‘Operating under the Radar’: Forestry Plantation Workers’ Everyday Resistance in Chimanimani District, Zimbabwe.

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own unaided work. It is submitted to the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, for a Doctor of Philosophy Degree. At no other university or institution has it been submitted as a requirement for a degree or any other qualification.

Wellington Mvundura

14th day of March 2024

Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to my beloved late father David Mvundura, my beloved mother (and academic mentor), my lovely daughters Kelly and Kim, and all the Zimbabwean plantation workers.

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Abstract

This thesis explores and analyses the everyday forms and practices of labour resistance that rural commercial forestry plantation labour crafts to navigate a highly insecure post-colonial capitalist plantation labour process. It attends to the scholarly puzzle that in Zimbabwe, Africa, and elsewhere quotidian forms and practices of resistance are in a much less or barely empirically demonstrated and theoretically elaborated state in both resistance and labour resistance studies. This is even more pronounced in agrarian labour politics studies, yet agriculture labour constitutes a significant proportion of the overall industrial labour-force in

Africa and elsewhere and is arguably the most easily exploitable form of wage labour. This motivated my empirical focus on commercial plantation labour.

In light of evidence from Barura plantation estate, I argue that the workers may have to accept the fact of post-colonial capitalist plantation wage employment, the plantation-specific modalities of statist ethno-national citizenship, and state-sanctioned partisan national politics while contesting the *terms* and *conditions* under which these mutual systems of domination and exploitation occur. The practices do not seek to radically decompose the historical material-cum-symbolic *bases* of these systems of power. The everyday practices of defiance mediate the workers' realisation of piecemeal *de facto* material and status gains more than the *de jure* recognition of those gains.

My major empirical contribution is the discovery and foregrounding of the quotidian practices of subaltern groups as an integral part of *politics*. In a specialised and methodical manner, I re-centre the mundane everyday acts of plantation labour as workplace politics namely labour resistance. Theoretically I deploy and test the conceptual-cum-theoretical positions of seminal scholars on (everyday) resistance and modify some of these positions in light of empirical evidence. Methodologically, I break from the intention-oriented and foreground the practice-oriented approach to everyday resistance.

This study is based on a continuous fourteen-month long on-site ethnography at a state-owned commercial forestry plantation. Ethnography was instrumental for the contextualised in-depth discovery and thick description of the workers' forms, practices, and dynamics of subterranean labour resistance. It also enabled the cultivation of high levels of trust and rapport required to discover a sensitive, incriminating, and largely backstage (hidden) social phenomenon like quotidian labour resistance. For data collection I used three levels of participant observation, unstructured in-depth interviews, casual conversations, and deep hangouts.

List of Acronyms

ATZ: Allied Timbers Zimbabwe (Pvt) Limited

BIPPAS: Bilateral Investment Protection and Promotion Agreements

BTL: Border Timbers (Pvt) Limited

CAA: Citizenship Amendment Act

CZAA: Citizenship of Zimbabwe Amendment Act

FCZ: Forestry Company of Zimbabwe

FTLRP: Fast Track Land Reform Program

GAPWUZ: General Agricultural and Plantation Workers Union of Zimbabwe

GoZ: Government of Zimbabwe

ID: Identity Document

MDC: Movement for Democratic Change

ZANU (PF): Zimbabwe Africa National Union Patriotic Front

ZCTU: Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 Research Gap, Scope, and Argument

This chapter sets the scene for this study. First, it highlights the research gap, scope, and overarching argument. It then concisely situates the work in key classical and contemporary scholarly debates in the field of resistance studies and in the specific sub-field of *everyday* (labour) resistance thereby illuminating the study's rationale and problem statement. Thereafter, it introduces the main research question, its sub-questions, and the research objectives. It also gives a concise historical politico-economic and concrete background to the research object and the specific research site to alert the reader to the historical and prevalent circumstances underlying the study. It then ends with a chapter outline of the thesis.

Immediately below, I begin by showcasing an excerpt from my fourteen month-long ethnographic research on a Zimbabwean state-owned commercial forestry plantation estate, which I gave the pseudonym Barura estate. The excerpt is an emblematic case of Barura plantation workers' responses to labour domination and exploitation. It is a workers' description of how fellow workers set sections of Barura estate plantation alight.

> *"… separately, they sneak into the night … strategically timed so that each duo or trio secretly reaches its assigned plantation site almost at the same time… At each site, camouflaged by the night, and the pine, A watches B's back while B gathers into a thick, big conical pile, highly flammable dry pine leaves and fruits, which are always available on every plantation floor…then, B burrows a hole midway into the base of the pile… via that hole, inserts a glowing cigarette stub or twig deep into the pile's centre… as a reliable time bomb, the glowing stub slowly but surely ignites the pile from the centre of its base…this gives them ample time to sneak back to unsuspicious spaces…Moments later, bonfires engulf the targeted pine sections… Overall result; unknown culprits, simultaneous forest fires at separate locations … net effect…overstretched fire-fighting resources… Fires normally seasonal, but because of workers like A and B, they become perennial…you get it?"* (Informal Chat, Farmworker H, June 2016)

The fieldwork excerpt above epitomises a striking exemplar case of an under-researched and under-theorised form of labour resistance in labour politics scholarship. Little is known of

specialised and *systematic* empirical research and theory on commercial plantation labour's everyday forms, practices, and dynamics of resistance in Zimbabwe and elsewhere in Africa. The overall field of resistance is relatively recent and still developing as a distinct discipline, while inordinate scholarly attention has been accorded to the more spectacular, organised, and collective form of labour struggle. Interestingly, practical instances of the latter form of (labour) struggle are risky, few, and far between (see Scott, 1985, Guha, 1987), more so, in repressive workplace settings like the one in the current study.

Given the overall dearth in specialised scholarship on the quotidian form of labour resistance especially in Africa's fast-evolving agricultural sector, the current study explores the practices and dynamics of everyday resistance crafted by forestry plantation wage workers vis a vis the various forms of power inherent in and articulated to a highly insecure and super-exploitative forestry labour process. Based on ethnographic fieldwork evidence from Barura estate and its surrounding rural village communities, I make the following overarching argument.

I submit that the workers' resistance practices and dynamics engage more the *terms* and *conditions* of plantation-specific dynamics of wage employment, statist ethno-national citizenship, and state-sanctioned polarised national politics than the material-cum-symbolic bases of these systems of domination. The workers' forms, practices, and dynamics of defiance are increasingly shaped by and occur within the material-cum-symbolic logic and dictates of these mutually-reinforcing (post)-colonial matrices of domination and exploitation. The commercial plantation workers make concessionary and sometimes repressive compromises within these interwoven systems of power to cope with, survive, and counteract domination and exploitation.

1.2 Scholarly Context: Research Gap, Rationale, & Problem Statement

We situate the current research in the broader field of resistance studies, which as a *distinct* academic discipline is relatively recent and still developing (see Webster, 1981; Hollander and Einwohner, 2004; Johansson and Vinthagen 2016). The concept and topic of resistance is interdisciplinary and thus ubiquitous across scholarly fields, yet by contrast, there is a dearth in *specialised* and *systematic* empirical research and theorisation on the topic (e.g., Vinthagen & Johansson, 2013).

However, for early specialised and methodical scholarship on resistance, we, like Gills (2000), laud and build on the seminal works of Polanyi (1944, 1957), Gramsci (1971), and Scott (1976, 1985, 1989, 1990). Their respective notions and analyses of *counter-movements*, *counter-hegemony*, *rebellions*, and *counter-discourse* established resistance as a specialised and methodical research and intellectual object. We are, of course aware that the pioneering analyses of these luminaries cannot fit neatly in our current rural African research context, but our major takeaway is the methodical analysis of how globalisation transforms the conditions, forms, modes, targets, sites, and strategies of resistance as societies change (also see Chin and Mittelman,1997). Relatedly, we also value how Polanyi, Gramsci, and Scott were partly influenced by earlier luminaries like Karl Marx and Marx Weber, whose germinal works on capitalist power relations did not explicitly focus on resistance as a systematic area of enquiry but set the scene for later specialised scholarship on resistance.

Following the tradition of Polanyi (1944, 1957), Gramsci (1971), and partly Scott (1976), most resistance studies in and on Zimbabwe, Africa, and elsewhere have a bias towards spectacular collective resistance. Exemplar cases are the works of Sandbrook and Cohen ([1973] 2023), Adler and Webster (1990), Raftopoulos and Sachikonye (2001), Moodie (2002), Von Holdt (2003, 2010), Moyo and Yeros (2005), Rutherford (2016). However, overall, despite this bias, these studies also largely remain less specialised as they mostly portray open resistance as an epiphenomenon to topics primarily focusing on power relations (see Webster, 1981; Gills, 2000). This is all the truer and more prevalent in the sub-field of everyday resistance, which is also under-studied. Thus, following Scott's (1985, 1989, 1990) seminal scholarship our current research deliberately focuses on the specialised and methodical study of *everyday* (labour) *resistance*.

Scott (Ibid) is our main protagonist among a corpus of scholars (e.g., Adas, 1987; Guha, 1987; Guha and Spivak, 1988; Chatterjee, 1993, 2004; Chakrabarty, 1991, 1992) who form part of a 1980s scholarly project namely *Subaltern Studies* in and on Southeast Asia. Strikingly, we draw the following parallels between this subaltern project and the current study. In resonance with the subaltern tradition, our current research foregrounds and uncovers the voices, experiences, and agency of *subalterns* (i.e., marginalised groups like peasants, workers, etc.), illuminating their acts of defiance and *everyday resistance* against (post)colonial matrices of

power. Our study is a critical scholarly intervention that offers fresh insights into the complexities of power, resistance, and identity formation vis a vis plantation wage workers-cum-peasants (i.e., subalterns) in a post-colonial commercial plantation production system. Below, we return to our main proponent Scott (1985, 1989, 1990).

The current research is inspired by Scott's (1985) *Weapons of the Weak* - a landmark methodical ethnographic study of *everyday resistance* by peasants in Malaysia. His argument for this under-studied form of subaltern resistance flows from a premise we share that conditions that favour organised, collective, and open protests are risky, few, and far between in repressive situations (also see Adas, 1987; Guha, 1987). We thus mainly draw from Scott (1985) and similar works (e.g. Scott and Kerkvliet, 1986; Kerkvliet, 1986, 2009, 2013) in foregrounding the *ordinary day-to day practices* of subalterns as an integral part of *politics* (i.e., resistance) - what Scott (1990) calls *infra-politics*. Hence, the current research focuses on the infra-politics of rural commercial plantation workers in a highly insecure capitalist forestry labour process. We also build on Scott's (1985) definitive coining of the notion 'everyday resistance' and its specialised and systematic mapping as an empirical object and analytical category.

However, we question and transcend Scott's (1985, 1989, 1990) over-privileging of the class dimension of and an actor-oriented (i.e., intentions) approach to everyday resistance. By taking scholarly cues from the likes of Chin and Mittelman (1997), Vinthagen and Johansson (2013), and Johansson and Vinthagen (2016), we underscore how subalterns, and their domination-resistance dynamics are also embedded in other *non-class* or *status* hierarchies and show that class is but one form or component of identity in power relations. Also, following de Certeau's (1984) novel *everyday practice* schema, we think beyond Scott (1985) and foreground the *practice-oriented* approach to the ethnographic discovery and analysis of everyday resistance by rural plantation labour. We also interrogate and improve de Certeau (1984) in his being less definitive about that which qualifies an everyday practice as 'resistance'.

This study also thinks with and beyond classical studies that deliberately *streamline* the topic of resistance to labour politics at the *micro-level* of the industrial *worksite*. In this regard, our main influences outside Africa are E.P. Thompson (1963), Braverman (1974), and Burawoy (1979), who shift the focus of labour politics research and analyses overall, and resistance in

particular, from the orthodox Marxian societal macro-level to the *micro-dynamics* of the agency, everyday life, cultural practices, and lived experiences of workers. Importantly for us, Burawoy (1979), and partly E.P. Thompson (1963), at least recognise and explore *everyday forms* of *labour resistance*, and they foreground the semi-autonomous role of *culture*, *politics*, and *community* in shaping *capitalist* workplace domination-resistance dynamics and identities. We assume a similar scholarly focus but in a more nuanced and methodical manner.

However, little is known from E.P. Thompson (1963) and Burawoy (1979) of the broader structural constraints, and the 'external' (to worksite dynamics) community-based solidarities shaping capitalist workplace power-resistance dynamics (see Rogers, 1990; Piven, 2008; Piven and Cloward, 2012). Also, they both overlook inter-sectional analysis by solely focusing on mainly white male industrial workers at the expense of other social identities like ethnicity, political affiliation, and gender that are also significant in shaping workers' experiences of domination, exploitation, and resistance (Ibid). This study partly attends to these empirical and analytical blind-spots.

In (southern) Africa, everyday forms of resistance are rarely systematically considered in literature on worker (and other subalterns) protest (see Cohen, 1980; Webster 1981; Ploeg, 2010). Consequently, in terms of wage labour struggles, there has been over-reliance on data relating to strikes, demonstrations, unionisation, social movements, and hence a failure to discover the subtle, informal, individualistic, everyday forms of labour resistance (Ibid). We also concur with van Onselen (1973, 1980), Cohen (1981), and Scott (1985) that open official protests are risky, few and far between and tell us little about the most lasting field of class conflict and (labour) resistance. However, our current focus on *everyday labour resistance* in workplace settings in the southern African context is not new.

Scholarly ancestry to what is similar to Scott's (1985) *everyday resistance* in labour politics is evident in the germinal works of Alverson (1971), van Onselen (1973, 1980), van Onselen and Phimister (1978), Webster (1978), Cohen (1980), and Morice (1981). These studies do not explicitly deploy the concept *everyday resistance* like we do, but importantly, they centre the daily, silent, covert, unorganised responses of African workers to a labour coercive and super-exploitative mining complex in the southern African region as an integral part of labour protest. For us, van Onselen (1973, 1980) stands out by his research focus on colonial Zimbabwe and

his ethnographic evidence-based discovery of a variety of *quotidian* practices by mine workers as the most feasible form of protest in repressive workplace settings. So, our major takeaway from van Onselen (Ibid) and his contemporaries is inspiring our own casting of the ordinary daily acts of commercial plantation workers as an integral part of what after Scott's (1985) influence we coin '*everyday labour resistance'*.

However, this study objects to van Onselen (1973, 1980) and his counterparts' failure to systematically theorise the workers' quotidian responses in ways that delineate them as 'resistance', and not quiescence. These works also over-privilege the class dimension and dynamics of these worker responses at the expense of their inherent or articulated non-class or status elements in the context of a highly controlled capitalist labour process. The current work attends to these lacunae.

Now, specifically in Zimbabwe, subaltern resistance scholarship also largely overlooks the sub-field of covert everyday subaltern resistance. Hidden forms of resistance are in a much less or barely demonstrated and theoretically elaborated state. Dominant literature (e.g., Sachikonye, 1995; Moore, 1998; Raftopoulos and Sachikonye, 2001; Rutherford, 2008, 2016; Sachikonye and Raftopoulos, 2018) emphasises the overt, collective, and militant forms of subaltern struggles. This is compounded further by related extant literature on agricultural labour (e.g., Moyo et al, 2000; Raftopoulos, 2003; Sachikonye, 2003; Rutherford, 2004, 2008, 2016; Scoones et al., 2019) that also barely considers covert, quotidian forms of protest. Also, while this literature quite rightly considers strikes, demonstrations, unionisation, and social movements as evidence of resistance, its main drawback is a uni-linear focus on key moments of struggles, which are however few and infrequent (see Scott, 1976, 1985). If anything, in Zimbabwe, since 1980 the last known major countrywide strike by commercial agricultural labour was in 1997 (see Muzondidya, 2007; Mpondi, 2012; Rutherford, 2016).

Interestingly, even despite the inordinate scholarly attention to spectacular collective resistance, it still remains barely researched and theorised especially in Zimbabwe's commercial agriculture sector. In the few and rare cases that it is, it is mainly an epiphenomenon to primary topics on agricultural workers' multiple experiences of socio-economic exclusion and marginalisation. If anything, literature (for e.g. Rutherford 2001a, 2001b, 2004, 2008, 2016; Moyo et al., 2000; Sachikonye, 2003a, 2003b, 2012; Moyo and

Yeros, 2005a, 2005b; Scoones et al., 2019) on the latter is well-researched. More so, it is well-argued in the context of milestone national events like: the chaotic and violent 2000-2003 Fast Track Land Reform Program (FTLRP); the targeting and turning of commercial farm spaces into active sites of polarised and violent daily and electoral party politics since 2000; the Zimbabwean state's adoption of a radical exclusive nationalist stance since 2000 henceforth; and the downturn of Zimbabwe's agro-based economy from the proverbial 'bread basket' to the 'basket curse' of the region (Ibid). Given this scholarship's extensive specialised focus on the negative ramifications of all these historical milestones on waged agricultural labour, one would anticipate some corresponding specialised and systematic exploration and growth of agricultural labour resistance literature. Surprisingly, apart from treating resistance as an epiphenomenon, there is a general dearth in methodical research and theory on agricultural worker resistance in Zimbabwe. This is all the more prevalent in the sub-field of *everyday resistance* where it is in a much less or barely researched and theoretically nuanced state.

Furthermore, since strong opposition politics emerged in 2000 mainly as an offshoot of the *trade union movement* and other civil society groups, the ZANU (PF)-led Zimbabwean state has forever been super-vigilant and intensified its brutal intolerance to any threat of or actual performance of any forms of open collective civil society or labour protest (see Raftopoulos, 2000; Raftopoulos and Sachikonye, 2001; Saunders, 2001; Dansereau, 2003; Rutherford, 2008, 2016; Sachikonye and Raftopoulos, 2018; Mutekwe, 2019). This also stems from the state's paranoia of associating any such protests with the regime change agenda of 'illegally' unseating the ZANU (PF)-led government (Ibid). This has at its worst seen the arbitrary and atypical deployment of armed state security forces to thwart peaceful civilian demonstrations (Ibid). It is now common to see armed soldiers and policemen fire live ammunition at and brutally assault protesters at the behest of the state (Ibid). The overall forbidding effect of such repression is specifically demonstrated in the agricultural sector, where the last known nationwide strike by commercial agricultural workers, despite their typically servile and precarious work, occurred in 1997 (Muzondidya 2007; Rutherford, 2016; Mutekwe, 2019). Since then, and especially after 2000, such open protests have become largely infeasible. Any isolated cases of open protest on commercial farms or elsewhere are instantly brutally thwarted with the aid of armed state security forces at the behest of the 'new' ZANU (PF)-aligned farm owners (Ibid).

Hence, to follow Scott (1976, 1985), under the foregoing repressive contexts, open forms of resistance increasingly become risky and infeasible. Thus, departing from the premise that subaltern struggles do not necessarily oscillate between the bipolar plane of outbursts of open protest and prolonged periods of quiescence, we would anticipate more specialised scholarly research on *non-conventional* forms of labour protest - and everyday forms of labour resistance is one such. Yet, in Zimbabwe, save for Mutekwe's (2019) scholarly article on everyday forms of labour resistance by platinum miners, little or barely anything is known of *specialised* and *systematic* research and analysis on this form of resistance. Notably so, in the commercial agricultural sector – a sector which constitutes the greater proportion of Zimbabwe's labour-force and of most African agro-based economies. We thus appreciate Mutekwe (2019) for giving systematic prominence to everyday forms of (labour) resistance in a contemporary Zimbabwean and African industrial worksite setting. However, we improve his scholarship by giving a more detailed and balanced power analysis, systematically theorising (everyday) resistance, and being categorical in foregrounding a practice-oriented approach to everyday (labour)resistance.

In all, we notice that empirical research and theory on Zimbabwean labour (and civil society) resistance in general, and (rural) agricultural labour protest in particular, has generally been confined to worker dissent that is overt, organised, and collective such as union activism, strikes, demonstrations. As a result, there is an increasing failure to discover and analyse the subtle covert individualised acts and dynamics of quotidian dissent by workers. This has resulted in a general misrepresentation of labour politics and resistance among waged agricultural workers in Zimbabwe, Africa, and elsewhere. In light of such lacunae, the current study questions and extends fieldwork and literature on rural labour protest, to include more exploratory data and analysis on the everyday subtle forms of resistance (or quiescence) that commercial plantation wage labour crafts to navigate various forms of power in a post-colonial capitalist forestry plantation labour process.

In order to attend to the scholarly gap(s) and research problem above, this research is under-girded by the following research questions and research objectives.

1.2.1 Main Research Question

What forms and practices of everyday resistance (or quiescence) do rural commercial forestry plantation wage workers craft to navigate various forms of power in a post-colonial capitalist labour process?

1.2.1.1 Sub-Questions

In order to answer the main question, the research attends to the following sub-questions.

i) What meanings do the rural commercial plantation workers make of their labour and life experiences?
ii) What power modalities and dynamics inform these experiences?
iii) What practices and dynamics of everyday labour resistance (or quiescence) engage these power modalities?
iv) What solidarities and identities inform this power-resistance synergy?

In light of these question(s), the research is guided by the following objectives:

1.2.2 Research Objectives

i) To examine the plantation workers' interpretation of their work lifeworlds.
ii) To investigate the forms and dynamics of power in the plantation labour process.
iii) To discover the workers' practices and dynamics of quotidian labour resistance.
v) To discover the social networks that shape the power-resistance synergy.

1.3 Socio-Spatial Context: Zimbabwe, The Plantation Economy, & Barura Estate

This study occurs in a socio-economic context wherein the broader Zimbabwean agro-based economy, and its agriculture sector in particular, have been in socio-economic decline especially since the early to mid-90s (for e.g., see Raftopoulos, 2004, 2013; Bauer, 2013; Eppel, 2013; Rutherford, 2016). This economic down-turn is especially attributed to the country's adoption of the largely socio-economically disruptive 1990s Economic Structural Adjustment Programs (Ibid). However, from the late 1990s onwards, the exacerbation of this downturn has largely been explained in terms of historic milestone political events that occurred in the country.

In 1999 the country's labour movement engaged other civil society groups to form arguably the first ever strongest opposition political party since 1980 to pose the first ever serious threat to ZANU (PF)'s twenty-year political hegemony (see Rutherford, 2008, 2016; Raftopoulos, 2004, 2013; Bauer, 2013; Mvundura, 2014; Mutekwe, 2019). The party, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), in a shock near-defeat of the ruling ZANU (PF) won almost half (57) of the seats in the June 2000 parliamentary elections. Earlier, in February 2000, civilians had in an unprecedented way, casted a 'no vote' to a constitution referendum that was presided over by the ZANU (PF)-led state. Also, earlier in 1999 disgruntled liberation war veterans led violent sporadic illegal invasions and occupation of white-owned commercial farms (Ibid). In an unprecedented retaliatory move to the latter direct threat to their own and their workers' land-based livelihoods, the white commercial farm owners joined party politics by actively participating in the formation and funding of the MDC, mobilising farm workers for the 'no' referendum vote and to vote for the MDC in the 2000 parliamentary elections (Rutherford, 2008, 2016; Daimon, 2016). In a move to retaliate and to retain some waning political clout and legitimacy in light of these political twists, the ZANU (PF)-led state 'hijacked' and officialised the sporadic land invasions into a nationwide Fast Track Land Reform Program (FTLRP) (Ibid).

The FTLRP stands out as one of the main political stimuli to a chain reaction that contributed to the ongoing downturn of Zimbabwe's economy and its agriculture sector in particular. Between 2000 and 2003 the state partly used the FTLRP as reprisal to the 'unpatriotic' (i.e., *anti-* ZANU (PF)-led state) behaviour of known or perceived MDC-aligned citizens, commercial farm owners, and commercial farm workers. The FTLRP epitomised a massive statist 'land grab' conditioned by and marred in countrywide *polarised, divisive,* and *violent* electoral and party politics that were deployed by pro-ZANU (PF) politicians, policymakers, and supporters (Moyo, 2011; Scoones et al., 2012; Moyo and Chambati, 2013 Raftopoulos, 2013; Daimon, 2016). This 'land grab' involved violent illegal occupations of white-owned commercial farms led by ZANU (PF)-aligned liberation war veterans and civilians (Rutherford, 2008; 2016; Sachikonye, 2003, 2012; Raftopoulos, 2013; Daimon, 2016). This resulted in the violent eviction and displacement of 'unpatriotic' commercial farm workers and their white employers from their commercial farmlands. Due their state-constituted 'alien' (either in the legal or 'unpatriotic sense) status the evicted workers either became squatters or had to stay

under the ZANU (PF)-dictated conditions under new black ZANU (PF)- aligned farmers (Ibid). Overall, over the official four-year period of the FTLRP, local and export agricultural revenues nosedived, there was low investor confidence, agricultural supply chains were disrupted, some agriculture linked industries scaled down operations or closed shop (Ibid). The latter trend has continued in light of state-sanctioned contested and tumultuous electoral politics and the state's adoption of a radical exclusive ultra-nationalist stance since 2000 (Ibid).

Interestingly, the FTLRP is also an important lens that can help us situate the vital importance of the large-scale plantation economy to the Zimbabwean state. Overall, the Zimbabwean large-scale commercial plantation economy was legally protected from the afore-mentioned illegal violent invasions. The 2000 FTLRP policy exempted large-scale agro-industrial estates owned by foreign and white domestic capital, indigenous public trusts, and the state from sub-division, acquisition, and redistribution (Tupy in Moyo, 2011a; Moyo, 2011a, 2011b). As of 2003 the Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ) was discouraging popular 'illegal settlements' around agricultural estates (Utete in Moyo, 2011a; Moyo, 2011a). Also, the Forest-Based Land Reform Policy of 2004 by the GoZ brought a moratorium to 'illegal' timber estate occupations (Ibid). Barura estate was and still is also among the 250 large-scale farms and estates, which by 1999, were supported by Bilateral Investment Protection and Promotion Agreements (BIPPAS) whereby the economic logic used by policymakers to justify the retention of such agricultural estates was their alleged superior micro-economic efficiency and productivity over other farms (Tupy in Moyo, 2011a). These dynamics explain why even seventeen years after (i.e., during 2016/17) the FTLRP, my study site, Barura forestry estate, was among the few fully operational companies both in the non-agricultural and agricultural sectors, nationwide.

However, immunity from the FTLRP did not exempt large-scale agro-industrial estates (and other commercial farms) from the novel development of being turned into *active sites* of ruling ZANU (PF) politics nationwide (see Rutherford, 2008; 2016; Raftopoulos, 2013; Southall, 2013; Daimon, 2016). The aforementioned 1999 to 2003 novel political events in which commercial farm workers (and other citizens) were an integral part fomented lasting suspicion by the state, of the national and political loyalty of the farm workers and their white employers (Ibid). To quote Rutherford (2008: 90), the state viewed farm workers as 'sell-outs' and "as foreigners under the control of white farmers" and the MDC. Consequently, since 2000 to date,

Zimbabwean commercial farm economies have typically become highly *politicised* as *active* sites of state-sanctioned polarised, partisan, and occasionally violent daily party and electoral politics, which are largely a monopoly of the governing ZANU (PF) party. The target is commercial farm workers suspected or known to constitute a strong support or voter base for any major opposition political party that threatens ZANU (PF)'s political hegemony and legitimacy (see for e.g., Rutherford 2008, 2016; Muzondidya, 2007; Sachikonye 2012; Eppel, 2013; Raftopoulos, 2013; Mutekwe, 2019). This active party politics was typically evident at my Barura estate study site, and I directly witnessed it at its peak since I did my fieldwork in a period (2016/17) immediately preceding the country's 2018 harmonised elections.

Furthermore, the ZANU (PF)-led state's retaliation to the 'unpatriotic' commercial plantation labour-force was through affirmation of the legal 'alien' status of farm workers with a non-Zimbabwean paternal ancestry. At this point we alert the reader to a *unique* category of commercial farm workers, which constitutes a significant proportion of the commercial farm labour-force in the country and also at the research site. This group is comprised of what the state legally designates on national IDs as 'alien' despite the fact that most of them are Zimbabwean-born and have lived in Zimbabwe for a lifetime (Sachikonye, 2003; Muzondidya, 2007; Mpondi, 2012; Rutherford, 2016). The colonial Zimbabwean state via its landmark racist piece of legislation namely the 1898 Government Notice 223, pioneered this *legal constitution* of the first generation of labour migrants of southern African origin as 'aliens'. The first generation of these 'alien' migrants was part of the 1890s to 1970s southern Africa labour coercive migration system (see van Onselen, 1973, 1980) in which male migrants from colonial Malawi, Mozambique, and Zambia were made to work in the colonial Zimbabwean mines or farms for nascent capitalists.

Interestingly, after independence in 1980, the post-colonial Zimbabwean state did not repeal this 'alien' or 'foreigner' legal status for the male descendants (and their families) of the colonial first-generation labour migrants. Fast-forward to 2000, in another retaliatory move to the 1999 to 2003 political twists and in seeming complicity with its colonial predecessor, the ZANU (PF)-led state through the 2001 Citizenship of Zimbabwe Amendment Act (CZAA), and the 2003 Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) re-affirmed the 'alien' legal status of any Zimbabwean citizens of non-Zimbabwean paternal ancestry (Magaramombe, 2001;

Sachikonye 2003; Muzondidya, 2007; Rutherford, 2008; 2016). The state's aim was to disenfranchise this so-called 'nationally and politically disloyal' group of 'foreigners' to avoid a repeat of the 2000 near-defeat of ZANU (PF) in the impending 2005 presidential elections and other future elections (Ibid).

A significant proportion of these newly affirmed 'aliens' included the present generation of commercial farm workers of Malawian, Mozambican, and Zambian ancestry (see Rutherford, 2008, 2016; Muzondidya, 2007). However, the lasting effect of the 2001 CZAA and the 2003 CAA to date has been the legal exclusion of all generations of agricultural workers (and other Zimbabweans) of non-Zimbabwean paternal origin from full *membership* and *ownership* of Zimbabwe as a nation and as a livelihood resource. In light of the 1999 to 2003 political surprises to its political hegemony, the ZANU (PF)-led state has since then ensured that citizenship and land reform statutes and processes barely consider the land rights of 'alien' commercial farm workers and other 'alien' minority groups (see Moyo et al., 2000; Worby, 2001; Muzondidya, 2007; Sachikonye, 2003, 2012).

As a result, "many farm workers do not have a home outside of their employment because of their foreign origins…" (Rutherford, 2004: 146) since their first-generation migrant forefathers were believed to be "living in the country [colonial Zimbabwe] solely to work and not to settle" (Muzondidya, 2007: 329). This is ironic since "by the late 1990s, more than 70% of farm workers were Zimbabwean born" (Sachikonye, 2003: 66). So, to date, successive generations of commercial farm workers and others with a migrant ancestry do not have any *legal* rights to and cannot *legally* acquire nor access land, land-based resources, and state projects in the 'native' rural communities or elsewhere.

So, overall, since the colonial era right through the 2000-2003 era of polarised tumultuous partisan politics to present, the ZANU (PF)-led state has created an enduring legacy of (near) landless 'alien' commercial farm workers typical of the Marxian *proletariat*. That is, the farm workers have become "the proletariat…a class of labourers, who live only so long as they find work, and who find work only so long as their labour increases capital" (Marx and Engels,1948: 15). Bereft of tillage and residential land, land rights, and legal access to alternative off farm non-wage livelihoods, these 'alien' farm workers became almost entirely dependent on agrarian wage labour. Also, "workplaces are life places" (Bolt, 2015: 5) for such workers - the

spinoff for commercial farm capital is the guaranteed statist (re)production of a *farm-dwelling* easily exploitable agrarian *proletariat*. This implies the latter's increased pre-disposal to super-exploitation via compulsory participation in servile commercial farm wage-labour. This case of a 'farm-dwelling' easily exploitable proletariat is quite typical with almost a third of the Barura estate plantation workers in the current study.

Meanwhile, another unique contextual dynamic involving the ZANU (PF)-led state's constitution of its known or imagined political 'enemies' in the country's commercial plantation economy and elsewhere as 'aliens' is noteworthy. From 2000 to date, through partisan public political discourse and action, the state has added a new layer of 'alienness' by re-defining *'being Zimbabwean'* to also mean being pro-ZANU (PF) and pro-state (see Worby, 2001; Mpondi, 2012; Rutherford, 2008, 2016). So, beyond the legal 'alien' status, there has emerged what we coin 'native aliens' (see Chapter 7). This now means that commercial farm workers and other citizens who are legally and officially 'native' Zimbabweans on their national IDs can also become 'alien' to the extent ZANU (PF) and/or the ZANU (PF)-led state can alienate them from socio-economic rights and resources on the arbitrary criterion of known or perceived *anti*-ZANU (PF) or *anti*-state [i.e., unpatriotic] behaviour. This dynamic partly sustains Rutherford's (2016) claim that all commercial farm workers in Zimbabwe, whether 'native' or otherwise, are considered 'foreigners'. The socio-economic disadvantages associated with such 'alienness' are more or less similar to those experienced by legally constituted 'alien' citizens. So, at Barura estate, there are also 'native alien' workers.

Another important contextual highlight in light of our centring of everyday forms of labour resistance concerns the current state of the general labour union movement in the country and specifically in the agro-industrial plantation sector. The former has been partly described in the problem statement segment. Suffice to add that the ZANU (PF)- led state's intolerance to trade unions, demonstrations, and any form of civilian unrest heightened especially in the post-2000 period (see Saunders, 2001; Dansereau, 2003; Raftopoulos, 2003; Muzondidya, 2009; Sachikonye, 2012; Rutherford 2016). This largely stems from the paranoia that the state and ZANU (PF) have since developed toward the labour movement since the first major formidable political opposition (the MDC) was formed mainly from the top leadership and the membership of the country's then genuine main labour union movement namely the Zimbabwe Congress

of Trade Unions (ZCTU). Post-2000, we witness the state's intolerant mortally brutal approach to any civil unrest through the arbitrary use of armed state security forces to assault, torture, or even kill protesting workers, students, political activists, or other civic groups.

At the sectoral level, post-2000, the specific union for agricultural workers, the General Agricultural and Plantation Workers' Union of Zimbabwe (GAPWUZ) has experienced an unsustainably low union density. According to Mpondi (2012) GAPWUZ lost a substantial number of its membership in the wake of the FTLRP. Members who lost jobs and left the commercial farms countrywide could no longer maintain their membership, pay their dues, and participate in union activities. For instance, GAPWUZ membership declined precipitously from about 180 000 at the start of 2000 to about 50 000 at the end of 2002 (Ibid). Overall, GAPWUZ lost its financial capacity and organisational reach. More so, the advocacy and lobbying activity of GAPWUZ has since been difficult in a politically and economically hostile environment. For instance, Mpondi (2012) notes how in 2010 the then GAPWUZ Secretary General, Getrude Hambira was interrogated by state authorities before being forced into exile for her safety.

Specifically, at the Barura estate research site, the chairperson of Barura shopfloor chapter of GAPWUZ and former members attested to how since the erratic payment of their wages and the sometimes-unpopular payment in kind since 2015, almost all of them had long lost their membership and could therefore no longer participate in union activities (Field notes, 2016/17). More so, most Barura workers asserted that the shopfloor workers' committee was as good as non-existent as a vehicle for the collective bargaining process and grievance machinery since it had been captured through imposition by the ZANU (PF) plantation leadership of a pro-ZANU (PF) Chairman and therefore pro-management given that the estate is owned by a ZANU (PF)-led state (Interviews with Barura workers, 2016/17). Below, we give a brief contextual overview that is specific to the Barura plantation estate economy.

The specific research site is a pine forestry plantation estate, which I gave the fictitious name Barura. It is located in Manicaland province (one of Zimbabwe's 10 provinces) where over 90% of Zimbabwe's significant plantation timber industry is located (Moyo 2011a; Bauer, 2013). Barura in the Eastern Highlands (EH) of Manicaland province on the border to Mozambique. The EH is a range of mountains stretching from Nyanga district of Manicaland

in the north, to Chimanimani district in the south. It is in Chimanimani district where Zimbabwe's forestry industry holds roughly 90 000ha of timber plantations. It comprises 60 000ha of pine (68%), 20 000ha of eucalyptus (20%), 10 000ha of wattle (11%), and the remaining 1 % is under other species (Ibid). Overall, the EH region has high altitudes (700-2 200 metres above sea level), cooler temperatures, and high rainfall (average of 1000mm/annum) making it really ideal for forestry plantation agriculture (Bauer, 2013).

Barura estate is in the southern part of the EH in Chimanimani district where the forestry and sawmilling activities of two of Zimbabwe's largest timber companies are concentrated (Bauer, 2013). These two companies namely Border Timbers Limited (BTL) and Allied Timbers Zimbabwe (Pvt) Limited (ATZ) both specialise in the management of forests and operation of sawmills. Formerly administered under a parastatal board namely the Forestry Commission of Zimbabwe, Barura estate became a subsidiary of a company founded in 2000 and initially named the Forestry Company of Zimbabwe (FCZ). Then in 2007 right through to the time of this study and to present the company changed name to ATZ (Bauer, 2013; Key Informant Interview, Manager K, April 2016).

ATZ, the private company under which Barura estate is a subsidiary is wholly owned by the Government of Zimbabwe (Bauer, 2013; Key Informant Interview, Manager K, April 2016). That is, the Zimbabwean state, via its agents (e.g., agriculture ministry officials, board of directors, CEOs, line managers, etc.), retain significant rights and powers of ownership and control of Barura estate's productive resources, especially "the basic power over allocation of capital" and the "command of profits" (see Wright, 2002: 13). Thus, the labour and production processes at the state-owned Barura estate are mainly *capitalist*. ATZ has its largest (about 21 600 ha) pine forestry resource base in the same district (i.e., Chimanimani) where it has a total of four forestry plantation estates (Bauer, 2013; Key Informant Interview, Manager K, April 2016). Among these four, Barura estate commands the largest proportion of this resource base (Ibid).

Between 2010 and 2014 ATZ was employing an average of 2 700 full-time workers and about 1000 contractors. More specifically, at the time of this research (early 2016 to early 2017), Barura estate had an average staff complement of 250 full -time workers and 150 contractors (Key Informant Interview, Manager K, April 2016). While until 2015 ATZ had enjoyed a good

share of regional and international markets especially in Namibia, Botswana, South Africa, and the United States from end-2015 onwards it was mainly focusing on the domestic market (Key Informant Interview, Manager W, May 2016). This was mainly attributable to undercapitalisation as the government was facing liquidity problems stemming from poor macro-economic management and there was low investor confidence due a negative political image owing to the state's ultra-nationalist stance (Moyo, 2011a; Bauer, 2013; Key Informant Interview, Manager W, May 2016).

Post-2015 and during the study period, Barura estate was experiencing heightened levels of labour insecurity. In terms of income insecurity, there was a pervasive pattern of wage payment delays by at least three months and the occasional payment of the wages in kind (i.e., a timber quota). Regarding job insecurity, there was a prevalent trend about deliberate ambiguity about the length and nature of labour contracts. Social insecurity was manifest in the form of the company's arbitrary forfeiture of pension and social security funds for some workers who had retired or were due for retirement. These insecurities were exacerbated by the representation insecurity wherein as alluded to earlier, the national, sectoral, and shop-floor levels of the collective bargaining and grievance machinery via ZCTU, GAPWUZ, or the shopfloor workers' committee were largely dysfunctional, co-opted by ZANU (PF)- aligned leaders, or incapacitated due to low union density (Key Informant Interviews, 2016/17; Field notes, 2016) In brief, at the time of the research, the Barura workers were in what I call a 'vicious circle' of labour insecurities.

Finally, as mentioned earlier, other contextual issues are elaborated and addressed as and when the thesis unfolds. What follows immediately below is a chapter outline of the thesis.

1.4 Chapter Outline

This thesis has nine (9) chapters. The initial three chapters (including the current one) introduce the research, illuminate the research hiatus, and explore and modify conceptual-cum theoretical debates relating to (everyday) resistance.

Chapter 2 situates the current study in the body and state of classical and contemporary (everyday) resistance scholarship. It brings into critical conversation (inter-textual analysis)

research and theoretical positions by prominent scholars to discover major empirical and theoretical debates and lacunae in the field.

Chapter 3 stems from my discovery of conceptual-cum-theoretical omissions and oversights on (everyday) resistance in Chapter 2. I make some modest conceptual-cum-theoretical modifications both in light of fieldwork evidence and the inter-textual analysis of theorists.

In Chapter 4 I tell a detailed story of my fieldwork experience of researching a vulnerable group of plantation wage labour on a sensitive and incriminating topic. I therefore pay curious attention to the practicalities of my ethnographic data collection methods mainly in light of my positionality, reflexivity, and ethical conduct.

In Chapter 5 I examine and analyse the plantation workers' experiences with and interpretations of labour domination and exploitation at various worksites of a post-colonial capitalist forestry labour process that is characterised by heightened labour insecurities and super-exploitation. This chapter connects to Chapter 6.

Chapter 6 discovers and illuminates the ensemble of quotidian practices and discourses that the plantation workers craft to counteract, survive, and cope with labour domination and exploitation in a highly insecure post-colonial capitalist workplace setting.

Similar to Chapter 5, Chapter 7 examines and illuminates the workers' experiences of and with plantation-specific versions of semi-autonomous cultural forms of power namely state-legislated ethno-national citizenship and state-sanctioned polarised partisan politics. This leads to Chapter 8.

Chapter 8, discovers and analyses the repertoire of ordinary everyday practices and discourses that the plantation labour articulates to counteract and/or cope with the subtle invisible forms of power in Chapter 7. Last, Chapter 9 concludes the thesis and suggests gaps for further research.

CHAPTER 2

SITUATING (EVERYDAY) RESISTANCE IN THE POST-COLONIAL COMMERCIAL FORESTRY PLANTATION LABOUR PROCESS

2.1 Introduction

The emergency of *systematic* landmark research and theorising on *everyday* (hidden) *resistance*, which is synonymous with luminaries like James C. Scott (1985, 1989, 1990) has marked a major turning point in the field of resistance studies. This is very much so given the inordinate scholarly attention that has often been given (and is still being given) to the more spectacular, organised, and collective, yet infrequent resistance. However, research (and theorisation) on what Scott (Ibid) methodically coined *everyday resistance* and other scholarship that bears some family resemblance to it is not new. Intellectual ancestry can be traced to the classical works for instance, of E.P. Thompson (1963), de Certeau (1984), and, at least in the African context, to the germinal studies of van Onselen (1973, 1980), van Onselen and Phimister (1978), and Cohen (1980). In light of this, the current chapter serves two related purposes. On one hand, it situates (and thus justifies) the current study in the extant body and state of (everyday) resistance scholarship. On the other hand, since the study also aims at modest theoretical contribution, the critical review of literature also forms the basis for our development of a reworked theoretical-cum-conceptual framework of (everyday) resistance in the ensuing Chapter 3.

From the outset, our appraisal of literature throughout this chapter both informs, and is informed by the scholarly puzzle that everyday (hidden) forms of labour resistance are yet to be closely researched and theorised in the post-colonial capitalist industrial setting of the agro-forestry plantation sector in Zimbabwe and elsewhere in Africa. Overall, specialised and systematic studies on resistance, more so, the sub-field of everyday resistance are scarce inasmuch as their empirical and analytical scopes vary significantly (see Hollander and Einwohner, 2004; Lilja and Vinthagen, 2009). As a result, for our review we borrow as needed from an inter-disciplinary canon of three main strands of literature. That is, the limited works

that explicitly deal with 'everyday resistance' (e.g., subaltern studies); general studies and theories of 'resistance' that are applicable or have relevance to the everyday (e.g., historical studies); and theories of the 'everyday' that use perspectives or concepts that are applicable to or have relevance for resistance, even though they might not use the concept (e.g., sociology of the everyday).

Importantly, we juxtapose, analyse, synthesise, and critically evaluate prominent research and theoretical positions by seminal scholars from the above-mentioned strands of scholarship with a view to discovering major debates, tensions, and lacunae in the field. It is these debates and gaps that the current research more or less seeks to address. Prior to appraising everyday resistance literature, below, we briefly outline how three luminaries set the foundation for the more specialised and methodical study of resistance in general.

2.2 Early Foundations for Specialised and Systematic Resistance Studies

Overall, we acknowledge and laud three luminaries namely Karl Polanyi, Antonio Gramsci and James, C. Scott for foregrounding resistance as a more *systematic* and *specialised* research and intellectual object. Following the works of Gills (2000) we concede that Polanyi (1944, 1957), Gramsci (1971), and Scott (1976, 1985, 1989, 1990) laid the early empirical and theoretical foundations for the ways in which we tend to envision resistance today. However, we are cognisant of the fact that their key ideas are not always neatly applicable to (rural) resistance in the South, in the current context of globalisation. But importantly, their milestone research and analyses provide a credible scholarly base from which we can creatively develop subsequent fieldwork and theories that are specific to particular contexts. A major takeaway from the three theorists concerns their reflections on how globalisation transformed conditions of resistance. Their common thesis is that as societies become more complex, so does the forms, targets, sites, strategies, and modes of resistance (see Chin and Mittelman, 1997; Vinthagen and Johansson, 2013).

According to Chin and Mittelman (1997), Polanyi, Gramsci, and Scott identified specific formulations of resistance tied to specific historical contexts. To this effect, they posit that among these three master theories of resistance, Polanyi's (1944, 1957) notion of *counter-movements*, the Gramscian (1971) concept of *counter-hegemony*, and Scott's (1985, 1989, 1990) idea of *infra-politics* deal with different targets. That is, Polanyi with "market forces",

Gramsci with "state apparatuses (understood as an instrument of education)", and Scott with "ideologies (public transcripts)" (Chin and Mittelman, 1997: 34 Table 1). Respectively, they also engage different modes of resistance namely "counter-movements aimed at self-protection", "wars of movement and position", and "counter-discourse" (Ibid). We get some specialisation among these master theories where Polanyi and Gramsci focus on visible resistance involving concerted collective actions, while Scott (1985, 1989, 1990) methodically explores the covert everyday forms of resistance. It is this Scottian (Ibid) persuasion of resistance (as well as similar studies and frameworks), which forms the empirical and theoretical basis of this chapter and study. Subsequently, from the field of studies and theories of (everyday) resistance and labour studies, we analyse, synthesise, and critically evaluate what we consider, in the present study, to be the cornerstone empirical-cum-theoretical perspectives developed by Charles van Onselen, James C. Scott, and Michel de Certeau. We of course invite other relevant contemporary scholarly voices insofar as they help us think with, against, and beyond these pioneering works.

Meanwhile, of note is that, although we have seemingly separate sections for these seminal works, our literature review below must be read as a continuous and connected *inter-textual* conversation among or synthesis of the voices of relevant and prominent scholars in the field or related fields. We enact this simultaneous critical engagement of different scholars so that we illuminate significant (dis)agreements and common omissions and oversights with a view to *situating* and *justifying* the current research empirically and theoretically.

2.3 Critical Appraisal of Everyday Resistance Research and Theoretical Positions

2.3. 1 Everyday Labour Resistance in Africa - van Onselen and Others

It is axiomatic that James C. Scott's (1985, 1989, 1990) specialised scholarship on peasant politics in Malaysia provides one systematic seminal perspective in resistance studies. As a major scholarly contribution, Scott (Ibid) rethinks and foregrounds the ordinary day-to-day practices of peasants (and thus other subaltern groups) as an integral part of politics (i.e., resistance). Specifically, he systematically coins the notion of 'everyday forms of resistance' to denote "the ordinary weapons of relatively powerless groups" (Scott, 1985: xvi), which for instance, include the peasants' quotidian acts like foot-dragging, false compliance, slander, and pilfering. However, one major oversight we spotlight and also address here concerns how, as a

pioneering proponent of scholarship on 'everyday forms of resistance', Scott fails to directly engage or at least cross-reference similar earlier seminal works of equally prominent scholars like van Onselen (1973, 1980) or other equally relevant works (e.g., van Onselen and Phimister, 1978; Cohen, 1980). We are thus compelled to initially acknowledge and appraise van Onselen's (Ibid) and other closely related works in the African context, before proceeding to an inter-textual analysis that brings Scott (1985, 1989, 1990) and other prominent voices into the exposition.

Arguably, van Onselen's (1973, 1980) pioneering research on the *day-to-day* acts of labour dissent by low-skilled Rhodesian mine workers in the southern African regional context can be credited for setting the early empirical and theoretical scope for what, in resistance studies, Scott (1985, 1989, 1990) later develops into a systematic analytical category namely 'everyday (hidden) forms of resistance'. In congruence with the specific research object of the current study, van Onselen's (1973, 1980) and similar seminal works build a compelling case for the *everyday* workplace *responses* (i.e., resistance-cum-survival practices) of 'native' African mine workers in the labour coercive capitalist mining industry in colonial Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) from 1900 to 1920, and elsewhere in southern Africa (see Alverson, 1971; Webster, 1978; Cohen, 1980; Morice, 1981). Importantly, van Onselen himself, largely influenced by the innovative work of E.P. Thompson (1963) on the *making* of the *working class* (which privileges workers' agency, culture, and lived experience), stands out as a chief proponent of a more feasible form of proletariat struggle in the guise of informal, passive, and individualised acts of labour protest especially in repressive workplace contexts in which open protest proves risky.

To this end, the last chapter of van Onselen's (1980) book, *Chibaro* (i.e., forced labour) encapsulates an anti-thesis to the rather flawed axiomatic argument that, due to a stunted resistance and political consciousness, 'native' African miners in Rhodesia, and in the overall southern African mining economy, were slow to demonstrate organised labour protest in the specific workplace situations of super-exploitative mining companies. The latter were part of a 'labour coercive' regional (i.e., southern Africa) mining economy and were characterised by racialised super-exploitation and highly repressive and violent labour recruitment and control mechanisms. The book title itself, *Chibaro*, is a vernacular term for 'rape', which is figuratively deployed to refer to a form of forced labour, which armed (with sjamboks and/or guns)

Rhodesia Native Labour Bureau agents and escorts forcibly recruited either from the ranks of local poor peasants ('natives') or from further afield (i.e., colonial Zambia, Malawi, and Mozambique) as African migrant labour (see van Onselen, 1973, 1980). This enforced proletarianisation and coercive labour regime were meant to address the 'labour shortages' that were synonymous with the early inception of a colonial capitalist mining (and agriculture) economy since 'natives' were resisting recruitment into wage labour. In light of such a highly coercive, violent, and repressive labour process, the common assumption was that African worker consciousness and action had to be assessed through the presence or absence of formal associations and organisations that articulated worker interests through open protest (Ibid; Cohen, 1980).

However, van Onselen (1973, 1980), refutes this fallacious assumption through detailed research on the responses of African workers to this 'forced labour' regime, which characterised the southern African mining sector. He documents how in addition to being coercively recruited and super-exploited, large numbers of mine workers were also violently controlled, marshaled, and disciplined through the agency of black compound police, suitably armed with leather sjamboks. To this end, van Onselen (1973: 239) concludes:

> Compound police spies, censorship and the sjambok (whip) do not produce an environment conducive to the development of public ideologies, organisations, meetings, petitions or strikes…the pattern of resistance should be looked for in the nooks and crannies of the day-to-day situation.

Be that as it may, our current research alludes to a similar conclusion but in a post-colonial commercial plantation setting. This flows from the fact that this setting is similarly repressive but in its own unique ways. First, broadly, throughout the 1990s and then from 2000 to around 2018, we encounter a Zimbabwean socio-economic context inundated by the widespread perpetration of violent and repressive laws and action against *labour*, *student*, *party*, and *national* politics by a ZANU (PF)-led state to thwart and arbitrarily deal with grassroot resistance at these four political levels (e.g., Saunders, 2001; Dansereau, 2003; Raftopoulos, 2003; Muzondidya, 2007; Sachikonye, 2012; Rutherford 2016). This literature also attests to the state's heightened intolerance of trade unions, strikes, demonstrations, and workers' rights as evidenced by its arbitrary deployment of state security forces to arrest, assault, or even kill striking workers, students, or civilians.

Second, and specifically, post-2000, commercial farm spaces have since become active sites of both the ruling ZANU (PF) political mobilisation as well as hotbeds of everyday targeted political violence, which escalates every election period. ZANU (PF) has since 2000 targeted these violent political acts at commercial farm workers mainly because it suspects or knows them to constitute a strong voter or support base for the then MDC, – a then arguably formidable opposition party formed in 1999, which in its different names and formations has since posed some constant threat to ZANU (PF)'s political hegemony and legitimacy (see for e.g., Rutherford, 2004, 2008, 2016; Muzondidya, 2007; Sachikonye 2012; Mutekwe, 2019). Auxiliary to this has been the enduring legacy of the state-sanctioned 2000 to 2003 FTLRP, which took off in 1999 in the form of violent and deadly illegal occupations of mostly white-owned commercial farms led by ZANU (PF)-aligned war veterans and civilians (e.g., Rutherford, 2008; 2016; Sachikonye, 2012). This move, which resulted in most farmers and workers being violently evicted from the farms or staying under new dictatorial conditions set by the ZANU (PF)-led state points to the ruling party's revenge for the farmers and workers' support for the MDC and also its political ploy to canvas for electoral support in any post-2000 national elections (Ibid). This all constitutes a synopsis of how the overall political terrain, and the current specific study context (the commercial plantation workspace) have evolved into sites typically besieged by violent, and occasionally deadly state-sanctioned electoral and everyday party politics. We therefore concur that these contexts more or less limit the plausibility of open labour dissent, while also cultivating prospects for everyday forms of labour protest as van Onselen (1973: 227) asserts:

> In a labour coercive economy…worker ideologies and organisations should be viewed essentially as the high water marks of protest: they should not be allowed to dominate our understanding … of the African miners' responses to it. At least as important, if not more so, were the less dramatic, silent and often unorganised responses…which occurred on a day-to-day basis that…forward the woof and warp of worker consciousness…Likewise it was the unarticulated, unorganized protest and resistance which the employees and the state found most difficult to detect or supress.

Here, while appreciating and positioning open organised protest as the threshold of labour resistance, van Onselen (Ibid) also validates and foregrounds the subterranean, unofficial, undeclared, ordinary practices of workers as a more plausible form of protest that escapes notice and reprisal in repressive labour regimes. Also taking a similar position that refutes the mistaken uni-linear focus on open labour protest, but one that also privileges innovative

research on African workers' 'hidden forms of consciousness and action', Cohen (1980: 8) says:

> There has been too much reliance on data relating to strikes, unionisation and overt political militance and for the most part, the failure to discover and evaluate the silent, unorganised, covert responses of African workers.

Overall, both scholars underscore the need to discover and bring to scholarly attention a complementary, and more so, an even more plausible form of resistance especially in repressive contexts. Specifically, van Onselen's (1973, 1980) extensive field research mostly in colonial Zimbabwe and Cohen's (1980) in various parts of Africa, build credible empirical (and theoretical) cases for the 'hidden unorganised forms of consciousness and action' (by African miners) against repressive and super-exploitative capitalist labour regimes through the discovery and analyses of a catalogue of everyday practices. Overall, these acts include loafing, desertion, feigned illnesses, absenteeism, boycott by bewitchment, withdrawal, target working, self-inflicted injuries, drug abuse, and others. Essentially, non-dramatic ordinary acts of subalterns are re-centred as an integral part of labour politics. However, this germinal body of literature (i.e., van Onselen, 1973, 1980; van Onselen and Phimister, 1978; Cohen, 1980), largely falls short of systematically analysing or delineating these day-to-day worker practices in a way that clearly distinguishes them as *resistance*. There is little or barely any deliberate framing of their field research in a specific conceptual/theoretical framework of what constitutes (everyday) resistance. This is a gap that the current study partly bridges by turning to James. C. Scott (1985, 1989, 1990), whom it also critiques and modifies (in light of related scholarship and findings) in this and the next chapter.

Importantly, for the current research, a major takeaway from the seminal works of van Onselen (1973, 1980) and Cohen (1980) is their validation and deliberate foregrounding of '*everyday* forms of labour protest' as an empirical and intellectual object of resistance studies. That is, the recasting of ordinary daily acts of workers as an integral part of *labour* politics. So, directly influenced by these earlier studies, the current study takes off from the premise that hidden forms of resistance in the African commercial agro-forestry plantation industry are in a much less or barely demonstrated and theoretically elaborated state. Subsequently, we submit that by systematically researching the workplace responses of labour in this economically significant

industrial sector, in a post-colonial African context, it is plausible to build a compelling case for well-developed patterns of subterranean practices of labour resistance.

However, whereas the foregoing pioneering research was done in a *colonial* industrial context wherein labour relations were predominantly *racialised* (Phimister, 1994), the current study obtains in a *post-colonial* industrial context in which such racialised relations have more or less waned. In this regard, the study shifts focus to examine farm labour's quotidian practices of protest through the unique lens of a highly *politicised* (i.e., infiltrated by polarised partisan national politics) commercial farm labour process, which, since 2000, has increasingly become a near-permanent site of active violent party and electoral politics mainly perpetrated by the ruling ZANU (PF) party (see for e.g., Saunders, 2001; Raftopoulos, 2003; Rutherford 2004, 2008, 2016, Sachikonye, 2012). Importantly, in this study, we acknowledge but also deliberately push past the commonly studied physical aspect of this commercial farm-domiciled political violence and give more prominence to what we consider to be its predominantly *disciplinary* (i.e., Foucault, 1979) component especially in the post-2010 era.

Meanwhile, this study also credits and builds on the appreciation by van Onselen (1973, 1980), Cohen (1980), and related works of the more or less *non-class* forms of domination such as race, ethnicity, employer-employee paternalistic relations, and labour legislation in shaping passive workplace resistance. To this end, van Onselen (Ibid), for instance, details how the colonial Zimbabwean state adopted the repressive Cape Master and Servants Law, which criminalised the breaking of a labour contract. Also, for the benefit of the mining industry in particular, the Rhodesian Chamber of Mines drafted a Pass Law, which limited the mobility of labour and facilitated the tracing of deserters. However, overall, such non-class cleavages are not systematically theorised and developed enough to allow for some more specialised and methodical analyses that capture the *complex* dynamics of everyday forms of labour protest. More so, these seminal works have a bias toward the coercive or repressive component, for instance, of cultural forms of power like labour legislation, ethnicity, and race at the expense of their subtle, invisible, productive, but equally subordinating elements. Therefore, to edify this omission by van Onselen (1973, 1980), van Onselen and Phimister (1978), Cohen (1980), and others, the current study deliberately explores and foregrounds the *invisible* and *soft* forms or components of power that are either *inherent* in or *articulated* to their more repressive forms and aspects.

Another major takeaway for us, from van Onselen (1973, 1980) and Cohen (1980), concerns their appreciation of the *role* of the state and the *nature* of its power (i.e., state autonomy) in relation to capitalist labour politics (i.e., labour resistance). To this effect, they accede more to *direct* state-capital alliances, in which the (colonial) state deliberately enacted politico-economic structures (e.g., Cape Master and Servants Law' Pass Laws), which were designed to directly benefit nascent colonial mining and agrarian capital (Ibid). This position, however, privileges only one of the ways in which the putative interests of capital are actually translated into state (i.e., state officers) action. Beyond it, the present study positions the role of the Zimbabwean state as a largely *indirect* 'external' force, in the form, for instance, of 'exclusionary citizenship legislation' (see Mpondi, 2012; Mlambo, 2013; Rutherford, 2016) and the state's manipulation of violent party, national, and electoral politics in ways that *incidentally* predispose and tie down agro-forestry labour to an exploitative capitalist labour process.

This characterisation of the nature of state power fits well with Poulantzas' (1968) framing in Scott and Marshall (2005: 632; emphasis added) that "capitalist states rule in the *long-term* interests of capital". So, in light of exclusionary citizenship laws and state-sanctioned partisan violent national politics, we portray the post-colonial Zimbabwean state as acting almost in the interests of local and international capital, not because state agents consciously contrive to do so, but because "the various parts of the state apparatus are structured in such a way that the long-term interests of capital are always to the fore and dominant". (Scott and Marshall, 2005: 632). That, is, we present the post-colonial Zimbabwean state as also having relative autonomy – i.e., its state agents also have own interests, which they can pursue independent of capital and labour, but which *incidentally* benefit or disadvantage these two groups.

Meanwhile, in framing passive worker resistance, van Onselen (1973, 1980) overprivileges *class consciousness* in a similar way that Scott (1985, 1989) overemphasises the *intentionality* of a resisting agent. According to Vinthagen and Johansson (2013), these two similar notions are difficult to establish empirically. With specific regard to van Onselen (Ibid), we subscribe to Cohen's (1980) critique that a major setback in the study of *class consciousness* in whatever context concerns the lack of theoretical elaboration of the concept itself, particularly its narrowly orthodox Marxist persuasion. Working with rigid binaries, for instance, of false vs true consciousness, class in itself vs class for itself, and bourgeoisie vs proletariat, cannot

encompass the levels and varieties of consciousness, its fluid and mercurial nature, its infusion with and relationship to more general categories of working-class culture, sub-culture, or contra culture. We engage and address this and other foregoing omissions and commissions by van Onselen (1973, 1980) and counterparts in a reworked framework of everyday resistance in Chapter 3.

Below, we turn to James C. Scott who was also foundational, but more definitive, systematic, and explicit in his theoretical and empirical mapping of *everyday resistance* in yet another 'Third World' context of Southeast Asia. This systematic or methodical approach is what sets Scott (1985, 1989, 1990) apart from equally seminal scholars like van Onselen (1973, 1980), Cohen (1980) and others (e.g., Kerkvliet, 1986, 1990; Adas, 1987; Guha, 1987, etc.). Importantly, Scott (Ibid) also theorised beyond case study material to build a *general perspective* of class, and state-society relations. Below, we critically examine Scott's work(s) in relation to that of a similar persuasion, and more importantly, in light of the current study.

2.3.2 Contextualising and Thinking Everyday Resistance with and beyond James Scott (and Others)

The *specialised* and *systematic* foregrounding of the *everyday resistance* paradigm and research is synonymous with, but not exclusive to the works of James C. Scott and Michel de Certeau. Theoretical and empirical ancestry for both can be credited and traced to the early satirical writings of Rabelais (see Bleiker, 2000). Also, according to Sivaramakrishnan (2005), the 'intellectual genealogies' of the Scottian framework (as couched in class, hegemony, moral economy, culture, and lived experience) can, as with the cases of van Onselen (1973, 1980) and Cohen (1980), be traced to E.P. Thompson (1963). (In)directly drawing from these earlier scholarly influences, Scott (1976, 1985, 1990) weaves arguably the most methodical argument and perspective on (everyday) resistance that examines the quotidian practices of domination and resistance from a generalised perspective of class and state-society relations. His argument flows from a premise shared by the current study that circumstances that favour large-scale, collective, and open protests are few and far between in repressive situations. Relatedly, Scott (1985, 1989) and others like Adas (1987) and Guha (1987) further note that should open protests occur, their success is rare as they are nearly always crushed by the state and/or capital. More so, Hobsbawm (1973) observes that most subordinate classes, after all, are far less interested in changing the larger structures of capital, the state, and the law than in what he

calls ‘working the system to their minimum disadvantage’. In this regard, we profit from Scott (1985) insofar as his work offers a variety of positions as to why less powerful groups do not revolt in circumstances that would otherwise seem to justify radical action.

Be that as it may, Scott’s (1985, 1989, 1990) work stems from the inordinate scholarly attention given to open, organised, collective forms of peasant resistance (e.g., strikes, riots, and civil wars), and too little given to ordinary, everyday forms of resistance and their symbolic and ideological underpinnings. So, for Scott (1990), as with van Onselen (1973, 1980) and Cohen (1980), open official protests tell us *little* about the most lasting field of class conflict and resistance. That is, the Scottian foregrounding of quotidian forms of resistance unsettles and disproves the popular imagery that the politics of relatively ‘powerless’ groups oscillate between the *revolutionary-acquiescence dichotomy* (see Bayat, 1997c). Relatedly, through the same work, Scott (1985, 1989, 1990) offers a critique of both the orthodox Marxist notion of *ideology* (i.e., false consciousness) and its related but modified Gramscian (1971) *hegemony* (i.e., free consent). These invisible, ideological forms of power (explored and theorised later in detail in Chapter 3) encapsulate how the dominated are able to tacitly and complicitly *internalise* and *accept* the logic of their exploitation. Interestingly, Scott (Ibid) argues that the peasant’s mind is free from and unpersuaded by these invisible forms of power (see Bayat, 1997c), and he proceeds to substantiate this through a discovery of peasants’ everyday forms of ideological resistance. Below, we appraise some of Scott’s (1985, 1989, 1990) prominent works, especially *Weapons of the Weak*, which, in resonance with our own study, gives prominence to *everyday resistance* as an analytical category and an empirical object of resistance scholarship.

James Scott’s (1976, 1985, 1990, 2009) scholarship on resistance spans over three decades of development in four major publications namely: *The Moral Economy of the Peasant, Weapons of the Weak, Domination and the Arts of Resistance and the Art of not Being Governed*, respectively. Of these works, *Weapons of the Weak*, stands out as an epitome of Scott’s (1985) extensive, systematic, and elaborate development of everyday resistance as an analytical category within the developing field of resistance studies. The anchoring argument in this book is that, in contrast to its openly declared, collectively organised, and confrontational counterpart, resistance for subordinate groups manifests more in their quotidian, often individual, and seldom collective, covert practices of *defiance* and *self-help* against domination

(also see Bayat, 1997c; Sullivan, 2003). Likewise, the current study sustains a similar argument in a similar socio-economic setting wherein agricultural capitalism is more or less articulated to a traditional peasant mode of production. However, the current study focuses more on the industrial *labour politics* aspect of this agrarian accumulation insofar as the resistance dynamics of low-skilled plantation workers matters.

In *Weapons of the Weak*, Scott (1985) generalises well beyond case study material to the role of ideology, hegemony, and interests in social control and class struggle thereby building a compelling empirical and theoretical case for everyday forms of resistance (also see Guha, 1987). His rich multi-layered ethnographic study is set in Southeast Asia, in a Malaysian village (in the late 1960s) namely 'Sedaka' in the Muda Irrigation District of Kedah state. The district's dominant agricultural activity is rice production. Key to Scott's (1985) argument is a significant shift in the material base of the Sedaka community. That is, a gradual shift from the original subsistence/traditional agrarian economy (i.e., peasant mode of production) to agricultural capitalism in the form of a "Green Revolution'. The latter manifests in the guise of the state-sanctioned introduction of exogenous economic variables such as: a large-scale capital-intensive irrigation scheme, increased mechanisation of farming mainly through the combine harvester, move to rents paid before rather than after harvests, and double-cropping especially by absentee Chinese investors/landlords. Noteworthy at this point is that this shifting of the material conditions or social relations of production is a key dynamic that similarly characterises the commercial forestry labour process of the current research.

That is, in the present study, there are also major shifts (in the economic base), but not to a different mode of production, but shifts *within* the labour process of the same commercial agro-forestry mode of production. Like in Scott's (1985) case study, these shifts are mainly a result of key *exogenous* factors. As briefly alluded to earlier, one of these concerns the increased state-led deliberate translocation of violent, repressive, and partisan [i.e., pro-ZANU (PF)] party, national, and electoral politics into commercial plantation workspaces in the post-2000 era (see Saunders, 2001; Raftopoulos, 2003; Rutherford 2004, 2008, 2017, Sachikonye 2012). Attendant to this is the ZANU (PF)-led state's politically motivated amendment of citizenship laws to intensify the legal exclusion of citizens of foreign paternal ancestry (a significant proportion of whom constitute farm and mine labour and is believed to be an MDC support and voter base) from land and land rights (see Mpondi, 2012; Mlambo, 2013; Rutherford,

2017). Interestingly, the latter exogenous factor kickstarts the last but more endogenic one, namely heightened levels of insecurities and exploitation of farm labour. This entails plantation capital's incidental spin-offs from the overall socio-economic deprivation of farm workers of foreign ancestry, which stems from this unique labour-force's enforced 'farm-dwelling' status and over-reliance on wage labour owing to their state-sanctioned legal exclusion from residential and tillage land and other land-based livelihoods. So, as we can see, similar to Scott's (1985) case study, the current case experiences these largely exogenous changes in its material conditions, but a unique set of changes that are confined to the same mode of agrarian capitalist production.

Back to Scott's (1985) Sedaka case study, he further asserts that the net effect of the transition to agricultural capitalism in Sedaka community is the disruption of the traditional land ownership/use patterns and an associated intensification of the uneven distribution of wealth. For the investors and village elite farmers, the Green Revolution results in improved productivity and profitability. By contrast, there is a sharp decline in the livelihoods of peasants, tenants, and landless workers who gradually lose access to land and work (Scott, 1985; Scott and Kerkvliet, 1986; Guha, 1987; Colburn (ed), 1989; Kerkvliet, 1990). Interestingly, Scott (1985) discovers that amid these adversities that would otherwise warrant open protests, such protests have barely escalated at all (see also Buttel, 1987; Guha, 1987; Bayat, 1997c). This resonates with the present study context wherein commercial agricultural work has become synonymous with heightened socio-economic deprivation and repression since the late 1990s. Yet, ironically, save for the historic nationwide commercial farm worker strike of 1997 (the first and last one to date), and some rare isolated collective actions on specific farms thereafter, there has barely been any fully-fledged open farm labour protests (for e.g., see Moyo, 2000; Sachikonye, 2001, 2003a; Rutherford, 1997a, 2001a, 2004, 2008, 2016). This paints a picture of seeming quiescence - an irony and puzzle, which significantly motivated the current research. Importantly, in Sedaka, Scott (1985) discovers an alternative form of resistance, which remains characteristically and deliberately subtle, non-confrontational, individualistic, and anonymous. He systematically and theoretically coins it *everyday resistance*.

This form of resistance comprises *normal* acts that bear a family resemblance to those discovered by van Onselen (1973, 1980) in the Rhodesian mines and by Cohen (1980) in other

African workspaces. Thus, in Scott's (1985) study, it is similarly comprised of the peasants' ordinary practices such as slandering, sarcasm, dissimulation, pilfering, sabotage, foot-dragging, and false compliance among other seemingly non-political acts. These acts embody the prosaic, subtle, hidden, piecemeal, but constant struggle between the Sedaka peasantry and the superordinate groups (mainly the village elite) who seek to extract labour, surplus, food, and rents from them (see Scott, 1985, 1989; Adas, 1987; Guha, 1987). Also, conformity by peasants is calculated, not unthinking - beneath the surface of symbolic and ritual compliance is an undercurrent of ideological resistance through *autonomous* everyday interpretations that the peasants give of their material conditions. Be that as it may, of immense empirical and theoretical significance to our research is Scott's (1985, 1989, 1990) creative extrapolation of these ordinary daily acts of *survival* and *dissent* beyond the Sedaka case study. That is, Scott recentres them as 'weapons of the weak' (1985) or 'hidden transcripts' (1990) that are typical of *all* kinds of subalterns in *other* similar contexts where dramatic resistance is considered too risky and fatal, and where the main concern is to make a living.

Subsequently, Scott (1985, 1989, 1990) methodically discovers and documents some *common features* that are typical of these forms of material and ideological struggle. He illuminates that they are small scale, patterned, individualistic and unorganised, opportunistic, require little or no *formal* coordination but *some* level of cooperation via implicit understandings and informal networks, and typically avoid direct symbolic confrontation with power or elite norms via the pervasive use of disguise (of the resistance actors or the acts or both). So, overall, for Scott (1989: 34) acts of everyday resistance are meant to seek self-centred, immediate, "tacit *de facto* gains", while acts of public resistance seek the long-term "formal, *de jure* recognition of those gains". Also, for Scott, practices of "everyday resistance [are] *heavy* on the instrumental side and *light* on the symbolic confrontation side". The acts are rooted more in the subalterns' everyday material gains (earning a living) than in 'revolutionary consciousness'. Although at a later stage, the Scottian (1990) framework attests to the greater ideological commitments, and the use of available figures (gods or kings) by the peasantry to decipher emancipation and long-term change, it is noteworthy that his emphasis on the *self-centred* and *immediate* gains of everyday acts of resistance does not erode the *political* element in these acts. To this effect, Scott (1985: 294) submits:

> [to] insist on such distinctions as a means of comparing forms of resistance and their consequences is one thing, but to use them as the basic criteria to determine what constitutes resistance is to miss the wellsprings of peasant politics.

Suffice to say that Scott (1985) deserves credit for systematically crafting and delineating the notion (and practice) of *everyday resistance* or *infra-politics* as a form of politics that is not only covert, unorganised, more private, informal, but also concerned with self-centred *de facto* and immediate gains (1985). His generalised approach therefore reorients and expands the domain and our understanding of 'politics' beyond formal organisations and collective mobilisation, extending it to what de Certeau (1984: xxiv) terms "the politics of ploys" embedded within "the practice of everyday life". Similarly, de Heredia (2017) lauds Scott for opening possibilities for the exploration of politics and relations of domination not in the open field of *structural* and *formal* politics, but in the *everyday relations* of the workplace, village life, church, and the home, for instance. So, our present study profitably builds on Scott's (1985, 1989) generalisation of Sedaka's quotidian acts into a broader analytical category of everyday resistance but distinguishes itself by exploring the incidence, nature, and dynamics of such resistance in a post-colonial capitalist agro-forestry workplace setting, which has its unique set of subjugating conditions (already detailed above) in addition to experiencing heightened levels of industrial decline in capacity utilisation.

We also find it highly valuable how Scott (1985, 1989, 1990) as well as van Onselen (1973, 1980), Cohen (1980) and Kerkvliet (1986, 1990, 2009) frame forms of power and (everyday) resistance as related or interdependent, despite narrowly casting this relationship as a *binary* (dichotomy) or two related opposites. According to Scott (1989), the form of everyday resistance depends on the form of power exercised. For him, "those who claim that 'real resistance' is organized, principled, and has revolutionary implications… overlook entirely the vital *role of power relations* in constraining forms of resistance" (Scott, 1989: 51, own emphasis). Resistance is an act that is articulated in an oppositional relation to power (see Johansson and Vinthagen, 2016). Subsequently, the underlying logic of the Scottian relational approach is that forms of everyday resistance are 'mirror images' of the forms of appropriation or power. To this end, Scott (1989:37) claims:

> The various practices that might plausibly be claimed to represent everyday forms of resistance are legion. To an outside observer it might appear quixotic to assemble them under the same heading. Their variety is nothing more than a mirror image of the variety

> of forms of appropriation; for every form of appropriation there is likely to be one – or many – forms of everyday resistance devised to thwart that appropriation.

In keeping with this claim, we partly emulate Scott (1985; 1989: 55-56) who identifies forms of: material or physical resistance (e.g., poaching, foot-dragging) that target *material domination*; hidden transcripts of anger and aggression as well as disguised discourses of dignity (e.g., rituals of aggression, tales of revenge) that resist *status/symbolic domination* (i.e., disprivilege or assaults on dignity); and finally the development of dissident subcultures (e.g. folk religion, witchcraft) to undermine *ideological domination* (i.e., justification by dominant groups for slavery, exploitation, privilege). This research follows this significant Scottian logic of *power dependence* (Scott and Marshall, 2005: 517), but it rescinds the related (mis)presentation of this relationship between power and resistance as a dichotomy. This Scottian oversight, which is also common among other seminal scholars is examined in more detail below to set the stage for an improved analytical frame in Chapter 3.

Although we credit Scott (1985, 1989, 1990) and most resistance literature (e.g., van Onselen, 1973, 1980; Kerkvliet, 1986, 1990, 2009; Cohen, 1980; Hollander and Einwohner, 2004) for framing power and resistance as related, overall, this literature inordinately portrays them as two related *opposites*. This framing invites theoretical and empirical interrogation (by the current study) since it over-simplifies power relations by suggesting rigid spatial binaries between power and resistance and the actors involved. Classical paradigmatic cases concern van Onselen (1973, 1980) and Cohen's (1980) pioneering works, which in an orthodox Marxist persuasion tend to cast exploitation and oppression as inherently conflictual. For them, more important than *explaining* resistance as a *duality* with power is analysing *how* resistance is articulated and supressed (see O'laughlin, 2003). Yet, such an analytic tends to romanticise resistance, giving resistance and its actors an excessively autonomous and separate existence from power relations. Subsequently, Abu Lughod (1990: 42) posits that many of such studies "read all forms of resistance as signs of the *ineffectiveness* of systems of power and the resilience and creativity of the human spirit in its refusal to be dominated."

Similarly, Scott (1985, 1989, 1990) erroneously positions power and resistance as rigid spatial binaries -i.e., not incorporating them in a reciprocal dynamic and interactive process but treating them as dichotomous (see Vinthagen and Johansson, 2013). In line with subaltern studies in general, O'Hanlon (1988) asserts that Scott applies a stark division between

dominants and subalterns while simultaneously overemphasising the role of resistance. To O'Hanlon (1988: 214) "this is a major problem since acceptance and submission is probably the strongest element of subaltern culture". Scott (1985, 1989, 1990) gives resistance and the agents too many independent abilities – a kind of autonomous or even isolated position. In other words, power and resistance are treated as 'separate' or 'pure' categories - an equation to an extreme position of *either* accommodation *or* resistance, and not a mutually inclusive and dynamic combination. Unfortunately, by extension, such is the dominant framing in "studies of workplace resistance [which] are often based on an implicit dualism of control and resistance as mutually exclusive" (Mumby in Vinthagen and Johansson, 2013: 34). Yet Starn (1992) illuminates that peasant politics, as any other subaltern politics, despite being distinctive, is never autonomous.

Meanwhile, Moore (1998) submits that Scott's vision of resistance and power as monolithic spatial binaries is mainly attributed to his framing of resistance in Geertz's (1973) metaphor of *'culture-as-text'*. The metaphor famously argues:

> the culture of a people is an ensemble of texts, themselves ensembles, which the anthropologist strains to read over the shoulders of those to whom they properly belong (1973: 452).

For Scott (1985, 1989), the autonomous, sovereign self, an artefact of western theory, authorises this metaphor, which scripts the performance of social actors. According to Moore (1998), the notion of Geertz's text as a fixed metaphoric site, resides in a static space removed from power, practice, and process. From this vantage position, resistance becomes the intentional thwarting of external forces from an imagined space of autonomy conceived of as outside or beyond power. Subsequently, Moore (1998) characterises the Scottian vision of resistance as citing the oppositional cultural text that is not only spatially removed, but temporally prior to the situated practices of social actors.

Furthermore, for Scott (1990: 76), in *Domination and the Arts of Resistance,* spatial metaphors such as "social spaces of relative autonomy" and "offstage social spaces", become sites where power does not colonise or saturate the consciousness of slaves, peasants, the proletariat or other subalterns. While Scott (1990: 76) views "the frontier between the public and hidden transcripts as a zone of constant struggle", his binary opposition of onstage/offstage naturalises separate spaces of domination and resistance, in the process being oblivious to the discursive

boundaries themselves as effects of power. Scott's static theatre of resistance, with fixed site for subaltern actors, an audience of power-wielders, and scripts authorising 'public' performances are ignorant of the processes by which social spaces are formed, reproduced, and reworked through situated cultural practices.

Thus, in light of the above-mentioned theoretical (and empirical) lacunae, this study reimagines resistance by accounting for it and its agents in an interactive, historical, constitutive, and relational process with power. That is, we analytically push past what Moore (1998) calls the postulation of an originary space of authentic insurgency and insurrectionary otherness. Our improved analytical thrust more or less sustains a position similar to Butz and Ripmester's (1992: 2) that power-resistance relations are "not a binary structure with dominators on one side and the dominated on the other, but rather a multi-form production of relations that are partially susceptible to integration in overall strategies". In other words, rather than reading subalternity, and therefore resistance, as an essential, absolute characteristic of social being, we postulate that it should be largely read as *practices* that are forged *historically* and are *relationally entangled* with *multiple* modalities of power. This is an improved theoretical vision, which we pursue and develop further in a reworked conceptual-cum-theoretical framework of everyday resistance in Chapter 3.

Our other main takeaway from Scott (1985, 1989, 1990) is that he transcends earlier seminal studies (e.g., van Onselen, 1973, 1980; Cohen, 1980) by methodically distinguishing the material and ideological dimensions of power and resistance and then by privileging their connection. To this end, in *Weapons of the Weak*, Scott (1985) develops a key theoretical thesis that the material base and normative superstructure are inextricably interwoven. For him, in Sedaka, the rich expend *material* resources in moulding a set of *norms* (i.e., ideology) that rationalise their interests. And for Scott (1985), at least in Sedaka, this ideological superstructure predominantly manifests as *political norms* that underly exploitation. Likewise, on the peasant side, Scott (1985: 305) reiterates that although ideological conflict and material resistance are clearly rooted in the change in the material base of production relations, "the peasants…do not simply react to the objective conditions *per se* but rather to the interpretation they place on those conditions as mediated by values embedded in concrete practices". That is, the peasants *legitimise* their resistance via the subaltern culture (i.e., local ideology), or what Scott (1989: 52) calls the peasants' "climate of opinion" articulated in their "folk culture". This

constitutes a typical way of doing communal activities (e.g., labour exchange, rituals), which is not unique to resistance, but overall, depends on "networks of *understanding* and practice" (Scott, 1989: 52). So, acts of everyday resistance that are attendant to shifts in social relations of production accrue *legitimacy* insofar as they are 'filtered' through the subalterns' shared worldviews, idealisations, and moral economy. That is, these self-interested acts are passed through some kind of 'normative sieve' by which subalterns either privately legitimise the acts or de-legitimise dominant ideologies. As a result, Scott (1985, 1989) also submits that the ideological superstructure must always be read as a product of struggle, not as something that pre-exists.

However, beyond the takeaways above, we criticise Scott (1985, 1989, 1990) as well as van Onselen (1973, 1980) and Cohen (1980) for narrowly couching resistance and domination in an orthodox Marxist tradition, which inordinately casts them as *class* (economic) relations that are also predominantly *structural* and *repressive*. To borrow from Chin and Mittelman (1997: 32), these scholars tend to downplay that subalterns are "embedded in whole ways of life" and that "class is but one (albeit important) modality of identity in landlord-peasant or other forms of dominant-subordinate relations". Scott (1985: 290, own emphasis), in conceptualising resistance, focuses on "act(s)…of a subordinate *class*…to mitigate or deny claims…on that *class* by superordinate *classes*…". In his view, peasants (and other subalterns) are couched in and engage a single matrix of power structured by the social relations of production, a location over-determined by the structural grid of class. Even in instances where Scott (1985) appreciates the *cultural/symbolic* forms or aspects of power (i.e., the 'public' vis a vis 'hidden' transcripts), he largely frames them as *class* ideologies that are secondary to and products of a disrupted and shifting *material* base. This over-emphasis on a single matrix of power is simplistic as it excludes other multiple social identities and relations (e.g., gender, ethnicity, race, etc.) that mediate access to resources and that crosscut or could even be more significant than class. To frame it from a Weberian, Bourdieusian, or Gramscian tradition of class analysis, we argue that Scott (1985, 1989, 1990) and van Onselen (1973, 1980) underappreciate the *semi-autonomous* role of *culture* (i.e., more, or less non-class forms of differentiation) in domination-resistance relations. While the former three traditions, in different ways, all acknowledge the interplay of *class* and *status* cleavages, unlike van Onselen and Scott, they

break from the classical Marxism of framing culture/status as increasingly secondary to or as subsumed under economic/class relations.

Furthermore, we also object to Scott and van Onselen's bias toward a structuralist approach to *class* (and other forms of power), which predominantly presents it as deterministic, reified, and possessed by or located in certain groups (see Barlett, 2005). We argue that such "essentialised understandings of class" are not in keeping with typical subaltern politics that are synonymous with "the complications of decentred, multiple selves, whose lives are shot through with contradictions and creative tensions" (Kondo, 1990: 220 and 224). A structural grid of class oppositions (e.g., ruling class vs working class) cannot adequately capture the multi-layered, nuanced, and ambiguous, politico-cultural nature and dynamics of (everyday) resistance agents and their acts. This study therefore adopts a post-structuralist approach, which is more utilised in the field of resistance studies of today (for e.g., see Lilja and Vinthagen, 2009; Vinthagen and Johansson, 2013; Johansson and Vinthagen, 2016). In keeping with this vision, we utilise as our departure points, the Foucauldian and Bourdieusian traditions, which are examined in detail in our reworked framework of everyday resistance (see Chapter 3). For now, suffice to say that these two and other related traditions view power relations as plural, decentred, productive (of subjects), and relational (see Barlett, 2005; Vinthagen and Johansson, 2013). This vision embraces the complexity of social actors' experiences, identities, and interests as embedded in intersectional, ambiguous, plural, contradictory matrices of power. We submit that this reworked framing recasts the subaltern lived experience (of the domination-resistance dynamic) as *concretely* situated in an ever-shifting more realistic socio-cultural space neither governed entirely by determinism (structure) nor voluntarism (agency).

Our last objection, which is closely connected to the preceding one is that Scott (1985, 1989, 1990) views (class) domination as increasingly *coercive* and *repressive* at the expense of its productive and consent–based elements (see Mitchell, 1990). As mentioned earlier, van Onselen (1973, 1980) and Cohen (1980) also subscribe to the same vision. Through the empirical lens of his Sedaka case study, Scott (1985) concludes that agrarian peace may well be the peace of repression (ongoing, remembered, or anticipated) rather than that of consent and complicity. Accordingly, Mitchell (1990) submits that Scott's framing of resistance relies on a reading of the peasant's mind as free and unpersuaded by ideological forms of power namely the Gramscian hegemony or the classical Marxist ideology. With specific reference to

hegemony, Scott (1985) posits that elite *values* and *norms* do not really penetrate into the lower classes – inevitability is not seen as implying legitimacy. For him, hegemonic ideas are always the subject of conflict, and are continuously being reconstructed. While we concur with the latter idea, we take issue with his under-estimation of the otherwise more durable, subordinating, and rationalising role of invisible and soft forms of power. As a result, through a modified framework, in Chapter 3, this study acknowledges and gives a wider theoretical purview to these soft forms of power (i.e., Gramscian and Burawoyian *hegemony*, Bourdieusian *symbolic violence*, and Foucauldian *discipline*). We present them as more subtle *productive cultural* forms or components of power that are articulated to and/or inherent in their over-privileged *repressive economic* counterparts.

Another significant contribution by Scott (1985) to resistance studies in general, and to the current research in particular concerns his methodical coining, definition, and conceptualisation of the notion *everyday resistance*. Of course, owing to the contested and contingent nature of resistance, this definition and conceptualisation does not have a universal application. However, we suggest that the definition and subsequent conceptualisation still provide a systematic departure point and theoretical scope from which we can creatively think through alternative understandings, categorisations, and application of everyday practices. According to Scott (1985: 290, own emphasis) resistance denotes:

> any act(s) by member(s) of a subordinate class that is or are *intended* either to *mitigate* or *deny* claims (for example, rents, taxes, prestige) made on that class by superordinate classes (for example, landlords, large farmers, the state) or to advance its own claims (for example, work, land, charity, respect) vis-à-vis those superordinate classes.

From this definition, *intent* and *opposition* (i.e., intentional opposition) are related concepts that matter significantly despite Scott (1985) being less categorical about it. First, a significant framing we infer from Scott's (1985) definition is that resistance denotes any subaltern act that is an *oppositional* (mitigate or deny) relation to *domination* (superordinate claims). This is a position that we concur with, but also later improve in a reworked theoretical framework of this study. So far, the Scottian definition is quite relevant for us insofar as it systematically casts resistance as the subordinates' (intentional) *contesting* of claims made by those in superordinate positions or the (intentional) *advancing* of claims *at odds* with what superordinates want (also see Kerkvliet, 2009). So, as per Scott's (1985, 1989) definition, while *mitigation* and *denial* are intentions that directly *oppose*/*contest*/*counteract* authority claims,

advancement of subordinate claims assumes a more or less indirect challenge to authority. That is, claim *advancing* practices are *resistance* given that they do so at the expense of authority claims. This implies that, in this study, acts articulated at the expense of people in the same class or status group are *not* resistance. Similarly, acts by those in superordinate positions so as to counter the actions of subordinates are not resistance, but repression or coercion.

Second, according to this Scottian (1985, 1989) definition and similar ones from the likes of Kerkvliet (1986, 1990, 2009) *intentionality* also matters significantly. In this regard, resistance is identified and understood more in terms of *intentions* of the actors than the acts (which could be *any*) themselves (e.g., Vinthagen and Johansson, 2013). In this imagery, privilege is thus apportioned to an *actor-oriented* approach wherein the actor's *conscious intent* is of crucial importance in order for a practice or behaviour to qualify as resistance. Scott's (1985, 1989) emphasis on intent suggests that resisters may *not necessarily* succeed in their actions - meaning that outcomes do not matter. Therefore, for Scott (Ibid) and his counterparts (e.g., Kerkvliet, 1986, 1990, 2009; Hollander and Einwohner, 2004), the actions of an actor who *intends* to resist should be defined as resistance regardless of the *outcomes* of their actions. Subsequently, analytical significance shifts from the acts and their effects, to increasingly become vested in the actors' *consciousness* and *intentions* that motivate the acts. For instance, from the Scottian definition, the actor's *intention* denotes their *conscious* articulation of a practice to *mitigate, deny* or *advance* a claim. Scott (1985) also maintains that while these acts fail in their intent in most instances, they still remain politically significant in terms of their intent. The merit of giving primacy to intention (ahead of the acts), according to Scott (1985), is the discovery of both *material* and *symbolic* dimensions of class relations and other relations of domination, which are present in both authority and subordinate claims. That is, by the Scottian definition, a superordinate position (and more generally, domination), entails both a material and symbolic *extractive capacity* (land, labour, taxes, prestige, etc.) and a *productive capacity* (delimiting the context of what is possible to do, to aim or to achieve) and the impossible (delimit the realm of idle dreams [and] wishful thinking) [see de Heredia, 2017].

Furthermore, another crucial lesson we draw from Scott's (1985) definitional account of resistance is the implied imagery that the intentions to be achieved by subalterns are *not* selfless, but are by definition, self-centred. For instance, tax avoidance or denigration of authority does not advance a collective agenda of the 'working class', but they are individual

representations of class struggle. However, given the individualistic and self-interested nature of intentions, Ortner (1995) is wary of the complications of distinguishing (everyday) resistance from simple egoistic acts. To this end, Ortner queries, "When a poor man steals from a rich man, is this resistance or simply a survival strategy?" (1995: 175). In light of the latter query, Scott's (1985: 295-6) position is quite perceptive by insisting:

> To ignore the self-interested element in peasant resistance is to ignore the determinate context not only of peasant politics, but of most lower-class politics … When a peasant hides part of his crop to avoid paying taxes, he is *both* filling his stomach and depriving the state of grain … When such acts are rare and isolated, they are of little interest; but when they become a consistent pattern (even though uncoordinated, let alone organized) we are dealing with resistance.

For Scott (1985, 1989) the political significance of these scattered, individualistic practices of self-help derives not from their capacity to transform the structures of domination that they intend to mitigate or deny. Instead, it derives from their widespread prevalence and amenability to the peasantry and other subaltern groups. Scott (1985: xvi) further argues that an understanding of these commonplace self-centred acts of defiance is equivalent to an appreciation of a lot that "the peasantry has historically done to defend its interests against both progressive and conservative orders". Suffice to say that these everyday forms of resistance have a historical, a present, and a future value for their prevalence. In de Heredia's (2017) framing, these practices are a permanent layer of resistance that illustrate the relative success of domination and limited consent. Below, we however proceed to critique Scott (1985, 1989) and other scholars' over-privileging of the actors' conscious intent in classifying and qualifying a practice as resistance.

A critical appraisal of Scott (1985, 1989), Kerkvliet (1996, 1990, 2009), and others' reduction of resistance to the actors' *intentions,* or *consciousness,* make us break from this intention-oriented approach to a more *practice-oriented* (see Chapter 3) one in researching and understanding (everyday) resistance. Rather than focusing on the actor's intentions, we instead, prioritise analysis of the acts themselves in order to detect and read resistance. We, of course, acknowledge that when social agents act, they always, per definition, have intentions, motives, aims. However, guided by Vinthagen and Johansson (2013) we suggest that there is no particular *intention* or *consciousness* of the actor (e.g., Scott) or *recognition* by targets of resistance (e.g., Hollander and Einwohner, 2004) that is necessary to detect resistance. This is

especially so given that social actors do intend or recognise *different* things with the *same* practices. Subsequently, Jefferess (2008: 40) admits that resistance is done with intent, however, *not* with *one* type of intent: "neither necessarily a political-ideological one, nor antagonistic class interest". For instance, an actors' intent may be to survive, solve a practical problem, gain status among peers, cope, or something else. This implies the *plurality* and thus *ambiguity* of intentions. As a result, they cannot be a necessary basis for identifying and analysing resistance.

Furthermore, we concur with Vinthagen and Johansson (2013: 15, own emphasis) that if we frame resistance and its actors as being in a dynamic relation to power it means that "we have to take the intentions, consciousness, and articulations of resistance as, *at least partly formed* by the *powerful discourses* in which actors are *situated*". This entails that socio-cultural context matters a lot and that, we cannot therefore base our definition and conceptualisation of resistance on intention as Scott (1985, 1989) and others do. Likewise, Bhabha (1994: 110) argues, "[r]esistance is *not* necessarily an oppositional act of political intention". Instead, cultural and historical context may have priority over intention. Vinthagen and Johansson (2013: 18) further posit that if a field of study is based on a certain kind of act, it is category mistake, which, for instance, Scott, Kerkvliet, and others make, "to infer a certain kind of consciousness, intention or even class-motive to the definitional properties of this act". If a category of action such as resistance is created and read according to the political awareness of the actor, we risk "excluding *not-yet-political* awareness, or *differently motivated* resistance" (Ibid: 21). That is, we inordinately reduce resistance to a category for the politically educated and one which excludes marginalised groups such as peasants and wage labourers. Similarly, Bayat (2000) objects to the Scottian over-privileging of *intentionality* arguing that it is tantamount to confusing the actors' awareness of domination with their acts of dissent against it. He suggests that, instead, if possible, such psychological properties should be a part of what researchers investigate.

However, even Scott (1985: 290) himself attests to the "enormous difficulties" in studying and proving intent. He is forced to detect intention in creative and indirect ways in his often-historical investigations of resistance (see for e.g., Scott, 1985, 1989: 49, 53). According to him, neither the intentional mitigation nor denial of a claim necessarily entails the presence of a developed *class consciousness*; nor does it mean that these acts entail a struggle against

capitalism in the abstract. “Intentions or aims may or may not be expressed that way by actors, so that the acts themselves become a way to gather intent” (Scott 1985: 296). For instance, the intent of tax avoidance may be no more than not paying tax. Likewise, the intent of insult may be denigration or delegitimisation. Relatedly, Ortner (1995: 190) submits, “[r]esistance studies…thin on the internal politics of dominated groups, thin on the cultural richness of those groups, thin on the subjectivity-the intentions, desires, fears, projects - of the actors engaged in these dramas”. This further implies the difficulty of determining intent, as well as the need to transcend intent and consider the *practices* in context and discourse.

Finally, we critique Scott, Kerkvliet, and others’ unilinear focus on intentionality through Ortner’s (1995) similar work, which insists that transformative processes are *not necessarily* directed by intentions. For her, “Things do get changed, regardless of the intentions of the actors or the presence of very mixed intentions” (Ibid: 175). Here, our takeaway is that we cannot reject a category of resistance on the basis of the ungraspable nature of its desires, hopes, cultural constraints and aims (individual and/or collective) as this equates to reducing resistance to a psychological category and to erasing its historical, political, and social meaning (Ortner, 1995; de Heredia 2017). Also, the presence of multiple intentions does not necessarily suggest conviviality or a lack of conflict in relations of domination. In a somewhat consolidative statement, Vinthagen and Johansson (2013: 21) submit, “more importantly, intent is irrelevant for the definition of a type of action, but relevant for understanding the ideas, strategic thinking, plans, psychology or cultural meaning that actors articulate when they resist”. Hence, in the final analysis, the current research maintains that intentions may *not* be an *end* but could offer a more nuanced account of other aspects in accounting for (everyday) resistance. Subsequently, guided by the foregoing critiques of *intentionality,* we develop (in Chapter 3) a reworked proposition that (everyday) resistance is a *practice* and not an intention or certain consciousness. Importantly, in building a compelling empirical and analytical case for this proposition, we invite de Certeau (1984) and others of a *practice-oriented* persuasion (of resistance) in the debate. But before doing so, we give a deserving conclusion to Scott, who is arguably the most methodical of the pioneers in the developing field of resistance studies, and more so, the sub-field of everyday resistance.

To this end, we quote Scott's concluding remark to *Weapons of the Weak* as we are convinced that it aptly encapsulates the scope of his research-cum-intellectual object of everyday resistance:

> Resistance in Sedaka begins as, I suspect, all historical resistance by subordinate classes begins: close to the ground, rooted firmly in the homely but meaningful realities of daily experience. The enemies are not impersonal historical forces but real people. That is, they are seen as actors responsible for their own actions and not as bearers of abstractions. The values resisters are defending are equally near and familiar. Their point of departure is the practices and norms that have proven effective in the past and appear to offer some promise of reducing or reversing the losses they suffer. The goals of resistance are as modest as its values. The poor strive to gain work, land, and income; they are not aiming at large historical abstractions such as socialism, let alone Marxist-Leninism. The means typically employed to achieve these ends – barring the rare crisis that might precipitate larger dreams – are both prudent and realistic […] When flight is available – to the frontier, to the cities – it is seized. When outright confrontation with landlords or the state seems futile, it is avoided. In the enormous zone between these two polar strategies lie all the forms of daily resistance, both symbolic and material, that we have examined. (Scott, 1985: 348–9, emphases in the original)

Noteworthy is that despite Scott's (1985) project (*Weapons of the Weak*) being initially an analysis of class relations, he later extends it to formulate a general theory of everyday resistance. This is aptly captured in his subsequent work where he posits that "similar structures of domination, other things being equal, tend to provoke responses and forms of resistance that also bear a family resemblance to one another" (Scott, 1990: 21). However, equally noteworthy is that although Scott's work is indeed seminal and has set a novel stage for a systematic account of an under-theorised and under-researched form of resistance, his empirical and analytical approach has attracted interesting critiques. Accordingly, this chapter has, thus far, explored and illuminated what are arguably some of the most topical debates in the field and in the specific context of this research. We proceed to finalise this critiquing in the segment below by specifically inviting de Certeau (1984) for his account of resistance which, similar to the traditions of van Onselen (1973, 1980), Cohen (1980), and Scott (1985, 1989), privileges the *everyday*, but unlike Scott, Kerkvliet, and others' privileges the *practices*/*acts* themselves and not the actors' intentions.

2.3.3 Contextualising Quotidian Resistance with and beyond de Certeau

The current research also lauds and builds on de Certeau's (1984) work, *The Practice of Everyday Life,* another pioneering and relevant empirical and intellectual effort, which

deliberately situates practices akin to *resistance* in an *everyday life* framework. Noteworthy here is the curious connection between de Certeau (1984) and Scott (1985) in that for both of them, resistance mainly concerns the less visible, quotidian, and informal actions by subalterns. To this effect, de Certeau's (1984: 37) main research object concerns "tactic[s]", which he overall presents as "an art of the *weak*" and a "'maneuver 'within the enemy's field of vision'…and within enemy territory". Similarly, Scott's (1985, 1989) empirical focus concerns 'weapons of the *weak*' as hidden transcripts, infra-politics, or everyday resistance. This research acknowledges and engages a similar unit (i.e., quotidian practices of resistance and survival) of empirical and theoretical analysis.

Overall, de Certeau's (1984) work is an important reference point for us as it is mainly a *counter-reaction* to Foucault (*discipline*), and Bourdieu (*habitus*) through its foregrounding of *creative practices* in liberal-democratic contexts from a perspective of postmodernism and cultural studies. In this instance, we again, see parallels with Scott (1985), part of whose work is also a counter-reaction to similar *soft/invisible* forms of power namely orthodox Marxist *ideology* and Gramscian *hegemony*. Of major empirical and analytical value to our current study is that in developing his *everyday life* vision on practices akin to resistance, de Certeau "proposes an anti-Foucauldian path to understanding domination and resistance", which does not privilege the apparatus of discipline (Bleiker, 2000: 201). Accordingly, as a typical inversion of Foucault's over-privileged *discipline* de Certeau (1984: xiv) asserts:

> If it is true that the grid of 'discipline' is everywhere becoming clearer and extensive, it is all more urgent to discover how an entire society resists being reduced to it, what popular procedures (also 'miniscule' and quotidian) manipulate the mechanisms of discipline and conform to them in order to evade them, and finally what 'ways of operating' form the counterpart, on the consumer's (or 'dominee''s?) side.

In addition to being a plausible antithesis to the conventional imagery of disciplinary (and symbolic) power as seemingly absolute or overmastering, de Certeau's (1984) quotation above also epitomises a break with Scott's bias toward an actor/intention-oriented approach to resistance. The innovative emphasis on 'ways of operating', implies that de Certeau (1984: xv) shifts lenses to foreground a *practice-oriented* approach wherein the essence of resistance lies in the *procedures/*practices themselves – i.e., 'consumer ruses', *ways of using* official systems, *ways of operating*, which ultimately constitute a "network of anti-discipline". For de Certeau (1984) resistance is synonymous with everyday *practice*, which denotes the *art of doing*

through which individuals create, produce, and invent their lives. Here, we laud the focal shift to the 'modes of action' or 'schemata of action' and not directly the subjects who are their authors. This giving of prominence to *practice*, to *acts*, as the main unit of analysis in researching and making sense of resistance helps us resolve some of the aforementioned methodological challenges associated with the over-privileging of the actors' intent that is characteristic of Scott (1985, 1989) and others of a similar persuasion.

In recentring a practice-oriented vision, de Certeau's (1984) analyses two kinds of practices namely *strategies* and *tactics*. For de Certeau (1984), a *strategy* is an official practice of cultural production linked with institutions of domination. It is a rationalised, expansionist, centralised, spectacular production that exercises "the power of knowledge" on the basis of a power that is "the pre-condition of this knowledge" (de Certeau 1984: 36). Thus, a strategy as a practice has a proper place, some degree of permanence, and formality. He says: a strategy:

> …postulates a place that can be delimited as its own and serve as a base from which relations within an exteriority composed of targets or threats (customers or competitors, enemies…objectives and objects of research) can be managed. (1984: 37)

Importantly, and therefore of empirical and analytical significance to this study, de Certeau's (1984) concept of *resistance* as an *everyday practice* finds methodical representation and meaning in *tactics.* To this effect, de Certeau (1984:37) submits that a *tactic* is "an art of the weak," "a calculated action determined by the absence of a proper locus," "a manoeuvre within the enemy's field of vision…and within enemy territory… [that] operates in isolated actions, blow by blow". Thus, everyday resistance as a tactic denotes a *temporal* intervention within the space of the *other* (i.e., the dominee) that disrupts predictability and *obscures visibility*. In this instance, we draw parallels with the Scottian (1985, 1989) imagery of everyday resistance, where tactics and tact embody the pervasive use of disguise or hiddenness by social actors. A tactic, as synonymous as it is with everyday resistance, does not deploy formalised knowledge but an *art* whose instantiation is *context-specific* and *unrepeatable* (see de Certeau, 1984). Categorically, de Certeau (1984: xix), posits:

> …a 'tactic,'… a calculus which cannot count on a 'proper' (a spatial or institutional localisation), nor thus, on a border-line distinguishing the other as a visible totality. The place of the tactic belongs to the other. A tactic insinuates itself into the other's place, fragmentarily, without taking it over in its entirety, without being able to keep it at a

> distance. It has at its disposal no base where it can capitalise on its advantages, prepare its expansions, and secure independence with respect to circumstances.

Thus, for de Certeau (1984: xix), as for us in this study, everyday *practices* of resistance are accounted for by "tactics" that "depend on *time*" since they do "not have a *place*". They are opportunistic practices that are not securely fixed anywhere - shifting targets, that are "always on the watch for opportunities that must be seized…Whatever [they] win, [they] do not keep." (de Certeau 1984: xix). From this framing, which we adopt, everyday resistance becomes increasingly identified and understood as *ways of using* imposed cultural systems and *how* (the actual art of doing) social agents deploy popular *tactics*, *stratagems* in their commonplace activities to *turn the actual order of things to their own ends.* Hence, according to de Certeau (1984: 26) the everyday practice of resistance concerns ways in which "order is tricked by an art". And order entails institutionalised and formalised ways of doing things – the de Certeauian *strategy*. Therefore, as a tactic, everyday resistance is more a form of *subversion* of the logic of power than an attack. To borrow from de Heredia (2017) in de Certeau's analysis, power and resistance, strategy and tactic respond to an everyday war of targeting and trickery, delimitation and avoidance, control and autonomy and of (re)appropriating the everyday order of things.

de Certeau's (1984) ***'La perruque'*** (the wig), for us, is a paradigmatic case that aptly encapsulates the practice-oriented notion of tactical resistance that we aim to underscore in the current study. For de Certeau (1984), in *La perruque*, workers may sometimes play the role of the employee, as if wearing a wig, but may not be performing the assigned work. de Certeau (1984: 25) portrays it thus:

> It differs from absenteeism in that the worker is officially on the job. La perruque may be as simple a matter as a secretary's writing a love letter in 'company time' or as complex as a cabinetmaker's 'borrowing' a lathe to make a piece of furniture for his living room.

In this portrait of resistance, it is important to understand that focus is on subversive *ways of doing* – i.e., *how* social actors subvert convention, and not necessarily *why*. Also of note is the fact that such *ways of acting* or *procedures* might also respond to other logics, outside or even subverting power. In this case, for de Certeau (1984), *the doing* i.e., making a piece of furniture, responds to the cabinetmaker's own interests, is a way of subverting the logic of work and the power relation between the employer and the worker. The logic of power is more or less

subverted than *directly* attacked. The tactic is a quotidian *trick* that subverts subordination. Using or 'borrowing' the company's lathe machine for personal use is a form of production, or *way of making*, that leaves no record. It represents the numerous *subversive*, *inventive* and *creative* acts that agents produce within the dominant order as they try to "cut corners" so as to "get by" (Kerkvliet, 2009: 237). But such *art* must have the potential to subvert, challenge, or oppose, (usually unintentionally) authority for it to qualify as resistance.

Thus, our main takeaways from de Certeau (1984) concern the framing of resistance within an *everyday life* framework, and importantly, its empirical and analytical casting as an *art of doing, a schema of action* (a practice). *Tactical resistance* is therefore constitutive of and synonymous with a practical analysis of *how* temporal, informal, inventive, disguised, parasitic practices are executed and *how* they rely on the nature of dominant practices (*strategies*) in order to subvert them in ways at odds with authority. For de Certeau, these tactics are a calculation, hence conscious, but they are also millenarian and thus form part of the *subconscious*, simultaneously provoking an *unconscious* use. The upshot is that de Certeau's (1984) vision of *practice* (of everyday life) sets the scene and scope for an account of resistance as a self-regarding *action*, where authority claims may not be directly confronted, but evaded, subverted, or reappropriated – but this has to be in ways that *oppose* power. This latter idea forms the basis of our critique of de Certeau immediately below.

2.3.3.1 Critique of de Certeau

Just like Scott, de Certeau (1984) undermines the power-resistance relational dynamics. We therefore concur with Vinthagen and Johansson (2013) who assert that the problem with de Certeau's account of everyday resistance is that "... although these practices are indeed per definition connected to power networks and 'concerned with battles' (see de Certeau 1984: 34) it is not visible in the way he has analysed this". It appears as if *all* ways of using or subverting the dominant's products, spaces, systems, etc. become resistance even if they do not have the potential to oppose power relations. Not every practice of subversion, difference, or creativity necessarily constitutes resistance.

Notably, in discussing Foucault's privileging of the panopticon system, de Certeau (1984: 45-47) does *not* analyse it as a technology of *power*, but as a form of privileged technology. Overall, de Certeau seemingly treats all non-conventional practices of difference, deviation, and individuality, which are somehow not using the existing cultural systems according to the

imposed way, as resistance. Thus, the main setback with de Certeau's framing is the oversight that acting differently or subversively *always* denotes resistance. He envisages too many practices of deviation as resistance so that power retreats into the background or a separate realm. Thus, the current study improves de Certeau by foregrounding an empirical and analytical approach, which places the dynamic, mutually inclusive relationship between power and resistance at the centre of its analysis. A vision that acknowledges that resistance itself is a form of power, as well as that resistance and power mutually produce, reinforce, oppose, and sometimes cancel each other out. That is, resistance and power are *never* in a position of exteriority to each other.

Last, we concur with de Heredia's (2017: 52) objection that de Certeau's notion of resistance as being synonymous with subversive acts is "ambiguous and needs a more concrete explanation of how some elements are to be interpreted (e.g.,…the relationship between intended and unintended acts)". The tension in his account of resistance as *subversive* practices is that this subversion is embedded in the outcomes of the practice(s). That is, subversion can only be inferred from *outcomes* insomuch that any ambiguity and/or absence of outcomes can further complicate any detection and reading of everyday resistance based on an account of subversive acts. Thus, the use of the logic of *subversion* and *outcomes* by de Certeau makes the practice and idea of resistance elusive. Thus, in the present study, guided by de Heredia's (2017) objection, we shift lenses away from actual outcomes to practically analysing *how* the subversive practices themselves have the *potential* to counteract, oppose, or undermine power. We argue that acts of subversion still retain the potential to challenge power whether they achieve outcomes or not.

After the foregoing critical appraisal of the classical conceptual-cum-theoretical contributions, omissions, and commissions of Charles van Onselen, James Scott and Michel de Certeau as well as those of their contemporary counterparts to the everyday resistance intellectual project, we make the following concluding remarks.

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter set out to contextualise and justify the current study in the topical classical and contemporary empirical-cum-theoretical debates in the general field of resistance and its sub-field of *everyday resistance*. Its central thesis was that everyday forms and practices of *labour*

resistance in Africa, and particularly in the agro-forestry plantation sector are in a much less or barely researched and theoretically elaborated state.

The foregoing analysis has revealed that the emergence and steady proliferation of systematic research in the general field of resistance has culminated in the innovative foregrounding of *everyday resistance* as an intellectual and research object in Africa and elsewhere. This is particularly significant in light of the enduring scholarly bias given to the more official, collective, and confrontational resistance. So, in order to foreground our own systematic contribution to the developing field of everyday (labour) resistance, our analysis acknowledged, interrogated, and also transcended certain empirical-cum-theoretical visions from three main strands of literature. That is, the scarce work in Subaltern Studies that directly engages 'everyday resistance', general research and analyses of 'resistance' that are applicable or have relevance to the everyday, and finally, sociology of the everyday-particularly theories and research of the 'everyday' that use perspectives or concepts that are applicable to or have relevance for resistance, even though they might not use the concept.

Furthermore, our appraisal of literature suggests that among the seminal scholars who innovatively foreground the mundane social practices of marginalised groups as an integral part of resistance, de Certeau (1984) and Scott (1985, 1989, 1990) articulate the most comprehensive, specialised, and methodical approaches. However, throughout this study we are poised to increasingly position Scott (Ibid) as our main luminary/protagonist and point of departure because, between the two, and also in comparison to others, he is more systematic insofar as he *explicitly* coins and defines the notion 'everyday resistance'. Importantly, he generalises beyond case study material to the role of ideology, hegemony, and interests in social control and class struggle thereby developing a compelling empirical-cum-theoretical case for 'everyday forms of resistance'. Hence, most of the analyses that anchor the current study, classical or contemporary, largely entail more or less critical conversations with the Scottian methodical persuasion of everyday resistance.

Relatedly, but at least in the African context, the literature review also entails that our research draws significantly from the pioneering work of van Onselen (1973, 1980). Despite his scholarship being less systematic than Scott's, it proves all the more appealing and relevant to us insofar as it directly speaks to everyday *labour* resistance, which happens to be the specific

research object of this study. Not to mention the fact that the scholarship was done with a similarly marginalised group (low-skilled and unskilled miners) and in the same geographical context (i.e., workspace of colonial Zimbabwe) as the current research, in similar super-exploitative and subjugating capitalist industrial settings. Thus, the upshot is that van Onselen's work also inevitably constitutes a vitally important benchmark for our study insomuch that any other similar works or critical analyses that inform this study somewhat revolve around and engage his seminal work.

Last, we draw the critically important conclusion that, just as is typical with any developing field of research, the overall field of resistance studies and its sub-field of everyday resistance are no exception to theoretical-cum-empirical oversights and excesses. Chief among those that have been illuminated above are the dichotomisation of power and resistance, the over-privileging of the social actors' intentions, consciousness, motives at the expense of social action itself, and the inordinate attention to class (identities and relations) at the expense of its more or less non-class elements or counterparts. We are thus not only compelled to interrogate these research-cum-theoretical tensions and lacunae, but to also acknowledge and build upon (for the current research) the strong research and theoretical positions of the luminaries discussed above. Motivated by these two related dynamics, in the next chapter we commit to a modest attempt to develop a modified theoretical-cum-theoretical framework for studying and making sense of everyday resistance and its specific domain of everyday *labour* resistance in the current study.

CHAPTER 3

THEORISING AND CONCEPTUALISING (EVERYDAY) LABOUR RESISTANCE IN POST-COLONIAL COMMERCIAL FORESTRY PLANTATION PRODUCTION

When the great lord passes the wise peasant bows deeply and silently farts (James Scott, 1985).

3.1 Introduction

The current chapter is a culmination of our critical review of the theoretical, conceptual, and empirical parts of the (everyday) resistance literature in the preceding chapter. That is, we aim at modest theoretical contribution by crafting a reworked theoretical-cum-conceptual framework of (everyday) resistance within which to make sense of the current empirical work as well as any other similar research. This theoretical contribution is justified given that, overall, despite some growing interest in the study of resistance and the pervasive use of the concept in the social sciences, it largely remains under-theorised (see Lilja and Vinthagen, 2009; Hollander and Einwohner, 2014; Vinthagen and Johansson, 2013; Johansson and Vinthagen, 2016). Suffice to therefore claim that this under-theorisation is all the more pronounced in the sub-field of everyday resistance.

It is vitally important to note that the seminal 1980s subaltern studies, which explicitly deploy the concept of *everyday resistance* have been more inclined towards the elusive or infeasible attempt to establish a unified grand theory (see Hollander and Einwohner, 2004). An emblematic case concerns Scott's (1985, 1989, 1990) geminal works, which explicitly coin the concept of *everyday resistance*, define it, and try to develop it into a coherent analytical framework. In fact, his works, *Weapons of the Weak* (1985) and *Domination and the Art of Resistance* (1990) encapsulate novel attempts to formulate a more general theory of (everyday) resistance. However, as the critical appraisal of literature in Chapter 2 has shown, Scott's (and other scholars') attempt at a general theory of quotidian resistance has limitations, tensions, and oversights. This is unsurprising given that everyday resistance, both as a concept and social

practice, claims to 'politicise' the seemingly 'non-political' everyday acts and norms, thereby placing subaltern politics 'everywhere'. In other words, it is a typically quotidian, informal, hidden, individualistic, context-specific, and therefore elusive phenomenon, which cannot be theoretically framed in a generalising grand theory.

Therefore, in light of sections of Chapter 2, which critically appraised certain theoretical positions on and conceptualisations of (everyday) resistance, the present chapter proceeds to acknowledge and/or modify them. Subsequently, this chapter attends to two intertwining purposes. First, in a deductive manner, it tries to develop a plausible analytical framework, which we can specifically apply to and thus test against our current empirical findings. Relatedly, in an inductive fashion, it also makes conceptual-cum-theoretical innovations in light of fieldwork-based evidence. That is, through the current chapter, we in a way, set the scene for both theory testing and findings-inspired theory building in the field of (everyday) resistance. To this end, the key theoretical debates that we engage in this chapter concern: what everyday resistance is (i.e., if intentions, outcomes and recognition matter), whether or not resistance and power are an empirical and analytical dichotomy, and the imbroglio of complexity (i.e. entanglement, intersectionality, and contingency) in power-resistance dynamics (see Moore, 1998; Hollander and Einwohner, 2004; Lilja and Vinthagen, 2009; Vinthagen and Johansson, 2013; Johansson and Vinthagen, 2016). In attending to these theoretical puzzles, this chapter proffers a reworked theoretical-cum-conceptual framework of (everyday resistance) anchored on the following main propositions.

First, we submit that everyday resistance is a *practice* and *not* necessarily a particular intention, recognition (by social agents), or outcome. Second, it is also historically *entangled* (neither separated nor dichotomous) with multifarious forms of power, and therefore is as *intersectional* (*not* one power relation) as and with these *plural* forms of power. We also claim that everyday resistance is a *heterogenic* and *contingent* practice (not a universal action or a unitary form of action) due to its entanglement with and intersectional relation to plural forms of power, articulated by agents sometimes as resistance, and sometimes not. Finally, we argue that everyday resistance is a *socio-spatial* practice. Immediately below, in light of inter-textual analysis and fieldwork, we engage in an unfolding exposition of these propositions.

3.2 A Reworked Framework: What Everyday Resistance is and what it is Not

Having critically evaluated prominent classical and contemporary research on (everyday) resistance and the related theoretical and conceptual persuasions I the preceding chapter, the section below offers a reworked theoretical-cum-conceptual framework of (everyday) resistance. We achieve this by thinking with (i.e., acknowledging) the theoretical ideas of seminal thinkers that are of relevance to the current study. We, however, also push past these ideas on the bases of more plausible theoretical/conceptual positions, as well as findings-inspired modifications. In other words, we craft an improved or modified framework by incorporating, challenging, and/or rescinding existing theoretical/conceptual positions as and when warranted by theoretical and empirical necessity. Below, we begin by framing and foregrounding everyday resistance as a social *practice*.

3.2.1 Everyday Resistance is a Practice not an Intention, Recognition, nor Outcome

To recap, in Chapter 2 we argued that it is a category mistake to infer the intention or class/status motive of agents to the definitional account of resistance. We submitted that while intention is a key part of resistance (or any social action), agents may have multiple intentions, which may be even ambiguous or difficult to interpret or measure empirically. Subsequently, we break from this subject or actor-oriented framing of (everyday) resistance by foregrounding a *practice-oriented* approach. Mainly inspired by de Certeau (1984) and related scholarship (Weitz, 2001; Hollander and Einwohner, 2004; Vinthagen and Johansson, 2013) we propose that everyday resistance is a *practice*, a *way of operating* or the *art of doing*, and *not* the agents' conscious intent, or recognition by agents, or particular outcomes. Prior to further exposition of our theoretical argument, we first delimit the meaning of practice(s) in this study.

3.2.1.1 Practice

There is no unified definition of a *practice*, but we frame it to denote an *interwoven activity* in a *social domain* (Schatzki 1997) or, "a 'bundle' of activities … an organized nexus of actions" (Schatzki 2002: 71). Practices are *social* actions, attitudes, behaviours, or interests of agents (Burger and Luckmann, 1966). They are *social* in that, first, "participating in them entails immersion in [a] … coexistence that embraces varying sets of people", second, in that their organisation is part of the "nexuses of doings and sayings that compose them" (Schatzki 2002: 87). To this effect, we present a practice both as a *co-ordinated entity* and a *performance*, which

is actualised and sustained through agents' *reproduction* of it. This regular reproduction concerns "a routinized way in which bodies are moved, objects are handled, subjects are treated, things are described, and the world is understood" (Reckwitz, 2002b: 250).

Therefore, our practice approach emulates de Certeau's (1984) foregrounding of everyday *practices* as the agents' 'art of doing', 'ways of acting' or 'modes of action' to subvert official productions/practices. Overall, Adler and Pouliot (2011: 6-7) give a summary, which encapsulates the forgoing conceptualisation(s) to the effect that, *practices*: (1) are a "performance" – the doing or making of something; (2) they are a "pattern", constituting "regularity of behaviour" and the "flow of history"; (3) they are "socially recognisable"; (4) "they represent skill (more than knowledge)"; and (5) they "weave together discursive and material worlds". Thus, in this vision, practices and actors are a part of a process of continuity and change, and not a hybrid outcome.

Theoretically, we delimit practice to an activity that concretely manifests at the *intersection* of structure, agency, and interaction (see Bourdieu, 1977, 1984; Giddens, 1979, 1984). For us, structure and agency only provide mutually reinforcing contexts for interaction, and *not* causal explanations for agents' resistance acts. Thus, we present resistance as practices that are neither voluntaristic (subjectivity-based) nor deterministic (objectivity-based). In this study, these practices take the form of mutually entangled *material* (economic), *ideological* (political worldviews) and *symbolic* (estimation of social recognition/honour) tactics, stratagems, ploys, or ruses articulated by individual and institutional social agents in a post-colonial commercial forestry plantation setting. Having conceptualised 'practice', we return to sustaining our central argument that everyday resistance is a *practice* and *not* the agent's *conscious intent*.

3.2.1.2 Everyday Resistance is a Practice not a Conscious Intent

This study foregrounds everyday resistance as specific *practices/actions* in specific contexts at specific times. It breaks with reducing resistance to the social agent since the notion entails how the agent may sometimes engage in resistance actions while at other times or sites may act in subordination. Relatedly, Wright (2002, 2005), asserts that explanation of practices cannot be reduced to the attributes (i.e., conscious intent) of the actors as there is no implication that the actions are predicated on some rational calculation, or even that all actions are consciously executed. Also, since practices of mundane resistance are typically tacit and disguised, it is not always clear *how* agents interpret their actions. In the absence of such

knowledge, McCann and March (1995) argue that one risks attributing greater agency and a highly developed oppositional *consciousness* to 'ordinary people' than is warranted by evidence. Thus, our submission is that, indeed, subalterns do resist, but the resistance is *not* an attribute of the subaltern subject. To this effect, we turn to Giddens (1984: 2) who asserts that practices are recursive:

> That is to say, they are not brought into being by social actors but continually recreated by them via the very means whereby they express themselves as actors. In and through their activities agents reproduce the conditions that make these activities possible.

Here, Giddens helps us affirm that resistance does *not* 'originate' within the agent, but it is a *practice* that arises in the mutual combination of subjectivity, context, and interaction. Therefore, from a typical de Certeauian (1984) standpoint, we reimagine everyday resistance to mean *how* agents are *acting*. We privilege the *assessment of the nature of the act itself* (see Weitz, 2001) in a specific context, relation, and at a specific time. That is, our lenses shift to understanding and analysing *ways* of acting: the *creativity* and actual *art* of resistance. The 'situated techniques' of the 'practices' (Vinthagen and Johansson, 2013), i.e., the tactics, ruses, stratagems, ploys, etc. become the central units of analyses. de Certeau's (1984: 25) activity analysis in "*La perruque* ['the wig']" is one exemplar case of the practice approach that we emulate throughout this thesis. For us, a practice-based analysis places focal points on the organisation of the practice and the moments of resisting enjoined. The practice lens gives us theoretical and empirical efficacy in the following ways.

It somehow helps resolve the common critique that everyday resistance is difficult to distinguish from other quotidian acts such as coping, survival techniques, and compliance. That is, this framing allows us to realise *how* social agents can "combine [these] very different kinds of actions…as well as other conventional everyday activities" (Vinthagen and Johansson, 2013: 26). In this vision, one is then able to understand how the same agent can do contradictory actions or utilise creative and complex combinations where for instance, what initially seems like coping also turns out as resistance or what is resistance is simultaneously compliance. Thus, everyday resistance is *not* 'pure' since it is *entangled* with and *embedded* in other quotidian practices such as *coping, accommodation,* and *survival strategy* (Ibid).

Furthermore, a practice-oriented vision makes the object of study (i.e., everyday resistance) empirically observable (see Hallett, 2003). Relatedly, the approach enables the researcher to glide through various levels of analyses, which are not provided for by an intention or actor-

oriented approach. To import Hallett (2003) into our specific study, we have *micro-level* shopfloor resistance practices that have a reciprocal link to *meso-level* company production practices, which in turn both have mutual links to *macro-level* structural practices of a post-colonial capitalist production system and a post-colonial capitalist state. Thus, a practice lens affords us a more concrete and holistic scope of analysis for an observable study object.

Finally, the approach is flexible enough to accommodate the practices of a wide range of *entangled* and *fluid* (and thus more realistic) resistance identities and relations that are neither strictly resisters, targets, nor observers but creative combinations. This in turn avails credible empirical and analytical accounts for potential conflicted alliances and struggles among these identities in quotidian resistance. Meanwhile, in addition to reimagining resistance as a *practice*, another significant innovation concerns qualifying it as an *everyday* or *quotidian* practice.

3.2.1.3 The 'Everyday' in Everyday Resistance and the Irrelevance of Recognition by Agents

This sub-section encapsulates a key contribution of this study, which is the theoretical and empirical foregrounding of the *everyday* as inspired by de Certeau's (1984) broad analysis of *everyday* practices of subversion, and by Scott's (1985, 1989, 1990) specific scholarship on *everyday* resistance. Through adopting the 'everyday' lens, we emulate and defend de Certeau and Scott in transforming the conventional understanding of politics by making the seemingly 'non-political' ordinary practices of marginalised people a significant component of *politics* (i.e., resistance). Thus, 'everyday' is a central idea, which engenders resistance specific properties insomuch as to include innovative practices of ordinary people.

For analytical clarity, we unpack the idea of 'everyday' in everyday resistance in contrast to the extraordinary or what Bhabha terms the 'spectacular' (in Jefferess, 2008). 'Everyday' resistance happens in *various* places and relations and is therefore 'everyday' to the extent it is *integrated in social life* where it "becomes the silent, mundane and ordinary acts that are normalized" (Vinthagen and Johansson, 2013: 10). To this end, Scott (1985; 1989) identifies exemplar acts like slander, laziness, foot-dragging, etc. as part of subaltern culture to *survive* but to also (unwittingly) undermine power. Subsequently, agents themselves are not necessarily regarding such acts as 'resistance', but a routine part of their lifestyle, personality, culture, or tradition. Logically, we also then submit that *recognition* by agents (i.e., 'resisters',

targets, and observers) is unnecessary to qualify an act as 'everyday' resistance. An 'everyday' practice remains as resistance even when agents call it something else (also see Hollander and Einwohner, 2004).

Also, to follow Scott (1989: 51) the 'everyday' notion implies refuting the popular imagery that "'real resistance' is organized, principled and has revolutionary implications…" 'Everyday' resistance is mainly done by individuals and small collectives and thus requires *little* or *no* formal organisation, but *some* typical passive cooperation and coordination cultivated by a subaltern culture (Scott, 1989; Vinthagen and Johansson, 2013). 'Everydayness' therefore also implies largely *informal non-confrontational* (i.e., *not* politically declared) practices. This, according to Scott (1989: 34), means that by these practices, agents are primarily seeking "tacit *de facto* gains" rather than the "formal *de jure* recognition of these gains", which are typical with public resistance such as riots, demonstrations, strikes, etc. 'Everyday' entails that the gains are mainly piecemeal, instrumental, and relate to the ordinary daily survival experiences of the ordinary people.

Furthermore, a key feature of everyday resistance concerns the 'everyday' being synonymous with practices that involve the 'pervasive use of disguise' (Scott, 1985, 1989). To this effect, *everyday* resistance is synonymous with *hidden* or *subterranean* practices. The practices "often avoid being detected as resistance" (Vinthagen and Johansson, 2013: 34) by either concealing the act and/or the personal identity of the actor (see Scott, 1989). *Indirect* (ambiguous) *acts* are articulated either by anonymous actors (as in witchcraft), or by identifiable actors (as in absenteeism). The practices assume "a double meaning…so that they cannot be treated as a direct, open challenge" (Scott 1989: 54). Also, direct acts can be executed by *anonymous* perpetrators as in arson. Even in cases where 'everyday' resistance is open and traceable to an individual, it tends to be practiced so that it can be denied if the agent is called to task. Also, 'everydayness', to import Vinthagen and Johansson (2013: 10), entails that "acts that deviate from hegemonic [elitist] understandings of resistance tend to achieve non-recognition". These acts are thus made *invisible* by the dominant framing that 'true' resistance is public, formal, and organised. Thus, overall, 'everyday' entails that resistance mainly remains quiet, dispersed, hidden and thus "preserves, for the most part, the on-stage theatre of power" (Scott 1985: 273) and provides no public accounting or justification. Subsequently, this also entails that *no recognition* by agents is necessary to qualify practices as 'everyday' resistance.

In all, noteworthy is that our privileging of resistance that is 'everyday' does *not* mean warranting a dichotomy between it and its more public and dramatic counterpart. That is, we frame 'everyday' resistance as part of a continuum and therefore constitutes what Vinthagen and Johansson (2013: 9) term "an initial *off stage, or later stage activity* in relation to other more sustained, organized and conventional political forms of resistance". Overall, we frame resistance that is 'everyday' as occurring *between* or *alongside* the dramatic, organised, and openly declared resistance. Thus far, in our *practice-centric* approach, we have argued that (everyday) resistance is a *practice*, and *not* the agents' *conscious intentions* and that *no recognition* by agents is required for practices pass as resistance. We now turn to another significant claim that everyday resistance is an *oppositional* practice, and outcomes do not matter.

3.2.1.4 Everyday Resistance is a Dynamic Oppositional (to Power) Practice

While earlier, inspired by de Certeau's (1984) seminal work on everyday practices, we recast everyday resistance as a *practice*; our critical reading of the same (and related) work reveals that *not* all practices of subversion, difference, creativity, deviation, and individuality necessarily constitute resistance. To this effect, Johansson and Vinthagen (2016) submit that despite the varied and contradictory use of the concept resistance, there seems to be a scholarly consensus (see for e.g., Scott, 1985, 1989; Hollander and Einwohner, 2004; Kerkvliet, 2009; Lilja and Vinthagen, 2009; Vinthagen and Johansson, 2013) that a key defining feature of resistance is that it is an *oppositional* practice. More precisely, we position it as a practice that is in some kind of dynamic oppositional *relation* to *power* in history, space, and context (see Lilja and Vinthagen, 2009; Vinthagen and Johansson, 2013; Johansson and Vinthagen, 2016). The idea and practice of resistance is inconceivable without power and to this end Abu – Lughod (1990: 42) asserts "Where there is resistance there is power" while Foucault (1978: 95-96) also asserts that "Where there is power there is resistance". So, this is an *inter-relational* oppositional dynamic wherein resistance and power reciprocally constitute each other (i.e., get *entangled*) and are therefore not a dichotomy (i.e., a choice between accommodation or resistance), but complex combinations. We surmise that Scott's (1985) definition of resistance, despite lack of universal application, gives prominence to *opposition*, *contest*, or *counteraction* as the central feature of (everyday) resistance. For Scott, resistance is:

> any act(s) by member(s) of a subordinate class that is or are intended either to mitigate or deny claims (for example, rents, taxes, prestige) made on that class by superordinate classes (for

> example, landlords, large farmers, the state) or to advance its own claims (for example, work, land, charity, respect) vis-à-vis those of superordinate classes. (Scott, 1985: 290)

Similarly, for Kerkvliet (2009: 233), resistance is "What people do that shows disgust, anger, indignation or opposition to what they regard as unjust, unfair, illegal claims on them by people in higher, more powerful class and status positions or institutions". Inasmuch as Kerkvliet, like Scott and others, also privileges the idea of 'intentionality', we have already critiqued this theoretical position. However, we adopt their common central notion of subordinated agents *contesting/opposing/undermining* superordinate claims, or their *advancement* of claims at *odds* with superordinate interests. Hence, in our framing, acts articulated against people of the same class or status position or superordinate acts that counter the actions of subordinates are not resistance. Thus, for this study, we adopt but modify Scott's (1985) classical definition of (everyday) resistance by appropriating de Certeau's (1984) practice-oriented vision, to propose a definition of resistance to mean:

> A historical pattern of practices, which subordinated individuals or collectives articulate to oppose or counter superordinate claims and the effects of subjugation, while advancing their own claims.

In this modified conceptualisation, the key elements concern *patterned historical* (i.e., widespread and drawing on past and present contexts and experiences) *practices* that are in an *oppositional interrelation* with *plural* forms of *power* (i.e., superordinate claims). These practices can either directly counteract power or indirectly do so by the advancement of subordinate claims (e.g., self-help), which by extension, could challenge superordinate claims. Taking after Scott (1985, 1989) and Vinthagen and Johansson (2013), we reiterate that these practices become a stronger account of resistance when envisaged as patterns of action within reciprocal relations of domination and subjugation. Also, to import de Heredia (2017,) our emphasis on patterns delimits what resistance is. In this vein, (everyday) resistance is *not* an automated or random counteraction. Instead, its techniques are a *patterned practice* against power. Consequently, workers' burning of sections of a pine plantation estate, for instance, is a widespread practice that concerns the reciprocal and fluid relations that flow between equally fluid subordinate-superordinate identities. That is, for resistance to have analytical value as a political category, it needs to be linked to widespread patterns of complex combinations of domination and/or insubordination within entangled economic and socio-political relations. We argue that with these key elements, one can at least theoretically and empirically

differentiate resistance from or identify it within any other practices of difference, deviation, creativity, denial, or mitigation.

Furthermore, our modified definition of resistance accommodates the fact that although the oppositional interaction between power and resistance is indeed asymmetrical, neither power nor resistance always decides the dynamic. Conventional wisdom casts resistance as a *reaction* to power – "as an act against something that already existed and provoked a response" (Vinthagen and Johansson, 2013: 29). Through our definition, we argue for some complex combination whereby we concede that power indeed subjugates, but *not* in a complete and totalitarian sense, and it is these 'gaps' that open up opportunities for oppositional acts to develop. Also, in instances where ordinary people *proactively* engage in practices that advance own claims (e.g., survival strategies); they may innately and unwittingly contest power relations. Power and resistance are *interrelated* and *react* to each other (see Cheung, 1997; Karner, 2004; Adnan, 2007). Despite the debate on origin/causality, what is certain is that forms of power and forms of resistance have *co-existed* as long as history. Our framing is that power and resistance are intimately interrelated and (re)produced in a continuous, open-ended, and historically emerging process. This echoes Vinthagen and Johansson (2013: 30-31), who portray this dynamic interrelation between power and resistance as spiral – "*constant spiral - dynamics of actions and reactions*, innovations and counter-innovations, measures and countermeasures".

Meanwhile, from the 'contentious politics' (see McAdam et al, 2001) persuasion, we frame the actual oppositional practices, their articulation, and potential effects as arising, *not* from the resisters' independent tactics or stratagems, but from the *dynamic* interaction of the mechanisms and processes of the struggle itself. We thus submit that (everyday) resistance is a matter of trying to understand *if* and *how* these dynamics *potentially* challenge or reproduce domination. Our innovative shift of focus to the analysis of the oppositional practices themselves entails prioritising the *means* rather than the ends of the quotidian struggles (or alliances), which in turn implies that outcomes do not matter. So, for us, the analytical significance (in resistance) rests more with the *potential* of given acts to *undermine* power than with their *actual* outcomes. This is crucial because, according to Vinthagen and Johansson (2013: 18), we must count on many factors that matter for "the *de facto* effect on power in different contexts" (2013: 18). Resistance is a certain kind of act, *not* an intent or effect, even

if it will always have intent or effect. Subsequently, our position is that oppositional practices remain as resistance whether they achieve outcomes or not. This leaves room for the concrete reading that neither resistance nor power permanently 'wins' – both continue to exist, "at least as temporary tendencies, subterranean desires or potential activity" (Ibid: 28). That is, it is a dynamic interaction that is sometimes expressed as resistance and sometimes not.

Finally, since we situated resistance as *oppositional,* it cannot be fully understood without *power analysis*. Through the latter, we discover that *what* and *how* to resist is informed by the structure and mechanisms of power. Our power analysis, in the section below, flows from and further develops the earlier two related arguments. First, that everyday resistance is an oppositional *entanglement* (not separated) with (everyday) power. Although extant resistance literature views power and resistance as related (Hollander and Einwohner, 2004), it largely positions them as a *dichotomy*, i.e., as two related opposites. We develop our power analysis in a separate (sub)section strictly for analytical clarity, but still submit that seemingly separate domains of power and resistance are more productively understood as *mutually constituted* parts of a *fluidity* or *ambiguity* of social life (e.g., Butz and Ripmester, 1999). Second, we simultaneously build a case for resistance being as *intersectional as* and *with* the *plural* forms of power that it engages. This claim is encapsulated in our conceptualisation and theorisation of the multifarious forms of power by privileging the *class* and *status/cultural* dimensions and components of power as *co-existing*, either innately or extrinsically in the same social reality. In all, the power analysis below consolidates the position that, through intersectionality and historical co-development, resistance and power become enmeshed, blended, conflicted, and even constitutive of each other.

3.2.2 Everyday Resistance is in a Mutual Dynamic Relation with Multifarious Forms of Power

In our literature review we argued that one major theoretical oversight in resistance scholarship is the framing of resistance as an *'autonomous domain'* standing exterior to and separate from power. We therefore recast and foreground everyday resistance as being in an *inherent mutually inclusive* and *dynamic* relation with *multiple intersecting* matrices of power (see Moore, 1998, Ewick and Silbey, 2003; Vinthagen and Johansson, 2013, 2016). Resistance is in a dynamic *entanglement* with power. Hence, Foucault (1978) in Moore (1998: 353) argues, "resistance is *never* in a position of exteriority in relation to power". More so, the entanglement

is not with one power relation, but multiple intersectional ones. Interestingly, resistance itself is also a form of power, which ambivalently constitutes and counteracts superordinate power (see Scott, 2005). Below, we conceptualise *power*, and then guided by relevant theoretical or conceptual persuasions, as well as empirical specificity, we *adopt* and/or *modify* certain understandings of the multiple dimensions and forms of power that intertwine with everyday resistance. While below, we separately engage the forms of power for analytical clarity, in concrete terms they are themselves as enmeshed as and with the forms of resistance they engage.

Power is a concept at the centre of social stratification and its meaning is contested. However, as a departure point, we retain Weber's well-known definition of power as "the *chance*…of men to achieve their *own will* [conscious intent] in a *communal* action even against the *resistance* of others who are participating in the action" (Weber, 1920 in Scott and Marshall, 2005: 514, own emphasis). Similarly, Scott (2005:127, own emphasis) considers power as "the production of *causal effects*" and "social power" as "an agent's *intentional* use of causal powers to affect the conduct of other agents". Amid the different interpretations given especially to Weber's core definition, this study profitably draws from it, and Scott's formulation, the following conceptual insights and reflections.

The two formulations are relevant to our study insofar as they present power as an outcome of *social interactions* which (at the outset of interaction), can be identified as a *differential probability* of effects. Thus, power is neither a thing that can be possessed (Foucault, 1971) nor necessarily an *actual* occurrence (Scott, 2005). Rather it is a *probabilistic* (i.e., potential) *social relation*. It is a social effect that is *contingent* upon the reciprocal interaction of all the agents and institutions involved - wherein more or less superordinate-subordinate institutions, relations, and identities interact (see Ewick and Silbey, 2003; Scott, 2005). We thus ultimately regard power as a social *practice* comprising the *mutual* interactive order between *everyday infinitesimal* relations and *institutional* relations as *ongoing* productions of social interactions (e.g., Foucault, 1975; Bourdieu 1977; Giddens, 1979). Relatedly, we thus, also rescind the definitional emphases on *intentionality* (i.e., *consciously* affecting the conduct of others). Instead, following Vinthagen and Johansson (2013), we assert that a power relation can come about with or without the conscious intent of agents. That is, the *unwitting* exercise of power and resistance.

Also, the two definitions suggest an inbuilt *antagonism* in power relations. Superordinate-subordinate interactions denote situations of *conflicting interests*. Hence, following Weber (1920) [also Marx], we retain the assumption that power *inherently* provokes subordinate *resistance*. Accordingly, Scott (2006: 131), notes that many power researchers have emphasised that "the exercise of power will tend to generate resistance, and that this resistance is a form of power". This resonates with our main thesis which foregrounds resistance as being in a mutual relation with power. However, beyond the definitions above, like Weber, we also acknowledge that usually *invisible* power, which also obtains within more or less *consensual* contexts.

In keeping with the latter, Weber, in Scott and Marshall (2005), for instance, refers to *authority*, whereby subordinates show *willing compliance* because of *commitment* to a *belief* in the *legitimacy* of a superordinate relation. Legitimacy arises from a shared belief that the exercise of power "is right, correct, justified or valid in some way" (Ibid: 130). Nevertheless, to import Scott and Marshall (2005), the idea of legitimacy presents problems concerning the direction in which the legitimacy flows. In the Weberian case of authority, it flows from subordinates to superordinates. However, this study subscribes to a legitimacy imposed from above, whereby *particular* superordinate norms and values become *conventionalised* as *universal*. The latter is synonymous with the Marxist traditions of Gramsci (1971) and Burawoy (1979) through the notion of ideological *hegemony* (explored latter in detail).

Last, the definitions above are silent on another face of power. To this end, we subscribe to Luke's radical view in Scott and Marshall (2005: 516, own emphasis), which "*denies* that interests are simply *consciously expressed* wants for those may be shaped by a social system", which then "suppress[es] people's *recognition* of their *real* interests". In light of this, the classic Marxist notions of *ideology* and *false consciousness* come to mind. Not to mention Bourdieu's radical appropriation of these notions, wherein he rescinds the idea of consciousness via his notion of *habitus*, which he casts as mediating the *non-reflexive complicit* submission to power relations. This is an equation to the exercise of power by preventing people from having grievances from the outset "by shaping their perceptions, cognitions and preferences" insomuch that they "accept [unwittingly] their role in the existing order of things" (Lukes in Scott and Marshall, 2005: 516). Meanwhile, mainly taking after Weber's (1920, 1947) theorisation above, the study incorporates both the *class* (economic) and/or *status* (cultural)

dimensions of power relations. However, below, in order to theorise the *class* aspect, we retain relevant assumptions of the classical Marxian class analysis, and then modify them through the integrated neo-Marxist approaches of E.P. Thompson, Wright, and Burawoy. Below, we theorise two related forms of power namely *labour domination* and *exploitation* as *class relations* that are inherent in the commercial forestry plantation labour process.

3.2.2.1 Labour Domination and Exploitation as Class Relations

In this study, we partly draw from Marx, and then mainly from his modified (i.e., neo-Marxist) appropriation by Wright (1989, 1997, 2002, 2005, 2009) and Burawoy (1979, 1985), in order to assimilate domination and exploitation within a *Marxist* problematic of *class*. That is, overall, we frame them as forms of power mainly "based on economic divisions and inequalities" (Scott, 2005: 175). *Domination,* as one such form of power, in this study, denotes two related formulations. First, as power relations that are "structured into *stable* and *enduring social structures*" (Scott, 2006: 129, own emphasis). However, we do *not* reduce social structures either to institutions or to actions (i.e., 'agency'). Instead, in a more post-structuralist reading, we stress their dispersed, fragmentary, and ongoing interactive character. Second, domination also denotes how these interactive relations *control* and *direct* the activities of social agents in coercive and/or non-coercive ways (e.g., Wright, 2005, 2009). Below, we situate labour domination and exploitation on the commercial estate plantation within a Marxist *class* analysis.

Class is an elusive concept. So, to achieve conceptual relevance in this study, we apply the concept by also basing it (and related concepts) on the "empirically given circumstances" (Marx in Bottomore, 1983: 77). Thus, in this study, we retain the orthodox Marxian reading of labour domination and exploitation within *capitalist production*, and as both *relational* (i.e., as socio-political processes) and *historical*- i.e., developing across space and time (see Marx and Engels, 1978; Wright; 1997, 2002). Despite class being synonymous with Marx, he never gave it a systematic theory and definition. However, we are guided by a Marxist reading of class to denote an *economic relation* of the *unequal* distribution of rights and powers of ownership and control of the *means of production* (productive resources) and of the control of *labour power* (see Marx and Engels, 1978; Wright, 1997, 2002). This also entails a Marxian 'objectivist' (i.e., class-in-itself) sense of class as an empirically identifiable social aggregate sharing a

similar social location in relation to the aforementioned rights and powers over productive resources.

However, in the ensuing (sub) sections, we modify this largely macro-level (i.e., societal level) Marxian analysis by offering a more *concrete micro-level* class analysis of labour domination and exploitation by reading them through the empirical lens of commercial *workplace* production politics (see Gramsci, 1971; Braverman, 1974; Burawoy, 1979, 1985). We initially conceptualise labour domination and exploitation as *social relations of production* in commercial forestry estate plantation production.

3.2.2.2 Labour Domination and Exploitation as Social Relations of Production

Conventionally, commercial workplace production is perceived as the *technical* (physical) deployment of productive resources (e.g., forestry land, machines, capital, etc.). However, taking a Marxist perspective, we also read it in *social relational* terms. To import Wright's (2002: 9) neo-Marxist position, this means that participants in workplace production possess "different kinds of rights and powers" over the ownership, control, and use of productive resources as well as the appropriation of outputs from these resources. From Wright's (1997, 2002, 2009) neo-Marxist view, 'powers' refer to *effective control over the use* and *disposition* of productive resources, whereas 'rights' entail the auxiliary notion that these powers are viewed as *legitimate* by the *state*. Thus, the expression *property rights*, means "effective powers over the use [and disposal]" of the means of production as "enforced by the state" (Wright, 2002: 9). The actual ways the production resources are combined and used, for instance, in the plantation estate labour process depend on how the rights and powers are wielded and the "sum total of these rights and powers constitutes the 'social relations of production'" (see Wright, 2002: 10).

A crucial theoretical position we take and emphasise is that these rights and powers, are in fact, "attributes of social relations, *not* descriptions of the relationship of people to things" (Ibid: 10). To have rights and powers over commercial forestry land or labour power, for instance, defines one's *relationship* to *others* regarding the *ownership*, *control*, and *use* of these resources and the appropriation of surplus value (profit) from using them productively. This means that, estate workplace labour domination and exploitation, as social relations of production, entail power relations that concern how the production *activities* of participants are *regulated* and *controlled*, and not simply the distribution of productive resources (see Burawoy,

1979, 1985; Wright, 1997, 2002, 2009). Meanwhile, we also consider labour domination and exploitation as *specific* social relations of production namely *class* relations.

3.2.2.3 Labour Domination and Exploitation as Class Relations

When we frame labour domination and exploitation as *class relations* at the workplace, it means that the participants' rights and powers regarding ownership, control, and use of productive resources as well as the appropriation of profits are *unevenly* distributed (see Marx and Engels, 1968, 1978; Wright, 1997, 2002). In classical Marxist capitalist contexts, the fundamental contrast, for instance, is between *owners* of productive resources and *owners* of labour power (Ibid). However, in our current empirical context wherein class is also 'made from below' (i.e., from the workers' everyday experiences) and thus, where it articulates with localised cultural norms and values, the distribution of rights and powers is not as simple but is more complex as later (sub)sections will reveal. Also, for labour domination and exploitation to count as class relations, there has to be unequal rights and powers over the *appropriation* of income (i.e., surplus value) accruing to the use of the productive resources. Meanwhile, labour domination and exploitation on the plantation need to be *historically* contextualised, and this entails *qualitatively* delineating them as specific *kinds* of class relations (see Wright, 2002). We give theoretical specificity to this qualitative variation by subscribing to the empirical reality of *post-colonial capitalist* class relations.

3.2.2.4 From Colonial Capitalist to Post-colonial Capitalist Class relations: Labour Domination and Exploitation

Our profitable starting point is the orthodox Marxist reading of class relations as *historical* (Marx and Engels, 1968, 1978). In light of this framing, forestry plantation labour domination and exploitation also denote class relations which, to borrow from Wright (1997, 2002, 2003), are further qualified by 'historical variation in systems of inequality across space and time'. In this case, pin-pointing the *basis* of the variation in the *kind* of class relation is of theoretical significance. So, we follow Wright (2002, 2003) that such a basis concerns the *kinds* of rights and powers that constitute the class relations. Hence, at an abstract level, our study partly retains the Marxist notion of *capitalist* class relations, wherein: capitalists (plantation owners) privately own, control, and use productive resources; 'legally' hire owners of living labour for a wage; and then privately appropriate the surplus value accruing thereto (see Marx and Engels, 1968, 1978; Desan, 2013). From the original Marxian framing, the *nature* of these rights and powers was mainly shaped by a historically specific *Industrial Revolution* in Europe.

However, in the current empirical setting "capitalism developed with *colonialism*" (Nkrumah, 1970: 14, own emphasis) mainly by dispossessing indigenous people of their *land* and *land rights*. Similarly, in a concrete demonstration of this *exclusion principle*, Wright (2002: 24) attests to how, "in Southern Africa", European settlers enacted and secured *colonial capitalism* by "a process of exclusion of the indigenous people from the land". The settlers' *private* ownership, control, and use of land and the subsequent 'forced' use and control of the indigenous people's labour power, were *causally* dependent on the *exclusion* of the natives from such rights and powers. Thus, while still *capitalist*, the *nature* of rights and powers in this study are shaped and complicated by the *colonial* experience and its legacies. Subsequently, we *reread* labour domination and exploitation mainly as *post-colonial capitalist* class relations. That is, in the current empirical setting, we trace their nature to European (i.e., British) *colonial* capitalism "many of whose elements have continued into the post-colonial era, despite the democratisation of the political space" (Burawoy and Holdt, 2012: 189), for instance, in Zimbabwe and elsewhere. Having *qualified* the two class relations as *post-colonial capitalist* relations, we now turn to defining and conceptualising them.

Labour Domination

Material *exclusion* (i.e., from productive resources) pre-conditions labour domination (e.g., Marx 1976, Wright, 2002, 2003). So, in this study, we define the latter as a *post-colonial capitalist* relation of production in which capitalists (via their managerial agents), by their *exclusionary* rights over productive resources, are able to *control* and *regulate* the *labour power* of the excluded. Bereft of ownership, control, and usufruct rights over the now-*privatised* land, etc., the excluded are *compelled* to 'sell' (to the capitalist) their living labour - the *only* resource over which they still retain some measure of ownership and usufruct rights (see Marx and Engels, 1968). Cohen (1980) terms this *enforced proletarianisation*. Labour domination is thus synonymous with the Marxian notion of *formal subordination* of *labour* whereby "workers and their skills [labour] are subsumed … under the control of the capitalist" (Marx, 1976 in Thompson, 1989: xv). This also entails the *appropriation* of labour effort since this usually requires "direct forms of subordination, especially within the labour process" (Wright, 2002: 25) such as supervision, surveillance, and sanctioning. So, importantly, labour domination is intimately linked to the problem of exploitation.

Exploitation

We conceptualise exploitation *not* within the 'labour theory of value' of classical Marxism since within sociological research, the theory has never featured prominently (see Wright, 2002; Desan, 2013). So, overall, we read exploitation within a Marxist model as the *extraction* of *surplus* labour (and the inherent surplus value) from workers as independent producers (see Marx and Engels, 1968, 1978; Wright, 2002; Desan, 2013). A key dynamic of exploitation is the 'enforced' interdependence between exploiters and the exploited. The employers, despite their exclusionary rights and powers over productive resources, need the workers' surplus labour (to create surplus value) much as the workers now bereft of the means of production, are also 'forced' to be increasingly dependent on hiring out their labour power to the former for *wage* livelihoods. Hence, we retain Wright's (2002: 23) framing that "exploitation is thus a diagnosis of the process through which inequalities in incomes are generated by inequalities in rights and powers over productive resources".

To this point, we have achieved theoretical traction by framing labour domination and exploitation within a (neo)Marxist class analysis. Yet, this framework also contains some explanatory inadequacies. For us, the key one concerns the *simplistic* and *polarised* presentation of class (i.e., capitalist) relations (Wright, 1997, 2002, 2009) for instance as bourgeoisie/proletariat, ownership/non-ownership, etc. This is misleading in *concrete* relations located in *time* and *space* as is the case in this study. Thus, our major task below is to foreground *complexity* and its ramifications in the analysis.

3.2.2.5 Repositioning Labour Domination and Exploitation as Complex Capitalist Relations

In the current empirical setting (Barura commercial forestry estate plantation), we are concerned with *complexity*, which emerges out of three interrelated theoretical-cum-empirical dynamics.

First, plantation labour domination and exploitation become complex capitalist relations through the *co-existence* of at least two *different kinds* of social relations of production (see Wright, 2002). This resonates with this study's *post-colonial* context, which scholarship (e.g., Cohen, 1980; Taussig, 1997, 2010) synonymises with *incomplete* capitalist penetration. This entails the concrete co-existence of *post-colonial agrarian capitalism* with *traditional* (i.e., largely non-capitalist) modes of production such as peasant agriculture. Wright's (2002: 12) notion of "articulation of modes of production" speaks to the latter case, thereby complicating

the *actual* ways in which labour domination and exploitation play out in a single unit of production namely commercial forestry plantation estate agriculture.

Second, following Wright (2002), complexity can also draw from the *concrete ways* in which *bundles* of rights and powers (over productive *resources* and *activities*) can be decomposed and redistributed. This denotes the *interpenetration* and/or *articulation* of these rights and powers *within* one or *between* at least two modes of production respectively. For instance, within commercial/capitalist forestry production, workers may not have ownership and usufruct rights over the forestry land, yet by contrast, by also being simultaneously part of a peasant mode of production in the surrounding rural villages; they may have *ownership* and *usufruct* rights and powers over rural ancestral land as a means of production (see Taussig, 2010). Also, plantation capital's *ownership* and *usufruct* rights of private forestry land for profits may not be *absolute* but relative as the state may also partly *retain* these very rights or influence their *actual* exercise via land legislation and/or partisan politics. Again, ownership may not necessarily entail control since managers can assume such control on behalf of capitalists. These examples show *how* bundles of rights and powers as embodied in the idea of '*owning*' the means of production can be variously decomposed and redistributed resulting in interpenetrating, articulated, and sometimes contradictory rights and powers. Overall, decomposed and redistributed rights and powers move class (i.e., capitalist) relations away from the overly abstract simplistic polarised model.

Finally, complexity obtains from transcending the overly objective class approach, which positions individuals simply as the *effects* or *carriers* of class (i.e., capitalist) relations. Influenced by E.P. Thompson's (1963: 213, own emphasis) thesis that "the working class *made itself* as much as it was made", we foreground capitalist relations also as the *direct* and *active* everyday action or *lived experience* of social actors. Labour domination and exploitation cease to be 'absolute structures', but "something which in fact happens…in human relationships" (Thompson, 1963: 9). They *happen* when social agents, as a part of common experience, *actively* formulate their *own interests* based on their *specific history* and social position. Hence, they are *historical* patterns of relationships between *social agents*, *institutions*, and *ideas* (Stewart and Zaaiman, 2015). This is a more concrete and grassroots notion of class, which places social agents at the centre of the active constitution of their class identities, based *not* solely on rights and powers over productive resources, but more significantly, on their

immersion in the realities of 'localised everyday cultural politics' (Thompson, 1963; Cohen, 1980; Moore, 1998). In this vein, our current research on *everyday* resistance is a typical case of the *making* of *class* from *below* by workers. By theorising class-cum-status relations as being also actively made by agents via their *localised* experiences, we like E.P. Thompson (1963), fully acknowledge the role of *culture* and *politics* as an integral part of class relations. The latter framing is explored later in detail in subsequent sub-sections.

However, noteworthy is that despite all these complexities, the class relations remain predominantly capitalist. That is, "the basic power over the allocation of capital and command of profits remains … under the private control of capitalists" (Wright, 2002: 13). Yet, it also means that capitalist *class structures* (i.e., sum total of class relations) in certain units of analysis (e.g., commercial forestry production) will remarkably vary in light of the foregoing complexities. This brings us to the problematic of the assignment of individuals and collectives to *class locations* within post-colonial capitalist forestry production relations.

3.2.2.6 Class Locations in Post-colonial Capitalist Forestry Production

Following the neo-Marxist tradition of Wright (2002: 24, own emphasis), class locations designate the "s*ocial* positions" occupied by social actors "*within* class relations", and "not simply an *atomized* attribute of the person". So, in this study, the 'class location' of individuals or collectives in post-colonial commercial forestry production denotes, as illuminated immediately above (i.e., complexity), situating them in complex *structured patterns* of *interaction* involving co-existing modes of production; variously decomposed and redistributed bundles of rights and powers (over productive resources); and the localised politico-cultural experiences of the social actors. For Wright (2009), in capitalist production, the key class relation is the capital/labour relation, and this gives two class locations namely capitalists and workers. However, such a two-class model has explanatory inadequacies for instance, if, as in the current study, one wants to understand social actors' subjective experience within the capitalist work process as well as the different kinds of struggles and coalitions thereto.

Thus, in order to push past the simplistic two-location model, we treat the three earlier complexities as *actual variations* in the concrete ways in which social actors can be located within post-colonial capitalist relations of labour domination and exploitation. We directly incorporate the three dimensions of complexity into our account of class locations. This move

is mainly predicated on the theoretical logic that these complexities, as asserted by the neo-Marxist view of Wright (2002: 16), "are in fact complexities in the concrete ways in which rights and powers" over productive resources and activities "are [re]distributed across locations", for instance, within post-colonial capitalist relations of forestry estate production. So, the class locations can be as many as it proves empirically useful to distinguish for the analytical purposes at hand (see Erikson and Goldthorpe, 1993 in Wright, 2002). Accordingly, in the current study context, the following class locations suffice (see the Appendix I under Appendices section). Having theorised and improved the largely material aspect of social relations of workplace production, below, we expose their usually under-researched symbolic component(s) and dimensions.

3.2.2.7 Exploitation, In-built Capacity for Resistance, and Cultural Forms and Elements of Power

In a way which typically sustains our central theorisation of the complex mutual entanglement of power and resistance, a Marxist class analysis also foregrounds a *capacity for resistance*, which is *inherent* in labour domination and exploitation. Since these class relations entail "inter-dependent antagonistic interests" (Wright, 2002: 28) between exploiters and the exploited, they generate an *in-built* class *struggle*. The latter denotes "conflicts between the practices" of social agents in pursuit of "opposing interests" and such conflicts include "the strategies of individual workers within the labour process to reduce their level of toil" (Wright, 2002: 21). These strategies (i.e., everyday practices of resistance) constitute the central scope of the present research. Labour domination and exploitation thus *endemically* render the exploited some forms of power with which to struggle for their interests (see Marx and Engels, 1978; Wright, 1997, 2002). More so, since workers always retain some measure of ownership and control over their labour effort, they always confront capital and its managerial agents with capacities for *resistance*. This constitutes a crucial form of power.

Owing to the inherent capacity of workers to resist, the extraction of surplus labour tends to be *suboptimal* for exploiting classes especially in predominantly *coercive* systems of production (see Burawoy, 1979; Thompson, 1979; Wright, 2002). So, to *insure* their capacity to appropriate unpaid labour, exploiting classes also deploy complementary *subtle* (i.e., increasingly tacit and non-coercive) and largely *invisible* modalities of power. The latter range from the development, by capital and its managerial agents, of workplace *cultures* that elicit

the workers' identification with and loyalty to their work to the production of "ideological positions which proclaim the practical and moral desirability of capitalist institutions" (Wright, 2002: 29). In this vein, we are compelled to theorise specific forms of power, which bear some family resemblance to what we broadly term *cultural domination*. That is, we turn to deliberately acknowledging and theorising the soft, invisible, cultural/ideational forms and components of power, which co-exist (inherently or in an articulated way) with the privileged material forms (i.e., class) discussed earlier above. In this way, we also give prominence to the underappreciated *cultural* or *ideational* dimensions and components of domination, which complicate and convolute their overprivileged class element(s).

3.3 A Power Analysis that Incorporates forms and Aspects of Cultural Domination

In this segment, our main theoretical argument is that the forms and aspects of power that everyday (labour) resistance engages in commercial forestry plantation production cannot be reduced to pure *economic* relations. Rather, a more concrete framing also concerns the incorporation of their *cultural* /*symbolic* dimension or counterparts. Thus, we frame the economic and politico-cultural aspects of power as always *co-existing* in the same reality in a two-fold sense of the cultural as *inherent* in and/or *articulated* (from outside) to the overprivileged economic forms or components (i.e., labour domination and exploitation).

To set the stage for theorising specific forms of *cultural* domination, we use Marx's class analysis as a departure point. In our current context, *culture* denotes the social realm of *shared cognitive meanings* (Scott 2006). Thus, cultural domination, on the plantation for instance, entails the *socialisation* of labour into dominant symbolic representations, meanings, and workplace cultures in ways that make them (in)advertently *believe* that it is *necessary* and *morally appropriate* to act in certain ways and not in others (see Scott, 2006). So, Marx mainly *subsumes* this symbolic aspect of power under class relations. Hence, for Marx, cultural domination, in addition to being reflected in the superstructure (i.e., legal, political, philosophical, etc. institutions), is powerfully present *within* and originates from the economic base (see Burawoy and von Holdt, 2012) where it is produced as "individual consciousness and shared values" (Scott, 2006: 46). We later theorise the latter below as orthodox Marxist 'ideology'.

However, Weber (1947, 1958) modifies Marx by distinguishing the *status* (i.e., symbolic, or cultural) aspect of power from its class aspect. This approach analytically helps us to foreground culture or the symbolic as a 'semi-autonomous' force capable of generating social effects in *its own right*. Hence, our analysis of plantation estate labour domination and exploitation is inextricably tied to an analysis of symbolic power relations roughly within the logic of Weberian *status* and *status groups.* Status is a form of social stratification based on the 'effective claim to positive or negative social honour', which can be recognised (or rejected) on the basis of a 'special lifestyle' (Ibid). It thus concerns ranking social agents by "legal, political, and cultural criteria into status groups" (Scott and Marshall, 2006). Thus, status groups, in contrast to classes, are amorphous *communities* defined by a common status position and they constitute *collective identities* by which social actors come to identify themselves and others (Ibid). For instance, in Chapter 8, the status positions 'native' and 'alien' in terms of state-codified ethnonational citizenship constitute status groups that are semi-autonomous from class but related to it.

In the ensuing sections, we theorise specific modalities of cultural domination by respective theorists in ways that are somewhat similar to or are modified or amalgamated versions of the classical Marxian and Weberian persuasions. Hereunder, we begin with the Marxian notion of *ideology*. In this way, we also lay the foundation for Bourdieu's (2000) uncharacteristic Marxist theorisation, whereby he innovatively coins the *second reversal* – i.e., a break from the privileged *objective truth* (i.e., exploitation) of capitalist labour in order to foreground its *subjective truth*. For Bourdieu (2000) the former 'truth' culminates from what he terms a *first reversal*, wherein Marx breaks from the *subjective truth* (i.e., workers' lived experience) of labour in order to illuminate the 'objective truth' of labour. Below, we first turn to *ideology* according to the Marxist reading of Marx and Engels and then explore the successive appropriations, modifications, and improvements of the notion by other theorists. These are streamlined into the current context of a post-colonial commercial estate plantation production.

3.3.1 Marxian *Ideology* and Bourdieu's Subjective Truth of Labour

3.3.1.1 Orthodox Marxist Ideology

This thesis partly follows Marx and Engels' (1978) approach, which subordinates ideology (i.e., the superstructure of *inverted* ideas) to the economic imperatives of capitalist relations of production (i.e., the base/class). That is, from this imagery, we partly adopt the casting of

ideology as a *reflection* of, and then fully adapt it to, the *micro* and *meso-level* analyses of post-colonial capitalist relations of forestry plantation workplace production. We therefore use as our departure point Marx and Engels' *critical* conceptualisation of ideology below:

> The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas: i.e., the class which is the ruling material force of society is at the same time its ruling intellectual force. The class which has the means of material production…has control at the same time over the means of mental production. (Marx and Engels, 1978 in Burawoy and von Holdt, 2012: 40)

Our first takeaway from this conceptualisation is the orthodox Marxist appreciation of the *innate* co-existence (mutuality) of the economic and cultural aspects of and in capitalist production relations, despite the classical tendency to privilege the economic aspect. The second takeaway concerns the *critical* framing of ideology as what Scott (2006: 86) calls "distorted forms of thought" or "inverted consciousness of the world". Streamlining this largely societal-level orthodox Marxist framing to the *micro* and *meso*-levels of worksite production politics, we are interested in the expression of ideology as the *illusory ideas* of capital/employers and management or as the *lived experience* (Althusser, 1969; Poulantzas, 1975) in the form of mystified workplace relations and identities, which are incorporated in workers' everyday labour and life experiences.

Overall, in this imagery, we read ideology as *ideas* and *practices* that always stand *against* other ideas and practices that are supposed to count as the objective *truth*. Thus, partly influenced by Marx and Engels, we subscribe to the real and main effects of these inverted conceptions and practices insofar as they *conceal* and *justify* the real contradictions (labour exploitation, domination, alienation, etc.) that are immanent, in this instance, to the post-colonial commercial forestry labour and production processes. Relatedly, as a continuation of our theoretical-cum-conceptual commitment, other concepts like *ideological mystification*, *false consciousness*, *commodity fetishism*, etc. that are related to the classical Marxist notion of ideology are illuminated, at the micro-shopfloor level, in relevant empirical sections as the thesis unfolds. Meanwhile, below, in a related but modified theoretical positioning, we appropriate the Bourdieusian (2000) foregrounding of the *subjective truth* of capitalist labour in what he calls the *second reversal*, so as to account for the cultural naturalisation and sustenance of labour domination and exploitation.

3.3.1.2 Foregrounding the Subjective Truth of Capitalist Labour

As mentioned above, orthodox Marxist ideology concerns an invisible soft form of power in the form of ideas and/or practices that *mystify* and *conceal* what Bourdieu (2000) theorises as the *objective truth* (i.e., exploitation) of labour. Concretely, this 'objective truth' takes the form of say, in an eight-hour working day, workers getting "wages that are equivalent to a portion of the working day, say five hours, leaving three hours as surplus labour, which is the basis of profit" (see Burawoy and von Holdt, 2012: 176). This is synonymous with the classical Marxist conceptualisation of wage labour as veiled/mystified exploitation. Burawoy (1979) terms this the *obscuring* of surplus labour. For Bourdieu (2000), this constitutes the *objective truth* of capitalist labour, and more importantly, a truth that is derived from what he calls the *first reversal* by Marx. That is, Marx's initial breaking with the *subjective truth* of labour in order to reveal its *objective truth*. The 'subjective truth' being the workers' *lived experience*, for instance, the illusion that their wages are of equivalent value to the total time expended in wage work for a specific period.

Influenced by orthodox Marxist tradition, labour studies tend to put more spotlight on the *first reversal*. However, Burawoy and von Holdt (2012: 176) insist, "It is one thing to discover the objective truth of labour, i.e., exploitation, it is another to show how exploitation is sustained by the workers themselves". In other words, we also have to answer the important question of *how* the extraction of surplus labour (i.e., exploitation) is secured by the workers themselves without them necessarily experiencing it as such. To attend to this question, we are inspired by Bourdieu (2000) to also give theoretical prominence to the *subjective truth* of labour (i.e., the workers' lived experience), which enables us to read commercial forestry plantation estate labour and production politics through the holistic lens (i.e., *twofold truth*) of both 'truths'. To this end, Bourdieu says:

> …labour can be understood in its objectively twofold truth only if one performs the second reversal needed in order to break with the scholarly error of failing to include in the theory the subjective truth with which it was necessary to break, in a first para-doxal reversal, in order to construct the object of analysis [i.e., wage labour]. Bourdieu (2000[1997] in Burawoy and von Holdt (2012: 175)

Therefore, in keeping with the Bourdieusian vision of the *twofold truth* of capitalist labour, we also foreground the second reversal in order to fully understand the *politico-cultural* forms of power that secure or assure their more economic counterparts (i.e., labour exploitation and domination) at the forestry plantation estate worksite. That is, we also give prominence to the

second break ‘against’ the ‘objective truth’ of labour in order to reincorporate the ‘subjective truth’- the lived work experience of the plantation wage labour-force. From this theoretical imagination, we are able to make sense of *how* the workers may become complicit in *securing* the extraction of surplus labour/value (i.e., exploitation) on behalf of capital and its managerial agents. According to Burawoy and von Holdt (2012: 175), for Bourdieu, surplus labour is *secured* or *assured* through the workers’ “investment in labour” by which they find an “extrinsic profit in labour, irreducible to simple monetary income”, with the result that exploitation is assured even though it is not experienced as such. Relatedly, in the section below, we appropriate and contextually modify Burawoy’s (1979) appropriation of Gramsci’s (1971) notion of hegemony, to craft our own theoretical vision of how exploitation can be *secured* and *naturalised* in more or less invisible, complicit, and non-coercive ways in the specific African *post-colonial* industrial setting of commercial forestry plantation estate agriculture.

3.3.2 Cultural/Ideological Hegemony, Civil Society, and the Forestry Plantation Labour Process

Our departure point is Gramsci’s (1971) innovative neo-Marxist reading of capitalist alliances and struggles *not* in terms of the economic base, but in terms of a modified *superstructure* (of civil society and political society). Following Gramsci, we foreground the *semi-autonomous* role of culture/ideology in naturalising/normalising and reproducing plantation capitalist relations. In this neo-Marxist vision, cultural *ideas*, in their own right, are “as much a force of repression and domination as crude economic domination” (Scott, 2006: 49). Breaking from orthodox Marxism, which privileges a linear causality wherein culture is reduced to and read as a mere reflection of the economic base, Gramsci (1971) recasts *culture/ideas, politics,* and economics as mutually constitutive. Thus, Gramscian (1971) notions of ideology, ideological hegemony, and civil society are of crucial analytical relevance to the current research.

We frame hegemony as a form of *cultural domination* in line with Gramsci’s (1971) reformulation of the classical Marxist notion of ideology. First, Lenin and Lukacs develop the idea of “*class ideologies* that are not merely distorted forms of thought but *worldviews* of *classes*” (Scott, 2006: 86, own emphasis). Then, Gramsci (1971) extends this vision to designate ideology as a more complex ‘worldview’ namely ‘spontaneous philosophy’. The latter denotes: language - a totality of determined notions and concepts; ‘common sense’

(conventional knowledge) and 'good sense' (empirical knowledge); and the entire system of beliefs, values, norms, ways of seeing things and acting (Gramsci in Lears, 1985). This philosophy becomes *hegemonic* insofar as a *particular* dominant economic group can selectively and credibly redefine it so that it *appeals* to subordinate groups as representing *common* interests thereby eliciting their *consent* to the prevailing capitalist relations. To this effect, Gramsci's (1971) notion of *ideological* or *cultural hegemony* (hegemony hereafter) is relevant to our study.

Hegemony helps us explain the reinforcement (or undermining) of plantation capitalist relations in the *cultural* or *ideational* realm. We frame hegemony as an antithesis to the classical Marxist notion of *false* consciousness by reading it as a form of cultural control through "the combination of force and consent, which balance each other …without force predominating excessively over consent" (Gramsci, 1971: 80). Thus, hegemony denotes the ideational control of subalterns *primarily* through their *knowing* and *willing* participation (i.e., *free consent*) in their domination. Thus, at the worksite, hegemony concerns when "workers actively, deliberately, and consciously collaborate" (see Burawoy and von Holdt, 2012: 195) in their labour domination and exploitation. Workers are *aware* of the latter, but "simply have difficulty appreciating that there could be anything beyond capitalism" (Ibid: 195). Thus, hegemony implies the *naturalisation* of capitalist relations, and for Gramsci (1971), in the European context, it was produced in *civil society*, and in the United States of America (USA), it was produced at the factory shop floor.

We adopt the notion of civil society to designate associations that are typically thought of as 'private' and 'non-political', and *nominally* autonomous from the state and economy, but are sanctioned and guaranteed by the state (see Gramsci, 1971; Burawoy and von Holdt, 2012). So, we can concretely imagine a *state-civil society* nexus in which the state subtly diffuses all civil formations like voluntary associations, political parties, trade unions, and churches (Ibid). These are the Gramscian (1971) 'trenches' of civil society, marketplaces of *political* and *cultural* ideas. They create hegemony insofar as they *validate* and *popularise* the *worldviews* (spontaneous philosophy) of the economic ruling class to the subalterns, thereby securing the latter's consent to capitalist relations. To this effect, Burawoy and von Holdt (2012: 58) assert that these 'trenches' "effectively organise[d] consent to domination by absorbing the participation of the subaltern classes, giving space to political activity but within the limits

defined by capitalism". We thus position civil society as deeply political since it secures capitalist relations by eliciting, in subalterns, some "half-conscious complicity" (Lears, 1985: 8) in their own domination and exploitation. However, hegemony is never totalitarian.

In this regard, we profit from Gramsci's (1971) casting of hegemony as a 'dual', or 'one contradictory consciousness', one that blends accommodation with the potential for resistance (*counterhegemony*). In this framing, the worldview of subordinates is always *ambiguous*. The part of the workers' dual consciousness, which indicates potential for counterhegemony is encapsulated in Burawoy and von Holdt's (2012: 195) assertion that, "by virtue of their position in production, workers also possess a critical perspective on capitalism and an embryonic sense of an alternative". In this study, this sense of an alternative under plantation estate production takes the form of what we theorise as a *worker-invented civil society* (see Chapter 8). It is a findings-inspired cultural form, which entails the estate plantation workers' cultural denigration of a state-capital sanctioned civil society on the plantation. We position this 'civil society-from-below' as akin to the Gramscian (1971) *war of position* insofar as it *reconstitutes* and thus *counters* the hegemonic idea and practice of civil society by aligning it with the plantation workers' own politico-economic interests. Meanwhile, also inspired by Burawoy's (1979) Gramscian influence, we adopt the thesis of hegemony also being born at the *shop floor* of the factory in the USA, under advanced capitalism. However, we *modify* this originally Gramscian thesis, and its subsequent appropriation by Burawoy, according to the context-specific dynamics of a suboptimal and highly insecure post-colonial, agrarian capitalist workplace setting in Africa.

3.3.3 *Manipulative* Hegemony: The micro-Politico-cultural Power dynamics at the Plantation Worksite

We adopt Burawoy's (1979) Chicago factory research in order to theorise the manufacture of hegemony/consent at various worksites of the plantation estate. However, based on fieldwork evidence, we discover and coin a context-specific *manipulative* or *compulsive* hegemony, which concerns workers being *induced* to 'give in' and 'give way' to plantation labour domination and exploitation. There is neither outright consent nor outright coercion – this is seeming 'consent' based largely on control via the unscrupulous influence over workers or the work situation. Also, in light of a suboptimal post-colonial capitalist workplace context of heightened labour insecurities (see Chapter 5), we appropriate and modify two related

Burawoyian (1979) apparatuses of shop floor hegemony namely the *internal state*, and the constitution of *work* as a *game*.

We adopt Burawoy's (1979) notion of the *internal state*, which he derives from adapting Althusser and Gramsci's theories of the state to the internal politics of the workplace. The internal state is "the set of institutions that organise, transform, or repress struggles over relations in production and relations of production at the level of the enterprise" (Ibid: 110). It denotes worksite government. In Burawoy's (1979) Chicago case study, the internal state comprises the *legal* regulatory *collective bargaining* and *grievance procedures*, which protect workers from managerial *despotism* by imposing *legal constraints* on the arbitrary use of punitive sanctions. Hence, management has to "manufacture consent" (Burawoy and von Holdt, 2012: 185) by *persuading* workers to produce surplus. So, the Burawoyian (1979) internal state produces hegemony (i.e., free consent) insofar as it harmonises the production and labour interests of capital and labour. It offers *piecemeal* shop floor concessions, which secure labour's *loyalty* (i.e., voluntary servitude) to the capitalist enterprise and its relations in and of production. However, in the current study, these formulations and dynamics get contextually modified.

The current post-colonial workplace setting has enduring *heightened* levels of labour *insecurities* particularly representation, income, job, and social insecurities. We later coin these a *vicious circle* of *labour insecurities* (vicious circle, hereafter). Of note, is that workplace (and sectoral) unionism is hardly existent and functional, and workers go unpaid for at least three months and, whenever they get paid it is usually in kind (i.e., a timber quota). So, in light of such precarity, we recast the internal state as taking a largely 'managerial direction' (see Burawoy, 1979). That is, in our case, it gets mainly comprised of the institution of lower management (i.e., foremen and supervisors). The latter *informally* and *indulgently* controls labour's conduct, retention, and turnover in ways that *induce* labour's *yielding* to continuous participation in a highly insecure and super-exploitative commercial forestry labour process. This is detailed hereunder. So, first. we reimagine the internal state's dynamics as being mainly conditioned by the manipulative constraint of the *vicious circle* of an acutely insecure forestry plantation labour process.

We position the vicious circle as a 'relation *in* production' (Burawoy, 1979) - the *lived* labour *experience* (what Bourdieu (2000) terms the 'subjective truth of labour'), which is both an

integral part of manipulative consent as well as its *trigger*. First, we theorise that the vicious circle itself *traps* workers in a 'catch 22' situation. The workers find themselves at a liminal point of their work life wherein they can *no longer* afford to simply quit insecure and super-exploitative work *until* and *unless* they get their long-outstanding wages and benefits, and they risk forfeiting them if they just quit the insecure work (especially after having waited thus far - i.e., long enduring waits of not less than half a year). Thus, in such a liminal space, the workers are *induced* to more of *give in* and *give way* to than *agree* to super-exploitative work. Second, we submit that the vicious circle has the *potential* to induce workers to quit at some point beyond the threshold of labour insecurities.

Be that as it may, the internal state (i.e., foremen and supervisors) ceases to be outright despotic/coercive in its command-and-control function lest it risks losing the optimum numbers of labour-force needed, first, to meet production and profit targets, second to secure the constant extraction of unpaid labour, and last to secure the internal state's own supervisory jobs. This then triggers *indulgence patterns* - another 'relation *in* production' in which the internal state is compelled to craft 'new' *informal* levels of tolerance to workers' acts of misconduct by postponing, relaxing, or forgoing punitive action. This in turn *induces* workers to *give way* and *give in* to continuous participation in highly insecure plantation work as conditioned and/or triggered by both the vicious circle and the internal state as 'apparatuses' (Burawoy, 1979) of *manipulative* hegemony. These dynamics, we theorise, also condition another fieldwork-specific apparatus of this hegemony namely *waiting on* or *waithood*. Following Burawoy (1979), we designate the latter a workplace *game*. It involves the workers enduring and patient participation in highly insecure work for as long as they are prepared to *wait* long enough to recover their long-awaited dues from capital, and as long as they are constantly indulged by lower management. This entails a *workplace culture* (Cohen, 1980; Wright, 2005) of patient, painful, and anticipatory waiting. A *waiting*, which ironically secures management's assured extraction of surplus value and surplus labour from the plantation workers, even under an acutely suboptimal labour process.

We cast 'waiting on' through Burawoy's (1979) lens of the *game* metaphor (which he derives from Bourdieu) after his Chicago factory game of 'making out' wherein workers play a piece-rate game whose goal is to 'make out'. That is, "make an acceptable percentage output … one not higher than 140% and not lower than 125%" (Burawoy and von Holdt, 2012: 185). Of

theoretical relevance here, however, are Burawoy's (1979) key propositions that playing a game entails simultaneous consent to its rules, and that games *naturalise* and *reproduce* the relations that necessitate them. We theorise workplace games as an expression of workers' *coping* with debilitating capitalist work (Burawoy, 1979; Hales, 1980; Thompson, 1989). They constitute 'relative' or 'repressive' 'satisfactions' (Baldamus in Burawoy, 1979) as *token concessions* that offer workers temporary relief from arduous work. For instance, in 'waiting on', the possibility of 'winning' (i.e., finally getting one's long-owed wages or benefits one day) makes the game seductive enough to enchant the estate workers into playing. Thus, such participation in a 'waiting on' game (which is a function of heightened labour insecurities and indulgency patterns), entails an *ideological* process of producing workers' manipulative consent to labour domination and super-exploitation and a *political* process of the naturalisation and reproduction of these self-same capitalist relations of workplace production. In all, in this sub-section, we have contextually modified Burawoy's (1979) own advancement of Gramsci's (1971) theory of hegemony by reading it through the lens of a post-colonial capitalist African workplace setting beset with unprecedented levels of labour insecurities.

Another related framing of cultural domination that concerns this thesis is based on the Bourdieusian (1977, 1979, 1984) notion of *symbolic violence*, which, contrary to the Gramscian (and Burawoyian) cultural hegemony, subscribes to the notion of an *unconscious* or *tacit* consent to domination. In the current case, we deploy the notion of symbolic violence to account for the empirical discovery of plantation-specific (i.e., *localised*) dynamics and effects of broader state-centric monolithic notions of citizenship (i.e., ethnicity-based citizenship laws) on plantation labour-force. Not to mention the mutuality of this soft violence with largely class-based forms of power (i.e., exploitation) on Barura estate. We theorise symbolic violence below.

3.3.4 Symbolic Violence (Legislated Ethno-nationality) vis a vis the Plantation Labour Process

In this segment, our explanatory scheme follows Bourdieu's (1977, 1979, 1984) improvement of Weber's opposition of class and *status* by underscoring their *mutuality* and spotlighting the often understated *symbolic* (status) aspect of domination. Bourdieu (1989: 21) theorises that "objective [class] relations of power tend to reproduce themselves in relations of symbolic power". The symbolic field is privileged in explaining the *masked* maintenance and

reproduction of the class relations upon which it is founded. To this end, Bourdieu's twin notions of *habitus* and *symbolic violence* are of analytical value. Symbolic violence is mediated through and internalised in the habitus.

Habitus denotes a socially constructed system of *dispositions* or schemes by which social agents perceive, think, appreciate, judge, and act in the social world (Bourdieu, 1984, 1990a; Scott, 2006). For Scott (2006: 79), Bourdieusian dispositions mean "enduring orientations, skills, and forms of 'know-how' that people simply pick up by being socialised into particular cultures…" and these get *incorporated* into the mind and body. Examples include bodily deportment, speech, social manners, and practical skills. So, the habitus is a deep notion of social reproduction since according to Bourdieu (1984, 1990a, 2000), it concerns an *embodied* or *internalised* form of class condition (i.e., objective conditions of life) and the conditioning it entails. It innovatively explains social action without an agent's conscious reflection on societal norms or rational calculation (Bourdieu, 1984, 1989). Thus, the habitus transcends the alternative between objectivism and subjectivism. It "acts as a phenomenological mediator between the external social and natural world and the world the agent inhabits experientially" (Scott, 2006: 80). By incorporating outside structures into the agent's mental and bodily structures, the habitus operates *pre-reflexively* by avoiding reliance on the subjective will of the agent. Overall, the habitus connects social structure and practice resulting in symbolic violence.

The innovation we draw from the idea of symbolic violence is that it is not real violence in the simplest sense – i.e., the use of physical force or legitimate authority, yet it causes agents to act voluntarily in a *subconscious* manner. The concept aims to overcome the alternative between coercion and consent, and Bourdieu conceptualises it as:

> …the [unconscious] consent that the dominated cannot fail to give to the dominator (and therefore to the domination) when their understanding of the situation and relation can only use instruments of knowledge they have in common with the dominator, which, being merely the incorporated form of the structure of the relation of domination, make this relation appear as natural; or…when the schemes they implement in order to perceive and evaluate themselves or… the dominators…are the product of the incorporation of the…classifications of which their being is the product. [Bourdieu, 2000 in Burawoy and von Holdt, 2012: 40]

So, symbolic violence is a power relation of the *unwitting internalisation* of the dominator's *habitus* (i.e., the legitimate culture) in a way that masks, legitimates, and reproduces the violence and its skewed material basis (class condition). It is *doxic* submission to the

dominators' instruments of knowledge and expression (*taxonomies*) of social reality that are *arbitrary* but *not* recognised as such by both the dominator and the dominated (see Weber, 1968; Bourdieu, 1971b, 1977, 1984). We thus have a *complicit* submission on the part of the dominated, which is *not* the result of a free voluntary act, but rather results from the embodiment of the dominant point of view. For Bourdieu (1979), the specifically *violent* effect consists precisely in the tacit imposition of the dominators' arbitrary political systems of classification in the legitimate guise of philosophical, religious, or juridical taxonomies. In the present study, symbolic violence is synonymous with the state's imposition of legislated *ethno-nationality (*a seemingly neutral cultural mechanism - citizenship) and the classificatory schemes thereto (e.g., 'native' vs 'alien', 'local' vs 'foreigner') on plantation workers (and others) of 'foreign' ancestry, which enhances the workers' cultural domination beneath the veil of enhanced relation.

Inspired by Bourdieu (1979, 1984) and fieldwork, we frame codified ethno-nationality (i.e., legal citizenship of the farmworkers on the monolithic criterion of ethnic/ancestral origin) as *effective* symbolic violence to the extent it is *recognised* (endowed with *legitimate prestige* by the farmworkers and others). This recognition is achieved through the workers' *misrecognition* of the arbitrariness of the ethno-national criterion of citizenship and its true basis in uneven objective/class conditions, which only ever manifest themselves in the *disguised* form of sense relations. Therefore, *misrecognition* is a key concept, and it concerns how agents, say in this instance, plantation workers "spontaneously recognise the world as a misrecognition that is deeply rooted in the habitus and seemingly inaccessible to reflection" (Burawoy and von Holdt, 2012:61). It emanates from the *homology* between social structures (class condition) and mental structures (habitus); what (Scott, 2006: 80) terms "the close match…between the social organisation and dynamics of the external world and the embodied internal dispositions of individuals". Bourdieu (2000: 147) calls this the *internalisation of externality* wherein "the schemes applied to the world are the product of the world to which they are applied". Over time, social agents internalise all they need to know about their social and material world in order to engage successfully with a given range of social practices. These dispositions become so ingrained that they become 'second nature', which guarantees tacit and complicit adaptation to the *dominant symbolic order* (e.g., ethno-national citizenship and its classificatory schemes) and its subsequent reproduction.

Overall, symbolic violence, mediated by the habitus' misrecognition secures and reproduces social agents' (the plantation estate workers in this case) *doxic submission* to the legitimate culture (e.g., legislated ethnonational citizenship, in this research) by *naturalising* and *universalising* taxonomies and hierarchies (of citizenship), which are supposed to be relational and heterogenous. Meanwhile, since the state is a key player in the current study, we also need to theorise it in relation to symbolic violence.

3.3.4.1 The State and Symbolic Violence

Appropriating Bourdieu's (1998b: 40; own emphasis) modified version of Weber, we theorise the state as "the *monopoly* of the *legitimate use* of *physical* and *symbolic violence* over a definite territory". We thus present the state as a complex political entity, which solely retains the *legitimate* right to impose or adjudicate taxonomies and hierarchies that enjoy a *compulsory validity* of all principles (see Bourdieu, 1990b). In this research, the Zimbabwean state concretely manifests itself in the form of legislative, home affairs, registry, and judicial officials, who are *symbolic experts* (of citizenship laws and procedures) representing these arms of the state. We centre them as presiding over the highest level of the *objectification* of symbolic violence (i.e., as binding *ethno-national* citizenship laws) through its inscription into *law* (see Bourdieu, 1987). We therefore encounter a fully *codified* symbolic system where "law is interpreted, applied, and typically produced by a body of specially trained experts, and these processes are restricted to an institutional arena in which issues of coherence and consistence are paramount" (Bourdieu, 1987: 40). Here, to import Bourdieu (1990b) symbolic violence (i.e., arbitrarily imposed codified ethno-national citizenship laws and classifications) attains a fully *formalised* status of a *code* and exhibits maximum precision. More so, legislated/codified symbolic violence is enforceable at law – with transgressions subject to sanction by an official agency that is a branch of the state.

Finally, we now turn to a similar modality of power namely panoptic discipline or disciplinary power. It is similar to symbolic violence in that it is *relational*, *invisible*, *everyday*, involves *institutional experts*, and concerns the *non-reflexive* corporeal *internalisation* of *dominant discourses* (i.e., the legitimate culture for Bourdieu, and the discursive norm for Foucault).

3.3.5 Imagining Panoptic Discipline/Disciplinary Power in Forestry Estate Production

We profit from Foucault's (1979, 1991) analytics of disciplinary power or panoptic discipline (i.e., discipline), which foregrounds *how* and by what *means* power is *exercised*. Focus is on

the application and effects of power. We adopt Foucault's break from the popular imagery of power as possessed by and concentrated in individuals, collectives, and institutions (especially the state). Instead, power is recast as *exercised* in the details of everyday social practices, at points where it produces effects as a plural, decentred, fluid, reversible, and invisible 'microphysics' of power (Ibid). Its effects of subjugation are not attributable to appropriation, but to dispositions, tactics, and techniques. Importantly, beyond positioning power as repressive or forbidding, Foucault's (1979, 1991) major contribution concerns also framing it as essentially *productive*. That is, constitutive of regulated and disciplined social relations and identities which are to be resisted (see Nash, 2010). This is the Foucauldian analytics that we adopt and illuminate below.

For Foucault (1979, 1991, 1994), discipline is constituted of *power/knowledge* regimes - meaning the mutual coupling of *practices of power* (e.g., the penal system) and their related *discourses* (e.g., the criminology discourse), which are then applied through the bodies (and minds) of subjects. Discipline is therefore a technology, a technique, or a strategy of power, which subtly controls, regulates, and (re)forms the thoughts and conduct of individuals by organising bodies, space, and time (Ibid; Scott, 2006). So, the human body is the central object of discipline. Panoptic discipline entails the subordination of the body to a mechanism that observes (i.e., surveillance) it, trains it, examines it, evaluates it, and finally normalises (i.e., reforms) it as a *docile* but *efficient* body for the interests of power. For analytical clarity, below, we separate the power (i.e., practices/mechanisms/techniques of power) and knowledge (i.e., discourse) components of discipline to expose how they produce individuals both as *objects* and *subjects*.

Through the metaphorical appropriation of Bentham's (1843, 1965) prison model namely the Panopticon, Foucault (1979, 1991) characterises panoptic discipline and how it produces docile but useful bodies by organising individuals in practices that train comportment according to expert-based classifications of normal and abnormal. The Panopticon is a utilitarian architectural prison model with a centralised watchtower, which has separate cells around it. As such, inmates cannot see the guard, who in turn can see them. In fact, the guard does not even need to be in the tower to supervise the inmates. Foucault (1979) submits that the Panopticon is an exemplar case of Panopticism (which he names after the Panopticon) - a general system of modern disciplinary techniques that diffuse society in different institutional

sites. It is a technology of power, which organises space and individuals in a manner that transforms the latter into more productive but docile bodies while gaining and retaining their cooperation. Panoptic discipline therefore extends beyond the original prototypical Foucauldian prison and hospital institutions to include institutional spaces like schools, universities, the military, workplaces (our current research site).

According to Foucault (1991: 201), the major effect of the Panopticon is to induce, in inmates, a "state of conscious and permanent visibility that assumes the automatic functioning of power". A significant quality of this *sense* of *constant visibility* is that it is also *unverifiable* in the sense that the inmate never knows whether, in fact, the guard is watching. This further renders the visibility some *omnipresent* character. Relating this Panopticon prison analogue to how discipline is exercised and with what effects in other institutional sites, Foucault (1991: 214) asserts that any disciplinary technique has to be "given the instrument of permanent, exhaustive, omnipresent surveillance, capable of making all visible, as long as it could itself remain invisible". This concerns a faceless gaze, the eye that sees but remains anonymous to targets or subjects. Thus, panoptic discipline is power that manifests at the intersection of the unverifiable and therefore permanent and universal invisibility of its techniques and a conscious sense of ubiquitous visibility on the part of the subjects. When individuals know that they are subject to constant but unverifiable surveillance, as does the prisoner in the Panopticon, they know they could be watched at any time and they *inscribe* the gaze within themselves, into their souls. That is, they *internalise* the gaze, the surveillance, insofar as to exercise *self-surveillance* or *self-discipline* even in instances wherein the gaze is discontinued. This speaks to the automation, depersonalisation, and therefore effectiveness of power. Individuals become constituted as objects of surveillance techniques, which constitute them as docile/subordinated bodies.

Also, operating in simultaneity and mutuality with the foregoing dynamic, which Foucault (1979, 1994) sums up as an *observing hierarchy*, is the constitution of *subjects* (both as *self-aware* and *controlled* individuals) through a knowledge/discourse-based *normalising judgement*. This concerns the production of a *discursive norm*, a homogenic code, a standard discourse against which each individual is examined and judged either as normal or abnormal. So, for Foucault (1994: 44), discipline also produces *subjects* by subjecting their minds to a "discursive norm", which "cannot be the discourse of right…has nothing common with that of

law, rule, or sovereign will… but a natural rule, a norm of normalisation". It is a homogenising discourse towards which each individual must strive. We designate *discourse* as the symbolic representations (speech, text, etc.) and practices that present themselves as representing objective reality and assuming the authority of the 'truth' by originating in institutional sites where they are produced by *experts* according to certain rules and procedures (see Foucault, 1994; Nash, 2010; Lilja and Vinthagen, 2014). In other words, Nash (2010: 22) reiterates that, "knowledge as discourse is *not* knowledge of the 'real' world as it exists prior to that knowledge". Thus, discourse constructs and makes 'real' the objects of knowledge it represents thereby organising social reproduction. Foucault (1979, 1981), for instance, refers to the criminology and sexuality discourses, which just like any other discursive knowledge, are distinguished from other ways of comprehending the world and are considered to be 'knowledge' of the objective world because they are supported by practices of power such as the penal system and confession respectively.

Noteworthy is that, just like Foucault, we are *not* concerned with how, the plantation estate workers, as situated actors *interpret* discourses. We are more concerned with *how* discourses are circulated, what they *do*, and their *effects* on the workers' bodies and minds as a result of the authoritative ways they are put in practice in institutions formed around knowledge. So, a normalising discourse constitutes subjects insofar as it is internalised and normalises "subjects who eventually become, speak, think and act in similar manners" (Foucault, 1991: 177). Deviants from the norm (i.e., the abnormal) are subject to corrective or therapeutic techniques that aim to rehabilitate. Yet, this discursive norm also individualises as it allows subjects to be compared to one another and be positioned differently (either as normal or abnormal) in relation to this discourse. In all, panoptic discipline, through a reciprocal interplay of its power/knowledge complexes, creates individuals as objects and subjects imbedded in it. It produces new subjects - docile bodies and subjected minds that are however effective and useful in articulating the interests of power.

At this point, it is also important to note that we also come up with empirically inspired conceptual-cum-theoretical innovations through notions such a *surfaceopticons, surfaceopticon discipline/anti-discipline.* These are exposed in detail as and when the relevant empirical chapters unfold. Meanwhile, suffice to also assert that disciplinary power is not overmastering. Foucault (1979) himself acknowledges that there is a plurality of resistances

that exist in the field of power relations. We also deploy and adapt his notions of *reversed discourses* (Foucault, 1981), *techniques of the self* or *care of self* (Foucault, 1988a, 1988b) to the post-colonial workplace setting to build a case for everyday resistance to discipline in later chapters. Not to mention our critical engagement with de Certeau's (1984) scholarship (on everyday *anti-disciplinary* practices), which constitutes a more or less a direct anti-thesis to Foucault's (1979) analytics of disciplinary power. Similarly, we also illuminate how discourses are a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy through appropriating Scott's (1985, 1990) notions of *counter-discourses* or *hidden transcripts*. Having theorised the various forms of power that mutually constitute and engage with various forms of everyday resistance, we make our last theoretical-cum-conceptual submission below.

3.4 Everyday Resistance is a *Socio-Spatial* Practice and Relation

Like any social action, everyday (labour) resistance is situated in a certain *space* (and *time*). We therefore adopt and improve Johansson and Vinthagen's (2016) notion of the *spatialization* of resistance (and power). The highlighting of space is not new. Chin and Mittelman (1997) centre space through the concept of *sites of resistance* in terms of *localised, regionalised,* and *globalised* resistance and the attendant waning of the *public-private* resistance binary in the context of economic globalisation. We recognise the central idea of *sites*, which, following Johansson and Vinthagen (2016: 425), we frame as "*social spaces*; places where social life is structured in a place-specific way". In this study, we for instance frame everyday resistance as shaped by and exercised in *private* sites (i.e., largely individualised and hidden) and *socio-economic* sites like the timber nursery, harvesting, sawmilling workstations of the commercial forestry estate plantation.

However, since everyday resistance is historical, relational, and situated, we need a more complex framing of its connection with space. So, we extend the scope of space beyond sites by recasting it as *how* the activities, social relations, and identities of everyday resistance are "*spatially organized*" and "how" they are "practised in and through space as a central social dimension" (Johansson and Vinthagen, 2016: 425). Space is recast as the mutual constitution and enmeshment of both the *social* and *spatial/physical*- i.e., *spatiality*. That is, we position everyday resistance as always situated in and shaped by *social* sites or *socialised* space. An auxiliary notion is Shields' (1991) 'social spatialization'- the ongoing social construction of the spatial, for instance, at the level of social imagery (e.g., discourse) by which space also

becomes a politically and ideologically charged system of spatial *division*. To follow Harvey (1990: 419), "the assignment of place [sites]" of everyday resistance "within a socio-spatial structure indicates distinctive roles, capacities for action, and access to power" regarding the agents involved. The upshot is that we present the practices, relations, and identities of everyday resistance (and domination) as 'inscribed' into the 'spatiality' of social life (see Soja, 1989). Since the body features prominently in this study, we briefly theorise it as a social space of power and resistance.

3.4.1 The Physical Body as a Social Space of Resistance and Power

Since this research is methodologically anchored on the logic of *practice*, it makes sense to also read power-resistance dynamics in terms of *bodily* practices. We also predicate this foregrounding of the *body* on a relevant theoretical statement by Burawoy and van Holdt (2012: 36) that "The social order inscribes itself in bodies; that is to say, we learn bodily and express our knowledge bodily". It follows that the various forms of *social order* (i.e., social power/control) [which we have already theorised in detail] such as exploitation, ideology, hegemony, discipline, etc., and the forms and practices of resistance thereto, are inscribed in the spatiality of agents' physical bodies. Foucault's (1979) panoptic discipline provides an exemplar case, which centres the organisation of an agent's body in space as a fundamental dynamic in the exercise of disciplinary power and potential anti-discipline thereto. Power-knowledge regimes are *mediated* through the *body*. It is the body, which is targeted for training and supervision through socio-spatial surveillance techniques. It is the same body through which knowledge as discourse is mediated insomuch as to produce a docile/subjected but useful body that acts in the interest of power. Similarly, Bourdieu (2000: 172) refers to "…an inertia which results from the inscription of social structures in bodies…". Here, Bourdieu's (1979, 1984, 2000) notion of *habitus* mediates symbolic domination – this is indicative of the centrality of the *body* as a social site of domination and resistance.

Another significant bodily site of resistance and power is *body surface*. Pitts-Taylor (2003) theorises how 'non-mainstream body surface modifiers' constitute new forms of social rebellion via the body. She submits that through "creating scarred, branded, pierced, and heavily pierced bodies", women resist male dominance by rejecting beauty norms and roles of 'proper' femininity (2003: 3). Inspired by this idea of bodily surfaces, fieldwork findings, and Foucault's *panoptic* discipline, we coin the concept *surface-opticons*. Analytically, these are

techniques of (anti)discipline whose effect, beyond the original Panopticon logic, is predicated on the *dialectical* 'see - being seen' dynamic, and on plural, dispersed and/or mobile 'central towers' or 'guards'. The many 'eyes' that 'see' but are also 'seen back' by targets of power. Concretely, they denote the visible scarred and/or dismembered bodies of plantation workers (and others) who were victims of violent circumstances (especially state-sanctioned political violence on commercial farms). Not to mention *inanimate* surfaces such as graves, unburied remains of victims, and physical sites/markers of violent acts. We cast all these bodily surfaces as visible socio-spatial markers and reminders of the fear, pain, grief, harm, and death (associated with violent acts) that paradoxically evoke discipline and anti-discipline simultaneously.

Last, we borrow the idea of *liminality* from van Gennep (1960) and Turner's (1974, 1978) work on 'rites of passage' to develop our notion of *liminal space* wherein quotidian labour resistance is exercised and structured on the plantations. However, we first lay the foundation through related notions of *marginal space* (hooks, 1990), and *third space* (Bhabha, 1994; Soja, 1996).

3.4.2 Liminal Space

To borrow from hooks (1984, 1990), *marginal spaces* (e.g., the closed and exploitative socio-physical space or spatiality of commercial farms), and the attendant *marginality* -i.e., living on the edge (e.g., labour insecurities) elicit the marginalised (e.g., rural plantation wage workers) to develop innovative ways of perceiving reality. Theoretically, one of these ways concerns focusing attention on both the centre and the margins, looking "from the outside in and from the inside out" (hooks, 1990: 342). That is, marginal spaces and marginality offer alternative reference points that the marginalised are denied by the more powerful. Thus, marginality paradoxically constitutes a "site of resistance" and a "site of deprivation and oppression" (Ibid).

In a similar imagery, we also draw from Bhabha (1994) and Soja's (1996) 'third space', which denotes an in-between space – a fluid space, which destabilises binaries. First, in keeping with our theoretical orientation is Bhabha's focus on the *ambiguity* and *uncertainty* of third space. Of a similar persuasion is Turner's (1974, 1978) notion of *liminality*, which denotes a time and place of withdrawal from *normal* modes of social action - it is a space 'in betwixt' characterised by *uncertainty* and *disorientation*. So, we theorise that this is one typical socio-spatial context, which structures everyday labour resistance on the plantations. Second, our framing also flows from Soja's (1996) emphasis on the capacity of third space to foster creative practices,

relations, and identities. Similarly, Turner (1969, 1974) asserts that liminality brings the possibility of new perspectives. Therefore, overall, we cast everyday resistance as exercised in and structured by *liminal spaces*, which are *social* sites or a *spatiality* of ambivalence – sites that simultaneously produce possibilities for domination and/or inventive practices and relations against it.

3.5 Conclusion

Through a critique of seminal theoretical-cum-conceptual positions and Barura farm-specific empirical evidence, we crafted a *critical approach* to resistance. Our reworked model helped us problematise and map one plausible way of making sense of the understudied sub-field of everyday resistance in the specific context of a capitalist plantation workplace setting, and by extension, in any similar settings. Overall, we argued that a unified theory of everyday resistance is infeasible given the largely elusive and contingent nature of the phenomenon. We then developed the following related sub-theses. First, that everyday resistance is a *practice* and *not* a particular intention, recognition, or outcome. Second, that it is in a historical *mutually inclusive* and *dynamic* relation with *plural intersecting* matrices of power. Third, that it is a heterogenic and contingent practice - not a universal or unitary action, articulated by agents sometimes as resistance, and sometimes not. And last, that it is a socio-spatial practice.

Our major theoretical (and methodological) contribution was the innovative framing of (everyday) resistance as a *practice*. We thus deduce that there is more practical logic in reading everyday resistance as constituted *pre-reflexively* at the junction of context, interaction, and agency. That is, in contrast to an actor -oriented model, a practice-centred vision enables several research takeaways. Focus on the *art of doing* or the assessment of the nature of the act itself makes the object of study (i.e., everyday resistance) empirically observable, and thus easier to discover and analyse. This is unlike with intentions, which could be ambiguous, and/or which the actors may not even be aware of. Also, focus on the *how* (i.e., acts) than the *why* (intentions) helps us to theoretically and empirically distinguish and tease out resistance from any other related acts of difference, deviation, or creativity such as coping and survival strategy. Then, flowing from the latter is that a practice-centred model also allows the researcher to discover resistance even when social actors call it something else. Last, the approach affords the researcher a smooth flow through various levels of analyses of everyday resistance namely the macro, meso-, and/or micro levels.

We further added theoretical meaning to (everyday) resistance by casting it as constitutive with and as intersectional as the plural forms of power it *mutually* engages. Power and resistance are not dichotomous realms, neither are they merely two related opposites. So, a more concrete understanding of power and resistance entails appreciating their historical co-existence and co-development in the same social reality resulting in them being blended, conflicted, and constitutive of each other both at the theoretical and empirical level. Thus, the power-resistance dynamic is not zero-sum, it is not about power *or* resistance permanently 'winning'. Instead, it is a continuum of more or less of the other in a specific context, at a specific time in ambivalent fluid combinations.

The approach immediately above is convenient if, on one hand, we are to understand the agency of marginalised groups and its limits. Not to mention if we need to also apprehend the concrete connection between structure, interaction, and agency, and therefore how the mutuality of power and resistance shapes historical change. On the other hand, through this theoretical-cum-empirical vision, we are able to interrogate and break with the conventional (mis)construal that the 'politics' or struggles of subaltern groups (e.g., commercial farm workers) oscillates between bipolar positions of quiescence and spectacular resistance. We are then able to read these two as extreme ends of a continuum with in-between heterogenous ambivalent combinations. We are also able to situate everyday resistance as occurring between or alongside its more official dramatic counterpart. This is a more pragmatic and complex vision of (everyday) resistance.

Last, and importantly, our entire theoretical exposition foregrounded an *everyday* lens to a social phenomenon (i.e., resistance), which is conventionally cast and read as 'few and far between', collective, official, and spectacular. Thus, we centred the notion 'everyday' insofar as it engenders resistance specific properties insomuch as to include innovative practices of ordinary people or subalterns (i.e., marginalised groups). We conclude that the creative framing of resistance in a *quotidian* model helps curtail the intellectual and political marginalisation or dismissal of subaltern struggles on the fallacy that they do not conform to the dominant understanding(s) of resistance. Research on resistance has the intellectual (and moral) obligation, to bring to the forefront of scholarship, the *everyday* framing of subaltern struggles. This is all the more logical given the reality that *everyday* resistance constitutes a practically more feasible political route for subalterns than its largely 'official' counterpart, which is

arguably more susceptible to bureaucratic censorship, manipulation, and physical or disciplinary reprisal.

CHAPTER 4

MY FIELDWORK EXPERIENCES OF RESEARCHING HIDDEN PRACTICES OF LABOUR RESISTANCE ON BARURA FORESTRY ESTATE

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter I tell the unique story of my fieldwork. I detail the field-specific complexities of trying to balance the technical and socio-political aspects of sampling, selection, and deployment of data collection, analysis, and interpretation methods and procedures. My departing premise is my overall framing of (labour) resistance as an *everyday practice*. Since everyday labour resistance at Barura was synonymous with *quotidian acts* that were typically hidden, illegalised, stigmatised, and *embedded* in everyday social life, it made empirical sense to explore and discover such resistance through ethnography.

The discovery of Barura workers' *acts* of resistance that were typically hidden, routine, informal, 'illegalised', and often considered 'deviant' required the organic and piecemeal building and cultivation of high and enduring levels of rapport, trust, and confidentiality with the workers, their families and colleagues, their superiors, as well as with the surrounding communities. Not to mention some meticulous attention to the *infinitesimal* details of these social actors' *mundane* lives. Hence, ethnography proved the most credible and reliable form of enquiry as it afforded me some prolonged, continuous, socio-spatial on-site immersion into the life-worlds of the plantation workers.

While I appreciate that scientific 'objectivity' is of essence to any field enquiry, my fieldwork realities unsettled this conventional imagery. Ethnography involved the daily immersive mutuality of the researcher's, participants', and onlookers' life-worlds for fourteen months. Such socio-spatial immersion also meant the convolution of 'objectivity' by the complex *socio-political* details of all these social actors' lives. So, I argue that my fieldwork, far from being strictly an 'objective' technical or scientific choice, application, and assessment of the

ethnographic method(s) and outcomes, was also a socio-politically charged endeavour. This was more so given that, the ethnographic design, placed me, the researcher, at the centre of its methods, procedures, and outcomes.

As a disclaimer, this methodology chapter is uncharacteristically long given that I was researching a highly vulnerable group on a highly sensitive topic, which entailed meticulous ethnographic attention and detail to methodological issues concerning ethics, positionality, and reflexivity. Immediately below, I begin by illuminating the technical-cum-socio-political dynamics informing my sampling of places, participants, and institutions. It is noteworthy from the outset that the author was well-acquainted with the Barura site as a former schoolteacher at the site and through constant long visits to friends and family who (had) worked at the site. This is further elaborated in sub-section 4.2.3 below.

4.2 My Sampling Experiences: Places, Institutions, People, Relations…

My choice of the research site (i.e., Barura estate plantation) was, to draw from Burgess's (2002) methodological insights, largely informed by my reflection of the dynamics of *spatiality*-i.e., social sites (see Chapter 3 Section 3.4) at the level of my 'intellectual habitus' or 'special cognitive map'. That is, in this instance, the stock of knowledge that I had about Barura (and its nearby village communities) and the relevant social meanings attached to it and knowledge of it in relation to the *research object* (i.e., everyday labour resistance). My 'special cognitive map' was concretely manifested through the following decisions regarding my sampling of the research site, sub-sites, and research participants, which all constituted key units of analysis. I used *purposive sampling* (Creswell, 2014), which enabled me to select the most suitable and appropriate places, institutions, participants, and relations for the fieldwork insofar as answering the research question(s) and objectives mattered.

4.2.1 Why Barura Forestry Estate Plantation and Chimanimani District?

4.2.1.1 Higher Intensity and Frequency in Wage Labour in the aftermath of the FTLRP

First, Barura forestry estate represented a 'typical case' (Yin, 2009) for exploring everyday forms and practices of resistance by formal *wage labourers* in a commercial agrarian industrial setting, which even in the aftermath of a 'violent' and 'chaotic' Zimbabwean state-driven nationwide Fast Track Land Reform Program (FTLRP), still managed to retain a relatively higher *intensity* and *frequency* in wage labour than other agricultural and non-agricultural sectors (Moyo, 2011).

Overall, the 2000-2003 FTLRP, which epitomised a statist 'land grab' resulted in instant and successive long-term high levels of labour turnover on most commercial farms (Ibid). This nationwide FTLRP was founded on polarised divisive party politics that was deployed by pro-ZANU (PF) politicians, policymakers, supporters, etc. Overall, these actors contributed to the incremental violent eviction and displacement (and thus job losses), from commercial farms, of farmers and farm workers known or alleged to be pro-MDC – an arguably strong newly formed opposition political party back then (Sachikonye, 2003). Post-FTLRP, these evictions continue(d) to persist as episodic open political violence on targeted commercial farms every election period. So, the net effect was the cumulative continuation of low intensity and frequency in formal commercial farm wage labour. However, at the time of this fieldwork, Barura forestry plantation estate largely remained least affected by these labour turnover-inducing dynamics.

That is, the FTLRP did not directly lead to a substantial loss of formal, waged agrarian labour among large industrial forestry plantation estates such as Barura, since the Zimbabwean state did not designate them for land acquisition and redistribution and such estates retained most of their permanent workforce (Moyo, 2011). Barura was also among the 250 large-scale farms and estates, which by 1999, were supported by Bilateral Investment Protection and Promotion Agreements (BIPPAS) whereby the economic logic used by policymakers to justify the retention of such agricultural estates was their alleged superior micro-economic efficiency and productivity over other farms. More so, the Zimbabwean state considered agro-industrial estates critical to export growth, employment promotion, and agro-industrial development. On this basis, Barura estate got exempted from acquisition and redistribution.

Thus, in the year (i.e., 2016), which this fieldwork was to commence, Barura estate plantation, for me, stood out as one of the rare enduring '*islands*' of *formal wage labour* (Ibid) amid informality, precarity, and low-capacity utilisation notably in the aftermath of a worker displacement-inducing FTLRP. So, the unique relatively *higher levels* of *intensity* and *frequency* in wage labour at Barura estate (relative to other agricultural and non-agricultural industries) motivated my choice of Barura as a social laboratory. It made empirical sense to explore a typically hidden form of labour resistance on a commercial farm that still retained a relatively large population of formal wage workers from which to select a typically representative sample of potential participants.

In mutual resonance with the above criterion, my choice of Barura estate was also motivated by the near-regular intensity and frequency in *industrial production* activities, broadly in the sub-sector (estate plantation agriculture), and particularly at Barura forestry estate plantation.

4.2.1.2 Near-Regular Intensity and Frequency and Higher Concentration in Production Activities

Relative to other agricultural (sub)sectors, the *near-regular* intensity (i.e., capacity utilisation) and frequency in industrial production activity in the commercial forestry estate sub-sector, and at Barura estate in particular (see Bauer, 2013), motivated my choice of Barura as a more feasible research site. In the year I began my fieldwork, this criterion was all the more relevant since in the wake of the 'chaotic' FTLRP, coupled to the general meltdown of Zimbabwe's agro-based economy (Ibid), most industries in the agricultural and other sectors had either 'closed shop or were operating way below the optimal capacity utilisation' (Ibid).

A pilot study and perusal of relevant scholarship (e.g., Bauer, 2013) made me establish that Barura estate plantation was/is located in and constitutes an integral part of a predominantly commercial estate plantation farming district namely Chimanimani, where the forestry and sawmilling activities of two of Zimbabwe's largest timber companies (see Chapter 1) are concentrated and were still active. One of these companies, namely Allied Timbers Zimbabwe (Pvt) Limited (ATZ) has its largest (about 21 600 ha) pine forestry resource base in the same district where it has a total of four estates (Bauer, 2013). Among these four, Barura estate commands the largest proportion of this resource base (Ibid). So, it made fieldwork sense to study a phenomenon such as (everyday) labour resistance broadly in a district, and specifically at an estate workplace where plantation industrial production was concentrated, and still active. This would not have been feasible at other commercial workspaces where production had become erratic, sparse, or even extinct - as was the prevailing situation nationwide in most industrial sectors at the time of this research. Another criterion for choice of Barura estate concerned its legal *ownership* as elaborated immediately below.

4.2.1.3 State Ownership under a Capitalist Production System

Formerly administered under a parastatal board, from 2000 Barura estate became a subsidiary of a state-owned private limited company namely Forestry Company of Zimbabwe (FCZ). Then from 2007 right through the time of this study (to present) the company was renamed Allied Timbers Zimbabwe (Pvt) Limited. The latter company was and is still wholly owned by

the Government of Zimbabwe (Bauer, 2013). That is, the Zimbabwean state, via its agents (e.g., agriculture ministry officials, board of directors, CEOs, line managers, etc.), retained significant rights and powers of ownership and control of Barura estate's productive resources, especially "the basic power over allocation of capital" and the "command of profits" (Wright, 2002: 13). Thus, the labour and production processes at Barura estate became increasingly *capitalist*.

Therefore, for me, the *conflicted* mix of state ownership and production under neo-liberal capitalist principles presented an interesting case and context for exploring everyday labour resistance. The *state-cum-capital* identity, relation, and dynamic made a curious and compelling case for studying quotidian resistance by labour in a context where statist and capitalist interests were curiously intertwined in the same production, valorisation, and labour system. It potentially meant complex power dynamics from within and outside the labour process itself and thus potentially complex power-resistance dynamics. Thus, together with the foregoing criteria, this state-cum-capital dynamic influenced my choice of Barura estate instead of other nearby commercial farms. Last, *accessibility* was a vitally important criterion for selecting Barura estate instead of other commercial farms in the district and elsewhere.

4.2.1.4 Physical, Social, and Cultural Accessibility

According to (Burgess, 2002), accessibility concerns 'the degree of access and entry that is given the researcher' to the research site(s), participants, networks, etc. So, my choice of Barura estate as the most feasible case study compared to other various plantation estates within its vicinity was significantly influenced by my relatively free and unrestricted entry and access at three mutually reinforcing *physical*, *social*, and *cultural* levels. Access at these levels is detailed later under a specific sub-section below. Suffice for now to say that, overall, my access and entry was free and enhanced despite a nearly six months' wait (despite me already physically residing at the estate) to be granted official written permission from the relevant agricultural ministry (sub) offices to begin conducting fieldwork proper on estate premises with rank and file and/or management. In addition to sampling Barura estate, I also had to sample specific socio-spatial sites and participants.

4.2.2 Selecting Research Socio-spatial Sites and Participants at and around Barura

My selection of representative cases of both sub-socio-spatial sites and research participants occurred before, at the start, and during the fieldwork. For credibility, I *triangulated* (Quick &

Hall, 2015) purposive and snowball sampling techniques, which are both non-probability sampling techniques. This entailed the selection of my study cases based largely on purposeful judgement rather than random selection (Babbie, 2020). According to Neuman (2014), in purposive or judgemental sampling the researcher "selects cases with a specific purpose in mind". To this end, I intentionally chose socio-spatial sites and participants that possessed 'certain known characteristics or experiences' (Babbie, 2020) that were relevant to my research objectives. The main takeaway from purposive sampling was that it enhanced my selection of cases, which provided an increasingly fair, honest, truthful, and balanced (i.e., *credibility* and *dependability*) account of everyday labour resistance at Barura estate. I used purposive sampling to select the sub-socio-spatial sites that are highlighted below.

4.2.2.1 Purposive Sampling: (sub) Socio-spatial sites at and around Barura Estate

The sub-socio-spatial sites, which I chose were spaces wherein the life-worlds of the research participants were centred (in relation to the research object) and which I had to observe and analyse through active and/or passive participation in them. These *socialised sites* (see Chapter 3) can be categorised into two related categories. First, those situated directly on Barura estate. Second, those with a close socio-spatial connection to the latter but situated in the nearby rural village communities.

At Barura plantation the sampled sites were the *worksites* of the various estate departments. These were silviculture (e.g., tree seedling nursing, transplanting, weeding, pruning, pest and fire control, etc.); harvesting (e.g., tree felling; tele-logging, timber jerking, etc.); sawmilling (e.g., wet and dry sawmills); timber stacking and storage; timber dispatch; estate security; and estate farm school *worksites*. Then, were the estate worker residential compounds and the workers' own compound-domiciled makeshift stokvel club centres. Not to mention the estate's recreational centres, open-air and sheltered religious spaces, shopping and vending stations, gravesites, and community halls. I also did purposive sampling of Barura estate's administration offices, its research centre, and specific sections (e.g., those affected by fires, those with islands of indigenous forest, etc.) of its vast exotic forestry plantation.

Then, in the nearby rural villages surrounding Barura plantation, I also intentionally sampled specific sub-spaces whose socio-economic, politico-cultural dynamics were curiously connected to those at Barura estate in terms of the research objectives. These spaces were rural health service centres (e.g., rural clinics and mission hospitals); rural business service centres

(e.g., grocery shops, butcheries, vending stalls, etc.); sites of rural local government projects; political meetings spaces; village social and recreational centres (e.g., social soccer fields, community halls, beerhalls, etc); village religious spaces (e.g., churches, mosques, shrines, etc); village burial spaces; prominent sites of the village money economy (e.g., informal vending and trading stalls, small irrigation ventures, small cooperative clubs, and craft centres). I also selected residential and subsistence plots of specific Barura village-resident workers and their peasant counterparts, the homesteads of certain rural traditional elites (i.e., chiefs, and kraalheads) and the homes and shrines of reputable traditional healers. Last, purposive sampling was also useful in my selection of village common pool resource sites such as grazing land, waterways, communal forests, playgrounds, and graveyards.

As well as socio-spatial sites, purposive sampling, this time in triangulation with *snowball sampling*, also helped me select representative samples of research participants.

4.2.2.2 Purposive and Snowball Sampling: My Research Participants

Snowball or chain referral sampling in a multi-stage fashion, involved my initial purposive selection of one or a few cases or participants (i.e., 'seeds') who met the study criteria. I then asked these 'seeds' to refer me to or nominate other individuals or networks that they believed also met the criteria (Creswell, 2014). In each case, I repeated this process until I obtained enough participants. My main takeaway from snowballing was that it enabled me to access Barura workers, key informants, and networks, which would otherwise have been inaccessible (also see Bernard, 2013). This was more so, given the largely sensitive (i.e., incriminating legally, socially, politically, etc.) nature of the research object of everyday labour *resistance*. The subject of workplace resistance or any hint thereto often elicits fearsome and suspicious images of 'illegality', 'criminality', 'deviance', etc. insomuch that any arbitrary invitation (i.e., without trusted referees) of potential participants is likely to be met with suspicion and hence some reluctance to participate. Thus, snowball sampling practically helped me prevent or resolve this likely obstacle.

So, I utilised purposive and snowball sampling techniques in a mutually reinforcing manner to select and gain access to representative samples of participants with the following specific attributes and experiences. First, and importantly, semi-skilled and unskilled (i.e., 'rank and file') workers, who were actively working or had worked (i.e., in at least the previous two years) at Barura estate for at least six months either on seasonal, casual fixed-term, or

permanent contracts. Also, male and female, farm-dwelling and/or village-dwelling workers from any of the seven Barura forestry estate departments mentioned in sub-section 4.2.2.1 above. Last, these 'rank and file' workers were both of Zimbabwean and non-Zimbabwean paternal ancestry. Second, Barura lower management staff (i.e., supervisors and foremen) who had the self-same attributes as the 'rank and file' above. Third, Barura top management staff – i.e., line managers or heads of the seven forestry divisions mentioned in sub-section 4.2.2.1 above. Last, key informants possessing esoteric, expert, and/or professional knowledge, which spoke (in)directly to the research object and objectives. Specifically, these key informants were Barura shopfloor union leaders, Barura line managers, local clinic/hospital staff, local traditional healers/witchdoctors, local traditional elites, and local leaders of political parties.

After sampling the foregoing socio-spatial sites and research participants, a related important part of my fieldwork process was to practically gain access to them. Subsequently, my logical departure point was to initially gain physical and socio-cultural access to Barura estate itself.

4.2.3 Gaining Access to Barura Estate as a Physical and Socio-cultural Space

The issue of access was vitally important in this study insomuch that, in relative terms, it was the most important criterion informing my choice of Barura estate despite the availability of other potentially feasible case studies within its vicinity. Overall, owing to their largely colonial heritage and therefore an 'autonomous- states -like status' and their typical physical remoteness from mainstream society, most commercial farm spaces in Zimbabwe, and elsewhere in Africa, operate more or less like total institutions. This makes access increasingly problematic, more so if it concerns seemingly 'intrusive' and sensitive fieldwork research. Despite Barura estate somewhat exhibiting these 'total institution'-like qualities, my access to it as a restricted physical farmland, and a *privately* owned socio-economic production site, was largely unrestricted. Essentially, my relative ease of access into Barura estate at the mutually reinforcing physical, and socio-cultural levels had a largely *historical* basis.

From 2000 to 2003 I worked and resided full-time at Barura estate as one of its farm school teaching staff members. Barura estate was not my direct employer, but I was deployed there by the Ministry of Education. So, together with fellow teachers we constituted an integral part of the education division of Barura estate. As estate schoolteachers, we were *de facto* liaisons between estate management and the rank and file. On one hand, as part of the school representatives team, I sat in the estate's board meetings as well as other estate platforms

wherein Barura farm school was part of the agenda. On the other hand, also as a teacher and a member of the broader Barura plantation community, I was immersed in direct day-to-day interaction with the Barura estate workers (and some households of the nearby villages), who were parents or guardians of the students whom we taught or who were members of the broader estate or nearby village communities. This was all between 2000 and 2003.

Coincidentally, thirteen years on, in 2016-17 (the active period of my fieldwork), some members (potential participants) of the above-mentioned communities were either still working at Barura estate and/or still resident in the nearby villages. More so, my former headmaster (who was still heading Barura farm school in 2016-17), was also a very close relative of mine. As a result, from the time (end-2003) I transferred from Barura estate to the material time of this fieldwork, I *regularly* visited my headmaster-relative and friends at Barura estate - both long and short-term visits. These cumulative frequent visits (in)advertently availed me invaluable opportune moments to continuously maintain *earlier* (i.e., 2000-2003) cordial relations, which I had built with former work colleagues, members of estate management, members of rank and file, and members of nearby villages. The same visits also helped me cultivate new relations with new members from these self-same groups. Fast forward to 2016-17, on the basis of being a constant and familiar social figure at Barura over the years, my physical and social access to Barura was mostly routine, free, and unhindered.

Another dynamic, which is closely tied to the cordial historical relations above, also eased my access. This concerned cases of initial encounters of mistrust and the attendant reluctance to participate that resulted from *potential* participants seeing me for the first time (i.e., me being totally unfamiliar to them). Such cases mostly got resolved when, at opportune moments, I discovered and proved to the reluctant would-be participants that they were, in fact, colleagues, friends, spouses, siblings, children, or friends of specific workers with whom I had established earlier cordial relations during my 2000-2003 full-time tenure at Barura, or during my regular cumulative visits to Barura as detailed above. Overall, I extensively tapped into historically accumulated *social capital* (Bourdieu, 1984) in the form of *enduring* cordial professional and personal relations and networks as the main basis for building and/or consolidating rapport, trust, and gaining access to social networks at Barura in 2016-17.

Meanwhile, the fact that I was a close relative of the Barura farm school headmaster, who himself had cultivated cordial personal-cum-professional relations (that spanned over a twenty-

year period) with farm management helped me easily secure a fixed abode at Barura. The headmaster-relative, via endorsement by the estate's human resource department, was *officially* allowed to accommodate me in one comfortable room of his four-bedroomed estate house, from 25 November 2015 to 30 April 2017. However, there was a bureaucratic hurdle. The Barura human resource manager (on behalf of the relevant Agriculture ministry (sub)offices), categorically informed me that the grant of official permission to reside on Barura estate premises did not immediately grant me the official greenlight to *practically* begin interviewing and/or observing Barura workers especially on any of the *estate premises*.

This meant that I had to wait until May 2016 (see Agriculture Ministry approval letter in Appendix) before receipt of written official permission from the relevant Agriculture ministry (sub) offices in order to practically conduct any formal interviews, observations, etc on Barura estate premises. Thus, the official response to my application (to conduct fieldwork), which, normally, was supposed to be availed within a month, was instead availed almost six months later. To this end, I was advised that given the imminent 2018 harmonised national elections viz a viz the potentially 'politically sensitive' nature of my research, my application had to undergo some 'serious' vetting and censorship. This was mainly attributed to the reality that, since 2000 (see Background section of Chapter 1), the governing ZANU (PF) party had, for electoral mileage, deliberately turned commercial farm spaces into active sites of partisan politics, and therefore sites that were highly susceptible to political violence, more so, every election period. Barura estate was no exception to such dynamics. So, in my case, the vetting was made all the more rigorous and lengthier since I was seen to be intending to do potentially 'politically sensitive' fieldwork with participants (farm workers) whom the state knew or perceived to be a strong voter base for the then opposition MDC party. This was more so, in years (2016-17) immediately preceding the imminent 2018 harmonised national elections.

I strategically capitalised on this unexpected six-month waiting period to cultivate new, and consolidate old, relations of trust and rapport with, and to gain gradual access into, some of the social networks of the general Barura plantation and/or the nearby village communities. I merely proceeded from where I had left socially (i.e., my 2000-2003 tenure on and the subsequent regular cumulative visits to Barura estate) by attending and/or partaking in multifarious *socio-cultural activities* (except direct Barura worksite activities) in which farm management, farm workers, and/or villagers were involved. This was either on Barura estate

or in the nearby rural villages. These socio-cultural activities included weddings, funerals, church services, braai or beer parties, political gatherings, and social soccer. With social soccer, I became both an active team player and one of the organisers of the two plantation and village-domiciled social soccer teams. Our audience was mainly people from Barura and the nearby villages. Also, it was during this wait that, in consultation with estate management, the school administration, and parents, I managed to implement voluntary tutoring sessions for the farm school's examination classes. This exercise was facilitated by my former role as a voluntary tutor during my 2000-2003 full-time teaching tenure at Barura farm school.

So, overall, prior to the official fieldwork 'proper', my initial immersion (during the six-month 'wait') in the socio-cultural settings and activities mentioned immediately above, was vitally important in setting and /or consolidating a socio-political stage of enhanced relations of trust, familiarity, and rapport. This strategy in turn availed me with a smooth social transition or passage to an enhanced execution of the officially sanctioned part of the fieldwork which, I then had to do within the legal remit of Barura estate policies and procedures as stipulated by the Ministerial approval letter I finally received in May 2016.

Last, cultural and linguistic accessibility also matter a lot in ethnographic research (see for e.g, Clifford, 1997; Harrison, 2018). To this end, my cultural and linguistic access to Barura estate, was feasible and enhanced by the fact that the estate is in the same district as and is only less than 60km from my rural residential ancestral home. Importantly, I and a majority of the farm workers (and their families) at Barura, and the villagers in the communities within its vicinity share(d) a similar ethnic heritage. That is, language-wise, I share(d) a common dialect (i.e., ChiShona), and a specific sub-dialect (ChiNdau) with a majority of the (potential) research participants. Sharing the same ethnic background also meant that I was familiar with and sensitive to the cultural norms and values of my (potential) participants insomuch as to establish meaningful, unoffensive, and effective communication and understanding within their home and work life-worlds. This might not have been this feasible in other plantation farms outside my ancestral home district (Chimanimani).

4.3 My Fieldwork Experiences: Collecting Data on and around Barura Estate

Given the six-month bureaucratic delay I detailed earlier, I began conducting Agriculture Ministry-sanctioned fieldwork with Barura workers and on company premises in May 2016.

The predominantly backstage/hidden, contextual, and politically sensitive or incriminating (i.e., real or imagined attraction of disapproval and punitive action) nature of my research object (i.e., everyday labour resistance) built a compelling case for my use of an exploratory *ethnographic* design. This is detailed immediately below.

4.3.1 Ethnography on and around Barura Estate- How and Why?

Ethnography concerns fieldwork being set in the natural social settings or the living and lived experience of the individuals and/or collectives under study (see Harrison, 2018; Robben & Sluka, 2012). It is a *qualitative* and *exploratory* design. By being qualitative - i.e., putting a characteristic thrust on the nuanced contextualised meanings, behaviours, practices, experiences, and interactions of individuals and small groups (Maxwell, 2008; Roberts et al., 2003), ethnography proved appropriate in my investigation of a largely *individual, subjective,* and *contextualised* research object like Barura workers' everyday labour resistance. Also, by being exploratory, ethnography was a relevant design insofar as its investigative nature facilitated my empirical discovery of practices and dynamics, which constituted such a typically hidden and under-researched social phenomenon.

Furthermore, regarding a single case study ethnography, of which my Barura case was a prototype, (Bourdieu, 1998) says:

> …scientific enterprise is indeed based on the belief that the deepest logic of the social world can be grasped if only one plunges into the particularity of an empirical reality, historically located and dated, but with the objective of constructing it as a "special case of what is possible', as Bachelard puts it, that as an exemplary case in a finite word of possible configurations.

In keeping with this Bourdieusian logic of ethnography, I 'plunged' or *immersed* myself into the historically specific concrete realities of Barura estate (and its nearby rural villages) in order to discover its workers' quotidian (labour) resistance, whose nature and dynamics constituted one prototypical case. The practical essence was 'thereness' or 'being there' (Geertz, 1973, 1988) onsite, as and when Barura workers' everyday power-resistance identities, practices, and relations played out 'within a real-life context' (Yin, 2009). The latter comprised the concrete and authentic context of a sub-optimal post-colonial commercial forestry labour process, co-existing with a subsistence peasant economy in the nearby surrounding rural villages.

According to Malinowski (1922), who is a pioneer of the ethnographic design, the immersive 'thereness' has to be for a prolonged period of at least a year. Likewise, but necessitated more by the typically backstage, personal, and politically sensitive nature of my research object, I

became a permanent resident of Barura estate and immersed myself in the workers' life-worlds for continuous fourteen months. This enabled me to have sufficient time to cultivate the optimum levels of trust and rapport, which I needed for Barura workers to allow me into their backstage life-worlds both on the plantation and elsewhere. This created an enabling context, which made my discovery of the typically hidden practices and dynamics of labour resistance increasingly feasible.

My ethnography was *overt* (Spradley, 2016b). That is, from the outset, I disclosed my researcher identity and the objectives and terms and conditions of the research (i.e., participant information sheet) to all my research participants. Ethically, this enabled these participants to give some informed consent and voluntary participation. However, in my being overt, I had to contend with an ethical dilemma regarding the actual verbal phrasing of my sensitive research object lest I scared away potential participants. I found myself needing to strike a balance between non-deceitful phrasing of the incriminating research object and curtailing the participants' potential reluctance to participate. So, I avoided the use of blunt fear-invoking or incriminating jargon such as vernacular equivalents of 'resistance', 'opposition', 'contesting', etc. Instead, I had to use more 'neutral' 'relaxed' but non-deceitful substitutes like 'daily responses to work and life conditions' or 'coping and survival strategies at work and home', etc.

In addition to what I have already alluded to, the ethnographic design was of further utility in the following ways. It addressed the research questions and objectives through an *emic perspective* (Babbie, 2020). Data on the research object was collected and analysed as experienced and understood by Barura workers. This enhanced the *credibility* (i.e., fair, honest, and balanced) and *dependability* (i.e., consistent, and accurate in terms of truthfulness) (see Quick and Hall, 2015) of the empirical data. Ethnography also afforded me *direct access* to and a *first-hand* learning experience of Barura workers' quotidian practices of labour resistance resulting in relatively credible and dependable thick descriptions. Last, immersive 'thereness' on Barura for fourteen consecutive months enabled me to, in an iterative way, refine my sampling techniques, data collection methods, and findings as and when the fieldwork unfolded.

Under the ethnographic design, I chose and deployed complementary data collection methods, namely participant observation, in-depth unstructured interviews, and casual conversations. These are discussed immediately below.

4.3.1.1 Participant Observation – When, How, and Why

It is noteworthy from the outset that inasmuch as my choice and deployment of the specific above-mentioned research methods was supposed to be an objective process, it was also *subjective* and *socio-political*. This is echoed by (Burgess, 2002: 24) when he submits:

> Accounts by researchers have revealed that social research is not just a question of neat procedures but social processes whereby interaction between researcher and researched will directly influence the course which research takes.

To this end, beyond the criterion of objective (i.e., technical) appropriateness, my actual choice, deployment, and evaluation of participant observation (and the other two methods) was also pragmatically shaped by contextual dictates. It was not a straightforward endeavour to the extent the research object (i.e., everyday labour resistance) was highly contextual, personal, sensitive (i.e., incriminating) and dynamic.

Participant observation entails the researcher's extended immersion and involvement in the concrete contexts and life-worlds of research 'subjects' in a systematic attempt to discover the knowledge and skill sets that they are using to organise their practices, processes, perceptions, behaviour, and interactions (Singleton & Bruce, 1993). In the current context, I immersed myself in the natural labour and life contexts of Barura wage workers for fourteen months in order to discover their practices of quotidian labour resistance.

For, Babbie (2020), in participant observation the extent of involvement with the subjects in their life-worlds will vary. This entails observation through different levels of participation, which can be placed on a continuum of roles ranging from complete participant, participant as observer, observer as participant, to complete observer (Mackellar, 2013). So, the researcher must decide the level of participation. In the context of my research, my participation roles were practically shaped by the scope and scale of the practices I was studying, the trust and rapport I had cultivated with the subjects, the rapport between the subjects themselves, and overall, the dictates of the prevailing situation (i.e., contingency). In light of such *realpolitiks* (Bourdieu, 1998a) -i.e., adaptation to things as they are, my observation roles more or less ranged from participant-as-observer (i.e., more active participation), observer-as-participant

(passive/moderate participation), to complete observer. Below, I initially articulate my participant as observer role.

4.3.1.1 (i) Participant-as-Observer Role on and around Barura Estate

In the *participant-as-observer* (P as O hereafter) role, I fully became an *integral part* of and an *active participant* in the life-worlds of the Barura wage workers (and other subjects) I was observing (for e.g., see Mackellar, 2013; Mwita, 2022). I fully immersed myself as a group member in the workers' labour and life contexts, and experienced *first-hand* what these workers were experiencing. That is, beyond being just physically present at and in the workers' socio-spatial sites, I actively engaged with the workers in their activities, processes, events, and interactions. So, in my P as O role, I had to strike a balance between my dual roles both as an active participant and as an observer by participating as an insider and observing as an outsider.

In order to give a practical sense of what my P as O role entailed, I spotlight quintessential fieldwork cases. First, my P as O role was quite plausible and prominent in formal Barura worksite tasks and processes that typically did not require highly technical and specialised skills. For instance, as an integral part of specific work-gangs, I directly carried out work tasks in the menial silvicultural operations of Barura estate, namely tree seedling transplantation, tree thinning, fertiliser application, weed and pest control, fireguard maintenance etc. I also actively engaged in similar general hand tasks in Barura's timber stacking and tallying operations. However, this direct and active execution of tasks with and alongside the workers was not feasible especially with worksite operations such as wet and dry sawmilling, which required specialised skills. Noteworthy is that unlike Burawoy (1979), in his Chicago factory case study, I did not have to become a Barura employee, but a volunteer worker for my P as O role. I achieved the effective articulation of the P as O role at specific silvicultural and timber stacking-cum-tallying worksites in the following way(s).

Prior to my participation (both active and passive) at any of the various Barura worksites, Supervisor X, at the instruction of the human resource department, formally took me through Barura estate's blueprint on its terms and conditions of work. Thereafter, for each respective worksite, I realised direct formal contact with the Barura work-gang in whose work tasks I wanted to directly participate through that gang's foreman. I had to initially contact the foreman in advance, for them to grant me informed consent and to provide me with basic work details such as specific worksites, physical access to the worksites, work schedules/shifts, the nature,

scope, routine, duration, the practical execution of the tasks etc. Noteworthy is that each respective foreman would initially discuss consent with all members of his work-gang before granting me informed consent as agreed with and on behalf of their work-gang. Some foremen would go out of their way to initially take me on orientation excursions to the worksites where I had to assume my P as O role. Then, on my first official day at the target worksite, the foreman would officially introduce me to his work-gang. This was a mere formality since I was already a familiar face to most of the workers who constituted these work-gangs (see section 4.1.3 above).

Thereafter, alongside the worksite foreman, I would then share with each respective work-gang my research role, the purpose and scope of my research, its terms and conditions, etc. I would then attend to any emergent questions form the work-gang members. Thereafter, I would be assigned at most two days to strictly observe, listen, learn, and inquire regarding the practical execution of the specific worksite tasks, routines, protocols, etc. After this two-day probation phase, I would then become a fully-fledged member of the work-gang. Overall, to follow Babbie (2020), all the foregoing induction procedures were done with relative ease and maximum cooperation given that my relationship with most members of Barura top and lower management and rank and file extended beyond my research role (see earlier section 4.1.3).

After the foregoing induction phase, I then ensured that I realised my P as O role through *continuous iterative* direct execution of worksite job tasks with fellow Barura workers for not less than a month at each respective worksite. This extended period proved sufficient for me to optimally observe and discover patterns, rhythms, intensity, frequency, dexterity, duration, intervals, consistency, accuracy, etc. insofar as specific worksite practices, behaviours, perceptions, activities, processes, and interaction played out. The standard workday at Barura worksites was nine hours long. So, practically, I ensured that I alternated between working the full nine hours and at most five – especially in cases of other competing fieldwork commitments such as intermittent passive observations and first-time or follow-up in-depth interviews elsewhere.

Another emblematic case wherein I assumed the P as O role at Barura concerned firefighting episodes. I actively helped in extinguishing fire outbreaks within sections of the commercial plantation forest because as per Barura estate policy anyone who was resident on the estate was obliged to directly engage in firefighting in any instances of fire outbreaks. This was especially

so, given the ever-diminishing numbers and capacity of firefighting vehicles and equipment to effectively extinguish fire outbreaks. I was an active participant in helping extinguish a total of eleven fire outbreaks during my fourteen months stay at Barura estate. This mandatory active participation availed me with the chance to observe and discover certain practices, patterns, and dynamics that spoke to the research object and objectives.

More so, both on and off Barura estate, I was 'part and parcel' of and a direct participant in recreational groups and activities in which my participants partook. I, for instance, observed by actively partaking in social soccer, beer drinking, braaiing, etc. which mainly took the form of Geertz 's (1998) *deep hangouts.* That is, a form of *participatory observation* (Ibid), which involved my immersion in intimate *informal* social interactions with the participants in non-work settings. These deep hangouts helped me consolidate existing relations of trust and also cultivate trust in situations wherein I was not completely trusted at first blush. More so, the hangouts enabled the participants to interact with me in a much more relaxed informal setting, which helped diminish their perception of my role as a researcher, which in turn helped minimise staged interactions. Importantly, these informal hangouts also immensely helped me pave the way for later interactions in formal settings (Takyi, 2015) like the various Barura estate worksites. Having given paradigmatic pragmatic cases of my P-as-O role, below I turn to the takeaways that were specific to this role.

Through the P as O role, my direct, extended, and iterative shared work and life experiences with Barura workers as an 'insider' cultivated 'new' heightened levels of *trust* and *rapport* (for e.g., see Babbie, 2020), which are a *sine qua non* for researching an incriminating research object like everyday labour resistance. This, in turn, enhanced my discovery of Barura workers' *backstage* practices, perceptions, and interactions, which I would not have been able to discover or would have been difficult to discover through passive observation or in-depth interviews. For instance, by my P as O role, I was able to discover typically disguised practices such as Barura workers' goldbricking acts, underhand land deals, etc. More so, my *iterative*, *continuous*, and *prolonged* presence especially at specific worksites enabled the realisation of a point whereby workers who had initially been trapped in an 'impression management' mode gradually became oblivious to my researcher role. This meant that at an opportune moment, they would finally revert to their natural work routines, which in turn resulted in authentic findings that were increasingly fair, honest, and balanced – i.e., *credible* (see Ouick and Hall,

2015). Furthermore, my continuous 'thereness' (Geertz, 1973, 1988) and direct involvement at specific socio-spatial sites resulted in a more realistic *contextualised* nuanced understanding of the research object (see Spradley, 2016b). Finally, direct, extended daily engagement with Barura workers enabled me to refine my P as O role, my attentiveness to detail, my positionality, reflexivity, etc. as and when required by circumstances (i.e., contingency). However, there were 'catches' associated with my P as O role.

My *overt active* onsite involvement with 'subjects' might have resulted in some of them shifting attention more to the research than natural social processes insomuch as to make the behaviours and processes being observed atypical (see Creswell, 2014; Babbie, 2020). That is, some Barura workers, possibly overwhelmed by my role and presence as a researcher, might have been triggered to alter their natural behaviour and interactions insofar as to give staged performances culminating in findings that lack *credibility* (see Quick and Hall, 2015). I curtailed or minimised this (potential) shortfall by *long-term* (at least a month) and *iterative* interactions in order to consolidate trust levels and promote the attendant highly likely effect of piecemeal reversion of any staged acts back to their natural course. In fact, these dynamics were confirmed by my 'co-worker' Z who, during the course of my eight-week long immersion at the same worksite, became a close 'workmate' of mine. After my first three weeks at our worksite, Z in agreement with his four close workmates-cum-friends, amid hysterical laughter, confessed:

> *"…believe me you Wellaz* (slang version of my name, Wellington) *… I confess… I and my four Cdes here were initially sceptical, we had to adjust our usual doings and become extra careful, sometimes pretend! Why not after seeing, you, a PhD person doing dirty farm work … work that only suits us who shot teachers with catapults* (i.e., who did not value education) *… We couldn't help treating you with suspicion … But all that changed when we began realising that you were slaving with us 24/7, often the whole nine hours…then two weeks of hard work, then third week, then another, and another still with us! … also, the way you naturally got along with most of us helped us finally believe that you were real…"* (Casual Chat, Worker Z, September 2016)

So, my repeated, relentless, and prolonged normal execution of my worksite tasks proved quite significant in diminishing the psychological distance between me and subjects like Z, which also minimised my researcher effect on the situation. This way, the participants largely no longer saw the need to conceal, withhold, or distort data (also see Takyi, 2015).

Regarding another common 'catch' with the P as O role, Mackellar (2013) asserts that by rendering the researcher the opportunity to directly share his/her subjects' experiences, the role increases the former's chances of emotional attachment. This was all the more relevant and

striking in my case given the unprecedented levels of labour and life insecurities, which my participants were experiencing. I thus became more susceptible to identifying too much with my participants' interests, plight, and worldviews. That is, I became prone to slowly 'going native' at the expense of the ethical value of scientific detachment and objective observation (see van Maanen in Mackellar, 2013). Since an extra 'catch' was that this affective attachment could also occur sub-consciously, I from the onset of my P as O role, and during its course, made constant conscious reflections on my emotions and made deliberate constant checks and balances on them. This entailed constantly reminding myself to 'participate as an insider and observe as an outsider' (see Mackellar, 2013). This meant that I tried as much as possible not to be overtaken by emotions in observing and recording the findings. This was a politically charged process that did not have a clear-cut solution.

Meanwhile, below, I illuminate when, how, and why I utilised the complementary observer-as-participant role (i.e., passive/moderate participation). A vitally important practical point to note here is that my P as O role above was not necessarily exclusive. It overlapped with my observer-as-participant role in the sense that some of the Barura workers I had observed in other socio-spatial contexts (e.g., at Barura worksites) through the P as O role were the self-same participants I would observe through the observer-as-participant role. This substantiates our earlier submission that the research process is devoid of neat technical procedures.

4.3.1.1 (ii) Observer-as-Participant Role on and around Barura Estate

In the observer-as-participant (O as P hereafter) role, I was *primarily* an *observer* while my participation in and integration into the informants' life-worlds were *moderate* and *passive* (Baker, 2006). Moderate and passive insofar as this mostly entailed 'the researcher following participants to various sites of their life-worlds' (Gold, 2017) primarily to be 'physically present and witness their practices unfold' (Babbie, 2020) with the basic aim of listening and observing. To follow Roller & Lavrakas (2015), in my Barura case, it meant that, I, in the main, did not have to directly participate in and actively share Barura workers' labour and life experiences in relation to the research object.

If at any point, I actively shared the informants' experiences, this was really limited to the extent it was increasingly peripheral insomuch that it did not qualify me to be an *integral* part of the participants' activities. So, typically, in my O as P role, I had to maintain a 'certain level

of professional detachment' and avoid becoming fully integrated into the group I was studying (Spradley, 2016a; Takyi, 2015).

Once more, as with my P as O role, my O as P role, and thus my passive and moderate involvement with and professional detachment from participants were contingent upon the nature and scope (e.g., legality, frequency, duration, etc.) of the practices under observation, researcher-participant relations, the study timeframe, and ethical considerations (see Babbie, 2020). In light of some or a combination of these influences, I give a pragmatic setting of my choice and articulation of the O as P role through specific concise but emblematic fieldwork cases below.

The O as P role was, for instance, made plausible by special cases of Barura workers' practices and interactions that required esoteric knowledge and skills in their execution. To this effect, a quintessential pragmatic factor, which made me learn Barura workers' practices of hidden labour resistance more by 'being directly at the scene' and by cordial relations with participants (see Spradley, 2016a) than by active engagement in the acts concerned the spiritual remit of the acts. This was typical with my presence-by-cordial invitation at performance sites (i.e., shrines) of supernatural rituals such as Barura workers' magical casting of spells on some of Barura managerial staff. In such typical cases, my predominantly observational role was, for instance, summed up by Witchdoctor K in one of his highly supernatural ritual sessions that I witnessed when he commanded:

> *"You are in this sacred hut solely by cordial invitation…these rituals are of a highly spiritual nature, and since you aren't here as a client, or as my assistant…but as one who wants to learn, just sit tight, open your eyes and ears to the goings-on… Any arising questions, I can only answer when the ritual is done…I am soon to enter the spiritual world together with him* (i.e., the client)-*during that phase all you can do is to just watch and listen quietly…"* (Fieldnotes, Witchdoctor K, September 2016)

Thus, based on enduring trust nurtured over a sixteen-year period of cordial relations, I was invited to such rituals by specific Barura worker clients and their traditional healers to solely observe and learn since I did not possess the esoteric knowledge, skills, and the spiritual 'calling' that qualified me to be an active performer in such supernatural life-worlds.

Relatedly, other similar Barura worker activities that I observed increasingly by moderate and passive participation concerned job tasks whose active execution required highly technical knowledge and skills. Exemplar cases concerned wet and dry timber sawmilling and the operation of timber jerks and tele-loggers at timber harvesting sites. Therefore, to follow

Spradley (2016), I participated mainly through being at the sites of these operations, watching, asking questions, and listening. The observation needed not to be continuous but iterative and long enough to allow for the establishment of patterns, rhythms, frequencies, durations, intensities, etc. of practices and interactions that spoke to the research object and objectives.

Another paradigmatic case of contingent factors necessitating my largely passive and limited participation in some of Barura workers' practices concerned the real or potential *legal* penalties associated with the practices. An exemplar case was my mostly observation role in the 'illegal' 'poaching' (i.e., according to statist private property laws) of game, firewood, wild fruit, etc. by some Barura workers in reserved islands of indigenous forest, which formed an integral part of the privately owned main Barura pine forestry plantation. Upon one of several such invitations by and in the company of workers like X, I had the privilege to witness first-hand, 'poaching' activities in one of the reserved islands of natural forest. Strikingly, part of X's emphatic warning to me onsite insinuated the *legal limits* to any prospect of my active involvement. He strongly advised:

> *"…So, your main task, in this remote part of the forest, Wellington, is to simply watch, listen, and learn…do not at all be tempted to pick wild fruit, firewood, honey…just watch the art…watch how us the so-called trespassers do our art…do not be an accomplice since if you happen to get caught by company* (i.e., Barura) *security, you have a lot to lose as a student and a former teacher here…a criminal record and ending your research and education in a prison cell!… how dehumanising it would be!"* (Fieldnotes, Worker X November 2016)

In light of such emblematic legal precautions and my own knowledge of Barura's code of conduct and the state's laws to criminalise and penalise such poaching activities, I had to intensify my involvement more in listening and observing than actively partaking in the participants' 'poaching' escapades. More so, my participation was passive to the extent I was physically present onsite to actively witness the 'poaching' activities and dynamics.

My O as P role was also necessitated by activities in which my active membership and participation would have breached the ethical requirement of 'no-harm' to participants (Ogletree & Kawulich, 2012). A paradigmatic case was my passive participation in Barura's ZANU (PF)-dominated partisan political rallies that the participants were a part of. My passive involvement was necessary given that Barura, like many other commercial farm spaces in Zimbabwe, had since 2000, become a hotbed of state-sanctioned polarised and violent electoral and party politics (see Chapter 1). So, as a researcher, I did not have to show any open allegiance to either the governing ZANU (PF) or then opposition MDC party. I did not at any

point become an active member, nor a central part of their core political activities. Doing so, would have predisposed all my participants to politically motivated enmities and verbal or physical assaults simply by being judged on the basis of my own open allegiance to a specific political party. Thus, to protect participants from any political harm, I restricted my participation to merely 'being directly at the scene' (Babbie, 2020) of both ZANU (PF) and MDC rallies mainly as an observer. In the extraordinary cases wherein attendance of ZANU (PF) gatherings was forced, my participation was moderate to the extent of wearing the party regalia and chanting the party slogans together with Barura workers. This level of participation did not however erode my political neutrality since all my participants understood that such participation was done under duress and did not therefore mean I was a ZANU (PF) supporter.

Last, I also deployed passive and moderate observation in Barura workers' activities and interactions whose occurrence was not daily, but typically intermittent and occasional. Not also to mention their personal nature. This was the case with funerals, weddings, religious services, stokvel meetings, etc. at Barura or in the surrounding villages. For instance, for church services, I had to attend on a specific designated day of fellowship, say a Sunday, and then wait until other more successive Sundays mainly to listen and observe. So, I had to be onsite, say for at least four different Sundays, during which I had to engage in moderate participation, for instance, by praying, singing, and dancing with the participants. I did not have to engage in core practices like being baptised or becoming an active member of the men's fellowship committee. The O as P role had its specific utility value and limitations.

A vitally important takeaway from the O as P role was that it helped me partly attend to a classical dilemma faced by participant observers. That is, the need to realise a trade-off between the ambivalent roles of involvement in the informants' life-worlds and simultaneous maintenance of a professional distance from them (see Takyi, 2015). So, relative to the P as O role, the O as P role availed me with at least a *moderate* level of engagement in Barura workers' life-worlds, thereby barring me from 'going native' (Baker, 2006). This self-same role of moderate involvement afforded me an optimal level of emotional detachment from the workers' life-worlds insomuch as to allow me to dedicate more focus on the objective and accurate observation of the research object (Schwartz & Schwartz, 1955). Overall, by the O as P technique, I was at least able to get the most value via an *optimal* combination of two conflicting roles of involvement with, and detachment from, the Barura workers' life-worlds.

By being O as P, I participated enough to get emic and contextualised data and got detached enough to observe objectively and accurately. The overall upside was the collection of *credible* and *dependable* (see Sharp and Hall, 2015) fieldwork evidence.

More so, the O as P role, by availing me at least *average* levels of intensity and frequency of engagement with Barura workers enabled me to observe their practices and dynamics of everyday labour resistance in their natural contexts for emic and nuanced data (see Takyi, 2015). Also, this moderate engagement, coupled with the cordial relations that I had built with most of my participants over the years, enabled me to provoke or elicit behaviour and perceptions during observation. Accordingly, in Takyi (2015), Bositis submits that the researcher's role in participant observation is not solely to observe behaviour, but to also provoke behaviours and subsequently observe them. Thus, by coupling the historical relations of trust that I had cultivated with Barura workers with my moderate engagement with them, it became quite plausible for me to use *verbal stimuli* or *behavioural cues* (Ibid) to elicit further responses, thereby improving the credibility of the data I collected.

However, despite the O as P role being less intense, direct, and frequent in terms of the researcher's involvement, the mere onsite presence of an overt observer made it still susceptible to staged behaviours and practices by Barura workers (see Spradley, 2016; Gold, 2017). With the mere awareness that they were under observation, which ethically should be the case, my participants were likely to alter the natural course of their labour and life experiences. To minimise this, I drew on my accumulated social capital of cordial relations to curtail the 'stranger' image that is typical with the O as P role (see Takyi, 2015; Gold, 2017) and elicit the workers' confidence in me insomuch as for them to feel comfortable enough not to significantly alter their normal routines. I also complemented this through *iterating* the typically intermittent onsite interactions of the O as P role for a period long enough for them to cumulatively come across as a normal routine, so that the Barura workers became comfortable enough to pursue their natural interactions.

Meanwhile, I also complemented the two foregoing roles of participant observation with the complete observer role. I briefly detail this below.

4.3.1.1 (iii) Complete Observer Role on and around Barura Estate

According to Gold (2017), the complete observer neither participates nor interacts with the participants in the course of the study. (S)he moves into the study environment solely to listen and observe (Baker, 2006). In my Barura case, this did not however entail the concealment of my researcher identity since I used this technique exclusively to observe physical settings and artifacts, which spoke to the research object. So, there was not any violation of the ethical requirement of *informed consent* (Ogletree & Kawulich, 2012), which is typical with the complete observer role that involves human participants.

I was specifically an onsite non-participant observer of the following significant physical sites on Barura estate and its nearby villages. After getting official company authority, I would embark on solo or accompanied excursions to strictly observe and familiarise myself with the physical geography of most parts of Barura plantation estate and to observe first-hand, parts of the plantation affected by fires. I also used my complete observer role as a follow-up to interviews that had referred to milestone socio-spatial sites that were of relevance to the research object. These, for instance, included Barura estate- or village-based physical sites or markers of state-sponsored political violence such as charred remains of burnt houses, damaged or burnt vehicle shells, sites with unburied human skulls and bones (which were believed to belong to victims of political abductions), graves of victims of political violence, landmarks where heinous acts of political violence were committed. I also made casual excursions of village common pool resource areas like grazing land, rivers, waterways, etc.

Since, as a researcher, I did not directly experience the events and interactions associated with the physical sites I was observing, the upside was that I did not have to contend with the ethical requirements of 'informed consent' nor 'emotional detachment from the subjects' experiences' (see Takyi, 2015; Gold' 2017). Overall, these purely observational excursions enabled me to observe, feel, and familiarise myself with diverse but mutually reinforcing socio-spatial sites of power-resistance dynamics. However, the downside was that my purely onsite observational role of physical sites was mostly devoid of a full context and story. To fill this gap, I had to complement the role with more follow-up in-depth or key informant interviews.

4.3.1.2 In-depth Unstructured Interviews – When, How, Why?

I used in-depth unstructured interviews in triangulation with the foregoing participant observation techniques. The interviews preceded or succeeded the observations so as to provide

more individualised fieldwork evidence to corroborate and/or rectify evidence from the observations. To this end, Patton (2002) situates unstructured interviews as a natural extension of observation since they so often occur as part of ongoing participant observation fieldwork. Regarding the feasibility of unstructured interviews for this research, I draw from Gill et al.'s (2008) submission that they are appropriate for sensitive research objects and where virtually nothing is known about such. Likewise, little was known about Barura workers' practices of hidden labour resistance, and the latter was a potentially incriminating (i.e., sensitive) issue for the workers who would rather discuss it in private confidential one-on-one contexts.

The unstructured interview was a one-on-one conversation between me, the interviewer, and a respondent wherein I established a 'general plan of enquiry' and a 'general direction' of the interaction by a loose outline of provisional open-ended questions (see Spradley, 2016; Babbie, 2020). There was not any predetermined standardised question or answer categories as with a structured interview (see May, 1991). Instead, the unstructured interview was almost like an everyday conversation as it allowed me and the respondent to pursue specific issues related to the research questions naturally and spontaneously - i.e., more and unanticipated questions and answers developed during the course of the interview.

I modelled each unstructured interview on the basis of an interview guide. The guide contained loose provisional open-ended questions drafted in line with the research questions. I ordered the schedule questions in a chronological sequence as well as phrased them in a non-leading and intelligible way (see Gill et al., 2008). I further ensured that lower order questions preceded higher order and sensitive questions, which made respondents to be at ease, have confidence, and thus more inclined to give more credible responses (see Spradley, 2016). I then piloted the interview schedules on several respondents prior to the interview proper (also see May, 1991). This proved quite instrumental in helping me establish if the schedules were clear, understandable, and capable of answering the research questions. I was then able to make the necessary alterations to the interview guides prior to the interview proper. Importantly, prior to the interviews, I ensured that I familiarised myself with the interview schedule so that the interview process appeared more natural and less rehearsed.

I conducted the unstructured interviews with Barura workers and key informants as sampled in sub-section in 4.1.2.2. I prioritised interviewing participants whom I had also observed as a follow-up to corroborate, elaborate, correct, and/or extend earlier findings from participant

observation. I also interviewed participants whom I had not observed at all, and this mainly concerned key informants from whom I had to solicit esoteric, professional, and expert knowledge in relation to the research questions. Since participant confidentiality and safety were a priority due to the incriminating nature of this research, each respondent chose a pseudonym, or I had to assign them one. Hence, any names that appear in this thesis are not the respondents' real names.

The interviews were conducted at locations and during times that were most suitable for and chosen by the participants themselves. In consultation with the respondents, we ensured that the locations and times were free from distractions, physical harm, and any potential eavesdropping. For most respondents this was in the safety of their homes and anonymity of evening time. While as a researcher, I had less control over the home environment, familiarity helped my respondents to be more relaxed and confident, thus increasing the possibility of more productive interviews (e.g., Kvale & Brinkmann in Gill et al., 2008). Below, I in more concrete terms, articulate how I executed the unstructured interviews with both the Barura estate workers and the key informants.

I began each interview by exchanging pleasantries and a brief ice-breaking moment with the respondent. I would then proceed to verbally elaborate the scope of the study, the terms and conditions of participation, and how *non-maleficence*, and *confidentiality* (see Ogletree and Kawulich, 2012) were to be realised and upheld. To borrow from (Legard et al., 2003), this gave the respondent some idea of what to expect from the interview, increased chances of honesty, and was a fundamental aspect of the informed consent and voluntary participation process. Most interviewees were more comfortable with giving verbal consent than written consent as they generally argued that they did not want to leave any written record whatsoever given the potentially incriminating nature of the study.

Pursuant to the above, I would then solicit biographical details that were relevant to the research objectives. Thereafter, my line of enquiry followed the interview guide only to the extent the answer(s) evoked by my initial question(s) shaped subsequent question(s). So, each interview turned into what Gorden (1969) calls the *natural path of free association*. That is, it took a life of its own as a flexible spontaneous conversation wherein based on the interviewee's responses, I 'detoured' from, returned to and/or abandoned the guide altogether. Hence, I became an attentive and patient listener who desisted from disrupting the respondents' line of discussion

whatsoever (e.g., Gill et al. 2008). Instead, I would pose a question, listen to the answer, interpret it for my general enquiry, and then frame another question either to evoke more detail for the earlier response or to redirect the respondent to an area more relevant to my enquiry. I redirected the interviewees' responses by probes like "How does the same practice play out at Barura estate?" instead of disrupting them when they 'strayed' from the topic. This redirection also signified my *interest* in their responses (see Babbie, 2020). I further showed this interest by letting the interviewees fill in any conversational silences. Overall, in all the interviews I endeavoured more to look interested than interesting. I made my respondents look interesting by being interested in their narratives and this led to more credible data.

Unstructured interviews also entailed my open-ended questioning (i.e., using the *What, Why*, *How* questions or their equivalent clauses) of Barura workers and key informants. Exemplar cases of such questioning were, "How do you cope with delayed wages?", "Why is your ID annotated 'Alien'?", etc. Such open-ended questions encouraged the interviewees to provide detailed and personal responses and also empowered them to shift the interview direction and thus, bring in unanticipated data (see Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). This in turn afforded me the chance to elicit important responses to previously unanticipated questions. Open-ended questions further helped me realise a trade-off between lengthy elaborate responses and redirecting them back to the interview-cum-research objectives in cases of digression (e.g., Bailey, 2008). More so, they induced respondents to 'report sensitive or socially disapproved behaviour' (Royse, 2004), which would have been difficult or impossible via the close-ended questions of structured interviews. For instance, via the probing nature of (and thus the capacity to elicit emergent issues) open-ended questioning led to some Barura workers (un)wittingly revealing how they set sections of Barura forestry on fire.

Furthermore, I also consciously committed to using *neutral* verbal and non-verbal communication (see Legard et al., 2003; Gill et al., 2008) during the interviews. I desisted from using pre-emptive, biased, or 'leading' (Babbie, 2020) questions, comments, gestures, expressions, etc. For instance, instead of asking a worker in a leading way such as "Is the burning of sections of Barura plantation not entirely accidental?", I would ask, "What do you think causes the fires that burn Barura plantation?" Similarly, I constantly avoided the urge to agree or disagree (via both verbal and no-verbal cues) with or give biased probes and encouragements to respondents (see Babbie, 2020). Instead, I used encouraging gestures (e.g.,

nods), expressions (e.g., Uhm), acknowledgments (e.g., “yeah”, “okay”), and neutral probes like “So, how do you feel about delayed wages?” as minimal and neutral feedback. All these techniques helped minimise my effects, as the interviewer, on the interviewees’ responses. That is, I managed to mitigate interviewer biases like ‘stereotype’, ‘confirmation’, and ‘social desirability’ biases (see Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009).

At the respondents’ request, I conducted all the interviews in their vernacular language (ChiShona), which was also my ‘mother tongue’. The upside was that the respondents were really comfortable, expressive, eloquent, and proficient using their ‘mother tongue’ insomuch as to give rich, detailed, contextualised narratives using rich concrete language devices like idioms, euphemisms, etc. Also, cognisant of the fact that the interviewees’ ‘universe of discourse’ (see Bailey, 2008) varied from respondent to respondent, I adjusted the question wording to meet each interviewee’s level of understanding.

I also thanked the participants for their time and commitment at the end of each interview. I would then ask them if there was anything they liked to add (see Gill et al., 2008). This gave them the opportunity to deal with issues that they would have thought about, or thought were important but which I would not have dealt with as an interviewer. This was really useful as it usually led to the discovery of new, unanticipated information. I also debriefed the interviewees about the study after the interviews were done (see Babbie, 2020).

According to Gill et al. (2008: 293) “All interviews should be recorded and transcribed verbatim afterwards, as this protects against bias and provides a permanent record of what and what was not said”. However, since I was dealing with a sensitive and incriminating research object all my interviewees declined to be audio-recorded. They insisted that the audio-tapped records would signify a risky permanent record of their responses, which contained incriminating details that could pass as crimes, workplace misconduct, and/or political disloyalty if (un)wittingly disclosed to Barura estate management, law-enforcement agents, or ZANU PF local leaders and supporters. Thus, according to the interviewees, audio-records, epitomised ‘ticking time bombs’, which increasingly predisposed them to punitive action such as job losses, suspensions, political assaults, etc that endangered their lives and livelihoods. This limited the original and verbatim nature of the responses. However, I devised techniques that at least guaranteed me a near-permanent, original, near-verbatim, and authentic record of the interviews. These techniques are detailed immediately below.

I negotiated and agreed with most of the interviewees for at most two follow-up interviews. This availed me with a second chance to listen to and write down any originally missed and/or recurrent verbatim quotes, statements, and themes that were significant to the research objectives. I also reached a negotiated position with interviewees wherein, at appropriate moments, I had to write contemporaneous notes during the interviews. This was fine with them as long as it was not an audio record of the interview. I also made the most of a fresh memory by writing down detailed field notes immediately after each interview. I further ensured that I reviewed these notes every night after the interview(s), making sense of what I had observed and finding out what I needed to improve in further interviews. More so, for enhanced credibility of the findings, I mastered the skill to listen, think, talk, and write at the same time during interviews, minding that I did not significantly disrupt the natural flow of the interviews. Relatedly, I also ensured to keep my mind fresh and alert (for enhanced memory) enough for further cultivation of the latter skill by conducting a minimum of two interviews per week. Whenever possible, I would spread the interviews at least two days apart for optimal rest. This helped to sharpen the concentration and memory levels that I needed to retrieve credible data from interviews, which were not going to leave a permanent record of an audio-taped conversation nor its printed transcript. Interestingly, Rakutumwa et al. in Swain & King (2022), suggest that, in some circumstances, not recording an interview may actually be the best approach, not 'second best'". I conducted a total of eighty-three and twenty-nine interviews with Barura workers and key informants respectively.

As well as the takeaways already alluded to above, the unstructured interview, due to its parallels with a normal everyday conversation, largely cultivated an egalitarian interviewer-interviewee relationship (see Klenke, 2016). The power dynamics in one-on-one flexible interview situations were somewhat balanced. This was unlike in a structured interview, wherein the interviewer holds more power over the conversation and how it evolves, and where the primary focus is data retrieval. Instead, the open-endedness of the unstructured interview centred the interviewee as the repository of knowledge and my main role was to listen, understand, and probe as and when dictated by the respondent's response. By the in-depth interviews, the Barura workers and key informants were empowered to talk more, bring up unanticipated topics, and direct the interview in a certain direction. Overall, the unstructured interview prioritised the interaction logic that, 'the researcher is there to learn from the

respondent rather than impose an external frame of reference' (Jupp, 2006). Also, because of its everyday flexible conversation-like nature, the unstructured interview had great potential in cultivating and consolidating interviewer-interviewee rapport. This increasingly set the stage for a more balanced, honest, authentic interaction and thus more credible fieldwork evidence. Last, the unstructured interview was of immense utility value in cases where my respondents experienced memory failure since its flexibility enabled me to revisit the same theme or topic several times, in the process triggering the respondent to produce information with what Bailey (2008) calls 'stimulated memory'.

Meanwhile, in an ambivalent way, the typically open-ended and flexible nature of the unstructured interviews also entailed their main set back. They made respondents to explore topics in detail and oftentimes some of these topics digressed from the research objectives resulting in lengthy elaborate responses (also see Gill et al., 2008). To this end, the 'shortest' interview I conducted lasted one hour thirty-seven minutes. Generally, the interviews were time-consuming and required sustained levels of extreme concentration. I minimised this setback by attentive listening to and quick interpretation of responses, incisive probing, as well as by well-timed non-disruptive probes that redirected respondents back to relevant interview topics. Also, since the interviews were akin to natural social interactions, there were certain aspects of my personality, my interpretation of the interviewee's personality or social identity, my interpersonal perceptions, etc. that could largely influence my interviewees' responses. In my specific case, these 'interviewer biases' (see Babbie, 2020) mainly concerned *confirmation*, *affinity*, and *social desirability* biases. I partly articulate how I positioned myself, interrogated, and navigated some of these biases in an ensuing section on reflexivity. Suffice for now to say that I offset these biases, at least to some extent, by ensuring the increased participation and involvement of the respondents in the interview interactions (see Klenke, 2008). Noteworthy, at this point is that some of my unstructured interviews were offshoots of the impromptu natural conversations that I also deployed as a complementary data collection method. More so, the natural conversations also formed an integral part of my participant observation roles.

4.3.1.3 Impromptu Natural Conversations

I also actively participated in impromptu natural everyday conversations (see Babbie, 2020; Swain & King, 2022) with Barura workers and key informants to collect data. To draw from fieldwork realities and from Swain & King (2022), since the nature, dynamics, takeaways, and

setbacks of natural conversations are almost the same as those of in-depth unstructured interviews, there is no need to repeat them here. Suffice to say that the main difference was that, unlike the unstructured interviews, they were organic everyday conversations, did not require any formal procedures such as appointments, formal consent procedures, set interview locations and dates, interview guides, and strict one-on-one interactions. It is enough to submit that throughout the research, I tried as much as possible to discover, pay attention to, and get actively involved in, and tap into any impromptu social interactions that (in)directly spoke to the research object and objectives. Circumstances allowing, I would deliberately and diplomatically direct these ordinary conversations insomuch that they spoke to the research objectives. In fact, some of my formal unstructured interviews were offshoots of some impromptu natural conversations, much as the latter would also constitute the end-most parts of the formal unstructured interviews. I now proceed to illuminating how I organised and analysed the data collected through the foregoing techniques.

4.4 Thematic Analysis of Fieldwork Evidence from Barura Estate and its Hinterland

Thematic analysis is a process of identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (i.e., themes) within data (see Clarke & Braun, 2013; Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). Its goal is to identify themes and use them to address the research question(s) and/or identify significant data that adds meaning to the research object. From the outset, my deployment of thematic analysis was guided by the following principles.

First, since my study involved both theory testing and modest theory building, I thus co-used the *deductive* and *inductive* approaches (Braun & Clarke, 2006) to thematic analysis. By the former, my analysis of data items and sets was driven mainly by my research questions, theoretical framework, and reviewed literature, which all gave me a sense of the kind of themes I was to expect from the data. In the latter approach, my themes developed mainly through the data itself and I intended to build my own framework based on fieldwork evidence (Ibid). Second, I co-used the *semantic* and *latent* (Boyatzis, 1998) levels of analysis. That is, I analysed the explicit content (i.e., surface meanings) in terms of the participants' stated perceptions, experiences, practices, etc. (semantic), as well as what these revealed (i.e., sub-texts) about their assumptions and context (latent).

Guided by the prominent work of Braun & Clarke (2006) on thematic analysis, I executed the following steps in my analysis. Noteworthy is that the actual execution of these steps was not necessarily a linear process but was an iterative and reflective one. It involved my constant back and forth movement between phases.

My search for themes began with me *familiarising* myself with all the *data* (Ibid; (Dawadi, 2021) from fieldwork interviews and observations. I read and re-read, in an immersive manner, within and across data items and sets, and the overall data set, to get a general sense of the *content* and social *context* of the data. That is, scanning fieldwork data enabled me to get acquainted with the subject matter of interviews and observations, and to relive or reflect on the socio-spatial contexts and interactions informing them. Acquaintance with the content and context of my data was a significant step towards my initial discovery of patterns and relationships in and across data items and sets. Thus, I did extensive notetaking. Of note is that I did not have to wait until I had complete data sets in order to start familiarising myself with the data. Instead, from the outset of fieldwork, I incrementally immersed myself in and across data items and sets as and when they developed. This really enhanced my timely, effective, and enduring knowledge of my data by the time it was complete enough for me to do the final thematic analysis. Data familiarisation set the stage for the coding process.

Coding was the primary process of theme development. According to Boyatzis (1998) and Braun & Clarke (2006), coding involves the systematic identification and organisation of data items of analytic interest in a data-set and tagging the items with a coding label. For each data item from the interview and observation transcripts, and related field-notes, I identified and highlighted phrases, sentences, quotes, examples (i.e., segments of the data item) that stood out in terms of addressing the research questions and/or capturing any other significant data that added meaning to the phenomenon of everyday labour resistance at Barura estate. I also included as much relevant surrounding text as was possible in order to contextualise the data segments (Bryman, 2011). I then collated the highlighted segments of each data item into categories to which I developed shorthand labels or codes to describe the content of each highlighted data segment. Each code described and represented a perception, experience, feeling, or behaviour expressed in the highlighted segment of a data item (Boyatzis, 1998; Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). I used *open-coding* (Braun & Clarke, 2006) whereby I did not

have pre-set codes. I developed and modified the codes as and when I worked through the data sets and items.

So, the coding evolved as I immersed myself back and forth in each data item and across the data set to refine the codes by adding, subtracting, combining or splitting the potential codes (Saldaña, 2021). Coding meant the simplification of data in each data item and set by reducing it to a common category or code. It also meant data complication whereby I made inferences about what the codes meant. Overall, this allowed me to gain a condensed overview of the significant points and common meanings that recurred throughout the data. The result of the stage was a comprehensive list of codes that captured different aspects of the data sets. The next step involved grouping these codes into preliminary themes.

In this context, a theme denoted a *patterned* response or meaning within a data set that captured something significant or interesting about the data and/or the research questions (see Braun & Clarke, 2006; Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). I examined, sorted, and grouped codes (from the preceding stage) based on their similarities or shared characteristics to form initial overarching themes. Examination of the codes involved cross-checking their clarity and relevancy for theme development. Mostly, I had to combine several codes into a single theme, but some codes became themes in their own right. In some instances, some codes became associated with more than one theme. The main criteria that I used to determine the keyness of a theme were its relevancy to the research questions and its significance in understanding of the research object (see Braun & Clarke, 2006). Although I also used prevalence as a criterion, I was aware that it was not necessarily the most important measure of determining what constituted an important theme.

So, at this stage, I heeded Braun & Clarkes' (2006) caution that theme prevalence does not necessarily mean the frequency at which a theme occurs (i.e., the number of data items in which it occurs), it could also mean how much data a theme captures within each data item and across the data set. In my case, themes were typically evident across the data sets, but I noticed that a higher frequency did not necessarily mean that the theme was more important to understanding the data. Thus, I also used my own judgement as a significant tool in determining the important themes. Overall, the themes I developed were predominantly descriptive, i.e., they described patterns in the data relevant to the research questions and significant to the research object. The

result of this stage was a list of candidate themes. The latter had to be reviewed as detailed immediately below.

I then examined whether the proposed themes were useful and accurate representations of the data set(s) and the overarching theoretical perspective. So, I returned to the initial themes and checked them against the coded data and the entire data set. This was to cross-check if the proposed themes: were really present in the data; provided a compelling account of the relevant data to the research questions and the better understanding of everyday labour resistance; had not deviated from the data; and if they overlapped or were really separate themes (also see Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). I also had to cross-check whether I was not trying to fit too much into a theme and if there were themes within themes. Subsequently, my refinement of the initial themes ranged from splitting them, combining them, discarding them, to creating new ones - i.e., whatever made them more useful and accurate in relation to the research question, the theoretical framework, and in understanding the research object. Overall, this phase enabled me to improve, modify, or discard the initial themes as and when they developed by cross-checking them against the coded data and the entire data set(s). I then had to define and name the refined themes.

At this stage, I had to further refine, name, and define the themes. So, I identified the essence of each theme and determined what aspect of the data each theme captured (see Braun & Clarke, 2006). A theme need not be too diverse and complex (Ibid), so I revisited the coded data extracts for each theme and organised all the themes into a coherent and consistent 'story'. I clearly identified the 'story' that each theme told, and how it fitted into the broader overall 'story' that I intended to tell about my data in relation to to the research questions (Dawadi, 2021). I further refined the themes by reading through all the main themes and sub-themes, codes, and extracts, and then assigned a final name and definition to each theme to tell a succinct story about the data. By a relevant brief clause or sentence, I devised a succinct and easily understandable name for each theme. For instance, I named a theme 'Conviviality and Land Access' and then determined exactly what I meant by 'conviviality' in this theme by deciding on a better name like 'Interdependent Strangers and Land Access'. Thus, the result was a final list of themes (i.e., thematic map) that clearly contributed to the reader's understanding of the data in relation to the research questions, reviewed literature, and the underpinning theoretical framework.

Last, from the final list of themes, I decided on the specific themes and sub-themes that added the most meaning to answering the research questions and to understanding significant dynamics of the data (also see Dawadi, 2021). I then used the latter (sub)themes to write the theoretical and empirical chapters of

this thesis. In the chapters, I provided concise, coherent, and logical accounts of the story that the fieldwork data represented within and across themes. I achieved this within and between chapters, by providing sufficient evidence through relevant emblematic examples, cases, and/or extracts, which captured the essence of what the (sub)themes were demonstrating and illuminating. I embedded these extracts within an analytic narrative of related literature and theoretical positioning so that they made an argument in respect of the research questions and objectives. Meanwhile, while I have given hints of my reflexivity in the foregoing sections, below I deliberately spotlight specific significant dynamics of my positionality vis a vis reflexivity.

4.5 Situating Myself within the Barura Fieldwork Process- Positionality and Reflexivity

My fieldwork experience was synonymous with the concrete complexities of trying to attain some trade-off between abiding by the scientific/technical principles of research, the socio-cultural practicalities of the research field, and my own subjective experiences and choices on what I was studying and how I was studying it. This was further complicated by my fourteen-month continuous immersion in the life-worlds of the participants - which meant the complicated negotiation of an ambivalent mix of complex scientific, administrative, and social fieldwork obligations.

Thus, I had to be highly reflexive of my positionality. That is, I had to consciously acknowledge, interrogate, and address the impact of; certain aspects of my identity (e.g., ethnicity, academic status, etc.), my personal experiences, the personal positions that I adopted, and my relationship to the study object (i.e., insider status) on the fieldwork processes and outcomes (see Holmes, 2020; Wilson et al., 2022). This was meant to improve the authority, credibility, and ethics of the fieldwork process. Noteworthy is that my positionality extended beyond me to also include how I was positioned by the participants themselves.

As well as the highly sensitive and personal nature of this study and thus the increased vulnerability (i.e., high susceptibility to social, legal, physical, and psychological harm) of the participants, I mainly reflect on my 'insider' role (Wilson et al., 2022) since it had some profound impact on my fieldwork experience, processes, and related positionalities. I was an 'insider' at three mutually reinforcing levels. Cordial personal and professional relations spanning over a sixteen-year period positioned me as a *de facto* 'native' of the Barura estate and nearby village communities. This 'insider' role was further consolidated by my originating

from the same rural district as and sharing the same ethnic heritage (i.e., language dialect, cultural values) with most of the participants from these self-same communities. Last, my *immersive* role as a participant observer for continuous fourteen months with the participants entailed the direct sharing of similar experiences and insider knowledge with them. Below, I critically reflect on issues of my positionality, which I believe deserve special mention from my fieldwork experience.

4.5.1 'Insider' and Participant Observer Roles vis-a-vis Emotional Attachment

My roles as an 'insider' and participant observer increased the possibility of my own positioning and thus the participants' own positioning and experience of me more as a 'native' of Barura estate than a Wits University research student. This predisposed me to high levels of emotional attachment such as the increased chances of my being an overly patronising and sympathising presence (Wilson et al., 2022). Such presence was all the more imminent given that I was studying, by first-hand experience, the dehumanising levels of socio-economic deprivation that 'my fellow Barura kin and kith' had been experiencing for long. So, instances were evident, during fieldwork, wherein I overly identified with and felt for 'my' participants insofar as to openly express biased emotions through 'overt verbal and no-verbal cues of affinity' (Klenke, 2016) such as cursing, swearing, etc. This could however predispose participants to tacit psychological harm via my (un)witting sadistic re-enactment of their suffering; my patronising kindness; and my seeming taking on the 'fictional' role of rescuer (Herman, 1992). It also potentially led to affinity biases (Holmes, 2020), which could have led participants to aligning their behaviour and responses to my emotional comportment. To minimise this, I deliberately tried to strike a balance between scientific detachment and emotional involvement, by for instance, substituting my strong emotions with 'neutral' verbal and non-verbal cues such as saying a simple 'sorry', a mere nod or shake of the head, or by simply keeping quiet and concentrate on the participants' narratives. Meanwhile, my participants' overrating me as a direct witness of their experiences also deserved some critical reflection.

4.5.2 Participants' Foregrounding of the 'Insider-cum-Witness' Identity thus 'Thin' Narratives

Meanwhile, I was also guided by Palmary's (2006) caution on how the researcher needs to be wary of how the fieldwork process can affirm some identities at the expense of others. To this

effect, I discovered that during most of my interactions with participants (and others), I was recognised and valued more as Barura and nearby village communities' 'son-of-the-soil' (i.e., a 'native' of these communities) than some university research student. Most of the participants openly confessed that the main reason why they were giving and entrusting me with their sensitive narratives was not because I was from some university, but because they considered me as 'one of them'. However, no sooner had I realised the latter benefit than I began to reflect on whether I was getting detailed narratives. I gradually began to discover that during interviews and observations, some respondents were taking for granted that as an 'insider' at the three afore-mentioned levels, I was enquiring on what I already knew!

Exemplar cases arose, through some participants' common statements like: "…you act as if you don't know what happens here at Barura…", "…the rest of the flesh (i.e., detail) you can fill in… you are a reliable witness to these 'satanic' labour conditions…", "Wellington, you are simply asking for what happens right under your nose…no need for me to tell you more…" (Field Notes, 2016/17). Thus, the participants' choice to foreground my 'insider' and 'direct witness' identities and roles jeopardised my extraction of nuanced complete narratives from some participants. In response, I began to consciously check if the latter was the case. If it was, I deliberately probed and motivated the respondents insisting that inasmuch as I was an 'insider', it was 'their' own unique direct experiences and perceptions, told in their unique ways, no matter how similar *per se*, that I was after. I also impressed on them that, unlike me, they had higher levels of duration, frequency, and intensity of everyday participation at Barura and in the villages, thus their detailed narratives told a more unique and interesting story. However, in a handful of cases, I lost the battle as some participants felt 'convinced' that, as an 'insider' and 'witness', I was already privy to the naunced details of their experiences. At another level, my positioning as a direct witness posed a different set of fieldwork complexities as detailed immediately below.

4.5.3 Direct Witnessing vis-a-vis (Un)Witting 'Correction' of the Respondents' Narratives

Furthermore, I had to contend with how my 'insider' status further positioned me as a *direct witness* to Barura workers' labour and life experiences. Being a witness increased the likelihood of invoking in me, some defensive types of 'resistance' reactions regarding the participants' portrayal of their experiences (see Herman, 1992). Such reactions included indifference to or avoidance and denial of certain details of the participants' stories. So, during interviews and

observations, I was sometimes caught off-guard as I tried to 'correct' the participants' narratives and/or impose my own vantage positions on them assuming that as a witness I knew the accurate details and thus felt they were exaggerating their experiences. Interestingly, it sometimes required some awakening from the participants themselves for me to realise that I had become overbearing, and they would then remind me that, it was *their* stories (and how they told them) that mattered, not mine. It was from such encounters that I learnt to always consciously remind myself that the essence of my participants' stories about their labour and life experiences, was not necessarily in their accuracy, but in how they were enacted, perceived, and presented by the participants themselves. So, overall, I became increasingly cognisant that I always had to respect and use each participant's original narrative as the main departure point for whatever questions that I asked or comments that I made (see Holmes, 2020). From another angle, I also had to be reflexive of translation issues during and after the fieldwork.

4.5.4 'Indigenous' ChiShona Language and Translation to English: Ethical and Epistemic Dilemmas

My sharing of the same 'indigenous' language and overall cultural heritage with all my participants positioned me to interact with them in our 'first language' or 'mother tongue', ChiShona. Also, I and some of the participants (mostly the farm workers and/or villagers) considered using ChiShona upon reflecting on their 'universe of discourse' (Bailey, 2008), which was informed by lower literacy and proficiency levels in the English language. More so, with my positioning as a 'native' or 'son-of-the-soil', it would have been considered morally inappropriate and insensitive of me (irrespective of my known academic research role) to use English in the ChiShona-speaking Barura and village communities.

Indeed, using ChiShona enhanced rapport and cultural competency with participants and ensured cultural sensitivity to their norms and values. However, translation of the respondents' original ChiShona narratives to English posed *ethical*; *epistemic* (i.e., the respondents' beliefs about the nature of knowledge; and *ontological* (i.e., their beliefs about the nature of social reality and what is knowable) dilemmas (e.g., Holmes, 2020). Ethically, this concerned the moral tension between the respondents' wish to have their stories written 'as told' in the ChiShona language and their giving in to the academic need for me to translate them to and report them in English. An emblematic statement to this effect was given by Worker V:

> *"…it's tricky …we really needed you, in your final thing* (i.e., PhD report) *to write our stories in our original rich Shona idioms, proverbs…pure Shona meanings, context, words …painful, all this to die by*

> *being changed* (translated) *into 'mutauro wevasina mabvi'* (language of knee-less people'). *But we also understand that your school* (university) *work must be written in English…so, we sadly give you that* (i.e., permission to write in English) *anyway…"* (Interview, Worker V, June 2016)

Thus, during fieldwork notes-taking and final report writing, I had to grapple with the attendant epistemic and ontological dilemmas of achieving *functional equivalence* (Sechrest et al., 1972) in translating Worker V and other participants' original ChiShona narratives to their closest English equivalents. Sechrest et al.'s (1972: 41) assertion below encapsulates my epistemic and ontological struggles with translation and how I subsequently reflected on and navigated them:

> Vocabulary equivalence must [consider]language as used by respondents and the possibility of terms lacking equivalents across languages. Equivalents in idiom and in grammar and syntax may be important, but equivalence in terms of experiences and concepts tapped is probably most important of all. Direct translation cannot be assumed to produce equivalent versions of verbal stimuli.

In light of this quotation and fieldwork experience, in some instances, I found it difficult to find English equivalents, which provided the exact or closest rich context-specific meanings, grammar, syntax, and experiences as exuded in the participants' original ChiShona worldviews and experiences. For instance, in Worker V's vignette above, they refer to the sad experience of the translation of their narratives to *"mutauro wevasina mabvi"*. Although the literal translation of this ChiShona clause to English is 'language of knee-less people', its meaning remains cryptic since it lacks the exact ChiShona cultural experience (i.e., context) from which it originates. In its original ChiShona deployment, beyond it denoting 'the English language', the clause also contextualises this English language by subtly speaking to the 'indigenous' Shona people's first colonial encounters with white British settlers whom they referred to as 'knee-less people' since the 'aborigines' could not see the Englishman's knees as they were hidden in the trousers they wore. Thus, in its original ChiShona language, the clause has a far deeper, context-specific, and culturally relevant meaning. However, in our exemplar Worker V case, the latter nuances were not fully captured by the English translation.

I navigated the above challenge(s) by resorting to mostly presenting the participants' narratives as *verbatim* quotes or conversations (instead of their reported 'third voice' versions) as fieldwork evidence in the final report. Noteworthy is that the challenge of my verbatim enactment of these statements (due to respondents' refusal to be audio-tapped) and the solution thereto have already been addressed elsewhere. Suffice to say that the verbatim quotes or statements that I selected, constructed, and wrote at the fieldwork and data analysis phases were, on one hand, closest equivalents of the respondents' spoken and noted statements. On the

other hand, I endeavoured to give the quotes direct English translations, which were closest in meaning and context to their original ChiShona versions. To realise the latter, I also ensured that each verbatim quote or any narratives that I (re)constructed from direct fieldwork observations/experience were preceded or succeeded by brief descriptions of relevant contextual cues to enhance the reader's extraction of more credible and authentic translated data and meanings. Overall, I also deliberately selected and translated respondents' ChiShona verbatim statements that I evaluated according to the research objectives to be the most representative of significant emerging themes. Finally, I had to critically reflect on the tension that arose between the social expectations from participants and my need to abide by scientific and ethical principles of research.

4.5.5 Scientific Practice and Moral Ethics of Social Engagement

My 'insider' status at the three levels mentioned earlier resulted in some line managers positioning me as a *discoverer* and *repository* of esoteric backstage knowledge of Barura workforce's tactical responses to a highly insecure labour process. Thus, these managers began increasingly viewing me as an important connection in the pursuit and realisation of their workforce surveillance and disciplining goals. Thus, I encountered a handful cases wherein some line managers attempted to overtly or tacitly recruit me to spy on their workforce. Interestingly, this was further compounded by some members of the Barura workforce also positioning me as a potential liability insofar as the discovery and (un)witting disclosure of their personal and sensitive labour practices and worldviews mattered. A prototypical case was for instance evident when, like many other workers, Worker T asked:

> *"Of course, we seriously take you as one of our own…but you're also kin and kith to some of our bosses* (i.e., line managers, foremen, supervisors) *here… we sometimes see you spend time with them as you do with us…What guarantee do we have that you won't snitch on us at some point…give our secrets we share with you to them…"* (Worker T, Interview, December 2016)

Such complex scenarios always compelled me to critically reflect on the professional ethics of scientific practice and moral ethics of social engagement (Babbie, 2020). In light of these kinds of situations, Burgess recommends:

> Researchers should not conduct research in order to spy on the activities of others on behalf of the gatekeepers. (Burgess, 1984: 51)

Overall, I had to uphold and exercise the scientific ethical principles of *confidentiality* and *non-maleficence* (see Ogletree & Kawulich, 2012). These are discussed in detail in a section below. On one hand, I would verbally emphasise to the concerned managers and rank and file that,

professionally and ethically, I did not under whatever circumstances have to divulge the personal identities and any fieldwork responses of research participants to the public whatsoever. That, confidentiality was the essence of this fieldwork, and I could not use the research to spy on behalf of either parties of Barura estate or any other social actors. On the other hand, I would then personally ensure that all fieldwork data, whether electronic or printed, I had to capture and store in anonymised form and in password-protected devices (see Neuman, 2014). Furthermore, I consciously censored my daily ordinary interactions with members of Barura management, rank and file, and any other farm or village community members, to ensure that I did not (un)wittingly give away verbal and/or non-verbal cues that would otherwise expose the respondents' personal identities and/or their fieldwork responses. In all, I kept confidential all fieldwork data and its providers.

As some parts of earlier sections of this report have already shown, part of my reflexivity meant me constantly considering the current research's ethical implications. Hereunder I duly single out three critical ethical issues, which I consider had a significant bearing on the credibility, dependability, and authenticity of the research process and outcomes.

4.6 Ethical Implications and Considerations in Studying 'Vulnerable' Barura Estate Workers

The ethical issues that I engage here largely stem from specific realities. My participants were a *vulnerable* group experiencing heightened levels of labour insecurities. Also, the research object was highly sensitive as it could incriminate participants in their employment, political, and everyday lives. It was also highly personal and thus emotional. So, unlike in less sensitive research, where ethical codes can be semi-fixed (see Nordstrom & Robben, 1995), the ethical issues of non-maleficence, informed consent and voluntary participation, and confidentiality, which I raise in this study involved fluid pragmatic compromises between me, participants, and the context as and when the fieldwork unfolded.

I had to ensure that my participants were at least safe from *legal*, *social*, *psychological*, and *physical* harm (see Ogletree & Kawulich, 2012). This was vitally important as, in the current fieldwork, these forms of harm were an imminent practical danger in the following ways.

I draw from Foucault's (1979: 280) claim that "the existence of a legal prohibition", in this case, in the form of Barura estate's code of conduct, "creates around it a field of illegal

practices". On Barura estate, the latter took the guise of the participants' professed acts of hidden labour resistance like arson and poaching. Hence, any (un)witting ethnographic disclosure of such criminalised practices and the personal identities of the 'perpetrator' participants was highly likely to predispose them to legal harm - i.e., possible arrest by Barura estate security and state law enforcement agents. Also overlapping with legal harm was social harm.

That is, the workers' participation in this research meant further ethnographic disclosure of more practices and worldviews that were incriminating employment-wise (see Babbie, 2020). Practices such as goldbricking and unwarranted absenteeism, if (un)knowingly divulged to estate management or fellow workers made 'perpetrator' participants increasingly susceptible to social harm ranging from job suspensions, wage cuts, withdrawal of estate accommodation, to dismissals. Thus, social harm implied further immersion of participants in deeper socio-economic insecurities and deprivation.

Also intimately linked to the foregoing was the imminent *psychological harm* (McKinney in Babbie, 2020). As sworn to secrecy as the participants were, my eliciting of data on their criminalised acts and discourses of labour resistance, which most of them might have been at pains to share might have been a source of distress and an act of subtle coercion. Also, the participants' mere awareness that I was investigating their typically criminalised and stigmatised behaviours potentially cast them into a *liminal space* (Turner, 1969) of constant fear, anxiety, uncertainty, disgrace, insofar as arrests, work penalties, and social disapproval remained imminent eventualities. Mere participation also meant the workers' possible memory and *reliving* of embarrassing, dehumanising, and stigmatising experiences that predisposed them to emotional distress and low self-esteem (also see Babbie, 2020). The personal nature of the research object also had the potential to force participants to face aspects of themselves that they did not normally consider, and this, to follow Babbie (2020), could have occurred even when the information was not directly revealed to me. For instance, in retrospect a certain past practice like burning parts of the Barura plantation may have appeared unjust and immoral insomuch as to constitute a continuing source of agony for the participant.

Last, the study also predisposed participants to physical harm. As detailed in Chapter 1, since 2000, Barura estate, like most commercial farms around the country, had been turned by the governing ZANU (PF) party into an active site of state-sanctioned polarised and violent party

and electoral politics. This was worsened by the fact that I did the current fieldwork in years immediately preceding the 2018 harmonised elections. Thus, since some of the Barura workers' practices and discourses of hidden labour resistance involved real or imagined political disloyalty to the governing ZANU (PF) party, any ethnographic disclosure increased the participants' susceptibility to acts of spectacular political violence. The latter could take the typical guise of abductions, physical torture, death threats, deaths, physical and verbal assaults, unlawful arrests, etc. Relatedly, at the psychological level, the research also involved participants' reference to historical acts of political violence, a case which was likely to trigger anxiety, grief, panic attacks, etc.

In order to safeguard the participants from the foregoing forms of harm, I had to exercise and uphold the principle of 'informed consent and voluntary participation' (see Beins, 2017). Before interviews or observations, I conscientised participants of the potential risks or danger of their participation, and my strategies to reduce or eradicate such harm. I also clarified to them the research scope, purpose, my final use of their responses. I further made the participants aware of their right to withdraw participation should the need arise. I also did not deceive or coerce participants into participation. However, the main ethical dilemma concerned whether my participants, as *vulnerable* as they were, were actually *able* (i.e., competence) to give voluntary consent. As a group of workers impoverished by and experiencing heightened levels of labour insecurities, they may have felt *compelled* to participate mainly based on motivation from some desired research outcome - e.g., that participation entailed *direct* solutions to their suffering. This might have happened irrespective of me clarifying that there were no *direct* benefits from the research.

I partly mitigated psychological harm by being *culturally sensitive* (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). This was enhanced by my insider (i.e., 'native') role - as an integral part of the cultural groups I was studying. I was familiar with their norms, values, and sensitivities. Thus, in interview and observational interactions with them, my cultural competency facilitated my use of socially acceptable and less distressful language in framing, phrasing, and asking sensitive questions and/or in exploring sensitive topics. Similarly, my proficiency in the local culture enabled me to use language devices like local idioms, proverbs, euphemisms, allegories, to elicit otherwise emotionally draining narratives and responses in a calming, sub-conscious, and even jocular manner with minimal or no distress for participants. I was also able to proficiently tap into the

local cultures' non-verbal cues, gestures, which were known to (in)directly reduce levels of anxiety, pessimism, tension, grief, etc., when engaging sensitive topics with participants.

I also ensured that I was on constant look out for developing and active cases of any forms emotional distress. Once I discovered such, I immediately advised participants to seek free counselling services, which, fortunately for me and my participants, were actually being offered by a local non-governmental organisation (NGO) in a nearby rural village community. Meanwhile, in addition to also upholding the ethical principle of confidentiality as dictated by the incriminating nature of this study, the self-same principle helped me mitigate or stop the forms of harm that I mentioned above.

Given the highly personal and incriminating (i.e., likely legal, social, emotional, and physical harm) nature of the topic of everyday (hidden) labour resistance, the participants' right to privacy (i.e., confidentiality) was a primary ethical concern. From the outset, I conscientised participants that anonymity between them and me, the researcher, was impossible since through face-to-face interviews and my observation roles, I knew their personal identities and could also relate them to their responses (see Ogletree & Kawulich, 2012; Neuman, 2014). However, I guaranteed them that I would be able to keep their personal identities and responses anonymous from the public. This entailed practising and upholding confidentiality.

Overall, for confidentiality, I removed any of the participants' personal identifiers (real names, names of identifiable locations, participants' personal attributes, etc.) from the participants' responses prior to presenting them to the public (see Beins, 2017). The 'public' included Barura farm management, estate owners, fellow workers, members of nearby rural villages, and potential readers of the final PhD report or publications thereto. For confidentially I deployed the following specific techniques.

I replaced the participants' real names and the real name of the plantation estate with pseudonyms. The participants either chose their own fictional names or they assigned me to choose one or a code (i.e., letters of the alphabet) for them. So, I used these pseudonyms in all data sets and research documents during and after the fieldwork. I did this to ensure that participants could not be tracked based on their real names being attached to their responses. Pseudonyms kept the participants' responses anonymous.

Relatedly, to permit the later correction of missing or contradictory responses or data, I also created an electronic password-protected *master identification file* (Babbie, 2020), which contained the participants' pseudonyms linked to their respective real names and responses. I ensured that I was the only one who had access to this master file during and after the fieldwork. Meanwhile, I also secured any hard copies of field notes, interview and observational excerpts, draft documents by keeping them under lock and key. Similarly, I archived any electronic versions of the same data sets as password-protected files in a password-protected laptop. This secure data storage, to follow Ogletree & Kawulich (2012), helped me prevent any unauthorised access by the public to the data sets and documents.

However, I was also realistic enough to alert my participants of some 'exceptions to confidentiality' (see Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). I alerted them that I could not guarantee them absolute confidentiality in exceptional cases wherein some potential readers (who would have been participants or onlookers) of my final PhD report or any related publications happened to incidentally identify certain striking viewpoints with certain participants they thought they knew or actually knew, despite my use of pseudonyms. I at least partly kept this in check by presenting such likely identifiable positions as collective views rather than as individual verbatim quotes, but without compromising the credibility of such responses. Nonetheless, this technique was not foolproof as I could not know in advance all the kind of and exact worldviews that a certain reader would identify with a certain participant.

Overall, the foregoing ethical practices meant my conformity to the ethical requirements of the Research Ethics Committee at the University of Witwatersrand. I applied for and got ethical clearance from this committee as a precondition for conducting the current fieldwork. Below, I give some concluding remarks to this chapter.

4.7 Concluding Remarks

The main contribution of my fieldwork story has been to illuminate and sensitise the reader to the ontological and epistemological complexities and dilemmas of balancing the scientific, administrative, and ethical requirements of ethnographic fieldwork research. My field experience has shown that there is no standard rule to approaching such a dilemma, but the researcher has to deal with workable compromises depending on the uniqueness of the research object and field context.

The seemingly scientific/technical fieldwork procedures and outcomes for mainly subjective social phenomena like everyday labour resistance can never be value-free. Ethnography at and around Barura demonstrated that the researcher increasingly becomes synonymous with or an extension of the data collection, analysis, and interpretation processes, which are normally considered strictly technical. That is, the researcher's social-being - i.e., personal values, experiences, positioning, fieldwork practices and choices significantly shape these processes. Subsequently, it is the researcher's imperative to be deliberately reflexive of their positionality throughout to at least make these procedures and their outcomes credible and dependable.

The other upshot is that ethical 'standards' in the context of sensitive fieldwork such as the current one increasingly become less apparent and routine. Instead, they become a complicated process and outcome of negotiated, renegotiated, iterative, pragmatic, and even ambivalent interaction between the researcher, the participants, and the realpolitiks of the fieldwork site and its broader social context. The highly sensitive and personal nature of my topic and fieldwork especially predisposed participants to all mutually reinforcing forms of danger ranging from physical to legal. Consequently, non-maleficence, confidentiality, and informed consent and voluntary participation became the most significant but elusive ethical issues that I had to negotiate for the well-being of the participants.

Last, far from being strictly technical, my fieldwork experience and processes were subjective and political and therefore needed to be context specific. So, in similar field settings, the researcher faces the dilemma of reconciling the technical and socio-political aspects of sampling, selection, and deployment of data collection, analysis, and interpretation methods. In other words, they have to find a pragmatic compromise in order to at least come up with credible and reliable fieldwork processes and outcomes.

CHAPTER 5

(RE)PRODUCING AND SECURING LABOUR DOMINATION AND EXPLOITATION IN AND THROUGH THE COMMERCIAL FORESTRY PLANTATION LABOUR PROCESS

'it is more important to examine how the capitalist mode of production has accommodated itself to worker resistance, rather than simply how the capitalist mode of production might be overthrown…' (Friedman, 1977a: 48).

5.1 Introduction

In light of empirical evidence from Barura commercial forestry estate plantation, the overarching argument of this chapter (and the related Chapter 7) is that the power relations that everyday resistance engages in the estate's labour process comprises eclectic, mutually reinforcing, post-colonial capitalist relations of wage labour, status relations of plantation-localised statist ethno-national citizenship, and the discipline of plantation-based surveillance of the workers' political party allegiances and activities by alleged ZANU (PF) paramilitary spies. The current chapter submits that Barura farm workers' *everyday lived* work *experiences* and *conditions* (i.e., relations *in* production) of acutely insecure wage employment actually conceal and normalise the super-exploitation and labour domination that are *immanent* to Barura's post-colonial capitalist agrarian labour process. An auxiliary argument is that the self-same lived labour experiences and conditions also help secure the workers' continued participation in such super-exploitation.

These two related arguments interrogate workplace labour politics scholarship, which tends to *conflate* workers' relations *in* production (i.e., workers' lived experience of (in)secure working and living conditions) with relations *of* production (i.e., labour exploitation, and domination). The latter relations, from a Marxist perspective, are, in fact, distinct in that they are as *endemic* to the Barura plantation labour process as they are to any capitalist labour process. In light of fieldwork evidence, instead of conflating the two relations, we empirically and analytically differentiate the two, but importantly, foreground their complex *mutuality* in *veiling*, naturalising, and *(re)producing* each other. Therefore, our departing premise is that inasmuch

as the relations *in* and *of* production (see Burawoy, 1979) constitute the *material logic* of the Barura estate labour process, such a logic is also *symbolically/culturally* and *politically* mediated and expressed insomuch as to conceal, sustain, and reproduce super-exploitative post-colonial agrarian labour relations. This politico-cultural mediation, we argue, takes the guise of an ensemble of *ideological* and *political representations* and *practices*, which tacitly manifest in the everyday relations between plantation workers (and local village communities) vis a vis the capital-management dyad and state agents.

Guided by findings, to unpack the nature and dynamics of the subtle, soft, invisible politico-ideological forms of domination that co-exist with, and help conceal, secure, and reproduce super-exploitative relations at Barura, we make sense of them within a Marxist- inspired (orthodox and neo) persuasion of the Bourdieusian *twofold truth* of labour, Marxian *commodity fetishism* and *ideological mystification* and the Gramscian and Burawoyian appropriations of the notion of *hegemony* (see Chapter 3) . We critically mainstream these analytical tools into the practical realities of a highly insecure and suboptimal, post-colonial capitalist forestry plantation setting. Subsequently, inasmuch as these analytical tools offer analytical traction, we test and modify them according to the cultural specificity of the meso- and micro level dynamics informing the labour and production processes of the various plantation worksites. As a result, field-work specific reworked analytical lenses such as *manipulative* or *compulsive* hegemony, a *lower management-oriented* internal state, the *'waiting on'* or 'waithood' game, etc. emerge to account for such specificity and complexity. In light of fieldwork evidence, the section below presents and illuminates the *twofold truth* of the plantation workers' everyday experiences of and with wage labour.

5.2. The Double-Pronged Truth of the Barura Commercial Plantation Labour Process

5.2.1. The workers' exigencies of material necessity: The Subjective Truth

A fruitful entry point to a critical analysis of the mechanisms operating to conceal, reproduce and sustain wage labour as a relation of exploitation is the farm workers' emic constitution of their everyday experiences of and with the plantation labour process. To this end, we adapt Bourdieu's (1997 [2000]: 202-5) notion of the "twofold truth of labour", which in an orthodox Marxian tradition illuminates the *subjective* and *objective* truths of labour. Following Burawoy and von Holdt (2012) the latter truth constitutes the *reality* (i.e., exploitation) which *underlies*

the subjective truth of the labour process as *experienced* or *lived* by the farm workers. Premised on the entanglement of these two truths, we postulate that the greater the gap between them, the more they are concealed from each other, and therefore reproduce each other thereby obscuring and sustaining exploitation. Hence, hereunder, we outline and analyse the plantation workers' constitution of their emic experiences (*subjective truth*) of the commercial plantation labour process to set the stage for an analysis of the undercurrents (*objective truth*) that reproduce and sustain the subjective truth. To this end, below, the author presents an emblematic part of one of the many similar fieldwork conversations he had with three farmworkers who chose the pseudonyms Mai Matibhiri, Simba, and Jestina.

> It is a scorching Sunday afternoon, the author arrives at Mai Matibhiri's farm compound quarters, and she is swearing at goats that have just invaded her kitchen and eaten a greater part of her foodstuffs. She greets and gestures me to sit on a rickety wooden bench under a shady avocado-pear tree. As she disappears into her kitchen she is saying, "…you see, this sums up our everyday poverty on this plantation, compound houses last maintained in 2011, now it's 2016, unlockable doors in a state of disrepair, no wonder why these goats invade our quarters daily, and eat the little food that we struggle to acquire. Add to that, cracked windowpanes, cement peeling off floors, look at the walls, covered in soot, no electricity…all thirty houses in this compound either look like mine, or are even worse off…" I listen in utter despair.
>
> Moments later, she and two other co-farm workers, Simba, and Jestina, join me in the shade. Mai Matibhiri offers me a plate of bananas and then woefully says, "Imagine, these (bananas) now constitute one meal of our two-meal-a-day lifestyle, please receive them as lunch..." She then clears her throat, and suddenly assumes a more serious tone, "After serving this company for fifteen years… as a permanent general worker, first, as a pine tree nursery tender… and now as a timber tally clerk, never had we imagined we would have bananas for lunch!" With some subtle measure of empathy, the author asks, "How is that so?"
>
> "Well, listen my brother, for the past three months, I and the rest of general hands haven't been paid at all... Can you imagine?" She then gives me a piercing gaze, and this serves as my cue to be extra attentive. In a hushed voice, she proceeds, "…the greedy bosses (employers) and their lapdogs (management) are making profits from

their timber sales… how cannot they, just look around, see all these pine trees ready for harvest. But us, workers, at various workstations toil on empty stomachs, no income to buy food, no more food rations that we used to get at work sites, zero protective clothing, and our dilapidated compound quarters to come back to…." There is a conversational silence, and then Simba, who has been sitting pensively all along, suddenly partakes in the lamentations. He interjects, "Exactly, I concur with her, you know I work here as a chainsaw operator…fixed term contracts for the past three years. Overall, we have not received our wages for four, three months…" He looks towards the two ladies for approval. They nod, and he continues, "You see, three months of non-payment. Our working and living conditions here have been in the intensive care unit for the past two years …wages, salaries, have been a nightmare we all wish we could wake from." Before I even ask for elaboration, Jestina, who seems to have read my mind takes over the nightmare narrative.

"Imagine, we work, by the way, I have always been recruited as a seasonal worker since 2013". At this point Jestina elaborates that the company often seasonally hires them together with others from the surrounding villages on fixed term contracts, annually. According to Jestina the seasonal tasks include transplanting seedlings, weeding, pruning and fireguard maintenance. She continues, "… the wage nightmare has haunted us for almost half a year now, the nightmare is, despite toiling for nine hours daily, hungry, these witches (the employers and managers) pretend and lie that there is not any money to pay us! Imagine! Listen carefully… not demanding that we share their profits, no, the machines are theirs - tele loggers, timber jacks, chain saws…, the land and forest theirs, the business money too, so let them get their profit, fair, …but all we need is payment for our effort sweat, our outstanding wages, $120 in lieu of…let me do my mental Maths…260, no, 270 hours that we sell every month, year in, year out. Once they pay us, we get square, square (even), I get satisfied, they…"

To this end, itching to qualify further, Simba intercepts and says, "Yeah, when we always sign these contracts, it is a straightforward agreement, don't you see, that the company buys my energy and skills… 24 days monthly, and in return, I expect them to be sensible and fair… pay me what matches that energy, my 120 dollars. Simple Maths. What is difficult to understand, here? They say they are educated, but they cannot

understand this simple Maths…Mai Matibhiri, please, I think you add your own bit on the non-payment curse."

Immediately, Mai Matibhiri leans over and spreads her work abused palms right in front of my face, pauses a bit, and says, "Do you see these fifteen-year-old permanent scars and cracks? They are a testimony of all the effort that I have loyally sold over the years…." She startles me as she suddenly spits in the direction of the company's sawmill which is visible from where we are sitting. "Sorry, I am spitting at these crooks, daily, I have sold them nine hours of my sweat, Monday to Friday, Saturdays too, and for these past six months, and all they do is give us this non-payment nightmare! Out of the six months… owed three months' wages backdated to last year, and then, the worst nightmare, the other three months' wages settled in the form of a timber quota! There is nowhere in my employment contract where I signed to sell my sweat for timber, no, since when has timber become money for a wage? This is madness…they tell us to sell the timber to get cash…where, how?"

The foregoing fieldwork conversational excerpts are paradigmatic cases of the Barura farm workers' widespread experience of the acutely insecure Barura commercial forestry labour process and the living and working conditions thereto. Imagination of these labour and life experiences was mainly through the lenses of the material lens of the acutely insecure working and living conditions on Barura estate plantation. This is typical of the *subjective truth*, which Mai Matibhiri, Jestina, Simba, and fellow workers have of the Barura estate worksite labour politics. Hence, below we adopt and adapt Bourdieu's ([1997] 2000) innovative lens of the *twofold truth* of labour (see Chapter 3) to analyse Mai Matibhiri, Jestina, Simba and fellow Barura workers' plantation *lived experience* as espoused in the excerpts.

5.2.2 Juxtaposing Mai Matibhiri and Co-workers' Lived Truth with the Objective Truth of Labour

The foregoing conversational anecdotes encapsulate unprecedented levels of labour insecurities, and other worsening labour and life conditions, which the author also confirmed through observation at Barura estate. The most spectacular one was the income insecurity as chronicled by Mai Matibhiri and her co-workers in the vignettes. There was a pervasive pattern of abnormally delayed payment of wages by at least three months and when the payment occurred it was in kind (i.e., a timber quota). As a result, there was always uncertainty, among

workers like Mai Matibhiri, Jestina, Simba, and colleagues about assurance of timeous payment and receipt of the payment in cash. This unprecedented level of income insecurity was confirmed by Supervisor S, who in a key informant interview revealed the following:

> *"…well, I am confirming what I think you have already heard and seen in the estate public life…For the whole of last year* (i.e., 2015) *to present* (i.e., June 2016), *the estate has failed to pay all its general hands, and even us supervisors, foremen too, in time…we, for instance, have constantly owed workers at least three months' wages…even though they attribute this to cash-flow problems due to an overall underperforming agricultural economy, that's an absurdly long time to wait for one's unpaid wages. Here is the worst scenario now…when settling these arrears, the company has introduced this awkward regime of using timber quotas of supposedly equivalent value to the outstanding wages or the current wage… One has to hustle to sell and convert the timber to cash…Imagine the toil involved first with the storage, and then looking for potential buyers of the timber…This is unexampled in the history of this estate until recently…We now celebrate the far and few between wage in cash like it's a gift… We know that they are easily getting away with this since this is a state-owned company, …"* (Supervisor S, Key Informant Interview, June 2016)

The socio-economic exclusion and deprivation of commercial agricultural workers as chronicled by Main Matibhiri and her workmates, as well as by Supervisor S echo the general trend in agricultural work in Zimbabwe and elsewhere (see e.g., Sachikonye, 2003, 2012; Rutherford, 2003, 2008, 2016; Muzondidya, 2007; Bolt, 2015). However, in the foregoing excerpts, the dynamics of income insecurity stand out as they have reached unprecedented levels as testified by Supervisor S above. We unpack Mai Matibhiri and colleagues' lived experience of the Barura plantation labour process through the lenses of the 'twofold truth of labour' as espoused by Bourdieu's ([1997] 2000) uncharacteristic Marxist persuasion, more so, in labour politics, as he improves the Marxian uni-dimensional focus on the objective truth (i.e., exploitation) of labour. We submit that Mai Matibhiri and her co-workers' articulation of their labour relations, conditions, and identities based primarily on their material experience of the Barura commercial labour process constitutes their *subjective truth* of labour. That is, the truth of the commercial plantation labour process as *experienced* and manifested predominantly in the form of everyday economic/material deprivation, exclusion, repression, and deplorable working and living conditions. Yet, a critical insight into the (re)production and sustenance of this *lived* truth on the plantation requires its juxtaposition with the *objective truth* of labour. Following Marx ([1848] 1976, 1978), Bourdieu ([1997] 2000) and Burawoy and von Holdt (2012) the *objective truth* comprises the *actual* or *objective* historically specific *post-colonial capitalist relations* of commercial forestry production (i.e., labour domination and exploitation) that underlie the experienced reality of wage labour employment. It is this truth

that Bourdieu ([1997] 2000), argues that we must break with in order to discover the subjective truth as experienced by the interlocuters in the foregoing vignettes. And to follow Bourdieu ([1997] 2000), and Marx ([1848]1976, 1978) himself, this objective truth of labour is *exploitation*. Yet, to unravel the latter, we also need to begin from a nuanced understanding of Mai Matibhiri and her co-workers' articulation and conception of their emic *subjectivities* of the Barura commercial plantation labour process.

In light of the findings, Mai Matibhiri, Jestina, and Simba's subjective or experiential truth of the plantation labour process is synonymous with long working hours; non-assurance of the timeous payment of their wages; wage payment in kind-i.e., a timber quota; starvation; deplorable working conditions; dilapidated housing, etc. Suffice to say that they understand their labour and life experiences and identities as mainly governed by functional exigencies adapted to *material necessity* (Bourdieu, [1974] 1984 in Burawoy and van Holdt, 2012). That is, they constitute themselves as a workforce preoccupied with the fatalistic immediacy of its material needs, deprivations, and exclusion. Transplanting Wright's (2005: 23) *"inverse interdependent welfare"* and *"exclusion"* (see theoretical Chapter 3) principles to the excerpts, we suggest that Mai Matibhiri and her colleagues' portraits of the Barura labour process attest to an experientially constructed truth. They cannot see beyond the veil of this truth, which mainly concerns what Burawoy (1979) calls relations *in* production, in contrast to the objective veiled relations *of* production. That is, in the excerpts, the interlocuters go only as far as to simply view the material welfare of the Barura employers as asymmetrically dependent on the workers' *material deprivations*, which strictly relate to mere *exclusion* from timeous payment of wages, payment in cash, and decent working and living conditions. That is, they do not visualise it as the historical *underlying* exclusion from the rights and powers of ownership, control, and disposal of productive resources that include the plantation forestry land, plantation machinery, and capital.

Interestingly too, Mai Matibhiri, Simba, and Jestina are oblivious to the underlying *"appropriation"* principle (Wright, 2005: 23) i.e., the appropriation of their surplus labour effort by Barura management on behalf of plantation capital. That is, Mai Matibhiri and her co-workers are oblivious to the asymmetrical dependency and exclusion principles insofar as these principles historically excluded them from key productive resources (i.e., ancestral productive land) insomuch that they had to experience enforced proletarianisation (see Chapter

3). Subsequently, Mai Matibhiri, Jestina, Simba, and even Supervisor S experientially (mis)read the Barura post-colonial capitalist labour process largely through their quotidian *material deprivations and oppression,* at the expense of the underlying objective truth of the 'enforced' *appropriation* of their unpaid labour as independent producers. This appropriation entails *exploitative* relations of production, which transfigure, conceal, and reproduce themselves, in this instance, as wage labour employment at Barura (see for e.g., Marx and Engels, [1845-46] 1968, 1978; Bourdieu [1997] 2000; Wright, 2005).

Similarly, if we mainstream the orthodox Marxian (1963) concept of *class-in-itself* into the Barura rural plantation labour process, we realise that Mai Matibhiri and her colleagues' characterisation of their labour encounters and identities is almost akin to the logic of a *class-in-itself*. That is, by increasingly understanding themselves in relation to shared material (dis)advantages (overly delayed of wages, payment in kind, etc.) these Barura workers, to borrow from Marx (1963) and Thompson (1989), identify themselves merely as constituted from a *common material relationship* to the means of production in terms of wealth, ownership and control, place in the division of labour, social consumption, and background. In other words, workers in the vignettes rarely imagine Barura farm labour relations, practices, and identities beyond the subjective truth of their day-to-day experiences of material deprivation in the form of income insecurities and deplorable working and living conditions. Thus, their overall reading of the Barura commercial forestry labour process remains largely governed by material necessity at the expense of the underlying appropriation of their surplus labour effort.

Such a predominantly material and instrumental understanding of the Barura estate labour process is not only confined to the general hands, but also extends to lower management. To this end, I had an onsite chat with foreman Fedson. It was part of my three-week onsite excursion with his work-gang of transplanters. Fedson has been with the estate for twenty years, eight fixed-term, and twelve as permanent, six of the latter as foreman. He was overseeing a work-gang of thirty-three (seven permanent and twenty-six seasonal) which was transplanting pine seedlings. He emphasised how every workday, until the end of that planting season, they had to walk about a radius of not less than ten kilometres from the nursery site to the various planting sites. More so, with each worker carrying his knapsack of at least 500 seedlings a day. He also bitterly hinted:

> *"… my foreman title, even supervisors, now just a token titles…We supervise them, but earn only $20 more* (laughs scornfully). *We also can't afford three meals a day, school fees, no disposable incomes… since 2015 wages uncertain, crazy payment in timber.…I think you noticed, ever since you joined us the past four days, our workday now begins at 5 (am) instead of the official 8 (am), only two shuttles remain to ferry over a hundred workers to more than seven separate sites daily... we are forced to start as early as 5 so that we have enough time to walk, without protective clothing, no more food rations to work sites this far, but knockoff time remains at 5(pm)… almost 12 hours of work! Yet, despite all this, the company owners still need their money's worth, profits, profits..."* (Key Informant Interview, Fedson, October 2016)

It is remarkable how lower management workers like Fedson also construe the plantation labour process through the *subjective* lenses of material necessity at the expense of the concealment of the extraction of their unpaid labour-time (see Marx and Engels, [1845-46] 1968, 1978; Bourdieu, [1997] 2000; Burawoy and von Holdt, 2012). Suffice to say that the puzzle that arises from Fedson, Mai Matibhiri, and her colleagues' lived experience of the Barura labour process (extreme everyday socio-economic deprivations and exclusion) concerns their rather contradictory, unremitting participation in and habituation to such an overtly highly insecure and precarious labour process. That is, *how* is the objective truth of *exploitation* concealed, sustained, and even reproduced (Bourdieu, [1997] 2000; Burawoy and von Holdt, 2012) in the wake of the subjective/experienced (i.e., relations *in* production) truth of overt unremitting socio-economic deprivations and deplorable working and living conditions? In the process of engaging this puzzle, we confront a quintessential case where Barura farm workers predicate their reading of the farm labour process on observable material 'fiction' through a subjective characterisation of the profit dynamics in the Barura estate plantation labour process. This is explored further below.

5.3 The 'Wolf' of Exploitation in the 'Sheep Skin' of Barura Wage Labour Employment

5.3.1 The subjective truth of the 'inevitable and self-multiplying investment'

Similar to Jestina and Simba's vignettes that opened this chapter, a significant motif threading through the vignettes below is the common agreement on the taken-for-granted subjective truth that the Barura plantation employers *must* realise profits. Following Thompson (1989) we postulate that this truth is in keeping with the economic logic that the labour process must be combined with the creation of *surplus value*. Marx ([1898] 1935) calls the latter process *valorisation*. To adapt Marx ([1898] 1935), Braverman (1974) and Thompson (1989) to the findings, it suffices to say that valorisation entails that plantation capital (owners) has to

subsume the labour process under its own terms and control. The latter specifically denotes the Marxian *formal subordination of labour* by plantation capital via the agency of plantation management (see Thompson, 1989). Interestingly, narratives from both management and general hands confirmed an explicit, unwitting, taken-for-granted legitimation of valorisation and its need to be subsumed under management's control. Relatedly, another striking taken-for-granted truth was the *source* of the surplus value as evidenced by the ensuing prototypical fieldwork excerpts.

Manager W is a sawmill manager who has been with the company on a permanent contract for almost seven years. He also happened to be the author's colleague, and after two key informant interviews with him, the author followed up with numerous informal chats throughout his stay on the farm. One Saturday, over a braai, we were discussing the general deteriorating economic situation in the country and its impact on the agro-forestry sector. In keeping with the valorisation logic, part of Manager W's narrative was:

> *"However, the inevitable fact remains…like it or not, the owners of this estate need their capital to generate profit. We oversee that end goal. Their money must multiply…despite workers' complaints. Their* (workers) *continual signing of work contracts… is direct acceptance that they must work hard…so that the employers' investment can earn profits. More profits more investment and more pay. Where do they expect their salaries to come from if the employers' capital fails to generate profits?"* (Informal Chat, Manager W, June 2016)

Foreman Fedson, from an earlier conversation above, as part of lower management also corroborated the subjective truth of the inevitability of profit realisation; the need for the supervision of its realisation by management on behalf of capital; and of the source of profit as the employers' *"money's worth"* or *"capital"* (according to Manager W). To this effect Fedson said:

> *"… no more food rations to work sites this far, but knockoff time remains 5(pm)… almost 12 hours of work! Yet, despite all this, we remain fully aware that the company owners still need their money's worth, profits, profits...that's why they put us in these positions…to oversee profit realisation…"* (Planting-site chat with Fedson, November 2016)

So, from these excerpts, the common taken-for-granted lived truth for both senior and lower management is that timber production on Barura estate *must* be coupled with the realisation of *surplus value*, under managerial control. This is in sync with the economic interests of the plantation owners for whom "it is not enough to create value which is an exact equivalent of the payment for labour power" (Thompson, 1989: 35). The timber extractive and production process ought to be coupled with the valorisation process to create a surplus value (profit).

Interestingly, the surplus value so created becomes the "legal property of the employer" (Thompson, 1989: 42), and what is intriguing is Manager W and Foreman Fedson's characterisation of its (profit) source. For Manager W, it is the employers' *"capital"* or *"investment"* which has to "*generate"* or *"earn"* profit or has to *"multiply"*. Similarly, for Fedson it is the employers' *"money's worth"*.

Remarkably, Manager W and Foreman Fedson's subjective experience of the origins of profit resonates with that of low-skilled workers. Mai Matibhiri, Simba, and Jestina's lived experience of the source of Barura plantation profit is distinctly summarised in Jestina's worldview in the excerpt that opened this chapter when she insisted:

> *"… we are not demanding that we share their profits, no, the machines are theirs-tele loggers, timber jacks, chain saws…, the land and pine forests theirs, the business money too, so let them get their profit, fair, …but all we need is payment for our effort, sweat, our outstanding wages …"* (Informal Conversation, Jestina, July 2016)

Overall, just as for Manager W and Foreman Fedson the basis of Barura plantation surplus value are the means of production (i.e., state capital), for Jestina it is, *"...tele loggers, timber jacks, chain saws…, the land and pine forests… the business money too."* More so, for these interlocuters, and the generality of Barura farm workers, profit is conceived of as an *inevitable* and *legitimate* property of the plantation owners. Yet labour process scholarship of a Marxist persuasion (Braverman,1974; Friedman, 1977b; Burawoy, 1989; Thompson, 1989; Wright, 2005; Desan, 2013) argues that the workers' unpaid *labour power* is the source of surplus value, as we shall discuss in successive sections of this chapter. Subsequently, *labour power* becomes a significant conceptual pivot in explaining exploitative relations in the Barura commercial forestry labour-cum-production process.

Nevertheless, Mai Matibhiri, Jestina, Simba, Fedson, and Manager W's subjective representations of the production and valorisation processes are not the sleight of hand. Instead, they reveal the workers' and management's *actual experience* of plantation work. Such an experience of surplus value and its bases affirms Thompson's (1989) position that it is generally held that value is a result of *capital* and *technology* being applied to production. By the same token, Hodgskin reiterates, "By the common mode of speaking, the products, the instruments, the mere owners of which, who neither make nor use them, imagine themselves to be very productive persons" (quoted in Berg, 1979:81). This sums up the mystification of production and valorisation as experienced through the farm labour process.

Thus, streamlining Marx ([1898] 1935), Braverman (1974), and Friedman (1977b) and into the rural plantation labour process, we submit that timber production becomes inextricably linked to the material-cum-ideological struggle for profitable production. Consequently, the plantation management-capital dyad, must configure the labour process in a way that guarantees profitability and the (re)production of *class relations* (i.e., post-colonial agrarian capitalist relations) necessary for its domination. This compels us to unravel the relations (objective truth) immanent in the Barura labour process which account for Mai Matibhiri, Jestina, Simba, Fedson, and Manager W's subjective experience and reading of the plantation production and valorisation as espoused in their narratives. In order to critically do so, we deploy the complementary Marxist concepts of *ideology* (Marx and Engels, [1845-46]1978: 172) and *commodity fetishism* (Marx, 1976: 163-75).

5.3.2 The Mystical-Fetishist Political Economy of Barura Forestry Plantation Wage Labour

5.3.2.1 Commodity Fetishism, and Ideological Mystification on Barura Estate

Overall, Karl Marx did not come up with "a politics of production specific to the factory" (Burawoy, 1981: 85), and by extension, neither did he, for a post-colonial rural plantation worksite. However, we can profitably transplant Marxian concepts of *ideology* and *commodity fetishism* in helping us dissect the logic at play when Manager W, Mai Matibhiri, Jestina, Simba, and their colleagues attribute surplus value to some of the means of production when in fact they must be attributed to an *exploitative relation* of primitive accumulation through the extraction of unpaid labour from workers as direct producers.

At various plantation worksites, wage labourers such as Mai Matibhiri, Jestina, Simba, and Fedson vis a vis capital and management, are involved in post-colonial agrarian capitalist social relations. The latter relations concern the functioning and distribution of ownership, control, skill, power, and knowledge, and inevitably, *the production of ideas* (Thompson,1989) about these class relations. Hence, *ideology* on Barura plantation manifests either as *illusory ideas* of capital (see Marx and Engels, [1845-46] 1978) or *lived experience* (Althusser, 1969; Poulantzas, 1975) of labour domination through mystified plantation relations incorporated in the farm workers' everyday work and life experiences. Interestingly, part of the respondents' lived experience in the vignettes above is that the sources of plantation profit are the employers' capital, farm machinery like tele-loggers, timber jacks, etc. and timber sales. Subsequently, this

prompts us to also deploy *"commodity fetishism"* (Marx, 1976: 163-75) to explain such a mystical lived reality (of self-valorising productive forces and workers' biased focus on material deprivation and working and living conditions) insofar as such reality *appears* as a natural order of things in the plantation labour and valorisation processes. The central premise of commodity fetishism is that "as men and women engage in production, they generate a world of appearances'' (Burawoy, 1979:16).

That is, definite social relations of production (i.e., labour domination, and exploitation) are disfigured and are reduced to appear as relationships between 'things' (e.g., commodified forces of production such as the farm workers' wage labour and the farm owners' self-expanding capital) – labour and the products of labour exchanged on the economic market. To follow Taussig (2010) commodity fetishism ensures that exploitation masquerades as a 'natural' relationship between systemic artifacts (capital, labour, technology) of production. Thus, Mai Matibhiri, Jestina, Simba, Fedson, and manager W experience the employers' capital or investment, farm machinery and products of labour (timber and poles) as reified independent 'things' invested with intrinsic properties of self-expansion which give them an animate character of *bearing* surplus value. Commodity fetishism thus illuminates that plantation post-colonial capitalist relations of labour domination and exploitation present themselves to the Barura workers' (and management's) consciousness as something other than what they basically are, "even though that consciousness does reflect the superficial and hypostatized configuration" (Taussig,2010: 30) of *exploitative* commercial forestry plantation relations.

In light of such farm workers' and management's *fetishised* experience of the plantation production and volarisation processes, it can further be proposed that Marxist *ideological mystification* (Marx and Engels, [1845-46] 1978; Burawoy and von Holdt, 2012; Desan, 2013) is the mechanism responsible for such *appearances*. Writing on the modus operandi of mystification Marx and Engels assert:

> If in all ideology men and their circumstances appear upside-down as in *camera obscura*, this phenomenon arises just as much from their historical life-process as the inversion of objects on the retina does from their physical life-process. Marx and Engels ([1845-46] 1978 in Burawoy and von Holdt, 2012: 179)

From the excerpts, the *'historical life-process'* of the farm labourers such as Mai Matibhiri, Jestina, Simba, Fedson, and manager W refers to their everyday material interaction with and

interpretation of the "physical combatants" (Nichols, 1980a: 35) of production such as labour power, capital, farm machinery and profits. In other words, the wage labourers are "…both the carriers and effects of social relations…" (Burawoy and von Holdt, 2012: 179) through their plantation labour worldviews and practices as evident in their anecdotes. So, if they experience exploitation as socio-economic deprivation and repression, and deplorable working conditions or experience the source of surplus value in its mystical form (i.e., as *appearing* to originate from the forces of production), it is because of the post-colonial agrarian capitalist (i.e., Barura class relations) they are a part of. These relations are designed in such a way that they *mask* the social relations of ownership, control, and exploitation, which are inherent in the capital-labour-management matrix and express them in the commodified forms of plantation land, employers' capital and machinery and labour power. These forces of production then acquire "the appearance of natural beings, so natural in fact that they appear to take on a life-force of their own" (Taussig,2010: 30). This is quite evident in the animate metaphors such as *"their capital to* ***generate*** *profit", "their money must* ***multiply****", "employers' investment can* ***earn*** *profits"* which Manager W uses in relation to the farm employers' capital.

Therefore, from a Marxian worldview, in the eyes of the Manager W and workers such as Simba and Jestina, it becomes a property of the farm owners' capital, machinery, pine trees, land, etc. "to generate value and yield interest, much as it is an attribute of pear trees to bear pears…Thus we get the fetish form of capital and the conception of fetish capital…a mystification of capital in its most flagrant form" (Marx, 1967, 3:392). Similarly, by bringing Burawoy and von Holdt (2012) into commercial farm politics, we can further attest that mystification is the social process of everyday *appearances,* which produces the *gap* between a fetishist experience *(subjective truth)* of the relations and forces of production, and the reality *(objective truth)* of the social relations of exploitation and primitive accumulation that actually underlie Barura plantation production, labour, and valorisation processes. At this point it is imperative to further analyse *how* commodity fetishism and ideological mystification operate so that *exploitation* becomes *disfigured, naturalised,* and *legitimated* broadly as *labour power,* and specifically as *wage labour* on the plantations.

5.3.2.2 The Social logic of Exploitation disguised as the Economic logic of Labour Power and Wage Labour.

This sub-section proposes that the continuous participation in and therefore subsequent domination and exploitation of Mai Matibhiri, Simba, Jestina, Fedson (and other similarly positioned wage labourers cited below), through the Barura plantation labour process is realised, secured and (re)produced through the *market-inspired* fetish understanding of *labour power*. Line managers and lower management alike, on behalf of the employers, through the market-oriented 'thingfication' and reification of the employment contract, the payslip, the pension schemes, health benefits, etc. constitute the *subjective truth* of labour power as a '*commodity'* (see Polanyi, 1957; Marx, 1973, 1976) up for *sale* in a seemingly 'neutral' labour market. A so-called *free* market for that matter. This cannot be further from the plantation lived experience when Manager W, in an interview excerpt insisted:

> *Their* (workers) *continual signing of work contracts… is direct acceptance that they must work hard…so that the employers' investment can earn profits. More profits more investment and more pay.* (Informal Interview, Manager W, June 2016).

A similar perspective was also evident in Manager X's deliberations when, for two weeks, she took me on a pine harvesting site observation and participation. One cold morning in the company of the harvesting site foreman, she insisted:

> *"…But, once someone comes to us, signs or renews a work contract…permanent, temporal casual, seasonal, fixed-term temporal, their signature on that paper is a clear legal…binding indication…official…that management, and the company* (employers) *have legal access to their labour, to get the maximum out of it* (labour)*…the permanent workers through the contract…entitled to pensions..."* (Informal worksite Chat, Manager X, November 2016)

Interestingly, in the same chat, as if to consecrate the commodified form of labour power, foreman Gweture who was in our company, enthusiastically interjected:

> *"…yes, yes, I agree with the boss* (manager), *like them* (pointing at the timber harvesters) *we sign these contracts, according to farm labour laws…no one forces you. The contract, a covenant…you say yes, here I am to exchange my physical power for pay and the payslip is a witness every month end…fair deal, sign contract, sell your power, earn your pay…simple…"* Informal worksite Chat, Foreman Gweture, November 2016)

In a similar, yet cruder and more mystical blindness to the socio-historical basis of their labour power, the plantation wage workers' apprehension of such labour as a fetishised 'natural' economic category is startling. My everyday interactions with the farm labourers on and off the farms yielded a pattern of an almost subconscious and consistent adherence to the social fiction of *selling* their labour power in exchange for an *equivalent payment* from the timber

estate owners. Workers even considered such 'buying' and 'selling' as a *fair* deal, a *straightforward* agreement or as *simple* Maths. Earlier conversational excerpts from Simba, Jestina and Mai Matibhiri are paradigmatic cases which capture the overall mystical-fetishist experience of wage labour on the plantations. To this end, Simba could not have been more distinct when he declared:

> *"… always sign these contracts…a straightforward agreement, don't you see…the company buys my energy and skills… 24 days monthly, and in return, I expect them to be sensible and fair… and pay me what matches that energy, my 120 dollars. Simple Maths. What is difficult to understand, here? They say they are educated, but they cannot understand this simple Maths… that I sell the company 9 daily hours of my energy 24 days a month, in return, I expect them to compensate me what is equal to that energy, the 120 dollars wage. Simple Mathematics…"* (Informal Conversation excerpt, Simba, March 2016).

Likewise, in the same conversation, Jestina, the seasonal contractual worker, whose services the forestry company has hired for four successive years also insisted on the following sensed reality of wage labour:

> *"Listen carefully, we are not demanding that we share their profits,…but all we need is payment for our effort, sweat, our outstanding wages, $120 in lieu for …let me do my mental Maths…260, no, 270 hours that we sell every month, year in, year out. Once they pay us, we get square, square* (even), *I get satisfied…"* (Informal Conversation excerpt, Jestina, March 2016).

In the excerpts, top management, lower management, and the wage labourers alike present and interpret labour power, or its derived market forms such as the employment contract, pension schemes, health schemes through a labour market-inspired lens. Yet according to Scott (2006), the market is a space of *appearances*, which is opposed to the production site as a space of inner, authentic relations. We suggest that such a fictitious constitution (appearances) of labour power can be explained through *commodity fiction* (Polanyi,1957) or *commodity fetishism* (Marx, 1973, 1976).

At the various plantation work sites, the labour market mechanism, and its ideology of "market exchange and universal equivalency of money" (Taussig, 2010: 26), mediates and transmutes the *use value* (meeting of subsistence needs) of labour power into the *exchange value* (limitless search for surplus value) of *commodified* labour power. Borrowing from Thompson (1967), Marx (1967, 1973, 1976) and Desan (2013) we suggest that the market mentality that permeates the farm everyday lived experiences serves to dismember the *actual underlying class relations* of labour domination and exploitation on the farms and (mis)represents them as commodified labour power. Hence, the commodified meaning and understanding of plantation labour and its derivatives as shown by Managers W and X, foreman Gweture, Simba and Jestina disguise and

conceal both "the humanly creative and social basis of value and the exploitation of that creativity by the market system" (Taussig, 2010:27).

It follows that labour power becomes *decontextualised* from the social (class) relations of exploitation and dispossession that underlie it. Importing Deleuze and Guattari's (1984) deterritorialisation thesis to the plantation findings, we propose that the market paradigm, *deterritorialises* (displaces) the *objective truth* of class relations of exploitation and dispossession from the farm workers' experience and mystically *reterritorialises* (replaces) them with 'neutral' *essentialised relations* between wages, profits, and capital. We suggest that this results in managers W and X, Mai Matibhiri, Simba, and Jestina being *desensitised* from the objective reality of the labour and valorisation processes on the farms. And to import Marx (1981) and Desan (2013) this reality is that commodified labour power is, in fact, the historically specific mode of *extracting* and *appropriating surplus labour* from the workers as direct producers. Thus, concealed within plantation wage labour is the history of primitive accumulation (at the inception of colonial plantation agriculture in Africa). That is, fetishised farm labour "presupposes the existence of classes, and with it, the history of their production and reproduction" (Desan, 2013: 321) through capitalist accumulation by dispossession (especially of the indigenous people of their land). Through mystification, the workers in the excerpts are oblivious to the social reality that their surplus (unpaid) labour produces surplus value for the plantation owners.

Subsequently, in the eyes of these workers, their surplus labour (as opposed to *necessary* labour) is misrepresented as the farm employers' surplus value (profit). To this end, we concur that "the origins of profit in unpaid labour is obscured by its ostensible dependence on the workings of the market… or the personal efforts of the entrepreneur" (Burawoy quoted in Thompson, 1989: 159). This apprehension of labour power is true to the Gramscian (1971: 333) notion of *common sense* (without a kernel of good sense of course) where the farm worker, as "the active man-in-the-mass has a practical activity but has no clear theoretical consciousness of his practical activity…". The farm workers' theoretical consciousness (common sense) or *lived experience* of their labour is indeed historically in opposition to the objective reality of the appropriation of their surplus labour by farm capital. To borrow from Burawoy and von Holdt (2012: 63) the plantation workers' "…common sense is simply a blanket of bad sense".

More so, noteworthy is how the managers, foremen, and the wage labourers similarly characterise and interpret the *wage* form of labour power. To this end, we refer to anecdotal segments from some of the foregoing excerpts. Manager X says, '*…that…the company have legal access to their labour, to get the maximum out of it'.* Simba talks of, '*… a straightforward agreement…the company buys my energy…and in return, I expect them to be sensible and fair… pay me what matches that energy, my 120 dollars. Simple Maths'.* Jestina also declares, '*…all we need is payment for our effort… 120… for…let me do my mental Maths…270 hours that we sell every month…Once they pay us, we get square, square* (even), *I get satisfied…'* Gweture the foreman similarly attests, '*…I am to exchange my physical power for pay and the payslip is a witness every month end…fair deal'.*

In these foregoing fieldwork anecdotes, management and wage workers similarly believe in the experiential or arbitrary truth that through the employment contract, the wage and other wage-related benefits like pension funds, the farm employers actually *buy* and legitimately acquire their labour power.

Overall, these anecdotes attest to workers' and even management's explicit or implicit endorsement that through the labour contract, *payment* of an 'equivalent' *wage* and other wage-related benefits, the plantation employers actually *buy* and therefore legitimately acquire labour power. In keeping with these findings, we import Marx ([1898]1935) and assert that the *wage* form of labour power, further obscures exploitation on the plantations since the payment of wages *appears* as compensation for the labour performed, rather than for the value of labour power. This theorisation is further validated when Simba reiterates, '*… in return, I expect them to compensate me what is equal to that energy, the 120 dollars wage.' Simple Mathematics…".* But Polanyi (1957: 72) writes, "labour is only another name for human activity…which in turn is not produced for sale…The commodity definition of labour…is entirely fictitious". We therefore have a *socially conditioned fiction* in which, according to Thompson (1989) workers like Simba cannot directly identify the distinction between labouring to produce the equivalent of wages and working additionally to create surplus value, since they *appear* to be paid for their entire labour-time. Yet, paradoxically, for the plantation owners, "It is not enough to create value which is an exact equivalent of the payment for labour power" (Thompson, 1989: 35). So, the wage form of labour power must produce more value than it is itself worth. Thus,

the plantation owners must ensure that timber production ought to be extended into surplus value.

An import of Taussig's (1977, 2010) scholarship on commodity fetishism in the Cauca Valley (Colombia) sugarcane plantations into the current study helps us illuminate how the above-mentioned exploitation disguised as the *wage* form of labour is secured. Getting a cue from Taussig (ibid), what farm labourers like Simba, Jestina and Gweture fail to realise is that in *buying* the commodity form of labour power as an exchange value, what the farm owners acquire is the right to deploy the use value of the workers' labour as their physical and mental capacity to produce more use values than those that are reconverted into commodities as *the wage*. Such a proposition is aptly evident in Simba's understanding of his waged labour power when he says:

> *"…They say they are educated, but they cannot understand this simple Maths… that I sell the company 9 daily hours of my energy 24 days a month, in return, I expect them to compensate me what is equal to that energy, the 120 dollars wage. Simple Maths…"* (Informal Conversation excerpt, Simba, March 2016).

Such a socially conditioned mystification ensures that farm workers such as Simba, bereft of the means of production, can be manipulated into investing *more* labour-time than is *necessary* for the production of timber or timber products required for self-sufficiency. In Simba's *nine* hour workaday for instance, he produces timber in *four* hours that (as commodities), is equivalent to the *$120 wage* received. The remaining *five* hours are appropriated as unpaid labour by farm capital. Yet, to follow Marx ([1867] 1977), Taussig (1977, 2013) and Desan (2013) the *hidden mechanism* that ensures the creation of surplus value out of a situation that *appears* as nothing more than the fair exchange of equivalence is the back-and-forth movement of labour as *exchange value* and as *use value*. That is, in Simba's *nine* hour working day, he *experiences* necessary labour (enough for self-sufficiency) and surplus labour (for profit accumulation) "simultaneously and together in a unitary labour process…" (Desan, 2013: 322). Thus, for Taussig (2010: 27) workers (such as Simba) "tend to lose sight of this and the crucial importance of the non-commodity nature of labour if…[they] adhere only to the simple arithmetic" which in Simba's case displays a surplus of *five* hours *unpaid* labour-time. Interestingly, Simba is oblivious to the latter. Thus, Simba's *living labour* (Polanyi, 1957; Marx, 1967) becomes something set apart from life and abstracted into the commodity of labour-time, which then appears to Simba, Jestina, and others as substantial and real. Suffice

that *commodification* of labour power into its *wage* form enshrouds the fact that living labour as use value is extracted and appropriated by the farm employer as a source of profit.

To conclude this segment, Simba and other farm workers' concrete *ideological* experience (Althusser, 1969; Poulantzas, 1975) of their labour power as *wage labour* disguises and conceals the underlying exploitative relations, and the history of their (re)production through the extraction of *unpaid* labour time from them as direct producers. Otherwise, this is congruent to Desan's (2013) assertion that the fetishised experience of wage labour produces a *mystification* of its essence as a social relation of exploitation. The quantity of this disguised exploitation can be measured, for instance, in Simba's case, as surplus labour-time (five hours) accruing to the estate employer. Yet, paradoxically, according to Taussig (2010) the quality of this exploitation cannot be measured. Subsequently, "the feeling of atomization and bondage which is the phenomenology of the market-based system is elusive because it is taken as natural" (Taussig, 2010: 27). In the final analysis, the *sociology* of domination and exploitation masquerades as a *'natural', legitimate, economic* relationship of wage labour on Barura plantation.

In addition to the *inherent* mystification (and thus concealment) and (re)production of super-exploitation and labour domination that underlie the Barura commercial forestry plantation labour process, we are also interested in ***how*** these processes are *secured* or *sustained*. We propose that *hegemonic* practices, ideas, and conditions are deliberately and/or incidentally crafted by the capital-management dyad to consolidate and secure the control and exploitation of workers in the suboptimal and highly insecure post-colonial, agro-forestry capitalist setting of Barura estate. We pursue this argument below. Accordingly, below, our point of departure is Gramsci (1971) and importantly, Burawoy's (1979) Gramsci-inspired south Chicago ethnographic account of how exploitation is secured under (advanced) capitalist settings (i.e., in an industrial plant). By critically juxtaposing these seminal works to fieldwork evidence, we build a fieldwork-specific analysis of *how* exploitation is secured under a suboptimal and acutely insecure, post-colonial capitalist African setting of Barura estate plantation.

5.4 Securing and Reproducing Super-Exploitation in and through a Highly Insecure Plantation Labour Process – *Manipulative Hegemony*

In light of striking fieldwork evidence, we add further meaning to debates on the politico-cultural mechanisms and dynamics that mediate the securement and reproduction of

exploitation at the Barura shop floor level of capitalist production. Thus, we find it profitable to juxtapose our field-specific findings with similar seminal scholarship on worksite labour politics especially by luminaries like Gramsci (1971), as well as Burawoy (1979, 2012), who critiques and extends the former's work. So, in the context of an acutely insecure post-colonial commercial forestry labour process, we acknowledge and transcend the empirical and analytical scopes of these milestone works and make the following argument. A field-specific *manipulative* or *compulsive* hegemony mediates the securement and reproduction of labour domination and super-exploitation at Barura forestry estate's worksites. Barura workers more of *give in* and *give way* to exploitation than *agree* to it. Manipulative hegemony, we assert, is produced by three mutually intersecting context-specific apparatuses namely the vicious circle of labour insecurities, the internal state (i.e., supervisors and foremen) and its indulgency patterns, and the 'waiting on' or 'waithood' workplace game.

Certain critical points of departure anchor our ensuing analysis. Since we have detailed these points in Chapter 3, presently it suffices to give a snapshot of the key positions, which we will revisit and rework in detail as and when this chapter unfolds. Gramsci's (1971) innovative foregrounding of capitalist *workplace struggles* in the *cultural* realm sets the analytical tone for this section. In particular, he submits that *hegemony* (i.e., free consent) is the ideational conduit, which secures the extraction of surplus labour (i.e., exploitation) under advanced capitalism. For him, at least in the USA, hegemony was born at the *shop floor* of the factory. Adopting this Gramscian thesis, Burawoy (1979, 2012) adapts it to his Chicago factory study (see Chapter 3) wherein he discovers three apparatuses of hegemony namely the internal state, the internal labour market, and the 'making out' game. However, Burawoy, in Burawoy and Holdt (2012) argues that Gramsci's original idea of hegemony is restricted to the *rational* and *conscious* basis of consent to exploitation. As a result, he extends and modifies Gramsci through the discovery that, a Marxian-kind of mystification is a necessary condition for a stable hegemony and vice versa. He demonstrates this through adopting the Bourdieusian game metaphor of social reproduction and adapting it to the 'making out' Chicago factory game. In this Chicago instance, under advanced capitalism, at the worksite, we encounter the simultaneous mystification of and consent to exploitation.

Nonetheless, Burawoy in Burawoy and Holdt (2012) acknowledges and suggests why for Gramsci (1971) hegemony needed not co-exist with the mystification of exploitation. This is encapsulated by Burawoy thus:

> For Gramsci, whose experience of the working class was through the factory council movement, exploitation was hardly hidden, and, on this occasion, the working class did not really exhibit a good sense within the common sense. (Burawoy and Holdt (2012: 186)

In other words, the workers were able to see through the subjective experience of capitalist labour. There was nothing hidden or unconscious about the consent of workers or trade unions and parties to capitalism and therefore to exploitation.

Having spotlighted the foregoing departing positions, our first takeaway, which we adopt from Gramsci (1971) and Burawoy (1979, 2012) is their neo-Marxist *streamlining* of society-level Marxist analysis of capitalist relations of production to the *micro-cultural* level of *worksite* production-cum-labour politics. However, contrary to the two authors' portrait of shop floor production politics under advanced capitalism, the shop floor politics of the current study obtain in a *post-colonial* capitalist production system characterised by a *suboptimal* and *acutely insecure* labour process. The latter scenario sets the unique scene for our first field-specific mechanism of manipulative hegemony in the form of what we coin a *vicious circle of labour insecurities*. Below, we present and dissect empirical findings that attest to the presence and dynamics of the vicious circle.

5.4.1 Producing Manipulative 'Consent' to Super-Exploitation – The Vicious Circle of Heightened Labour Insecurities

Guided by findings, this sub-section argues that a vicious circle of unprecedented labour insecurities (vicious circle hereafter) both causes and conditions Barura workers' sustained participation in a super-exploitative forestry labour process. This is quite curious and interesting given that the heightened levels of labour insecurities *per se*, would, logically, be expected to motivate the workers to quit super-exploitative plantation employment. However, as the ensuing vignettes demonstrate, the plantation workers are, in fact, manipulated and induced by the vicious circle (of labour insecurities) to *give in* and *give way* to subjugating and exploitative relations of agrarian production insomuch as to secure and reproduce the self-same relations.

Scholarship on the insecurities and precarity of commercial farm work in Zimbabwe is replete (e.g., Sachikonye, 2003, 2012; Addison, 2006; Bolt, 2015; Rutherford, 2008, 2016). We value this scholarship for deliberately demonstrating and illuminating the characteristic precarity of agricultural work. However, the unprecedented levels, which the precarity takes at Barura estate deserve special attention insofar as they also ironically produce the workers' manipulative hegemony to super-exploitation. Such unprecedented precarity as observed and narrated at Barura manifests in the form of widespread prolonged periods (i.e., at least three months) of wage non-payment and the 'new' infamous payment in kind (i.e., timber quotas) when payment occurred. Not to mention the pervasive arbitrary forfeiture of workers' pension and social security funds, the arbitrary breach of workers' contracts, and representation insecurities due to an acutely low union density (i.e., non-subscriptions due to mainly non-monetary wages), an almost dysfunctional workers' union at both the enterprise and sector levels, and employment insecurities, etc. To set an empirical scene for how compulsive hegemony is produced at the various Barura worksites, we begin with Garabha's emblematic narrative of the unprecedented levels of labour insecurities at Barura.

Garabha is both a farm worker and farm dweller who has served the forestry estate on fixed-term contracts as a wet-timber-saw operator for successive three years. His narrative sums up the alarming levels of precarity as spotlighted mainly through acute income and job insecurities. We were relaxing under the sagging and cracked asbestos-roof, which was what remained of Garabha's veranda of his equally dilapidated farm quarters. The piercing, relentless September heat matched Garabha's sordid details of his and other farm workers' encounters with *"an unrivalled level"* of precarity. Exuding despair, anxiety, and uncertainty around the alarming levels of insecurities, Garabha, whose case is prototypical of many such cases detailed the following:

> *"… we have endured these trying eleven months of unheard-of suffering! This is an unrivalled level of suffering…employers owe me four months' wages…also got timber in lieu of my April, May, June wages, and as is the trend, it's a lengthy, difficult process to sell it, I desperately need networks from management to dispose of that timber for money…Painful… for the past three years, instead of the company converting each of my six months' fixed term contract to a permanent one a month before expiry as must be the norm, they make it expire first, and then make me sign a new one! See, a lot is at stake, any quitter stands to lose more…no jobs elsewhere too… Holding on is the anthem for most sensible workers on this farm …. 'The darkest hour is before dawn' we keep urging ourselves…"* (In-depth Interview, Garabha, September 2016)

To further qualify the extremes of the workers' heightened income insecurities (i.e., *diminished* assurance to receive it in cash and on time) was Zakeu's emblematic case of management's (on behalf of capital) arbitrary shift to wage payment through a *timber quota*, which was considered to be equivalent to a month's wage of US$110 (Zimbabwe was using the multi-currency system at the time of the research) One evening, at a funeral wake, I had a fireside dialogue with him. Zakeu, a fixed-term timber stacker, just like other general hands, was devastated by the new 'payment-in-kind' regime which the employers had arbitrarily implemented. Bitterly, Zakeu was cursing, "… never ever imagined these devils would reach this level"! He then gazed into the dark sky and continued, "…we wish our ancestors could rescue us from this primitive pestilence… being paid wages in timber, since March! Yet these Satanists (employers and top management) pay each other real money". I then interjected, "…but one manager advised me… there are cash-flow problems, declining sales, bad economy…" He gave me a long piercing stare before retorting, "… explain, why do *you* get money salaries and us timber wages…huh!" I almost reminded Zakeu that I was not part of management before he resumed, "…daily, three, four, thirty-tonne truckloads of timber leave this estate for sale…this is despicable, a timber wage!" I had to duck a knee-jerk swing of his work-abused palm, a swing I guessed was not necessarily aimed at me, but at an imaginary estate manager. (Field notes, Zakeu, October 2016)

Equally inconceivable and melodramatic was Foreman Zuze's chronicle of the newly attained levels of the deterioration of Barura plantation work conditions as reflected in the mutually reinforcing income, job, employment, social and representation insecurities. Zuze, as a key informant, chronicled:

> *"…where do I get the guts to supervise someone who hasn't received wages for more than three months… who for the first time is receiving timber in lieu for wages…taking two months to sell that timber for cash…usually, after selling the timber on behalf of workers, some senior staff short-change them…We no longer have a functional workers' committee…also no cash for subscriptions to the main labour union,* (GAPWUZ)*…so no employer-worker grievance resolution. Worse, with the recent heart-breaking crisis where the pension benefits of retired workers are being forfeited and the company is complicit…funnily, all this also applies to us foremen…I would rather make compromises or give a blind eye to misdemeanours of the work gangs that I supervise…"* (Interview, Foreman Zuze, October 2016)

Bauman and Haugaard's (2008) 'liquid domination' through *insecurities and uncertainties* can partly help explain the puzzle of the contradiction between the extraordinarily acute labour and life insecurities portrayed by Garabha, Zakeu and Zuze above, and their continuous

participation in them. Almost similar to the 'liquid domination' framework is the Marxian ([1867] 1990) notion of the *dull compulsion* of economic relations. The extreme, day-to-day bundle of insecurities (income, job, employment, representation, social) encountered by Garabha, Zakeu and Zuze predispose them to a vicious cycle of socio-economic liminality insomuch that they cumulatively get trapped in and habituated to the debilitating conditions of farm work. Also compounding these capital-initiated insecurities are systemic ones such as a *reserve army* of farm labour and the transition from *discretionary* to almost *necessary* participation in plantation wage labour.

The extremeness of the labour insecurities, which Garabha, Zakeu and Zuze are experiencing approximate van Onselen's (1973: 60) '*economics of death'* in the Northern Rhodesian (now Zimbabwe) mining compounds where according to Pollak (1978:96) the profit motive "…bred a callousness in which employers cared little…that their labour force died annually" from conditions directly related to malnutrition, wage-cuts, matched by stinginess in accommodation, safety devices and compensation for injury.

Similarly, Garabha and his colleagues are experiencing acute levels of income insecurity (i.e., largely reduced assurance of receipt and/or receipt in cash) in the form of the abnormally prolonged non-payment of wages and the arbitrary switch to wage payment in kind (a timber quota) whenever payment occurs. Crude job insecurity is evident in the intermittent, six months' fixed-term contracts running for successive years without their legal conversion to permanent contracts (a month prior to expiry). There is also an employer-implicated collapse of the worker pension and social security schemes, which Zuze says is a "… *heart-breaking crisis where the pension benefits of retired workers are being forfeited and the company is complicit".* As confirmation of such extraordinary social insecurity, the researcher, during the entire ethnography, observed that workers who were due for a pension were 'offered' an 'option' of a further five year, fixed-term contract extension while awaiting their pension funds. Interestingly, the death knell to all this precarity, was a context in which, for Zuze, workers *"no longer* [had/have] *a functional workers' committee…also no cash for subscriptions to the main labour union, GAPWUZ…so no employer-worker grievance resolution".* The latter epitomises the death or deterioration of trade unionism/collective bargaining at the Barura shopfloor level, and by extension, as demonstrated by Sachikonye (2012) overall at the sector and national levels as well as the demise of a worker grievance resolution machinery.

Following colonial labour politics scholarship on the '*economics of death'* (van Onselen, 1973, 1980; Cohen, 1977; Pollack,1978) the acute labour insecurities portrayed above involve the (un)intentional illegal practices of Barura capital's withholding of wages and pensions, payment of wages in kind, and being deliberately ambiguous about the length of labour contracts. The overall effect of such *extra-economic* (Arrighi, 1970) strategies is the holding of the farm workers 'hostage' in a vicious web of insecurity and uncertainty where they are compelled to endure precarity and 'hold on'. The latter is evident when Garabha reiterates, *"... See, a lot is at stake, any quitter stands to lose more… Holding on is the anthem for sensible workers on this farm…"*. Completion and complication of Garabha and other farm workers' vicious web take the form of confounding systemic conditions within the broader logic of post-colonial agrarian capitalism in Africa.

To this end, adapting Arrighi's (1970) proletarianisation thesis, we gather from findings that the Barura farm workers' motivation to participate in the rural *money economy* through the sale of *labour-time* (to plantation capital) has since become far stronger than through income and resources from other non-capitalist wage livelihoods, especially peasant agriculture. According to workers like Garabha and many others, constraints such as occasional droughts, a national hyper-inflationary environment, and therefore an erratic flow of alternative incomes (hence little or no funds for subsistence agricultural inputs) have increasingly made the subsistence economy less viable. That is, the sale of labour-time, by and large, is no longer *discretionary* (as it relatively is during conditions of economic stability) but almost *necessary* (Ibid) since in the current study, it has become almost indispensable for the satisfaction of the farm workers' daily subsistence needs. This is especially so (as detailed in Chapter 7) given that most of the workers in commercial farms have, since the colonial era to present, been legally produced by the Zimbabwean state as *'aliens'* either on the basis of their *legislated* foreign ancestry or on the ZANU (PF) – led state's basis of real or perceived political allegiance to no other political party other than ZANU (PF). As a result, the former group of 'aliens' has no *legal* access to residential and tillage land in Zimbabwe, and the latter type of 'aliens' remains (near)landless in terms of retaining poor tillage land owing to politicised land reforms that exclude them (also see Sachikonye, 2003, 2012; Rutherford, 2008, 2016).

These ‘alien’ farm worker dynamics are detailed in Chapter 7. Suffice to say that the potential income from Barura plantation wage work has increasingly assumed an almost ‘indispensable’ status as a source of rural livelihoods for Barura workers. This, for instance, is evident in earlier vignettes wherein Mai Matibhiri, Jestina, Fedson, and many others prioritise *farm wages* in terms of meeting families’ basic nutritional, agricultural, and educational needs. Thus, importantly, and overall, compulsion into insecure Barura farm work is compounded and guaranteed by the increasing *effort-price* (Arrighi, 1970; van Onselen, 1977) of participation in non-plantation wage livelihoods (i.e., peasantry, handcraft, petty trade, etc.) resulting from their *weakening competitive position* in an inflationary Zimbabwean product market. Thus, for the farm workers, the relative *necessity* of subsistence through *wage labour* triggers a matching increased *intensity* (total amount of time) in their compulsive participation in a post-colonial capitalist agrarian labour process, thereby also increasing susceptibility to intensified and sustained exploitation.

Another systemic force, which compels the unremitting participation, in Barura’s highly precarious farm work, by Mariga and colleagues, is the employment threat posed by the *reserve army of labour* (see Marx, [1867] 1976; Braverman, 1974; Beechay, 1982) from nearby villages and elsewhere. We streamline *reserve army* to specifically refer to a *floating reserve* of potential farm workers repelled from agriculture and other sectors by politico-economic crises and are in periodic unemployment before being attracted back to farm work, sometimes even at a lower rung (see Sachikonye 2003, 2012). Not to mention a *stagnant reserve* constituted of a potential ‘pool’ of poor groups (e.g., women peasants, school dropouts) who find it difficult to find employment other than in a casual, irregular, and marginal way. The researcher’s confirmation of the workers’ acknowledgement of the imminent threat posed by the *reserve army of labour* was aptly summarised by Rosewinter:

> *“… been a permanent worker for three years…yet I don’t fool myself. It’s an open secret here…whether seasonal, permanent, casual work …that you can be easily replaced! Why? There, nearby villages A, B, C...* (names supplied) *and more villages afar, are thousands of available healthy men, women … that this farm and other farms laid off. What of those who have never worked…those who leave this farm school, many other schools in this difficult economy…ready labour for the company. No alert general worker, ask anyone, thinks themselves indispensable on this farm…in the blink of an eye any villager can replace us…a lot of willing people in the villages… managers and foremen know that…”* (Informal Chat, Rosewinter, February 2017)

Both the foregoing systematic practices by the Barura farm capital-management dyad, and the confounding systemic (extra)economic conditions epitomise Crozier (1964) and Bauman and Haugaard's (2008) domination through insecurity and uncertainty. It is a subtle domination whereby the farm workers' discipline, submission, and sustained participation in Barura's suboptimal labour process are guaranteed through all the heightened forms of insecurity mentioned earlier deepening the uncertainty under which the farm workers 'choose', decide and act. Following Bauman (2008) there is a shift towards unpredictability, in this case, in terms of labour contracts, wage payment time and regimes, and pension schemes as they remain opaque and less predictable (see Crozier, 1968). Thus, Barura workers occupy *liminal* or *third space* (van Gennep, 1960; Turner, 1978; Bhabha, 1994; Soja, 1996) where the Barura plantation labour process casts the workers in a state of ambient ambiguity, insecurity, anxiety, and fear. The ontological insecurity (Brown, 2000; Mitzen, 2006) thus created results in unstable farm worker relations and identities which, in a cyclical manner, remain ever more susceptible to the vicious cycle of precarious work conditions. In relation to such precarity and insecurity, Bauman (2008: 112) asserts, "It is because of the haunting uncertainty and insecurity that subjects are inclined to engage in 'synoptical' endeavours…" and one such synoptical endeavour we focus on is what we coin the *'waiting on'* or *'waithood'* game. To borrow from Haugaard (2008) the latter is comprised of *compulsive practices* which in this instance, secure the hegemonic participation and therefore domination and super-exploitation of the farm workers in a sub-optimal and highly insecure capitalist labour process.

5.4.2 The 'Waiting On' Game: (Re) producing Compulsive Hegemony

5.4.2.1 The Material dynamics of 'Waiting On'.

The foregoing systematic practices and systemic conditions are the preconditions that compel Barura workers' active and sustained participation in an increasingly precarious labour process through the 'waiting on' game. The game metaphor is adopted from Burawoy (1989, 2012) and reworked according to fieldwork findings and related scholarship (Lupton, 1963; Hales, 1980; Thompson, 1989) to embrace both the *material* and *ideational practices* that the workers (in)advertently engage as adaptation to the debilitating conditions of farm work. To this effect Nicholas and Armstrong (1976: 3) reiterate that survival in alienating and insecure work contexts means that workers "have devised their own particular means of 'getting by".

However, on Barura, on one hand such means of 'getting by' can be simultaneously self-defeating as they remain anchored within the capitalist accumulation logic and hence subtly induct the workers into their own exploitation and domination. On the other hand, while the clause 'getting by' implies a certain degree worker 'choice', in the current empirical context, 'waiting on' entails more of the workers *giving in* (i.e., enforced 'compliance') rather than *agreeing* to continuous participation in a suboptimal and highly insecure post-colonial capitalist labour process. In light of findings, we thus, propose that it is more the *manipulative* or *compulsive* side of hegemony (i.e., *compulsive hegemony*) than its voluntary (see Gramsci and Burawoy) side, as embodied in 'waiting on', which also secures the domination and super-exploitation of Barura plantation workers. In addition to earlier excerpts (which spotlighted the workers' acute labour insecurities) from Garabha, Zakeu, Zuze, Mariga, and Rosewinter, the mechanisms, dynamics, and logic of compulsive or manipulative hegemony through the 'waiting on' game find paradigmatic expression in further empirical anecdotes hereunder.

Gozden, in early 2015, was due for his pension benefits after serving the plantation for twenty years as a pine tree nursery tender. The company failed to avail his, and other two colleagues' benefits. Instead, it 'offered' them further five year, fixed-term contracts for the same jobs. Gozden's colleagues declined the 'offer' and sought recourse through the main agricultural labour union, the General Agricultural and Plantation Workers' Union of Zimbabwe (GAPWUZ). Gozden confessed that despite the painful pension scam, taking up the offer was, for him, a 'calculated' and 'tactical' move which ensured that he did not lose everything. His other two workers ended giving up on union recourse, and Gozden took pride in his tactical ignorance of the GAPWUZ route which he believed had been rendered ineffective through co-option and bribery. In a painful, yet proud portrayal of his tactical approach he said:

> *"… work and life have worsened! You need to think, act fast with the worst… tactics, useful ways to survive the unexpected in farm work… Look…my two colleagues, now losers throughout… GAPWUZ zero, nothing, two years gone no pensions. Worse, they refused the extensions, five-year contracts while waiting for pensions. Empty-handed! You seem shocked and think, but what about your twenty-year pension…very sad yes… But I didn't throw away the baby with the bath water… I took the offer. Why? I had everything to lose! Sounds crazy, but I know I made a more reasonable move than my colleagues… I still have a job for more five years and who knows, my pension may be resolved anytime, while I still have a job in my pocket, a bird in the hand is worth more than two in the bush…unlike those two… My advantage, I will wait while working in the company... The company owes me a lot… I am patient like a chameleon trying to catch a fly… the company is my fly…"* (Informal Interview, Gozden, February 2017)

To add more appeal to Gozden's narrative was Matigari's anecdote. She has been a farm security guard for five successive years on a permanent contract, and her narrative also embodies a synoptic characterisation of the dynamics and underlying logic of the 'waiting on' game. Part of her narrative was:

> *" The cumulative nature of what the estate owes us… after long-suffering sacrifices, quitting work becomes even more catastrophic … who quits and risks losing forever… the five months' unpaid wages, accumulated pension benefits… risk losing potential conversion to permanent status of fixed-term contracts that have painfully dragged on for years…losing the only realistic source of income for survival, livelihoods elsewhere have been difficult… stakes are high… quitting does us more harm than holding on… a lot of replacement labour in villages. So, what do us workers advise each other, seasonal, permanent, fixed term alike? Develop a thick skin … report to your workstation almost daily, be physically visible, even those who have dual residence…village and compound, ensure that management sees that you are somehow staying in your farm quarters, make them see a semblance of your occupancy of the farm space… secretly engage in self-help… only exception… whatever you do don't risk job loss…."* (Interview, Matigari, March 2017)

What we can conclude from Mariga, Zakeu, Zuze, Rosewinter, Gozden and Matigari's anecdotes is that, following Burawoy and von Holdt (2012), hegemony on Barura plantation assumes a *practical logic*. That is, hegemony is realised through a *material workplace culture* (Nicholas and Armstrong, 1976; Hales, 1980) between capital, management, and labour. On one hand, hegemony assumes the *dull compulsion* (Marx, [1867] 1990) of the socio-economic insecurities (Bauman and Haugaard, 2008) systematically produced by the capital-management dyad, and the *state* (see Chapter 7 for detail), as well as systemically produced by a highly insecure post-colonial capitalist forestry labour process, and then experienced by the workers. Such insecurities, as mentioned earlier, include the abnormally delayed wage payments, notorious payment of some of the outstanding wages in kind, insecure labour contracts, and the ambiguities surrounding Mariga and other workers' pension and social security funds. Coupled to the latter, as chronicled earlier by Rosewinter, is a tacit compulsive force elicited by the *reserve army of labour* (Marx, [1867] 1976; Braverman, 1974; Beechay, 1982) in the hinterland, and the systemic increasing *effort-price* (Arrighi, 1970; van Onselen, 1977) of participation in non-wage livelihoods. On the other hand, compulsive hegemony finally manifests as the farm workers' exercise of the material culture of 'waiting on'. The latter is exemplified by Gozden's 'tactical' adaptation to the pension scam by taking up a further five-year contract, and the farm workers' tactical frequent presence at worksites while also deploying underhand self-help practices. The latter, in an ambivalent way, also inform a section

of Chapter 6 as part of Barura workers' everyday resistance. In all, farm workers, through both management-based (un)intentional strategies, and the mute compulsion of acute socio-economic and labour insecurities, are *compelled* or subtly *manipulated* to *invest in labour* (see Bourdieu, [1997] 2000) as work at various plantation sites becomes a 'waiting on' *game* (i.e., as also elaborated in the theoretical chapter).

Suffice to argue that through the 'waiting on' game, as portrayed in the excerpts, Gozden, Matigari and other farm workers' "investment in labour" (Bourdieu, [1997] 2000: 202) is further secured and sustained by "… an extrinsic profit in labour, irreducible to simple monetary income" (Ibid). That is, the 'waithood' game offers the workers concessionary and promissory benefits which compel them to continuously participate in alienating farm work. Such extrinsic rewards include Mariga's symbolic avoidance of losing out on outstanding job entitlements especially after having invested in a long-suffering wait. The contract extension 'offers' to Gozden and his colleagues exemplify concessionary profits. Hence, due to 'waiting on', "workers may contribute to their own exploitation, through the very effort they make to appropriate their work, which binds them to it" (Bourdieu, [1997] 2000: 203) due to the potential incentives – though piecemeal and promissory, but almost always functional. Thus, reworking Burawoy and von Holdt (2012) we assert that the material and symbolic profits that accrue to the 'waiting on' game, *legitimate* the conditions of playing the game through the very process of securing the farm workers' sustained participation, which in turn results in the reproduction of the self-same conditions of the game (i.e., reproduction of domination and super-exploitation).

Meanwhile, following Burawoy (1989), Wright (2005) and Burawoy and von Holdt (2012) we further submit that the systematic and systemic Barura farm work heightened insecurities also place physical constraints on lower management (i.e., supervisors and foremen) insofar as the exercise of purely coercive or punitive mechanisms of labour control are concerned. Most Barura plantation foremen such as Zuze below and most supervisors alike, confessed that since the unprecedented downturn in labour and life conditions on the plantations, they had been forced into relaxing and reducing reliance on strict worker surveillance, threats of suspension or dismissal, negative reports to top management, etc. Foreman Zuze's interview excerpt was emblematic when he said:

> *"…where do I get the guts to strictly supervise someone who hasn't received wages for more than three… months, who for the first time are receiving a quota of timber in lieu for a wage …We no longer have a functional workers' committee… all this also applies to us foremen…I would rather make compromises or give a blind eye to the misdemeanours of the work gangs that I supervise…"* (Interview, Foreman Zuze, October 2016)

It therefore follows that the 'waiting on' game and by extension, the production of manipulative or compulsive hegemony, also occurs within the *indulgency patterns* (see Gouldner, 1954; Lupton, 1963) of Barura's (lower) management. Zuze's is one paradigmatic case of such indulgency. That is, there obtains unofficially communicated practices wherein lower management (i.e., foremen and supervisors) (in)advertently yields to some of the interests or misdemeanours of the workers. This is as long as there is a trade-off between such yielding and the farm workers' continuous participation in the increasingly precarious plantation labour process, and thus, the foremen and supervisors' securing of their own jobs.

Be that as it may, the 'waiting on' game as epitomised by Matigari's and her colleagues' long-enduring adaptive practices to and invoked by a highly insecure plantation labour process, and Zuze's (i.e. lower management's) indulgent (i.e., a relaxed control-command function) responses to such adaptive tactics results from and in a *conspiracy of silence* in which both lower management and their work gangs "… cannot play [the] game and question the rules at the same time…" (Burawoy, 1981: 92). In this instance some of the rules of the game entail accommodation to the afore-mentioned bundle of unprecedented labour insecurities as well as the indulgent patterns of Barura's lower management to otherwise punishable worker acts of misconduct. Consequently, both the Barura plantation workers and (lower) management cannot participate in the manipulative hegemony-producing 'waiting on' game while simultaneously questioning its rules and practices. Following Burawoy (1989; 2012), we observe that the latter are largely *informal* and aimed at creating *space* and *time* within the precarity of plantation work, as well as making such work more or less tolerable and bearable. Thus, the symbolic indulgency achieved between Barura workers and Barura lower management (through informal rules and practices of the 'waithood' game) is a legitimating act, which *normalises* and therefore almost guarantees the sustained participation of Barura farm workers in super-exploitative plantation work in a suboptimal commercial forestry plantation labour process.

Also, in light of the findings, just like in Burawoy's (1989) 'making out' game, for the 'waiting on' game to achieve hegemonic effect, there is need to strike a reasonable "balance between

certainty and uncertainty" (Burawoy and von Holdt, 2012: 184). In this study, on one hand, a semblance of certainty was achieved through both the *indulgency patterns* of management and the *concessionary* and *promissory incentives* (material and symbolic) attached to 'waiting on'. On the other hand, uncertainty was inscribed in the systematic and systemic socio-economic insecurities of the suboptimal Barura plantation labour process. So, we conclude that we have the more or less *manipulative* or *compulsive* component of hegemony glossed over with seeming *consensual* submission to super-exploitative plantation wage labour. Instead of Gramsci's (1971: 263) consensual "hegemony protected by the armour of coercion" we instead have *compulsive hegemony* normalised by the armour of seeming *consensus*. In the final analysis, manipulation or compulsion is made to *appear* to obtain from the consensual participation of the Barura workers in increasingly alienating and exploitative labour and life conditions. Meanwhile, embedded within the material dimension of manipulative or compulsive hegemony is a complementary ideological component, which that further consecrates the unwitting, compulsive participation of Barura workers in a super-exploitative commercial labour process.

5.4.2.2 The Ideational dynamics of the 'Waiting On' Game

Just as there were good psychological reasons for the Burawoyian (1989) Chicago factory workers to participate in the 'making out' game, we argue that there is also a "kernel of good sense" (Gramsci: 1971: 333) for the semi-skilled and unskilled Barura workers' continuous participation in the 'waiting on' game. As corroborated by the representative excerpts below, participation in the 'waiting on' game is predicated on a *moral economy* (Scott, 1976) of endurance, sacrifice, and hope. This is typical below in Garabha and Matigari's mindsets shaped by appropriation, from their moral economy, of the *symbolic capitals* (Bourdieu, 1984; Desan 2013) of endurance sacrifice and hope. Garabha, gives a moral appeal to 'waiting on' when he optimistically emphasises:

> *"… we have advised each other to endure. We are visibly worse off, and we have sacrificed even more, these past eleven months on this farm, but what we keep reminding each other is, but we have also had better days on this very farm. Things will one day get back to those days again… I don't want to be a shame to kin and kith for breaking my nose to spite my face. Holding on is the anthem for most sensible workers on this farm. …. The darkest hour is before dawn…"* (Interview, Garabha, September 2016).

Matigari's own testament is even of a more elaborate moral inclination as it explicitly draws from biblical religious values of sacrifice and hope to legitimate and justify continuous service to an ever alienating and insecure labour process. Here goes part of her moral justification:

> *"What! Quitting? No. After enduring this longest wait of suffering and sacrifice… What if tomorrow things suddenly turn better… our five months' wage dues get settled; we get back to cash wages again … Quitting is out…Remember the biblical narrative? How long the children of Israel had to suffer and sacrifice in Egypt before reaching the promised land, Canaan? You may think we are all crazy, but this, our suffering is still a far cry from what God's chosen people* (Israelites) *underwent in Egypt. So, who are we to quit, after every dark night is a bright day…"?* (In-depth Interview, Matigari, March 2017)

In light of Garabha and Matigari's vignettes, we notice that the farm workers draw from the *symbolic space* (see Bourdieu, 1990b, Swartz, 1996, Desan, 2013) of their moral economy some *symbolic capital* in the form of own alternative *meanings* and *interpretations* of the insecure and uncertain (Crozier, 1964, Bauman, 2008) terms and conditions of 'waiting on'. Thus, while materially, 'waiting on' conveys increasing susceptibility to subjugation and exploitation, morally and symbolically for Garabha and Matigari, it also entails a symbolic act of endurance, sacrifice, and hope. Drawing from Burawoy and von Holdt (2012) we assert that while the 'waiting on' game may appear absurd and irrational to the neutral observer, for the plantation workers, sustained participation in the game has morally symbolic justifications as spotlighted by Mariga and Matigari.

Respectively, Mariga and Matigari' idioms; *"The darkest hour is before dawn…"* and *"… after every dark night is a bright day…"* symbolise the *hope* that farm workers invest in 'waiting on'. Such a *hopeful* mindset is predicated on their sacrifices. Mainstreaming Boulding's (1967) idea of *legitimacy* into the rural plantation space, we suggest that hope is a *legitimating* symbolic *practice.* That is, it is a negative pay off in the form of a *sacrifice trap* ibid). Namely that, Mariga and Matigari's participation in 'waiting on' is normalised and sustained by their moral mindset that, "if we begin making sacrifices… the admission that the sacrifices were in vain would be a threat to our… legitimacy" (Boulding, 1967: 300). While the hope is a function of the workers' sacrifice, the hope justifies the sacrifices that Mariga and Matigari have invested in the game. The net effect is that such legitimation results in the farm workers' tolerance of and habituation to an exploitive commercial plantation work setting. This sums up how the subtly compulsive, ideational dimension of the hegemonic 'waiting on' game

operates on the plantations, in the process securing and sustaining exploitative post-colonial agrarian capitalist relations.

5.5 Conclusion

Thinking with and beyond the neo-Marxist labour process scholarship tradition of Braverman, Burawoy, Thompson, and others, this chapter achieved empirical and theoretical specificity and innovation by streamlining the Marxian macro-level problematic of capitalist political economy to the micro and meso-level analyses of worksite labour politics. Importantly so, since Marx himself, a seminal critic of capitalist political economy, barely engaged the micro-physics of capitalist labour politics at the worksite, more so, a suboptimal and highly insecure, post-colonial, rural-based commercial plantation workplace.

At these two levels, the analysis also pushed past the dominant narrative of wage labour as a predominantly economic relation. Subsequently, related analytical tools such as the 'twofold truth' of labour, commodity fetishism, mystification, and hegemony helped to delineate and illuminate the soft, invisible cultural forms and components of domination which co-exist with, obscure, and (re)produce labour exploitation and domination on Barura plantation estate worksites. In the process, this chapter also realised a methodological shift from the conventional position of initially breaking with the subjective truth of labour in order to establish its objective truth, to one that first recognises the underlying truth of exploitation and then tries to understand how it is subjectively experienced in ways, which explain its (re)production.

Our analysis also repudiated conventional wisdom on commercial agrarian labour struggles which often conflates wage labour's everyday experiences of material deprivation and exclusion (i.e., Burawoy's relations *in* production) in the form, for instance, of insecure working and living conditions with the extraction of surplus value (exploitation). We acknowledge the mutuality of these post-colonial capitalist production relations, yet we conclude that they are neither the same nor *necessarily* connected. We therefore disambiguated exploitation as a *mystified* socio-political relation of the extraction and appropriation of unpaid labour from the Barura plantation estate workers as direct producers. Relatedly, from the findings and the interrogation of Burawoyian worksite labour politics scholarship, we conclude that, indeed, the *mystification* of exploitation at Barura estate foregrounds and secures ideological domination through a complementary mode of power namely Gramscian-kind

hegemony. However, findings from the Barura's suboptimal post-colonial agrarian commercial setting beset with heightened labour insecurities, compelled our rescinding of the *consent*-oriented hegemony to underscore what we have coined and concluded to be more or less *manipulative* or *compulsive* hegemonic domination.

While, like Burawoy, we predicated compulsive hegemony on the mystification of exploitation at Barura estate, we broke from similar analyses by explaining such mystification via the 'waiting on' worksite game rather than 'making out' shop-floor games typical of advanced capitalist work settings in the USA. Thus, manipulative hegemonic control through the 'waiting on' game is more or less historically specific to an increasingly insecure and suboptimal post-colonial commercial agrarian labour process, sector, and economy as witnessed on Barura plantation. Consequently, compulsive hegemony on Barura plantation guarantees capital's and management's command and control over the Barura plantation workers' everyday labour and life conditions, while exploitation ensures the acquisition of surplus value from the unpaid labour of the self-same dominated labour force.

Meanwhile, it is noteworthy that in light of further findings, and the inordinate scholarly attention given to the *internal economic logic* of capitalist labour processes, in Chapter 7 we propose that power relations do not necessarily have to originate solely in the Barura commercial labour process in order to subjugate the workers. We also need to consider the forms and ways seemingly 'external' (i.e., to the capitalist labour process), politico-cultural social cleavages (i.e., state-legislated ethno-national citizenship and state-sanctioned partisan politics) entangle with, get reproduced inside, and also reproduce the Barura post-colonial capitalist labour process. These largely ideational power dynamics epitomise the complementary role of the Zimbabwean state in the reproduction of the subjugation and exploitation of Barura workers. However, before attending to this, in the next Chapter 6, we showcase and illuminate Barura workers' forms, practices, and dynamics of quotidian resistance to the various forms of power detailed in this entire chapter. This is in keeping with our earlier (i.e., in the theoretical Chapter 3) submission that power and resistance are in a historical dynamic, mutually inclusive, and often ambivalent relationship.

CHAPTER 6

‘FARMZENSHIP’: HIDDEN RESISTANCE TO LABOUR SUBORDINATION AND EXPLOITATION (AND THEIR JUSTIFICATION) IN THE COMMERCIAL FORESTRY LABOUR PROCESS

6.1 Introduction

Chapter 5 set the empirical campus and impetus for our current discovery, description, and analysis of corresponding practices of quotidian labour resistance by Barura wage workers. To this end, the chapter identified and illuminated labour subordination and exploitation, as well as their underlying ideologies (i.e., commodity fetishism and *manipulative* hegemony) as mutually reinforcing modes of power, which constitute the *capitalist* forestry labour process at Barura plantation estate. However, further findings attest that these forms of power are neither exclusive nor overmastering. Thus, this chapter encapsulates a simultaneous *everyday class-cum-status struggle* comprised of *contingent intersectional subterranean practices*, which mutually engage and constitute the above-mentioned forms of power. In this dialectical co-existence and interaction with these modalities of power, the Barura workers’ practices are sometimes articulated as resistance, and sometimes not.

We argue that these practices, as *everyday* resistance to labour subordination and exploitation and the ideological undertones thereto, are imagined, crafted, and articulated *within* the material-cum-symbolic logic of a *capitalist* (commercial) labour process. That is, the Barura workers’ resistance practices do *not* necessarily pose a *radical* challenge to or entail the eradication of the historical system of agrarian capitalist production at Barura. Instead, the practices largely navigate and contest, in a piecemeal manner, the *terms* and *conditions* of plantation estate wage employment within the limits set by agrarian capitalism. They are not designed to radically transform the latter as a mode of production, but to make and contest some concessionary claims within its labour process, which remains largely commercial or capitalist.

Analytically, we couch the current empirical chapter in the scholarly and theoretical debates and positions, which we articulated in Chapters 3 and 4. But, for further analytical traction, we coin and add a findings-inspired notion namely *farmzenship*. Analytically, we deploy this notion to denote the widespread, informal, routinised, *plantation-specific* identities, relations, and actions wherein claims and interests are (re)invented, bent, adjusted, and (re)negotiated among farm workers, rural villagers, the capital-management dyad, and state agents. Empirically, we demonstrate farmzenship through a *stock* of everyday *practices* through which Barura plantation workers can navigate, *contest*, and survive labour subjugation, exploitation, and their underlying ideologies of commodity fetishism and manipulative hegemony. Thus, in light of fieldwork evidence, we identify material-cum-ideological practices such as witchcraft, forestry arson, 'poaching', absenteeism, and goldbricking as constituting the Barura farm workers' culture of labour resistance. Accordingly, this chapter illuminates the nature, texture, dynamics, and complexities of these practices as they reciprocally engage with and as potential resistance (*material* and/or *ideological*) to labour domination and exploitation. Immediately below, we begin by describing and analysing various witchcraft techniques both as practices and epistemes of hidden labour resistance.

6.2 'Magical Constraint': The Idea and Practice of Witchcraft on Barura Plantation

Witchcraft allegedly constituted a pervasive practice at Barura estate and the surrounding villages. Interestingly, during the entirety of our fieldwork, neither of the Barura workers *overtly* identified themselves nor others as witches nor as involved in witchcraft relations. This is unsurprising given the dominance of the classical Ameri-Euro-centric positioning of witchcraft as evil and primitive (see Hutton, 1999; Murrey, 2015; Magliocco, 2020). More so, witchcraft accusations are outlawed in Zimbabwe (see Mvundura, 2014). However, we encountered witchcraft on Barura farm and its hinterland mainly through the imagined and/or confirmed *manifestation* of its *everyday mortal effects* on the plantation and in the nearby rural villages. Accordingly, from an Afro-centric viewpoint, Geschiere (1997) and Nyamnjoh (2001) assert that apart from being a belief, witchcraft is an inescapable part of the African traditional folk culture and being. Folks may not be able to openly admit to their or other's participation in witchcraft, but they know and can confirm when someone has been bewitched (see Geschiere, 1997).

In light of findings and related analyses (Taussig, 1980; Ekholm, Friedman, 2011; Reyna, 2011; Murrey, 2015), we assert that, far from being representative of 'traditional' or pre-colonial African culture, witchcraft can provide material and ideological resistance to labour subordination and exploitation under commercial forestry production. This claim is worth pursuing given that localised practices and epistemes such as witchcraft have remained almost completely unexplored as critiques to capitalist extraction and production (see Murrey, 2015).

Our foregrounding of witchcraft as everyday resistance is informed by our blending of two dominant positionings namely witchcraft as a social practice (Geschiere, 1997, 2013) and as an epistemology (worldview) [Comarrof and Comarrof, 1993; Nyamnjoh, 2001]. Although the term witchcraft is Eurocentric in origin, in the current empirical context it is a practice and idea, which pre-dates the colonial encounter. Thus, witchcraft is presented as a quotidian age-old African folklore, which transcends the Ameri-Euro-centric 'evil-good' dichotomy and refers to a wide range of folkloric supernatural beliefs and practices. From our findings, the latter include the workers' casting of spells on management, magical fortification of the farm workers' being, magical attacks on the health and wealth of managerial staff, as well the nocturnal spiritual harassment of the same staff. These so-called 'primitive', 'irrational' practices-cum-epistemes get entangled with and (in)advertently *contest* the labour subjugation and exploitation (and their underlying ideologies) that are inherent in the so-called 'rational' *capitalist* forestry production and labour process. We explore this dynamic hereunder.

6.2.1 The Art of Targeted Magical Resistance: Spells, Fortification, Magical Misfortunes and Nocturnal Invasions

From a management standpoint, Supervisor S's narrative was emblematic regarding the incidence, scope, and possible reason(s) for witchcraft practices on Barura plantation (and the nearby villages). He said:

> *"… witchcraft, always common between kin and kith! … But believe me you, there has clearly been an unmistakable pattern on this estate… managers, supervisors, foremen… standing out as targets … say since the past two years… high incidence of suspicious and confirmed evidence of this targeting… Possibly a stern warning by general hands to be left alone since they are already burdened by unequalled poverty and work-related suffering…"* (Key Informant Interview, Supervisor S, August 2016)

Similarly, most general hands conceded that witchcraft was historical and still formed an integral part of their daily life in the farm compounds, at work sites, and in the nearby villages. However, there was a workers' general consensus that, lately, top and lower management staff,

had become prime targets. Mai Matibhiri's narrative could not have been more representative when she confided:

> *"Obvious! … supervisors, foremen, are the ones in daily contact with us, workers who are at unexampled levels of suffering in farm work history …So, any overzealous, or even normal supervision is* (mis)*construed as collusion to that suffering… The result? Bewitch them…safest revenge!"* (Informal Chat, Mai Matibhiri, September 2016)

The two related vignettes suggest that witchcraft is prevalent insomuch that it has ceased to be of insignificant moment in class-cum-status labour struggles on Barura forestry plantation. Suffice to say that acts of witchcraft have become "sufficiently *generalised* to become a *pattern* of resistance" (Scott, 1989: 36) whose potential oppositional influence on farm labour politics can no longer be ignored. Similar to their enslaved subaltern African counterparts in the southern United States (see McMillan, 1994), general workers at Barura estate are deploying witchcraft as a spiritual stratagem, which possibly contests the production and valorisation interests of the 'master class'. In this material instance, the latter class concerns the forestry estate owners represented by their agents namely estate line managers, supervisors, and foremen, who preside over the formal subordination and exploitation of agrarian wage labour. Below, we explore potential resistance to the latter forms of power through the magical medium of spells and fortifying charms, which can contest the capital-management dyad's claims on the plantation workers' labour power.

6.2.1.1 Spells that Bind Management and Talismans that Fortify the Farm Workers

6.2.1.1(i) Spells that Bind Management

Ndiweni is one of the few famous witchdoctors in the nearby villages surrounding Barura plantation estate. The author, after being cordially linked to him by a farm worker - friend Q (also one of Ndiweni's regular clients), often engaged Ndiweni as a key informant. However, here, we spotlight a unique and rare encounter whereby Q and Ndiweni invited the author to witness the actual performance of a typical ritual. Q was fulfilling an earlier appointment whereby, as per ritualistic protocol, he had to return to Ndiweni and have his 'management-binding' and 'self-fortifying' work charms revitalised. Below is the author's synoptic account of the two rituals:

It is dusk. We arrive at Ndiweni's compound, and I and Q await our turn. Close to fifteen minutes later, we are in the ritual hut. Q kneels facing Ndiweni who, lion-like, begins to growl eerily. Then, Ndiweni is seized by a sudden trance: fits-like bodily convulsions, chants of Q's clan names, and then ancestral possession. Moments later, the trance gone, Ndiweni assures Q that the ancestors have consented to the rituals. Ndiweni smears little glue on part of Q's red handkerchief, then Q ties a tight knot at the glued spot before depositing the knotted hankie into

an empty container whose lid he tightly seals while chanting after Ndiweni something like; "… devil's agents … I bind your thoughts, actions, of being overbearing…overworking us like donkeys …". One last trance, and unintelligible incantations over the sealed container and its contents, and Ndiweni surrenders the renewed 'bind management spell' to his client. Ndiweni instructs Q to ensure that the talisman is always safe and sealed. End of the first ritual, a brief break and the second ritual ensues.

Ndiweni draws, from his sacred bag, a python-skin wrist band, and a small container of lion-fat ointment. Q, shirtless, cupping the charms in his palms, kneeling over a jet of steam issuing out of a clay pot full to the brim with a cocktail of herbs, sweats profusely. Ndiweni insists that he is "herb-treating" Q for protection against the "slave-driving" tendencies of the "devil's agents" (farm management). *He stands over Q, spasmodic, incantatory, and ecstatic. The ritual ends, and Q is instructed to always wear the wrist band and regularly apply the lion-fat ointment before every working day. Ndiweni also insists that, true to their sources* (python and lion) *the charms instil fear and reluctance in "devil's agents" who intend to abuse the bearer physically or mentally at work. Under the anonymity of darkness, we sneak back into the farm compound.* (Field notes, October 2016)

The foregoing rituals - the spell, which binds management and charms, which fortify farm labour are typical Scottian (1985, 1989, 1990) 'weapons of the weak' or 'infra-politics'. They are quotidian spiritual and symbolic practices that potentially constitute a cosmology of veiled resistance in the magico-spiritual domain (see Murrey, 2015; Magliocco, 2020) on Barura farm and its nearby villages. From the anecdotes, spell and charm rituals exude *tactical wisdom* by avoiding attention to themselves and the participants. They remain largely anonymous regarding the personal identities of the performers/participants (spiritual host or ritual expert, and the client) and the timing and performance of the rituals. At the spiritual level, the spells and charms draw their oppositional momentum from the supernatural powers of supra-territorial ancestral spirits, which Ndiweni invokes. The latter spirits are hosted worldly by spiritual experts like Ndiweni who possess esoteric knowledge and experience in the performance of magical rites. In this instance, Ndiweni, as a spiritually ordained spell-caster, invokes the will of Q's ancestral spirits (by chanting Q's clan names) to seek their divine permission and intervention before, during, and after the spell-casting and fortifying rituals. Accordingly, Beckett (2017) in Magliocco (2020) asserts that spirits work best when already in a reciprocal relationship with the worldly receptacles and consulting clients.

At the symbolic level, the physical practices and talismans, which constitute binding spells and magical fortification are symbolic expressions of anticipated effects on targets (e.g., Murrey, 2015; Beckett, 2017; Magliocco, 2020). In the first ritual, smearing glue on Q's handkerchief, tying a knot around the glued area, and sealing the knotted hankie in a bottle (amidst ritual chants) involve practices and talismans, which symbolise the 'binding' of the control-command agency of farm management. This casting of binding spells (as resistance) is also evident in the February 2017 'Bind Trump' spell, in which anxious left-leaning Americans participated in

online magical resistance to the new Donald Trump administration to bind it from the likely abuse of office (see Hughes, 2018; Magliocco, 2020). In both cases, binding, as folk magic, becomes a potential resistance stratagem by spiritually-cum-physically interfering with the will or agency of the superordinate target(s) in a way, which mitigates or thwarts their exercise of arbitrary authority at worksites. To this end, in their incantations, Ndiweni and Q refer to line managers, supervisors and foremen as *"…devil's* (i.e., farm capital) *agents…"* toward whom they chant, *"…I bind your thoughts, actions, of being overbearing…overworking us like donkeys …"* Thus, the binding spell is meant to thwart and challenge excessive supervisory "social relations of command and control" (Thompson, 1989: xiv) and the attendant heightened extraction of labour power (i.e., the *'donkey'* metaphor), which characterise the *formal* and direct *subordination* of Barura wage labour. The subsumption of the forestry labour process under plantation capital, and then under relations of command and control (via farm management) on Barura entails the *formal* and *direct* subordination of farm labour respectively. Regarding the dynamics and implications of such subordination, Marx says:

> If changes occur in the traditionally established labour processes, after their takeover by capital, they are nothing but the gradual consequences of that subsumption. The work may become more intensive, its duration may be extended, it may become more continuous or orderly under the eye of the interested capitalist… (Marx, 1976: 1021)

It is therefore the command-and-control function (of top and lower estate management), which ensures the everyday realisation of such Marxian (1976) *intensive*, *extended,* and *continuous* surplus labour extraction on behalf of plantation capital. Similarly, Thompson (1989: 41; emphasis added) asserts that beyond the provision of the means of production, the capitalist also seeks to "*exert control* over the *conditions* under which the *speed*, *skill*, and *dexterity* of the worker operate". Therefore, spells, such as Q's, which bind the direct command-and-control agency of management potentially challenge and mitigate excessive labour subordination and exploitation. Spells that bind managerial agency are stratagems that safely allow Q and fellow farm workers to at least (re)appropriate some considerable measure of control and command over their own labour power and the intensity of the work process. In *opposition* to the almost overmastering surveillance, supervision, disciplining, and sanctioning entailed by both the formal and direct subordination of labour, through the magic of binding spells, workers may attain some measure of control over the intensity, rate, timing, volume, and quality of work tasks. To extend scholarship on the *indulgency patterns* of workplace management (e.g., Gouldner, 1954; Lupton, 1963; Burawoy, 1989; Burawoy and von Holdt,

2012) to the magical realm, spells that bind managerial agency can supernaturally enhance such indulgency in favour of Barura farm workers.

That is, the author observed and established that the alleged *binding* of the surveillance, disciplinary, control, and sanctioning capacities of farm managers, supervisors, and foremen can result in the silent cumulative establishment of 'new' informal, 'magically induced', 'tolerated' levels of absenteeism, goldbricking, quota restriction, late arrivals at and early departures from work, etc. Such spell-induced relaxation of control, and reluctance to report or punish work misdemeanours, which under normal circumstances would attract negative sanctions, is in direct opposition to capital's interest to exercise optimal control over labour with a view to maximising production and valorisation (see Thompson, 1989; Marx, 1976). Hence, spells that bind managerial and supervisory agency may *mitigate* and even *deny* the capital-management dyad's optimum appropriation of the Barura workers' unpaid labour power and time. Such potential denial of labour time (e.g., through a spell-induced 'conspiracy of tolerance' to goldbricking, absenteeism, etc.) entails some reduction in the rate and intensity of exploitation. The upshot is that a reduced rate of exploitation cumulatively resists the logic of valorisation that, "no more [labour] time is consumed than is necessary" (Thompson, 1989: 41). In all, spells that bind managerial staff can afford the Barura plantation workers some relative "control over [labour]situations which are not controllable by more direct physical means" (McMillan, 1994: 101) thereby availing them the opportunity to tacitly challenge claims on their unpaid labour time (and thus, on surplus value) by the capital-management dyad. We now turn to the magical fortification of the farm workers.

6.2.1.1(ii)Talismans that Fortify the Farm Workers

Furthermore, the widespread magical fortification of Barura farm workers, as epitomised by Q's striking case, also showcases daily piecemeal resistance to subjugation and exploitation under capitalist accumulation (e.g., Nyamnjoh, 2001; Reyna, 2011; Murrey, 2015). Likewise, Nash (1979) in Murrey (2015) articulates the fortification of Bolivian miners against dangerous mining conditions through sacrifices to *Tio Lucas* (the devil) who is believed to spiritually own and operate the mines. However, fortification of Barura plantation workers, as demonstrated by Q's emblematic case, is mainly directed against farm management whom Ndiweni metaphorically calls the *"devil's agents"* bent on *"slave-driving"* plantation labour. To borrow Durkheim's (1995) ideas on ritual, fortification becomes a magical reflection of the workers'

attempt to confront wage labour exploitation and subjugation through ritual. To this end, Q is 'herb-treated' amid consensual, incantatory, spiritual engagements between Ndiweni and the supernaturally powerful ancestors. This ritual is symbolically meant to infuse and invest the farm workers' bodily presence (at the worksite) with a mystical protective shield, which, to get a cue from Ndiweni, is believed to render them *defensible against* the intensive, extended, and continuous extraction of their labour power and time under the logic of the Marxian (1976) formal and direct subordination of labour. Such defensibility can reduce the rate and intensity of exploitation whose domino effect is the cumulative denial and decimation of Barura plantation capital's absolute claims on the farm workers' surplus labour and surplus value thereto.

In the same ritual, we encounter spiritually potent talismans namely the python-skin bracelet and the lion-fat ointment. These charms are 'symbolic representations' (Durkheim, 1965; Magliocco, 2020) of the alleged aura of formidability, which supposedly invests the physical workplace presence of workers like Q, who adorn and/or apply such charms. Such workers, according to Ndiweni in the excerpt, are then believed to become endowed with the capacity to mystically instil *fear* and *reluctancy* in managerial staff. The latter are then believed to be unnerved in terms of controlling and reprimanding any deviant labour practices (e.g., shirking, absenteeism, etc.), which militate against the efficient extraction of unpaid labour (hence, surplus value). Thus, charms that are thought to enfeeble Barura management staff, can be a vector to resist wage labour exploitation by "*destabilising* the institutional control of behaviour" (Lilja and Vinthagen, 2014: 114) at the workplace. The capitalist micro-management of Barura farm workers, for instance, through predictable and measurable disciplinary techniques (timetables, task routines, task targets, etc.,) is magically challenged.

We thus read the fortification of Barura workers as an *anti-disciplinary tactic* (de Certeau, 1984), which destabilises institutionalised managerial surveillance. It is a quotidian spiritual tactic, which can incrementally oppose the disciplinary transformation of the workers' bodies and minds into docile, but utilitarian forces for realising the profit interests of farm capital. Overall, supernaturally fortified bodies (such as Q's), and the associated charms (python-skin bracelets, lion-fat ointment, etc.) gain oppositional force against plantation exploitation by *informally* creating a wide supervisory/surveillance distance between wage labour and management insomuch that the former can partly ameliorate or thwart the arbitrary, prolonged,

and intensified appropriation of its surplus labour. To adapt Durkheim (1995: 24), we have a scenario whereby the "supernatural is in opposition" to the so-called "natural order" of commercialised forestry plantation accumulation.

More so, from the findings, and to adapt Magliocco (2020), fortification rituals can operate at the workers' socio-psychological level to tacitly effect infra-politics by allaying and dissipating anxiety and uncertainty under heightened precarity. A typical case of the latter was discussed in Chapter 5 as the systematic and systemic *liquid domination* (Bauman and Haugaard, 2008) of the farm workers through manipulative participation in highly *insecure* and *uncertain* (see Crozier, 1968) plantation labour conditions. So, as an attestation to the dissipating effect of fortification, Ndiweni said to Q, *"…herbal steaming also infuses your mind with a* ***clear sense*** *of the devilish work and life conditions … a sharp vision to read, navigate them* ***without doubt****…"* Thus, in opposition to the capitalist logic of labour subjugation through insecurity and uncertainty (liquid domination), fortification is believed to mystically imbue Q and fellow workers' minds with some measure of confidence, certainty, and control amid adversity. In other words, the complete casting of the workers into a state of ambient ambiguity, insecurity, and anxiety is mitigated or prevented. Fortification, as demonstrated by Ndiweni, arguably psychologically shields Q and other workers from an absolute slip into the *liminal space* (see van Gennep, 1960: Turner, 1978) of exceedingly alienating labour conditions. Relatedly, we can also argue that fortification can cumulatively contest Barura workers' hegemonic participation in such conditions, through 'compulsive practices' (Haugaard, 2008) like the *'waiting on'* game (see Chapter 3). In all, at the magico-psychological level, charms that fortify Barura farm workers can challenge the capital-management dyad's interest in the absolute habituation of the workers into the seemingly self-evident plantation wage employment. Such a challenge potentially has a negative knock-on effect on farm capital's rates and levels of production, productivity, and valorisation.

In all, the oppositional momentum (against labour subjugation and exploitation) of spells that bind Barura management and charms that fortify the Barura workers' bodies and being mainly lies in their alleged capacity to magically temper with the command-and-control function of Barura estate's lower and top management. Consequently, a direct immediate or incremental *mitigation* and/or piecemeal *denial* of farm capital's *absolute* claims on the farm workers' labour power (surplus labour) and labour time can be realised. Spells and charms destabilise

the institutionalised *command and control* (direct subordination of labour) function of the plantation labour process, and by extension, can contest Barura capital's claims on surplus output and surplus value. However, routine super-natural resistance to labour subjugation and exploitation at Barura is also alleged to take the form of nocturnal nightmarish harassment of and magical attacks on the health and wealth of lower and top management staff. We expose these mystical stratagems in detail immediately below.

6.2.1.2 Witches -Targeted Nocturnal Spiritual Harassment of and Magical Harm to Health and Wealth of Barura Farm Management

In this section, the witch, a folkloric character traditionally characterised as evil (see Hutton, 1999; Murrey, 2015; Magliocco, 2020), emerges as a key figure in executing *sympathetic witchcraft* (see McMillan, 1994). That is, the crafting of magical acts, which (in)advertently help subordinate groups reclaim a measure of their material and symbolic status from superordinate groups. In this instance, sympathetic witchcraft can help Barura workers mitigate and contest super-exploitation and labour subjugation. From observations and in-depth interviews, Barura farm workers (who are actual or alleged witches) are said to target and torment line managers, supervisors, and foremen through spiritual nightmarish invasions, as well as magically attacking their health (mental) and wealth (prized possessions, and livelihoods). These practices are typical Scottian (1990: 42-43) "hidden transcripts" whose "tactical wisdom" (Scott, 1989: 35) as potential folk expressions of resistance lies not only in the *anonymity* of both the witches and the mystical performance of the witchcraft rituals, but also the *visibility* of the mortal effects (of the witchcraft) on targets. Below, we explore how nocturnal spiritual harassment plays out as a practice of everyday resistance on Barura commercial forest.

6.2.1.2(i)Nocturnal Spiritual Harassment

Regarding, the nuances of the tactical supernatural dynamics of the nightmarish invasion of the bodies and souls of targeted management staff by witches, witchdoctor Ndiweni's narrative was emblematic:

> *"I spiritually discern witches on the farms and elsewhere… common tactic… involves invisible magical torment by infiltration of target managerial staff's bodies and souls at night… witch-induced nightmares in which targets can be transfigured into and ridden as hyenas, snakes, donkeys …travelling long, harrowing journeys through graveyards, mortuaries … targets feel weak, helpless, defenceless … sometimes fed on human flesh, then waking up fearful, anxious … even falling sick thereafter … Or disguised as dogs, hyenas, snakes, and owls, the witches spiritually and physically assault, strangle,*

suffocate their targets in on-going nightmares …" (Key Informant Interview, Ndiweni, February 2017)

To corroborate Ndiweni's narrative, Manager T admitted to the rumoured and confirmed prevalence of nocturnal spiritual invasions targeted at management. T, a confessed victim of such invasions himself, revealed the existence of hushed everyday conversations in which affected members of farm management secretly shared their encounters with and of witchcraft. To this end, he shared what he considered to be the common shared pattern and dynamics of events constituting such nocturnal spiritual invasions of torment:

> *"… Some deep sudden nightmare engulfs you… you then feel the eerie unannounced invisible presence of the witch … they magically enter locked spaces, your body too, and appear in your nightmare using faces other than theirs! Then, sudden bodily, spiritual, or mental torment… you try waking up, fighting back, but usually, you feel powerless, helpless, … hair-raising nightmares in which you are the physical or spiritual target of deadly and horrific events, places, people, spirits, animals … finally you're released…you wake up fearful, anxious, panicky, sweaty … In the long term you then suffer panic attacks, persistent migraines, anxiety... some are even believed to die in the long term "* (Key Informant Interview, Manager T, February 2017)

From the excerpts and related literature (Nyamnjoh, 2001; Murrey, 2015; Magliocco, 2020) we discern the pervasive use of disguise whereby the witches conceal their personal identities by magically: appearing as ill-fated animals; swapping faces; and invading the targets in spiritual form. In relation to the latter, Murrey (2015) submits that, during sleep, there are moments when one can become infiltrated by the spirit of a witch. The witch(es) can simultaneously be physically present in their own beds, while spiritually tormenting their targets elsewhere (see Nyamnjoh, 2001). Also, in the vignettes, the actual performance of the torment or harassment is mediated and masked through mystically induced nightmares. To import Murrey (2015), attacks via nightmares qualify as a sustainable tactical ploy since they remain *invisible* to the untrained eye of observers and the targeted managerial staff. Conversely, the vignettes also spotlight the daytime manifestation (of the nocturnal nightmarish attacks) in the form of *visible* afflictions on management, namely fright disorders, panic attacks, persistent migraines, anxiety, and the prospect of death.

Thus, nocturnal spiritual attacks embody the logic of *time-space compression* by allowing the paradoxical intersection of *invisible* realms (witches, night-time, and nightmares) with the *visible* world (the targets and the alleged day-time visible effects/afflictions of the witchcraft ritual). Such a complex dynamic builds a strong case for a potentially increased capacity of nocturnal magical assaults to undermine labour subjugation. We will demonstrate this shortly below. But, prior to that, further findings compel us to spotlight other witch-initiated practices

whose nature and dynamics bear some family resemblance to nocturnal spiritual assaults. Below, we present witchcraft acts whose potential antagonism to labour exploitation lies in their alleged spectacular effects of spiritually destabilising the mental health, and magically destroying the wealth of 'problematic' management staff.

6.2.1.2(ii)Magical Harm to the Mental Health and Wealth of 'Problematic' Managerial Staff

One evening, an impromptu chat with Barura farm workers, whom I had offered transport from a village meeting yielded an animated debate on the magical use of 'love portions' to tame husbands. The chat spontaneously developed into specific workplace cases of witchcraft. Urged by the 'tell-the-driver-that-other-story' kind of motivation from her colleagues, Matigari shared with us a quintessentially spectacular case of Barura workplace witchcraft saying:

> *"… Ever heard of the notorious case of the now mentally ill ex-foreman … he was notorious for work altercations with most workers… one day, at dusk, a masquerade was spotted sneaking into his yard, 'stole' his prized woollen hat from the laundry line … Now, believe me you…this I saw with my own eyes … Boom! two days later, at our worksite…same foreman, out of the blue, collapses, and amid convulsions, began scratching his head with dry pine fruits… then, removed his work pants, and sped off like something was chasing him … The rest is now history… visit the nearby village shops…you will see him loitering, half-naked shouting something like '…I meant no harm … it's just work'… You see… a glaring case of 'huroyi papurazi'* (witchcraft at the plantation workplace) …"(Impromptu Chat, Matigari, November 2016)

Matigari's narrative was corroborated by some managerial staff members with whom I had established cordial relations as 'drinking buddies'. We were huddled around a frothy pot of home-brewed opaque beer, when Zed summed up his narrative saying "… we all believe that's how our fellow foreman got mentally ill, a spell cast by witches via his 'stolen' hat … no known culprits… this is magic, hidden, unverifiable… but its effects are deadly and unnerving! Forewarned is forearmed… we've since been very cautious, taking it easy on the duration, scope, intensity, of our supervision…" Pushing the narrative of the mortal danger posed by witchcraft beyond human casualties, Fedson also reckoned, "… Also, a fellow supervisor lost three herd of cattle to a mysterious bolt of 'lightning' on a clear-sky, no-sign-of-rain day!... ironic part, the flash was seen only by him…yet his wife was right next to him! … the only apparent evidence… charred bodies of the three beasts in the kraal!" Then, Lawidzani, in a hushed precautionary tone, warned, "… with this unexampled suffering… forfeited wages, payment in timber… hellish work and life conditions … it's easy to stir the ire of general hands…and witchcraft comes in handy as revenge …" (Field Notes, Mrach 2017)

From the findings, it follows that nocturnal spiritual harassment and the alleged magical harm to health and wealth draw their oppositional potential (to labour subordination and exploitation) from their own *invisibility*, and that of the crafters (witches). Not to mention the *visibility* of both the allegedly targeted managerial staff and the *mortal afflictions* thereto. The vignettes showcase the latter as *observable* harm such as panic attacks, persistent migraines, mental illness, and destruction of wealth (e.g., the 'lightning-burnt' three cows). Thus, the magical practices above constitute a 'visible invisibility' insofar as they remain "hidden from view at the same time that they are understood, sensed, known in the visible world through their material consequences" (see Murrey, 2015: 68). Since the performance and effects of these witchcraft practices largely depend on the organisation of bodies in space, it suffices to analyse how they can potentially resist wage labour subjugation and exploitation through Bentham (1843, 1965) and Foucault's (1979) lenses of panoptic surveillance/discipline. These lenses are however modified in relation to the findings.

Just as Foucault (1979) develops the idea of panoptic discipline from Bentham's (1843) prototypical Panopticon model, we position the foregoing witchcraft practices as prototypes of *reversed* panoptic discipline. Reversed, in the sense that, as micro-techniques of magical power, the spells, nocturnal spiritual assaults, and attacks on health and wealth, exercise some quotidian *anti-discipline* (de Certeau, 1984) to the institutional (workplace) *training* and *normalisation* (see Foucault, 1979) of farm workers, by management, into utilitarian tools for the profit interests of capital. The witchcraft practices become an anti-discipline insofar as they organise the witches, their rituals, and targeted managerial staff in a manner that allows for the separation of the see/being seen dyad (see Bentham, 1843; Foucault,1979). In Bentham's (1843) Panopticon, inmates can neither see nor verify the presence or absence of the guard, who interestingly can see them.

Likewise, on Barura plantation, spells, nocturnal spiritual harassment, supernatural attacks on mental health and wealth (livestock) are magical Panopticons, which separate the visibility/invisibility dyad. In line with such separation, in a foregoing excerpt, Fedson said, *"no known culprits… this is magic, hidden, unverifiable… but its effects are deadly and unnerving!"* Thus, to import Foucault (1979) to the findings, the *universal invisibility* of both the witches and the performance of their craft entails that they remain *"unverifiable"* (e.g., see Bentham, 1965: 60) and therefore appear *omnipresent* to the targeted managerial staff. Coupled

to this dynamic is the *ubiquitous visibility* (Foucault, 1979) of the targets (managerial staff), and the ominous visibility (to the same targets) of witchcraft's alleged mortal risks. Such a visibility/invisibility dynamic on and around Barura estate casts a magical "penetrating gaze" (Foucault, 2006: 488), which elicits "a perpetual penalty that…supervises every instant" (Foucault, 1979: 183) of management's own surveillance and control of the workers. To draw from Manager T and Matigari above, the perpetual penalty derives from the *fear, anxiety,* and *suffering* elicited by real or anticipated mortal risks/harm posed by witchcraft in the form of panic attacks, incessant migraines, mental illness, death, destruction of livestock, etc. A prototypical case of the anonymous *repressive* and/or *productive restraint* (see Foucault, 1979; Manokha, 2018) that these anti-disciplinary and punitive mortal risks exercise on managers, supervisors, and foremen was given by Supervisor G:

> *"Anonymous witches…acts, but direct effects of extreme fear, excruciation, anxiety … fear of actual or waiting death, illness, harm, misfortune … all put hidden pressure on us to stop, reduce, or avoid work things that make us targets or that make us worse off as victims … we* (managerial staff) *quietly, off-record, agree to ease up on the duration, intensity, frequency of our supervision… relaxed reprimands, selective reports of work mischief to top bosses…sometimes totally ignoring lateness, sloppy work, absenteeism…covering up such anomalies in other ways less lethal than the pain and suffering from known or alleged witchcraft … "* (Key Informant Chat, Supervisor G, August 2016)

To follow Supervisor G, the *direct* experience or anticipation of witchcraft's observable mortal *danger*, coupled with the anonymous source of this danger, exert some punitive pressure on the targeted management staff to reduce, stop or avoid the lengthy, intense, and frequent surveillance and control of farm labour. Once more, management is forced to silently establish new 'tolerated' and 'relaxed' limits to worker-related indiscipline. Thus, to adapt Foucault (1991: 177-184) the "norm" that magical *anti-disciplinary* techniques (e.g., spells, nocturnal invasions, etc.) carry, in fact, is reversed to a *critical discourse*, which vicariously "*normalises"* managerial staff into agents who in a way "eventually become, speak, think, and act" partly against capitalist workplace norms. That is, the omnipresent *counter-surveillance gaze* of magical Panopticons (alleged plantation witches and their craft) and their apparent mortal risks, subtly and partly elicit farm management's *counter-training* away from the capitalist norms of management's need to optimally supervise, sanction, discipline, control the workers.

Therefore, witchcraft's magical gaze has the potential to partly *counteract* (by partly reducing, stopping, or avoiding) management's training and constitution of Barura estate workers into profit-oriented work quotas, rates, routines, timelines, etc. In other words, witchcraft on the plantation allows workers to partly advance own claims on *relaxed, autonomous,* and

comfortable levels of work targets, intensity, duration, and control, which is all in direct opposition to the production and volarisation interests of Barura plantation owners and management. Suffice to say that the harmful spells, nocturnal spiritual invasions, magical harm to health and wealth are plantation-specific *anti-disciplinary* Panopticons, which organise a socio-spatiality wherein there are no apparent perpetrators, but scores of apparent supernatural afflictions. Such a socio-spatiality instils in allegedly targeted and yet-to-be-targeted members of management the subtle urge to *avoid, mitigate,* or *stop* any *absolute* training and habituation of farm workers into exploitative and subjugating plantation labour politics. Overall, on one hand, the foregoing witchcraft practices can partly *counteract* labour subjugation and exploitation by *repressing* excessive supervisory/managerial surveillance and control in a *'proactive, preventive,* and *precautionary'* way (see, Manokha, 2018).

On the other hand, the same witchcraft practices gain *perfection* in counteracting labour subjugation and exploitation by effecting *self-induced* restraint in farm management. Since the actual presence or absence of the witches and their craft remains anonymous, there obtains a socio-spatiality of a seemingly *omnipresent* "penetrating gaze" (Foucault, 2006:), which actually "ingrain[s] a sense of *permanent* and *conscious* visibility" (Foucault, 1977: 6) in (un)targeted management workers. Thus, the latter end up *assuming* that their supervisory/managerial conduct is under *permanent* witchcraft (counter)surveillance. Depersonalisation (anonymity) of the witchcraft practices also entails that their *anti-disciplinary* force becomes *plural* and *diffuse.* Hence, the plural and diffuse force of the seemingly 'permanent' *gazes* of harmful spells, nocturnal spiritual invasions, etc., (and the anti-command-and-control discourse they carry) *permanently infiltrate* the infinitesimal details of management workers' minds, bodies, and relations insomuch as to produce them as *self-restraining* subjects (see Foucault 1988b; Manokha, 2018). So, the fictitious power relation of witchcraft's *assumed* 'permanent' gaze produces management workers who eventually act 'on their own' in modifying their managerial conduct to be partly in conformity with farm worker interests, even when the witchcraft is practiced by only a few witches or not practiced at all. This entails the *automation,* and therefore perfection of the *utility* of the alleged spells, nocturnal spiritual invasions, magical harm to health and wealth to partly *mitigate* and *counteract* the total subordination and exploitation of Barura commercial forestry plantation labour.

Meanwhile, close analysis further reveals that ideologically, the fetishism that underlies the foregoing witchcraft practices is in diametrical *opposition* to the one that legitimates exploitative plantation labour relations on Barura plantation. We illuminate this hereunder.

6.2.2 Ideological Antinomies: Witchcraft's 'Symbolic Fetishism' versus Exploitation's Commodity Fetishism

While the foregoing witchcraft practices largely epitomise *instrumental* resistance to labour subordination and exploitation, further analysis reveals a simultaneous oppositional *ideological* logic that underlies these self-same practices. The farm workers' *belief* in witchcraft and *implicit understanding* of exploitation through the folkloric *knowledge* of witchcraft suggests a powerful *counter-episteme* to capitalist accumulation (e.g., see Taussig, 1977, 2010; Friedman, 2011; Reyna, 2011; Murrey, 2015). Murrey's (2015) study of the Chad-Cameroon Oil Pipeline is an exemplar case in which the pipeline as a site of capitalist extraction, is understood through counter-epistemes of witchcraft. Likewise, but through a fieldwork-specific ideology, which we coin *symbolic fetishism*, we explore the farm workers' unwitting oppositional reading of exploitation. Symbolic fetishism denotes the *perception* of witchcraft rituals and fetishes as *representative* and *mutually inclusive* of the reciprocal *socio-spiritual relations* and the *social labour* of the socio-spiritual actors who partake in witchcraft production and consumption. We assert that *symbolic fetishism* avails implicit ideological opposition to *commodity fetishism* (see Chapter 5). The latter is a fetishism, which justifies and veils plantation labour exploitation and domination on Barura estate. Based on the foregoing and more fieldwork, we build a case for witchcraft-derived symbolic fetishism as a counter-ideology to commodity fetishism on Barura.

In earlier excerpts, we noted the ritual performance of spells that bind management, and those that fortify farm workers. In the former spells, we identified Ndiweni's prototypical use of and reliance on talismanic artifacts (i.e., fetishes) such as knotted and glued handkerchiefs in sealed containers. In the latter spells, there was further use of fetishes in the form of python-skin bracelets and lion-fat ointments. In another emblematic attestation to the pervasive use of talismans (fetishes) to secretly thwart plantation work adversities, R, a self-confessed frequent consultee of magic revealed:

> *"…see, our work problems are largely material, so, most inner circles of workmates or friends, who I can confirm rely on witchcraft… keep, use, wear, or apply ritually anointed charms… tangible things…lion-fat ointments, animal-skin bracelets, ear or nose rings, pieces of cloth, animal shells… all*

> *standing for* (signifying) *the intended results… things which mean covenants made in, and through rituals…"* (Key Informant Interview, R, July 2016)

Relatedly, in a representative statement, which exuded esoteric knowledge and expertise on the significance and modus operandi of the talismans (fetishes), Witchdoctor Ndiweni explained thus:

> *"… all these charms, no more than symbols…say, the knotted handkerchief signifies binding… Importantly, any object, is nothing, absolutely useless, without the cooperation, agreement, commitment… between the spirits or gods, us – spirit mediums, healers, our clients… the spirits and everyone bonded by ritual… gives supernatural power to the objects. Without this, the knotted handkerchief, the sealed container, and all other charms remain mere ordinary objects…"* (Key Informant Interview, Ndiweni, October 2016)

According to worker R and Ndiweni, the knotted handkerchiefs, sealed bottles, lion-fat ointments, and many other fetishes, are perceived as *"…**standing for**…"* or *"…**no more** than **symbols**…"* of the anticipated effects and the *relational* socio-spiritual totality of which they are products. Also, to draw from Ndiweni, the knotted hankies, and the sealed containers (fetishes), which for instance, mediate the binding of farm management, gain supernatural competency *only* as carriers of *symbolic* meaning - "sensuous, *interactive*, animate meanings of *transitiveness*" (Taussig, 2010: 136; own emphasis), and *not* as *reified* artifacts with 'magical attributes *within* and *between* themselves' (see Marx, 1967, 1976). Here, symbolic fetishism, in tacit ideological opposition to the commercial forestry's labour process immanent commodity fetishism, allows for R, Ndiweni, and other workers' tacit understanding of witchcraft's magical artifacts and effects through their "humanly creative and social basis" (see Taussig, 2010: 27). To this end, Ndiweni insists on the need for *"…cooperation, agreement, commitment… between"* the spiritual practitioners, their supernatural counterparts (ancestral spirits or gods), and the farm workers as direct clients (e.g., Q and R), or as 'incidental' beneficiaries of witchcraft's omnipresent effects. Similarly, R privileges the *relational* genesis and significance of the fetishes by viewing them as *"…**covenants** made in, and through rituals…".* The fetishes are viewed as embodiments of relational, and not transactional networks. Therefore, witchcraft's socio-magical ontology lies in its *relational logic* of symbolic fetishism, and *not* in any inherent properties of its fetishes. To borrow from Taussig (2010: 115), witchcraft's fetishism, in contrast to commodity fetishism, is an ideological logic that is predicated on "common kinship, neighbourhood and culture" between the alleged producers and consumers of witchcraft on Barura commercial farm.

This logic is synonymous with the Marxian (1967: 76) claim of the *vanishing* of the "mystery of commodities", which is associated with "other [non-capitalist] forms of production". Witchcraft on Barura estate is one epitome of such non-capitalist production. Concerning other such forms of production, Marx asserts:

> *Personal dependence* here characterises the social relations of production…for the very reason that personal dependence forms the groundwork of society, there is *no necessity* for *labour* and its *products* to assume a fantastic form different from their reality. (Marx, 1967: 77, emphasis added)

True to such logic, under symbolic fetishism, the means of witchcraft production (i.e., talismans, rituals, socio-spiritual labour, etc.) and their magical outcomes on Barura farm, are read as being in a *mutual relational interaction* with the *direct* socio-spiritual relations that entail the social labour of interdependent territorial and super-territorial actors (also see Magliocco, 2020). This ideological dynamic on Barura estate echoes Taussig's (1977, 2010) study of the peasantry of the Cauca Valley (Columbia) sugarcane plantations, who believe in the baptism of money (fetishism) for it to bear interest. Interestingly, in direct opposition to capitalist fetishism, the money bill (a fetish) multiplies as a result of the supernatural power incurred through the *social relations* (i.e., baptism) of the Christian faith, and not some power inherent in the bill itself. Thus, on capitalist plantations, folkloric fetishist practices such as witchcraft and the baptism of money, governed as they are by symbolic fetishism, pose some tacit *epistemological disobedience* (see Mignolo, 2009), to commodity fetishism. The latter is a dominant *'ideology'* (Marx and Engels, 1978), which mediates the (mis)reading of capitalist relations like labour domination and exploitation as *natural, neutral* economic relations between *commodified* fetishes (e.g., farm 'wage' labour, farm owners' 'self-expanding' capital, etc.). So, commodity fetishism is inadvertently contested by a folkloric *counter-ideology* (Scott, 1989, 1990), which allows for the unwitting dissenting reading of the exploitative relations between the state, the farm capital-management dyad and farm labour, as *mutual personal* relations, "albeit relations which are distorted, evil, and destructive, and not as the result of forces naturally inherent in things" (Taussig, 1977: 145).

So, in the vignettes, witchcraft's symbolic fetishism *inherently resists* the ideological *reduction* of interpersonal social relations of labour subordination and exploitation to the magical matrix of commodified means of commercial forestry production. To import Taussig (2010), Reyna (2011) and Murrey (2015), into the foregoing findings, witchcraft is partly a 'powerful anti-

capitalist worldview'. Indeed, the workers' understanding Barura plantation labour politics through epistemologies of witchcraft (i.e., its symbolic fetishism) provides a "powerful language *against* selfishness, greed, individualism and domination" (Murrey, 2015: 72, own emphasis), which are synonymous with capitalist production. We thus witness Ndiweni, R, and other workers' tacit *contest* of the commodity fetishism, which masks and reproduces the exploitative and subordinating relations of Barura's commercial labour process. Meanwhile, a rather more direct (in terms of effects) but equally anonymous (in terms of actors) practice of quotidian resistance, which complemented witchcraft was arson. That is, the widespread burning down of specific sections of Barura commercial forest by the workforce. We turn to this tactical ploy.

6.3 'Burning Away' Exclusion, Labour Subordination, and Exploitation

In this section, we profitably draw from similar research (e.g., see Peluso, 1982; Kerkvliet, 1986; Guha, 2000), which streamlines *anonymous* acts of burning down of forests as typical of the 'avoidance protest' (Adas, 1986) or the Scottian (1985, 1989, 1990) 'infra-politics' of subalterns. Accordingly, we illuminate how arson's *modus operandi* (as an oppositional stratagem) is mainly predicated on the workers' deliberate avoidance of any direct confrontation with the capital-management dyad. Below is the author's snapshot of one of his many direct experiences of and with a 'plantation fire outbreak'.

It is the fifth time in a space of four months that the author and a number of farm worker households, as per company policy, are helping (the often-ill-equipped company fire tenders) *to extinguish a large fire that is fast consuming a vast section of young pine. As with the four previous cases, no sooner has our makeshift fire-fighting team begun extinguishing the fire than there are new siren alarms signalling the simultaneous burning of other distant sections of the plantation.* (Fieldnotes, June 2016)

Interestingly, the scenes in the foregoing excerpt became a common trend throughout the author's stay on Barura estate. In a related excerpt, which typically revealed one common source and the dynamics of such fire outbreaks, farm worker H, shared an archetypical scenario (reconstructed from a real incident involving his work colleagues). In a hushed tone, H confided:

> *"… separately, they sneak into the night … strategically timed so that each duo or trio secretly reaches its assigned plantation site almost at the same time… At each site, camouflaged by the night, and the pine, A watches B's back while B gathers into a thick, big conical pile, highly flammable dry pine leaves and fruits, which are always available on every plantation floor…then, B burrows a hole midway into the base of the pile… via that hole, inserts a glowing cigarette stub or twig deep into the pile's centre… as a reliable time bomb, the glowing stub slowly but surely ignites the pile from the centre of its base…this gives them ample time to sneak back to unsuspicious spaces…Moments later, bonfires engulf the targeted pine sections… Overall result; unknown culprits, simultaneous forest fires at separate*

locations … net effect…overstretched fire-fighting resources… Fires normally seasonal, but because of workers like A and B, they become perennial…you get it?" (Informal Chat, Farmworker H, June 2016)

A neutral observer could be forgiven for dismissing most such fire outbreaks as either natural or accidental. However, from the two vignettes, one draws curious patterns with the fires. They are consistent in their high incidence regardless of seasonal changes. Normally, forestry plantations are prone to fires during the hot, dry, windy season(s). Yet, in the study, fire outbreaks prevailed throughout the year. Also, there was often at least two simultaneous fire outbreaks at separate distant sections of the plantation. Last, the most affected areas were plantation sections with young (5 to 15 years old) pine or gum. Given such empirical trends, it becomes logical to consider plantation arson as a subterranean practice, which is *pervasive* enough to constitute a *pattern* of *resistance* (Scott, 1989) whose dynamics are unpacked below.

In the vignettes, acts of arson suggest "tactical wisdom" (Scott, 1989: 35) insofar as they afford the workers opportunities for *direct* but *anonymous* retaliation (see Scott, 1985, 1989; Vinthagen and Johansson, 2013) to socio-economic exclusion, labour subordination, and exploitation. Depersonalisation (anonymity) of the perpetrators and the craft obtains through various *tactical ploys* (de Certeau, 1984). As portrayed by H above, execution is under the anonymity and safety of the dark night, the small 'group' numbers, and the plantation forest foliage. Relatedly, to adapt Scott's (1989) analysis of 'poaching' to the current context, the *expansive* nature of the commercial forest itself conveniently allows the workers to set fire mainly to its remote sections thereby evading potential surveillance and reducing detection. Anonymity and safety also obtain from the physical setting of the fire through insertion of a glowing medium into the middlemost base of a large thick conical heap of dry pine leaves and fruit. This technique delays any sudden visible outbreak of the fire until when the perpetrators retreat to safe unsuspicious spaces. In the latter spaces, the arsonists assume an "on stage" (Scott, 1989: 50) behaviour of public compliance, which yields a semblance of submission, fear, and caution. As a result, like witchcraft, arson often denies the capital-management dyad and neutral observers a discernible culprit.

The capital-management dyad also became unwittingly complicit in the depersonalisation (anonymity) of arson through a widespread belief in the possible supernatural origins of most of the fires. Manager W's sentiments were emblematic when he submitted, *"… If the witches can become invisible, and filter through our locked doors to torment us…what can stop them*

from setting the plantations ablaze?" Similarly, farm rank and file also occasionally attributed the fire outbreaks to godly spirits, whom they believed to be eternally vengeful upon loss of their natural habitat(s) to commercial forestry agriculture. These dynamics enhanced the incidental diversion of suspicion from the actual perpetrators such as those alluded to by H in his narrative above.

Meanwhile, in light of H's narrative, the arsonists also exude tactical wisdom through their *utilitarian* (see Bentham, 1843; 1965) deployment of arson as a "network of anti-discipline" (de Certeau, 1984: xv). The perpetrators spatially organise themselves so as to ensure the simultaneous (thus, ubiquitous) burning of different geographically dispersed sections of the commercial forest. This inevitably leads to the splitting of and subsequent overwhelm on the estate's limited fire-fighting equipment and manpower. The knock-on effect is the enhanced efficiency of the technique, i.e., the massive destruction of the targeted portions through the minimal effort of a few unverifiable perpetrators in the shortest possible time. Interestingly, the tactical efficacy of plantation arson did not only derive from its utilitarian deployment, but also from the workers' 'masked' responses to it as shown in the exemplar case below.

Whether the fires were perpetrated or of natural occurrence, the author observed (after direct participation in several fire-fighting encounters) a recurring pattern of *how* most workers 'helped' extinguish the fires. This trend was later confirmed by one of the author's confidantes, farm worker K, who in an informal chat reiterated:

> *"… that briskness during firefighting is mostly feigned! … workers usually carry almost empty or empty containers of water or soil back and forth the burning area! … Often, we just dump the little water, soil carelessly …why waste energy rescuing their wealth? We rather keep it for other personal things for survival… healthy pine or burnt ones, the pain of erratic wages, wages in kind, lack of secure contracts, remains constant!"* (Informal Chat, Farmworker K, August 2016)

The dynamics of the workers' firefighting as witnessed by the author and confirmed by K above, are synonymous with *goldbricking* (see Cohen, 1980; Burawoy, 1978; Burawoy and von Holdt, 2014). The workers assume bodily gestures and actions (briskness, carrying buckets, pouring soil or water, etc.) that give some semblance of 'diligent effort'. Yet, in reality, they do the tasks sloppily or *appear* to be doing them. This dynamic is similar to Marx's (2009) study of everyday resistance by workers in computerised workplaces, who deploy 'masking' or 'distorting' ploys such as holding down computer keys to *appear* productive. In both cases, this "political masking" (Scott, 1989: 55) allows workers to safely divert diligent effort from

the profit interests of capital and management. In the excerpt, the Barura workers divert effort from rescuing the employers' and management's commercial forest, and instead spare that effort for own livelihoods. Overall, whether the plantation fires are natural or perpetrated, goldbricking undermines and counteracts the capital-management dyad's *extractive capacity* (de Heredia, 2017), i.e., to fully appropriate the workers' labour power in extinguishing the fire(s) and saving the commercial forest.

We now turn to making sense of *how* and *why* the *frequent* burning down of *young* (5 to 15 years), and the *occasional* burning of *mature* (at least 20 years) pine/gum sections of the plantations qualify as resistance. Regarding the essence of such a widespread specifically selective stratagem, worker L insisted:

> *"… Why mainly burn the younger trees? Since it takes more than twenty years for a pine tree to be harvested, it means you nip future timber quantities, sales, and gains, in the bud… creating a permanent gap … Sparingly burn the mature trees…Why? To at least remain employed, but in both cases, under much reduced toil."* (Informal Chat, Farmworker L, May 2016)

In light of L's prototypical statement, plantation arson can be an antagonistic practice at the *instrumental* (see Guha, 1987; Scott, 1985, 1989; Lilja and Vinthagen, 2009) level. It can either instantly or cumulatively *contest* the capital-management dyad's material interests to exercise *optimal* control over the workers and the timber production process, and to appropriate the maximum surplus value thereto. In the short term, resistance may obtain when *mature* pine is burnt and destroyed resulting in an immediate reduction in forest sections with adequate quantities of *harvestable* pine or gum. This may imply a reduction in the rate, volume, and intensity of work tasks at the timber harvesting, sawing, drying, stacking, and loading sites. To this effect, L refers to *"… much reduced toil"*. So, reduced work effort and rhythm, and the associated temporal (re)appropriation of some control over one's labour time, are the "tacit, *de facto* gains" (Scott, 1989: 34), which the workers realise at the expense of the employers' interests to *directly* subordinate the workers, and to maximise timber production and profits. Meanwhile, also in the short term, similar resistance dynamics are at play when arson is targeted at young pine. The main exception is that these dynamics become largely confined to work sites and work tasks that concern the nurturing (e.g., weeding, pruning, spraying, etc.) of young pine. However, in the *long term*, burning down younger trees achieves more complex resistance dynamics, and this is implied by L when he talks of *"…creating a permanent gap…"*. We turn to this dynamic below.

In the excerpt, L, as did the foresters, reiterates that it takes at least 20 years for a commercial pine tree to be profitably harvested. Thus, for L, and from analysis, selective arson on sections of young pine (that originally had strategically staggered maturity periods), entails periodical and *cumulative* declines in the *volumes*, and lags in the *availability* of mature trees during timber production cycles. The domino effect could be that arson, as a form of invisible 'sabotage' (see Cohen, 1980; Scott, 1985), then also cumulatively *slows down* the rate, and *reduces* the intensity of timber production and its specific work tasks like harvesting, sawing, drying, and loading. In this way, the 'tactical wisdom' of arson as quotidian resistance lies in its *cumulative consequences* (Vinthagen and Johansson, 2013). That is, historical acts of arson become manifest in the guise of tacit piecemeal effects like the employers' diminished 'extractive capacity' (de Heredia, 2017) of the workers' labour effort and time. Specific timber production work tasks (e.g., harvesting, stacking, etc.) may gradually become less intense, less extended, and less continuous. So, there is a persistent latent reduction in the rate and intensity of exploitation, which means a contest to the employers' claims on the workers' unpaid labour. Contested claims on unpaid labour imply a contest to the plantation owners' claims on profits and financial capital. In all, at the instrumental level, arson cumulatively stalls the timber production process, and then destabilises its valorisation logic by 'levelling down profits' (Cohen, 1980). However, acts of arson also entail incidental ideological resistance to commercial plantation commodity fetishism.

The vignette below is a prototypical case whereby Barura farm workers re-imagine the commercial forest and acts of arson through a *symbolic-fetishist* lens. That is, making sense of them as representative and mutually inclusive of the *social relations* of production between capital, management, the state, workers, and villagers and *not* as *commodity fetishes* (see Chapter 5). To this effect, Farmworker P said:

> *"…these fires, whether natural, or perpetrated…their success depends on the workers' mutual silence… the villagers' conspiracy of silence too. The fires mean a lot to us! … invincible forces that help us burn away the employers and their lapdog's* (i.e., management) *greed, selfishness, arrogancy…and bring us respite from the pain of gainless toil, of deadly work conditions… the fires are also safe dissenting voices and outlets for our disgust, anger, revenge …"* (Informal Chat, Farmworker P, February 2017)

P's portrait of the fires as mediated through *"mutual silence"*, and as *"invincible forces"* that *"burn away"* the employers' greed, and *"bring…respite"* to the workers, signifies a tacit appreciation of the socio-*relational logic* of arson. 'Normally', *commodity fetishism* (Polanyi,

1957; Marx, 1973), would entail reading of the fires and commercial forest as reified economic things or processes, which are independent of the relational socio-political totality of which they are products. However, P and other workers, in an (un)witting *counter-ideological* (Scott, 1989, 1990) fashion, interpret the fires and forest as a *relational network* with life and social properties. To import Marx (1976) and Taussig (2010), Barura workers such as P re-read acts of arson and the forest as having a *social basis*. They are tacitly re-imagined as the functions and products of the *social labour* of and *direct relations* among the capital-management dyad, the workers, and the villagers. Hence, as a veiled ideological challenge, or Scottian (1990: 42-43) "hidden transcript" to the dominant commodity fetishism, the workers recentre acts of arson and the forest as constituent parts and products of the socio-political relations of *exclusion, exploitation,* and *subjugation* vis a vis the workers' oppositional infra-politics. The latter, according to P, is manifested in the dissenting relations of *complicitous silence* (Scott, 1989) among the perpetrators of the arson, their accomplices, and sympathisers. Also, P's portrayal of the fires as the workers' safe oracles, and outlets of discontent also spotlights the *expressive/symbolic* (Scott, 1985; Guha, 1987) side of resistance. So, acts of arson may also constitute a "counter-hegemonic embodiment" (Kwan and Roth, 2011: 194) that symbolises the farm workers' ideational loathing of the terms and conditions of the Barura commercial forestry labour process. Here, resistance also mainly lies in the gratification that derives from the act of arson itself. In all, within the foregoing counter-ideological framing, Barura workers like P (un)wittingly interpret acts of arson [and the (burnt) pine forest] *not* as commodity fetishes, but as symbols and mutual constituents of dislocated and unequal relations of exclusion, exploitation, and subjugation that are systemic to the capitalist forestry labour process.

Also, as part of their repertoire of *direct* but *anonymous* practices of quotidian resistance, the Barura forestry plantation workers also turned to 'poaching'. In light of quintessential vignettes, we analyse its nature, dynamics, and simultaneity as a survival and resistance technique.

6.4 'Poaching': "reclaiming and redistributing our stolen ancestral resources" (Worker M)

Poaching is conventionally understood as the 'theft' of private property in wild game (see Scott, 1989). However, as evidenced below, poaching also extends to the 'theft' of pasture, firewood,

wild fruit, honey, and construction material in the reserved indigenous portions of the commercial forests. From the outset, it is noteworthy that the workers and villagers did not consider their acts as 'theft', but as an ongoing reclamation and redistributive endeavour.

The author witnessed, first-hand, the village-dwelling workers' poaching in sections of the plantation comprised of reserved natural habitats. The latter are thick vast islands (in the midst of certain sections of the commercial pine forest) of the original indigenous forest, which at the colonial inception of commercial exotic forestry, the Barura estate owners preserved as private endangered enclaves of wildlife conversation. Through several excursions, often in the company of farm worker M [a self-declared (to the author) 'reclaimer' and 'redistributor' of colonially stolen resources], the author directly witnessed the pervasive 'poaching' in various islands of natural habitats furthest from surveillance. Below, the author relives one striking quintessential excursion.

Our long hike finally leads us into one of the many islands of the estate's reserve natural habitats. Traces of any company or village activity have since disappeared. Groping through the dense, vast forest, I lose count of the herds of grazing cattle, (wo)men felling trees, beehives, and stacks of firewood or thatching grass that we have come across. M, then hints that at dusk or dawn, all this 'loot' will be smuggled into the village. He frequently insists, "In fact, most of us believe that we are reclaiming and redistributing our stolen ancestral resources …", and insists that village-based workers, farm-dwellers, villagers, village heads, company guards are "…separate, silent, but united voices…" in this encroachment. Now dusk, we are heading back to the village. True to M's word, we occasionally walk ahead of, beside, past, or behind 'poachers' carrying firewood, thatching grass, or basketfuls of wild fruit. We also stumble upon, stop over, and greet small groups of hunting parties sharing the day's 'kill'. (Field Notes, March 2017)

From the narrative, 'poaching' is largely anonymous and typically avoids "direct symbolic confrontation" (Scott, 1985: 29) with farm capital and the state. The 'poachers'' *spiriting away* of fuelwood, game meat, honey, etc., constitutes a form of "quiet encroachment" (Bayat 2000: 545-546) on the privatised natural habitats so that there is not any discernible culprit for the capital-management dyad. To realise and sustain this *quiet* or *anonymity*, M and colleagues ensure that the volume and intensity of their 'poaching' increases with increasing distance from possible company or village surveillance. Elsewhere, Scott (1989) explains poachers' disguise in terms of the nature of the forest itself. In the excerpt, the islands of natural habitats are vast thick camouflages, which conceal the 'poachers'' personal identities. The dispersed nature of the islands of natural habitats also poses surveillance problems since the possible sites of 'poaching' become numerous. M and colleagues' "quasi-invisibility" (de Certeau, 1984: 31) is further enhanced by 'smuggling' the proceeds back home during times (dusk or dawn) of minimal activity and constrained visibility. To follow Vinthagen and Johansson (2013), all this

pervasive use of *disguise* increasingly denies authorities such as plantation capital and management any clear-cut occasion for reprimand and retaliation.

Another significant condition for both the anonymity and feasibility of 'poaching' is encapsulated in M's profiling of participants as *"…separate, silent, but united voices…"*. This implies that, while 'poaching' (just like witchcraft and arson), may seem to be an "individual" act of "self-help" (Scott, 1985: 29), its success depends on some measure of group cohesion. Findings suggest that 'poaching' as a folk subculture, may lack formal coordination, but it thrives on some *tacit cooperation* that is cultivated through relational "networks of understanding" (Scott, 1989: 36). These relations assume the form of the *conspiracy of silence*, which for M is cultivated among the village and farm-dwelling workers, peasants, estate security guards, and complicit villagers. Such a conspiracy of silence was further confirmed from a farm management perspective when Manager V insisted:

> *"… Zero success with known or suspected cases reported to village heads… of livestock trespassing into parts of the estate. Cases mostly dismissed, as we are often clueless on definite culprits…deafening village and farm silence. No one is forthcoming either as the owners, or as witnesses, or as informants… each is separately, quietly, part of this ghostly collective plot…"* (Key Informant, Manager V, September 2016)

In both the foregoing emblematic cases, the *self-interested muteness* of each 'poacher' (un)intentionally weaves into a *pervasive* network of secrecy, or the Scottian (1989) 'complicitous silence'. The latter is implied in V's idea of a *"… ghostly collective plot…"*. To borrow from Guha (1987), such a plot or tacit cooperation through complicitous silence may derive from a sense of *popular justice*. This sense is evident when M and other workers staunchly believe that they are not 'poaching' but are merely *"reclaiming and redistributing"* their *"stolen ancestral resources"*. Such a belief may stem from what Scott (1989) terms a 'normative consensus', which in this instance, is predicated on a common traditional commitment to *norms* and *values* that uphold *communal* resource control and ownership. So, through 'poaching', Barura workers (and peasants from the nearby villages) pursue own *de facto* material and ideological gains while also tacitly maintaining a faithful eye on the *collective well-being* through a complicitous silence. To import Scott (1989: 34), the *self-interested silences* of each 'poacher' and 'accomplices' have "aggregate consequences all out of proportion to their banality when considered singly". Having profiled the nature of 'poaching', below, we unpack *how* 'poaching', a survival strategy per se, also constitutes potential *infra-politics* (covert labour resistance).

The two vignettes above attest that 'poaching' confers de facto *material* gains on the perpetrators. For Bayat (200: 546), it allows "ordinary people to improve their lives". It presents workers like M, with a 'tactical opportunity' (de Certeau, 1984; Butz and Ripmeester, 1999) to subversively use the *privatised* (i.e., commodified) natural forests for domestic consumption and self-sufficiency. This is akin to Kerkvliet's (2009) idea of the 'creative making of a living' or 'getting by'. Yet, in this self-same material instance 'poaching' can double as "embedded resistance" (Mihelic and Storrs, 2003: 419). That is, workers such as M become unwitting resisters since they believe that it has always been their tradition and custom to use the forest as a source of livelihood. To import Scott (1985, 1989) and Kerkvliet (2009), 'poaching' becomes resistance since in advancing their own usufruct claims on natural resources, the workers (and peasants) (un)wittingly mitigate and challenge the plantation capital and management's material and ideological claims on the *private* ownership and control of the same resources. Thus, on Barura, 'poaching' epitomises a systematic pattern of *counter-appropriation* and *insubordination.* Meanwhile, deeper analysis reveals that the workers' spiriting away of privatised natural resources undermines the *bases* of exploitation and thus exploitation itself.

That is, if we adapt Wright's (2005: 23) problematic of exploitative capitalist relations, 'poaching' destabilises the "inverse interdependent welfare" and "exclusion" bases/logic of commercial forestry exploitation. Our departing premise is that the material welfare of the estate owners and management is asymmetrically dependant on Barura workers' *exclusion* (through (post)colonial land grabbing) from what was originally traditional land and land-based resources therein. Such historical and current material exclusion predisposes workers like M to *compulsive participation* in plantation wage labour. However, in the vignettes, M and other workers consider 'poaching' to be a piecemeal, enduring *redistributive* endeavour. Hence, it *partly* but persistently *contests* and *mitigates* the workers' material exclusion. This entails part challenge to the basis of their exploitation. Through 'poaching', Barura workers secretly and informally *include* themselves in the piecemeal acquisition, use, and control of estate-privatised natural resources. This could imply that the workers may no longer need to exclusively rely on plantation wage employment for dependencies. To this effect, Farm worker L revealed:

> *"…since we can now meet some of our basic needs by direct consumption of or petty trading in firewood, venison, wild fruit, honey, thatching grass, gotten from there …we sometimes can comfortably forego overtime shifts at work or conveniently absent ourselves from work…"* (Farmworker L, January 2017)

L's prototypical statement suggests that Barura workers who have constant 'illegal' access to the estate's privatised natural resources can partially *mitigate* compulsive participation in forestry wage labour. They can reduce the intensity, frequency, and duration of their participation. Also, to import Thompson (1989) into L's revelation, 'poaching' entails capital and management's loss of some measure of control (*direct subordination*) over the material conditions required to produce a fully-fledged and committed stock of wage labour. This further entails some piecemeal reduction in the rate and intensity of exploitation. Such a reduced *extractive capacity* (de Heredia, 2017) of Barura workers' labour commitment and surplus labour power/time means a corresponding reduction in surplus value (profits). Thus, this chain reaction initiated by 'poaching' constitutes an (un)witting "network of anti-discipline" (de Certeau, 1984: xv) to material exclusion, direct subordination, and exploitation. Overall, the capital-management dyad is partly *denied* claims on surplus labour and surplus value.

'Poaching' as evidenced in the vignettes above also entails ideological resistance. We concur with Scott (1989: 38) that a striking fact about 'poaching' is that it is "part of the traditional subsistence routine of the rural population". To this effect, in the excerpt, M insists*, "In fact, most of us* ***believe*** *that we are redistributing our stolen* ***ancestral*** *resources …"*. Thus, 'poaching' is embedded in and understood through the 'hidden transcript' (Scott, 1990) of *customary* property rights, and not the conventional *private* property rights. Suffice to say that, as a potential crime, 'poaching' entails "less of a change in behaviour" of the workers (and peasants) "than a shift in the law of property relations" (Scott, 1989: 38). This is all the truer for most post-colonial neoliberal African contexts wherein the state *redefined* the forest as a state or corporate resource and then imposed a *regulatory* system of private ownership and control (see Scott, 1989). The state and farm owners' enforcement of this *dominant ideology* of private property legislation and tenure regimes then (mis)represents a *traditionally* subsistence routine as 'poaching'. It is therefore logical that workers like M, through their *hidden transcript* (Scott, 1990) of *belief* in *ancestral/customary* resource rights, (un)wittingly contest and denigrate the dominant legislative (i.e., ideological) system of private ownership, usufruct, and control rights and powers over the endangered indigenous sections of Barura commercial estate. Overall, the workers, in counter-ideological fashion, vicariously (re)interpret 'poaching' as a traditional subsistence practice governed by customary property

"values and rights recognised by a significant proportion of other similarly positioned people" (Kerkvliet, 2009: 233) such as peasants and village heads.

The foregoing (sub)sections have centred witchcraft, arson, and 'poaching' as quotidian practices of resistance whose feasibility is largely dependent on the *anonymity* of the actors. The (witch)doctor or their clients, the arsonist, the 'poacher', and their accomplices endeavour that their *personal identities* and *performances* go *undetected*. We have acts of resistance being executed by *disguised* participants. However, more findings reveal an auxiliary dynamic wherein *disguise* largely becomes embedded in the *practices* themselves. So, an *ambiguous* (indirect) message of hidden dissent is sent by clearly identified messengers. Empirically, we draw on labour-time 'theft' and/or task budgeting practices namely absenteeism and goldbricking/shirking. It is this set of practices that we now focus on.

6.5 'Paradoxical Constraint': 'Waiting On', Labour-Time 'Theft' and/or Task Bargaining on Barura estate

As a significant departing point, we reflect on an earlier section (in Chapter 5), where we argued that the subordination and exploitation Barura farm labour was *secured* through the *'waiting on'* game (i.e., *manipulative* or *compulsive hegemony*). We adopted the *game* metaphor from Bourdieu (2000[1997]) and Burawoy and Holdt (2012) and adapted it to an unprecedentedly insecure commercial forestry labour process to signify how 'waiting on', like a game, *obscured,* and *secured* the workers' subordination and exploitation by the very process of securing their sustained *participation* in wage employment. Participation was secured more by the workers *giving in* (compulsion) than *agreeing* (consent) to wage employment. We cited heightened labour insecurities and uncertainties as the basis of 'waiting on'. The workers' tacit *giving in* to wage employment was, for instance, necessitated by the hope that their long-outstanding wages, elusive monetary wages (often replaced by a timber quota), long-overdue transition to permanent work contracts, etc., would at some point eventually materialise. This was especially after the workers' historical sacrifice and investment in a *long-suffering* wait.

However, further findings avail a paradoxical twist wherein 'waiting on' also places *tacit constraints* on the workers and lower management's *full commitment* to wage employment and *fully-fledged labour control* respectively. These constraints manifest as enhanced *anti-disciplinary* (de Certeau, 1984) worker *autonomy* at farm worksites. But in Chapter 5 we noted that, an autonomy, mediated by 'making out' in Burawoy's (1979) Chicago factory case, and

by ‘waiting on’ in the current case, predisposed both sets of workers to a complicitous subordination and exploitation. However, ‘waiting on’, as illustrated henceforth, also ambivalently avails Barura farm workers with a *counter-hegemonic* autonomy, which manifests as coping-cum-*resistance* practices to labour subordination and exploitation. This epitomises the *ambivalent* reciprocal relationship between power and resistance (see Vinthagen and Johansson, 2013). Thus, below, we unpack the characteristics and dynamics of the ‘waiting on’-stimulated labour-time ‘theft’ practises namely absenteeism and goldbricking, and how they constitute resistance.

6.5.1 Labour-Time ‘Theft’ and/or Task Bargaining: Absenteeism and Goldbricking

6.5.1.1 Widespread and Disguised Absenteeism with(out) Official Certification

From the outset, it is noteworthy that we refer to absenteeism (and goldbricking) as acts that involve labour-time ‘theft’, not as a moral or legal offense. Rather, the ‘theft’ denotes the workers’ *diversion* of their supposedly ‘to-be-paid-for’ labour-time from the profit interests of the hiring employer. Repetitive active participation ad observation at various worksites, enabled the researcher to witness such ‘theft’ through dispersed *widespread* acts of absenteeism. One typical official confirmation of such was Foreman G’s insistence that, *“… fellow foremen can testify… there is, in an unprecedented manner, barely a full staff complement at each worksite daily… especially so since 2015 when wages became erratic and paid in kind* (a timber quota) *…”.* Follow-up interviews further enabled the author to establish curious patterns concerning absenteeism.

At the official level, workers validated and legitimated their absenteeism through *sick notes,* which accrued to the prevalent worksite accidents (especially fainting and bodily injuries), and common illnesses (headaches and stomach-aches). The idea of sick notes is not new. Sick notes have classical roots in colonial Zimbabwe’s mining workplaces where for instance, miners would forge sick notes after feigned illnesses and/or accidents and self-inflicted injuries (see van Onselen, 1976; Phimister and van Onselen, 1978; Cohen, 1980). However, the farm workers in the current study do not forge the sick notes, but just like their counterparts in Mutekwe’s (2019) study of everyday resistance (in a Zimbabwean platinum mine), they get valid and authentic sick notes. The author established that issuance of such sick notes had to be originally sanctioned by a site foreman’s approval (in routine consultation with their supervisor) via a referral note to a relevant health-care centre. The latter retained the official

authority to sanction the actual issuance of a medically certified sick note, which would then (dis)qualify the worker for *official absence* from work without undue penalties. However, follow-up key informant interviews with healthcare providers yielded some interesting Scottian (1990: 157) *"infra-politics"* concerning the actual circumstances surrounding Barura workers' 'qualification' for sick notes. To this effect, a quintessential interview that I had with a long-serving health worker X revealed:

> *"… At this centre most of the referral cases of workers fainting at worksites, suffering headaches, stomach aches often medically lack diagnostic signs of such…they turn out to be faked! I have worked here long enough to know this! So, one, there are genuine cases…, two, cases where the fainting, headache… are simulated, and , also where they are too mild to warrant a foreman's note or our sick note…But we often identify with the workers' acute suffering…deferred wages, wages in kind, zero protective clothing, no more food rations at and hiking to distant worksites …So, in collective sympathy we often give them sick off days that are inflated or malingered but officially visible and valid through our official stamp…their foremen, supervisors can't dispute that!"* (Key Informant Interview, Health Worker X June 2016)

Interestingly, there was also a complementary worker-centric revelation regarding the workers' qualification for officially sanctioned absenteeism. In a hushed chat, the author indulged three close farm worker friends, and one of them, B, animatedly clarified:

> *"… foremen and health workers also bribed to validate simulated illness, accidents via referral notes, sick notes … Doable due to tight, secret networks of shared sympathy toward an abnormally suffering farm workforce…"* (Informal Group Chat, Farmworker B, July 2016)

Meanwhile, there was also an *unofficial* sub-plot to absenteeism whereby foremen indulged their workers through an uncharacteristic but tactical tolerance toward absenteeism. Normally, absenteeism is considered a serious work offense. Of the many foremen's portraits of the sub-plot, A's was quintessential:

> *"Also, many off-record cases, no recorded evidence or traces of the absences in our logbooks, timesheets … Workers informally* ***negotiate*** *with some of us foremen… for absences that often lead to extended weekends…more time for such absentees for off-farm livelihoods … Or sometimes, foremen just* ***ignore*** *unannounced ordinary absences in return for non-monetary favours or out of emphathy."* (Informal Chat, Foreman A, February 2017)

The evidence in the vignettes resonates with similar seminal research in colonial Zimbabwe's mining industry (see van Onselen, 1976; Phimister and van Onselen, 1978; Cohen, 1980) where the incidence of the distribution, seriousness, and authenticity of illness and accidents (that led to absenteeism) was neither fortuitous nor random. Relatedly, a common feature that crosscuts the vignettes above concerns the "double meaning" Scott (1989: 54), and hence ambiguity, which both the official and unofficial cases of absenteeism assume. In both scenarios, the true basis of the absenteeism is meant to remain opaque especially to line managers, who may notice

the absences, but without any hint of the actual circumstances (i.e., deceit) underlying them. So, the Scottian (1985, 1990) portrait of an *identifiable* absentee sending an *ambiguous* message obtains. In the referral-cum-sick note-certified cases, knowledge of the deceit and feigning, which underlie the medically sanctioned absenteeism remains the preserve of the complicit workers, health personnel and/or involved foremen. Hence, the line managers may (mis)construe such officially documented and recorded cases of absenteeism as 'normal' deserving cases. Similar ambiguity imbues the 'negotiated' and 'ignored' cases of absenteeism, which Foreman A refers to above. With these, the concerned workers are visibly absent, but there is *not* any official record or report to that effect. Subsequently, the cases largely remain opaque to line managers (and capital). The latter barely visit worksites, and in the rare case that they notice the absences, chances are higher, according to Foreman A that, *"the line manager just assumes that they* (absentees) *are captured somewhere in our records…"* In all these scenarios, absenteeism constitutes a "politics of dissimulation" (Scott 1989: 53), through its double meanings, which help *conceal* the deceitful bases of the workers' *non-compliance* with *full* labour commitment. Thus, absenteeism may elude any punitive action that would otherwise come from line managers on capital's behalf. This elusiveness gets all the more consolidated via the *social labour* that is also showcased in the anecdotes. We pursue this immediately below.

The foregoing deceitful cases of absenteeism retain further *ambiguity* and *oppositional* impetus insofar as they remain immersed in an *informal* co-ordinational ambience of Scottian (1989) *'complicitous silence'*. A quietly shared "climate of opinion" (Scott, 1989: 52), which according to X and B manifests as *silent collective sympathy* (toward the workers' worsening work conditions) stimulates a conspiracy of silence, in which foremen like A and health workers like X connive motivated by the moral campuses of sympathy and empathy. Subsequently, this complicity implies that similarly sympathetic foremen and health workers may *forfeit* or conveniently *suspend* their mandate to *authentically* diagnose, record and report absenteeism or any conditions leading to it. So, the complicit officials safeguard both the omission of the latter from or its deceitful inclusion in the official record via a *pervasive conspiratorial silence*. This silence can help *veil* any increased incidence of absenteeism under false pretences. Subsequently, capital's interest in *disciplining* (see Foucault, 1979) the

workers' bodies and minds into *optimal* labour submission (through strictly and genuinely monitored absenteeism) is quietly challenged.

The anecdotes further reveal that absenteeism's potential as a *subterranean oppositional* force to labour control and exploitation also draws from management's *indulgence practices* (see Lupton, 1963; Burawoy' 1979; Burawoy and Holdt, 2012). Foremen unofficially relax, postpone, or suspend their command-and-control functions over absenteeism. Our idea of indulgence practices derives from Burawoy's (1979) Chicago factory study, where such practices were privileged for manufacturing the workers' *consent* to exploitation. However, the narratives above suggest that indulgence by lower management (especially foremen) also tacitly manufactures *dissent* in the guise of disguised absenteeism. More so, the indulgence practices in the current case, (unlike the Chicago case) do not stem from the constraints imposed on management by an internal state and labour market, but those imposed by a suboptimal post-colonial capitalist forestry labour process with its highly insecure terms and conditions of employment. The latter, and how they played out with the foremen's indulgence practices were aptly captured by Foremen A:

> *"Most of us are now tolerant to absences… no longer religiously record, report, reprimand absent workers who, like us, are already victims of the never-seen-before suffering…unpaid for many months, getting paid in timber, ever-liminal contracts … So, no, few, or forged reports, records, excuses, of absences mean less accountability for us to line managers, less chances, or levels of punishment for our work gangs, and the more us foremen can retain a sizeable workforce at worksites in the long-term … work now hell, but foremen and workers need it as backup to off-farm livelihoods in case work conditions improve…"* (Informal Chat, Foreman A, February 2017)

Indulgence-wise, Foreman A confirms that fellow foremen forego, under-state, or tweak the conditions, records, and reports of absenteeism insomuch as to repel or minimise punitive action against absentees. To streamline Burawoy and von Holdt (2012: 183), absenteeism passes as a coping and resistance tactic to the extent it gets "protected" from any "arbitrary application of coercion", such as suspensions, wage cuts, and being fired. Thus, indulgence entails the foremen's concessionary relaxation of their surveillance and punitive roles. This means the subsequent challenge to capital's interest to "exert [despotic] control over the conditions under…which the worker operates" (Thompson, 1989: xiv). The indulgence practices are synonymous with Collinson's (2000) 'resistance through distance' whereby workers in his study had to restrict information from reaching top management in order to minimise work demands. Similarly, we encounter the *subversive* creation and widening of

surveillance distance between the absentees and line managers as mainly mediated by foremen who withhold or misrepresent absenteeism records and reports. Foremen mastermind the *anti-disciplinary* (de Certeau, 1984) *non-use* or *abuse* of farm capital's micro-techniques (e.g., logbooks, timesheets) that were originally meant to control acts of labour time 'theft' like absenteeism. Therefore, absentees more or less gain a measure of control over when and how to expend their labour effort/time thereby undermining farm capital's claims on the workers' wholesome investment in wage labour.

Meanwhile, the indulgence practices of most of Barura plantation foremen can also help constitute absenteeism as a "creeping incremental" (Scott, 1989: 54) tactic of hidden resistance. Indulgency acts can trigger dispersed but widespread chain reactions of 'new' frequencies and levels of absenteeism. To this effect, worker L's testimony was apt:

> *"… A lot of us now capitalise…once we notice that foremen are easing up on absenteeism cases that once and normally attracted punitive action, suspensions, even dismissals…what stops us from experimenting, bit by bit, for example, on extra days away, more times away…bit by bit, we have managed to silently get 'new' tolerance to our new tricks of being absent as long as we do not take extremes."* (Group Chat, Farm worker L, December 2016)

L's testimony attests that the foremen's cases of low-profile tolerance to absenteeism act as precedents to and stimuli for the continual testing of what is permissible by Barura workers. If daring workers such as L experiment with 'new' levels or frequencies of absenteeism and escape punitive action, others, profiting from the example, may also cross the line. The potential aggregation of such isolated 'experimenting' could result in the creation of 'new' *de facto* limits to what levels or frequencies of absenteeism are permissible or not. As a result, there develops a *cumulative non-compliance,* which results in the establishment of Scottian (1989: 62) new "tolerated informal limits" on absenteeism. The latter implies the workers' advancement of own claims at the expense of the farm owners and line management's claims on their full "investment in labour" (Bourdieu, 2000: 202). However, to follow Foreman A, there has to be a *trade-off* between the foremen's indulgence and their own interest to retain numerically viable work gangs in the long term. So, the indulgency is paradoxically tied to the absentees *not* quitting forestry wage employment at all, but 'waiting on' (see Chapter 5). However, Barura foremen's retreat from an increasingly coercive approach to absenteeism also doubles as *repressive tolerance* (i.e., veiled domination. We discussed the latter in detail earlier in Chapter 5. Suffice for now to say that this demonstrates the ambivalent entanglement of power and resistance.

Furthermore, absenteeism, as articulated above, all the more assumes Scottian (1989: 54) "double meaning" (i.e., disguise) due to its *opportunistic poaching* (de Certeau, 1984) on the existing dominant (dis)order of acute labour insecurities and uncertainties. The latter are highlighted by X and A above, and regarding one typical case of their net effect, Manager R said,

> *"... increased worker susceptibility to diseases, accidents to do with malnutrition, hunger, stress, fatigue, no work clothing…increases cases eligible for sick leave, but, who knows, workers may quietly take advantage since the extremely deplorable working conditions complicate the separation of genuine and faked cases of absenteeism…"* (Manager R, Interview, February 2017)

According to Manager R, the absentees can (un)intentionally seize the opportunities availed by the dominant (dis)order (i.e., heightened precarity) and use it "to their own ends" (de Certeau, 1984: xix) to cover up 'invented' or 'inflated' cases of sick leave. The acutely insecure and uncertain terms and conditions of work at Barura may facilitate in *justifying* and *veiling* deceitful absenteeism, thereby constituting it as a ploy that "avoids being detected as resistance" (Vinthagen and Johansson, 2013: 10). The heightened labour insecurities help to *blur* the line between genuine and feigned cases of absenteeism for the non-complicit line managers. Here, (dis)order is "*tricked* by an art" (de Certeau, 1984: 26) of deceitful absenteeism. So, while the acutely insecure labour conditions constitute the workers' domination (see Chapter 5), they also are ambivalently *poached on* to facilitate the *blurring* of the actual basis (e.g., malingering, deceit) of absenteeism. The upshot is that absenteeism *uses* the existing precarity to increasingly *camouflage* itself from possible punitive action, thereby turning itself into a relatively safe and feasible stratagem of everyday labour resistance. Below, we consolidate *how* absenteeism constitutes piecemeal resistance to exploitation, and therefore valorisation.

Absenteeism becomes "embedded resistance" (Mihelich and Storrs, 2003: 419) to the extent absentees (un)wittingly *deny* Barura farm capital and its managerial agents the *continuous, intensified,* and *extended* extraction of (surplus) *labour time*. Legally, "the employer must use the time of his labour and ensure that it is not wasted" (Johansson and Vinthagen, 2016: 427). Yet, Foreman A insists that most of the absenteeism mainly stems from the workers' increasing participation in own *non-wage livelihoods* since *farm wages* have increasingly become erratic, non-monetary, and paltry. This corroborates Cohen's (1980) argument that, under post-colonial capitalism in Africa, the degree of workplace absenteeism depends more saliently on the degree

of viability that remains in *pre-capitalist* livelihoods. So, *individual,* but *widespread* cases of labour time 'theft' to expend the 'stolen' time in dependencies that are "precisely not directed toward profit" (de Certeau, 1984: 25) for farm capital entail the incremental *thwarting* of capital's claims on the workers' *surplus labour*. Absenteeism therefore implies a *piecemeal* reduction in the rate and intensity of the workers' exploitation. Relatedly, Stevens and Lavin (2007: 45) assert that labour time 'theft' also "*subvert[s]* the labour process by… reducing productivity". In a cumulative way, individual but pervasive acts of absenteeism may reduce employee productivity, and at the aggregate level, workforce productivity. So, in the vignettes, absenteeism confers '*de facto* material gains' (Scott, 1989) whereby the workers partly *reappropriate* their labour time for household subsistence at the expense of farm capital's claims on surplus value. More so, as *expressive resistance* (Guha, 1987), disguised absenteeism may also constitute the workers' expression of *disgust* toward the acutely debilitating work conditions. In all, the foregoing acts of *veiled* absenteeism can *cumulatively* and tacitly *resist* the *total* habituation of Barura workers to plantation wage labour, as well as the extraction of surplus labour and surplus value from them as independent producers. In general, routine resistance via absenteeism is largely enhanced by the typically 'still-developing' post-colonial agrarian capitalism, which in Africa still inevitably co-exists with enduring pre-capitalist modes of production, as well as by the heightened labour insecurities at Barura estate in particular.

We now turn to goldbricking, another prevalent practice concerned with time 'theft' and/or task budgeting, which constitutes quotidian resistance to labour subjugation and exploitation on Barura forestry plantation estate.

6.5.1.2 Time 'Theft' and/or Task Bargaining: Goldbricking to and at Worksites

The researcher witnessed and confirmed individual but permeative *goldbricking* at worksites. Goldbricking/shirking refers to cases wherein Barura farm workers *appeared* industrious while in *reality* they were inefficient and less productive. Goldbricking was evident at the timber harvesting and production (sawmilling, stacking, etc.) sites, but it was more recurrent and pronounced at the silvicultural (i.e., nursery, transplanting, weeding, spraying, etc.) sites. We thus spotlight one of the most striking exemplar cases of shirking at the latter sites through snippets of the emic experiences of three close workmates, A, B, and C, whom the author chatted with during a fishing expedition. After clarifying that the expansive, foliage-covered,

and undulating terrain of the all Barura plantation worksites minimised the chances of easy detection by foreman, A further qualified:

> *"500 seedlings, tentative daily target. We now mostly hike, carrying heavy knapsacks of seedlings to the distant planting sites… so, we take secret detours to empty out several seedlings…then, at planting sites skip some planting stations, prepare, and plant some stations carelessly … cover up all this with hard-work-like postures… also use moments of distracted or no surveillance… Take long or feigned peeing breaks, do tasks the longer way but carelessly … to save energy for own work elsewhere…"* (Informal Chat, Worker A, November 2016)

Workmate B further articulated the pervasiveness and nuances of similar goldbricking with other timber growing/nurturing-related work tasks. Part of his narrative went thus:

> *"…dead estate machinery…fertilising, spraying, now mostly manual… apply excessive fertiliser or pesticide at some stations, omit some…bend down along each row with feigned briskness… Pour away some of the pesticide, fertiliser under cover… then carry empty or half-empty cans, sprayers, appearing to be spraying, fertilising with gusto…to trick the foreman's gaze! Kill time…walk slowly to refilling sites, feign minor accidents to get some onsite rest …"* (Informal Chat, Worker B, November 2016)

Furthermore, C's snapshot was more revealing of the periodisation, rationale, and scope of shirking to the effect that:

> *"… Intensified since 2015 'cause of the never-seen-before delayed wages, wages in timber, forfeited benefits…so, meeting daily targets diligently, or not meeting them at, all changes nothing … So, like my friends A and B say, subtly do sketchy work, take subtle long breaks … Similar tactics common at harvesting, production, security sites of this estate…"* (Informal Chat, Worker C, November 2016)

The three excerpts spotlight mutually reinforcing goldbricking practices namely sloppiness, 'quota restriction' (Burawoy and von Holdt, 2012), and Scottian (1985) 'foot-dragging'. To deploy Cohen's (1980) classical notion, these acts constitute *task/time bargaining* wherein workers tactically tweak official job and/or time specifications to cope with arduous work. As with absenteeism, the *tactical wisdom* of the goldbricking cases above lies in their *elusive* deployment predicated largely on *political masking* (Scott, 1989; Marx, 2009). The *political* (i.e., subversive and dissenting) undertone of the goldbricking, which permeates the transplanting, spraying, and fertilising tasks is 'masked' by *feigned* or *counterfeit* gestures of diligence. For instance, B reveals how workers secretly spill away portions of pesticides or fertiliser, proceed to carry lighter (half)empty containers, and then *veil* these *infra-political* (Scott, 1990) acts with the *simulated* painstaking spraying/fertilising of the pine/gum rows. Once insulated by the colossal deception of *simulated* briskness, timeliness, and target-meeting, the goldbricking practices above assume some *double meanings* (Scott, 1989)

insomuch that they *avoid* easy notice and detection. Thus, goldbricking then acquires some enhanced impetus and feasibility as a *disguised* act of insubordination or resistance to exploitation. We examine this below.

Sloppiness, and *quota restriction* (i.e., keeping the *quantity* of work done at the bare minimum) manifest when workers like A, B, and C leave out a number of pine/gum stations unplanted, unsprayed, or unfertilised. Relatedly, the workers also lower the pace and break the rhythm of work through foot-dragging. The latter entails the *disguised* 'stealing' or 'killing' of time through quintessential cases of taking longer routes to accomplish a task; slow walks between task sites; and 'invented' peeing or injury breaks. To adopt de Certeau's (1984: 25-26) case of "*La perruque* ['the wig']", these goldbricking cases epitomise the workers' reintroduction of "techniques of other time and places into the industrial space". The cases are *tactical* 'inventions' crafted from the workers' *opportunistic* (i.e., 'borrowed' time) manipulation of the *official* time/job specifications of a prescribed capitalist forestry labour process. The upshot is, via goldbricking, the workers complete the tasks using the barest minimum effort, dexterity, and time. From worker C's narrative, the logic is, whether the workers execute the tasks diligently or not, they still *seemingly* reach their targets, and there are no guarantees of timeous and/or monetary payment.

Therefore, as widespread and persistent as goldbricking cases are at multifarious worksites, there obtains a *cumulative* low-profile reduction in the workers' diligence, efficiency, and productivity. Since Barura farm owners' extraction of surplus labour time and surplus value subsists on the logic that "no more [labour] time is consumed than is necessary" (Thompson, 1989: 41), foot-dragging ('killing', 'stealing' time) entails the workers' (in)advertent mundane resistance to exploitation and valorisation. Similarly, permeative acts of quota restriction and sloppiness incrementally challenge farm capitals' claims on high employee and workforce productivity (see Stevens and Lavin, 2007). In a mutually reinforcing manner, these goldbricking acts enable workers like A, B, C, to work at a comfortable pace, and therefore exercise some measure of *control* over their work, its rate and intensity. This contradicts farm capital's interest to exercise absolute "control over the conditions under…which the worker operates" (Thompson, 1989: 41). Overall, Burawoy and von Holdt (2012: 183; own emphasis), argue that "*hard work* … is the foundation of *exploitation*". Be that as it may, the foregoing goldbricking practices constitute a tacit de Certeauian (1984) *anti-discipline* to hard work or to

the workers' "investment in labour" (Bourdieu, 2000: 202). Subsequently, the expansive and hidden nature of the exemplar goldbricking cases above sets them as potential resistance to the subordination and exploitation of Barura farm workers. However, the feasibility of goldbricking as everyday resistance was further enhanced by the following social dynamics.

Like with absenteeism, goldbricking attains feasibility as resistance insofar as lower management is more or less *complicit* in its articulation. Earlier, under absenteeism, we explained this feasibility partly in terms of the Scottian (1985, 1989) *complicitous silence* (between foremen and fellow workers) and foremen's *indulgence practices* (e.g., Gouldner, 1954; Lupton, 1963; Burawoy, 1979; Burawoy and von Holdt, 2012). Hereunder is an archetypical case of such complicitous silence and indulgency with goldbricking:

> *"… Most of us* (foremen) *now quietly compromise… give a regular blind eye to suspicious or clear slacking, sloppiness…No more strict supervision of workers, who like us, are starving, erratically paid, poorly clothed … So long there is a semblance of work done, we let them off the hook, and tweak our worksheets in their favour."* (Key Informant Interview, Foreman F, September 2016)

The nuances of how the *complicity* and *indulgence* portrayed by Foremen F play out need not detain us here as they operate in the same manner as explained earlier under absenteeism. Suffice to reiterate that, overall, sympathetic, empathic, and equally-suffering foremen *forfeit* or loosen their mandate to exercise diligent *command and control* (Thompson, 1989) over goldbricking. However, managerial-wise, there was a noteworthy dynamic that 'masked' goldbricking further insomuch as to enhance its potential as *disguised* resistance to exploitation on the farms. To this effect, Line Manager Z's testament could not have been more archetypical:

> *"… Tough times or not, workers are 'naturally' lazy… us managers, even estate owners, consider any form of sloppiness, sluggishness, time-wasting as laziness that resides in their* (workers') *DNA ... they may simply capitalise on the worsening work conditions…* (Key Informant Interview, Line Manager Z, January 2017)

The representative excerpt certifies that line managers and farm owners conventionally *read* any practices of goldbricking as *inherent* laziness. To take a cue from Vinthagen and Johansson (2013: 10), it is therefore commonplace for line managers to casually dismiss goldbricking as a workers' "lifestyle" of laziness. No wonder why Manager Z goes as far as reading goldbricking as *"…laziness that resides in their* (the workers') *DNA"*. Thus, once (mis)interpreted as 'natural' laziness, goldbricking is (in)advertently made to further deviate from hegemonic understandings of resistance. This is despite the fact that it is a *visible*

"counter-hegemonic embodiment" (Kwan and Roth, 2011: 194), whose *political* nature line managers like Z complicitly make invisible by dismissing it as everyday laziness. In all, goldbricking attains increased potential as a resistance stratagem to the extent it is imbued in the Scottian (1989: 53) "politics of dissimulation". In the excerpts, this politics obtains from the 'masked' execution of goldbricking, the complicitous silence and indulgency patterns of foremen toward it, and its complicitous (mis)reading as innate laziness by line managers and capital. Coupled with being widespread, individual acts of goldbricking attain greater potential to cumulatively *undermine* a commercial forestry labour process that inherently disciplines and exploits and disciplines Barura workers.

Finally, from all the foregoing analyses in this chapter, we draw the following concluding remarks.

6.6 Conclusion

This chapter discovered and analysed Barura plantation workers' *practices* of everyday labour resistance, which are mainly rooted in the *class relations* of a *commercial* forestry labour process. Class (i.e., post-colonial capitalist relations of agrarian labour subjugation and exploitation) constituted the main social cleavage informing these practices even in instances where they assumed a more or less symbolic or ideological nature. We positioned resistance by Barura labour as prosaic practices, which are in a dynamic, dialectical, and somewhat ambivalent oppositional relation with agrarian labour domination, super-exploitation, and their underlying ideologies (e.g., *manipulative* hegemony), whose peculiarity derives from an acutely insecure forestry labour process. We discovered witchcraft, arson, 'poaching', absenteeism, and goldbricking as the key acts of dissent. A critical analysis of these mundane acts helped us sustain our central argument that Barura plantation workers may have to accept the *fact* of agrarian *capitalist* wage employment without accepting its *terms* and *conditions* at the various estate worksites.

Our key contribution is the discovery and foregrounding of the ordinary daily socio-cultural practices of Barura workers such as witchcraft, 'poaching', etc. as an integral part of capitalist workplace *politics* namely labour resistance. Another related main contribution concerns our theoretical-cum-empirical innovation to transcend Scott (1985, 1989, 1990) and related scholarship by giving prominence to a *practice-oriented* approach to quotidian labour resistance at Barura estate. Such an approach enabled the enhanced empirical feasibility,

dexterity, and scope, which we needed to effectively tease out any oppositional dynamics that were potentially embedded in the workers' mundane acts. We achieved this through our deliberate shift of focus more to the nuanced *practical analysis/break-down* of the practices themselves than the intentions or motives (i.e., actor-oriented approach) behind them.

Our foregoing analyses of the nature, texture, and dynamics of witchcraft, arson, 'poaching', absenteeism, and shirking, leads to the deduction that these acts become *feasible* as enduring piecemeal labour resistance to the extent they pervasively remain *hidden* from capital, management, observers, and sometimes, the workers themselves. In general, such hiddenness or disguise obtains from the reality that the practices themselves are *embedded* in the routine day-to-day lifeworlds of the Barura workers, their employers, and their village counterparts. In particular, these self-same practices of dissent also get disguised through their innate physical properties; their socio-spatial contexts; and the identifiability of the actors.

Based on different combinations of the above criteria of disguise, at Barura estate obtains acts wherein both the personal identities of and the performance by the 'resisters' largely remain anonymous. This is typical of 'poaching' and arson. Also, witchcraft, which is all the more disguised given its innate magical invisibility and unverifiability. These acts may also send *ambiguous* messages where for instance, witchcraft and arson could alternatively be (mis)read as targeted revenge and accidental or natural veldfires respectively. Then, we have *disguised* acts, which are executed by clearly identifiable 'resisters'. The practices are disguised insofar as they exude *ambiguous* meanings. This is epitomised by absenteeism and goldbricking. For instance, absenteeism could entail illness, pressing social problems, or laziness. However, a common source of camouflage to these acts of labour dissent at Barura is the *complicitous silence* obtaining between the workers and any other social actors sharing a normative consensus around the practices.

Regarding socio-spatial context, 'masking' of these practices is also enhanced through what we call the *moral* and *existential* tactical opportunities, which the acutely insecure and suboptimal Barura commercial labour process inevitably avails. For instance, absenteeism becomes morally masked through its *de facto* legitimation and tolerance mainly derived from the existential reality of inevitable worker susceptibility to workplace accidents and diseases stemming from the lack of protective clothing and malnutrition associated with a highly insecure labour process.

Another deduction we make from this chapter is that the practices of labour dissent by Barura workers need *not* be and are not *'pure'* resistance since they are an integral part of everyday life. Witchcraft, arson, 'poaching', absenteeism, and goldbricking can simultaneously be resistance, accommodation, coping, or survival strategies. Whether these quotidian practices more or less become resistance to labour domination and super-exploitation at Barura estate is *context specific*. It largely depends on their potential to (in)advertently *undermine* labour domination and exploitation, either by directly *denying* capital, management, state's labour claims on the plantation workers or indirectly by allowing the latter to advance their own claims at the expense of the former's interests.

Finally, the very fact and logic that all the quotidian acts of resistance, which we discovered *avoid* some open *dramatic* confrontation with labour subordination and super-exploitation at Barura implies a certain *accommodation* with a post-colonial *capitalist* labour process. Here, everyday labour resistance leaves the dominant forms and logic of power intact. This is an equation to the upshot that Barura workers who resist through *disguised piecemeal* acts also somewhat tacitly *recognise* or *legitimate* the class relations and norms of Barura's commercial labour process. So, the foregoing labour resistance practices paradoxically reproduce and reinforce labour subjugation and exploitation at Barura and vice versa. This epitomises the conflicted entanglement of power and resistance. Barura plantation workers have to accept the fact of post-colonial capitalist plantation wage labour while simultaneously challenging its terms and conditions at the worksite. That is, Barura wage workers, through the foregoing practices, do not contest the material bases of labour subordination and exploitation. Instead, in a piecemeal way, they subtly contest labour claims imposed on them by, and/or advance own claims at odds with plantation capital, its managerial agents, and the *state* (see Chapter 8).

Overall, the current chapter attended to the practices and forms of everyday resistance to forms of power (i.e., labour subordination and exploitation), which are *immanent* to a suboptimal Barura commercial forestry labour process. Relatedly, the next chapter concerns the discovery and illumination of complementary statist forms of power, which seem 'external' to the Barura *commercial* labour process. We identify these modalities of power as the state's exclusionary production of commercial farm workers (and other citizens) of non-Zimbabwean ethnic ancestry as 'aliens' via legislated ethno-national citizenship criterion and the state-sanctioned deployment of surveillance techniques on commercial farm spaces to instil partisan political

submission. Striking fieldwork evidence shows that these *relatively autonomous* (i.e., from the Barura capitalist labour process) forms of power actually get trans-localised into the Barura plantation labour process where they reciprocally reproduce, get reproduced, and complicate the immanent power forms (i.e., labour domination and exploitation). So, Chapter 7 demonstrates how the two seemingly 'external' and largely *status-oriented* modalities of power encapsulate the Zimbabwean state's central and complementary (to the capital-management dyad) role in complicating the domination and exploitation of the Barura plantation labour-force.

CHAPTER 7

THE BARURA ESTATE UNHOLY TRINITY: 'INVITATIONAL CITIZENSHIP', VIOLENT-CUM-DISCIPLINARY POLITICAL SUBJUGATION AND WAGE LABOUR EXPLOITATION

7.1 Introduction

In Chapter 5 we discovered wage labour subordination and exploitation (and their underlying ideologies) as forms of power that are immanent to Barura plantation estate's post-colonial capitalist labour process. Backed by striking findings, our departing premise in the current chapter is that power relations do *not necessarily* and *solely* have to be *inherent* in the Barura commercial labour process in order to subjugate, exploit and/or to be resisted by the workers. Thus, we extend scholarship on worksite labour politics by arguing that *semi-autonomous* (from the Barura commercial labour process) status-oriented modalities of power get trans-localised *into* the Barura labour process where, in their own right, they reproduce, get reproduced, and complicate the domination and exploitation of the Barura labour-force. We discovered these seemingly 'external' (to the plantation labour process) statist forms of power to be what the workers colloquially call 'invitational citizenship' and the state's deployment of violent-cum-disciplinary techniques on Barura commercial forestry estate to instil polarised party politics in favour of the governing ZANU (PF) party.

Formally, 'invitational citizenship' concerns domination through the statist exclusionary legal production of commercial farm workers (and other citizens) of foreign ancestry as 'aliens' via the legislated monolithic criterion of common ethnic origin (i.e., ethno-national citizenship laws). These two modalities of power embody the Zimbabwean state's complementary role in the reproduction and sustenance of exploitative labour relations at various worksites of Barura plantation estate.

We analyse Barura farm workers' lived experiences of and with codified ethno-national citizenship and partisan political subjugation through state-sanctioned violent-cum-disciplinary surveillance. First, we illuminate the workers' historical and ongoing encounters with the former, which they metaphorically term 'invitational citizenship'. Thus, we trace

Barura estate workers' portraits of the statist colonial legacy of legislatively (re)producing them as workers (and citizens) with an 'alien' legal status, leading to their alienation and exclusion from the Zimbabwean land both as a citizenship and livelihood resource. We read the latter through the Bourdieusian lens of *symbolic violence* (see Chapter 3). Then, in a complementary manner, we proceed to engage a form of partisan political subjugation, both in the guise of the waning spectacular violence and alleged spying on the Barura farm workers' political allegiances and activities by the governing ZANU(PF) paramilitary agents allegedly planted on the plantation and in its surrounding village communities. We perceive this gradual penetration of the 2000-2008 spectacular political violence by disciplinary spying (surveillance) through the Foucauldian notion of *panoptic discipline* (see Chapter 3).

Overall, the chapter illuminates the mutuality of 'invitational citizenship', partisan political domination by both spectacular political violence and its more disciplinary form of panoptic surveillance, and capitalist plantation wage labour (as masked exploitation) in the symbolic-cum-material subjugation of Barura workers. In this way, we also set the scene for the analyses of forms and practices of everyday resistance and/or survival thereto (i.e., in Chapter 8). We conclude that the latter are as intersectional, heterogenous, and situated as the complex matrices of power, which they contest at the political, ideological, and material levels. Below, through the emic lenses of the Barura workers, we illuminate the dynamics of their official constitution as 'alien' citizens-cum-workers by both the colonial and post-colonial Zimbabwean state.

7.2 'Invitational Citizenship': Production of an 'Alien' Plantation Workforce

We spotlight a unique group of commercial farm workers who constituted about a third of the workforce on Barura forestry estate. This group is comprised of what scholarship typically calls 'alien' or 'foreign' farm workers despite the fact that most of them are Zimbabwean-born and have lived in Zimbabwe for a lifetime (Muzondidya, 2007; Sachikonye, 2003, 2012; Mpondi, 2012; Rutherford, 2016). The first generation of these so-called 'alien' farm workers were mainly male labour migrants of southern African origin, who during the colonial labour migration system (1890s to 1970s), came to then Southern Rhodesia (colonial Zimbabwe) mainly through what van Onselen (1973, 1980) calls *'Chibaro'*. 'Chibaro' was a coercive labour recruitment regime regionally confined to southern Africa aimed at addressing labour shortages in Southern Rhodesia where the peasantry resisted waged labour during the early

inception of commercial agriculture. Interestingly, the 'alien' or 'foreign' label still applies to the male descendants (and their families) of the colonial first-generation labour migrants.

Multifarious hangouts mostly with second and third generation migrant workers yielded themes that included the workers' 'foreign' heritage, contested national belonging and entitlements thereto, political participation, and the mutuality of these aspects with insecure wage-labour livelihoods. Hereunder, we draw on quintessential ethnographic vignettes to analyse the constitution by state specialists (registry officials, home/native affairs officials, legislators) of a dominant mode of belonging, namely legislated ethno-national citizenship, which most plantation workers metaphorically called 'invitational citizenship'. In the process, we unravel its workplace-specific dynamics in constituting and subjugating this fraction of the workforce as 'aliens' or 'foreigners'. Below is a snapshot of a quintessential narrative, which constituted one of the many interactions that the author had with Chihobobo, a farm worker of 'foreign' descent.

Chihobobo hitches his tattered overalls and assures us that in about an hour we will be done harvesting his maize crop on a one-acre plot of plantation reserve land allocated to him through loyalty ties to farm management. It is the third and last day that the author is helping Chihobobo, his wife Mai Ziruwi, and their son Mafiosi with the harvesting.

Chihobobo trains his gaze on the author and in reference to their earlier visit to the farm cemetery says, "I guess you noticed that this year (2017) marks two decades since my father's death … born in Malawi, then in 1950 migrated to colonial Zimbabwe for work. From 1960, worked, lived, and died on this forestry estate… my father's biography, the same for the fathers of my fellow workers of Mozambican, Zambian, Malawian origin…" He then links his father's biography to his own. "I, born in 1960, on this plantation… have lived here since then. I have been working here since my twenties." Abruptly, Chihobobo shifts to a metaphorical portrait of his citizenship status, "… I, Malawian paternal ancestry, yet Zimbabwean-born … but according to *mitemo yehurumende* (state citizenship laws) we are still *vabvakure* (aliens). Just like our forefathers, all of us farm workers of non-Zimbabwean paternal ancestry agree that we have *hugari hwekukokwa* (invitational citizenship) … invitees, conditional invitation to the party ... Our new hosts, in the post-1980 (i.e., in politically independent Zimbabwe) era, just like their colonial predecessors, still enact laws which state that us, successive generations of workers of non-Zimbabwean paternal descent, owe our presence in Zimbabwe to an invitation

of our forefathers from the 1890s, to say 1970s, mainly to work on Southern Rhodesian farms and mines …" The author then politely asks Chihobobo to unpack some of his metaphors.

Chihobobo then hands the author two metallic national identity cards (IDs) and insists, "Check properly … you see, my own, my late father's, both annotated with an uppercase 'A' for 'alien'… to present, we remain invitees. Our 'alien' identity is in fact historical and official, through *mitemo yeRhodesia* (colonial Zimbabwe citizenship laws). These *mitemo* (citizenship laws), classified as *vabvakure* (aliens) all African labour migrants, who were mostly men, who had paternal ancestry in colonial Malawi, Zambia, Mozambique." He pauses thoughtfully, and says, "Interestingly, the criterion of paternal ancestral origin seems to remain constant despite changes in circumstances … I, and Mafiosi, my son, both Zimbabwean-born, I, during the colonial period, Mafiosi after … but our IDs are still annotated 'Alien'."

Mai Ziruwi, eager to further elaborate her husband's narrative, chronicled the following:

> *"My late parents, both of Zimbabwean ancestry, yet 'mitemo yezvitikinyani'* (state citizenship laws) *have always favoured paternal ancestral descent, so my ID card, is annotated 'Citizen', but our children, all born after the colonial period* (after 1979) *here, in Zimbabwe, are still designated 'aliens' because of their Malawian paternal ancestry… why not designate my children 'Citizens' by birthplace and maternal lineage…*" (Conversation Excerpt; Mai Ziruwi, April 2017)

The emblematic excerpt embodies the trajectory and dynamics of a racialised, ethnonational-centred, and gendered mode of belonging, which constitutes the legal identities of farm labour as 'alien' in Zimbabwe and elsewhere. Chihobobo and his workmates metaphorically call it *invitational citizenship.* Analytically, it is a routinised mode of belonging (see Rutherford, 2008, 2016) that we term ethno-national citizenship. A legislated symbolic order which predicates membership of the Zimbabwean *nation* and access to its resources mainly on a shared heritage of *common ethnic ancestry* and *indigeneity*. We analyse and illuminate this dynamic below.

7.2.1 The 'Host' and 'Invitees' at Barura Estate: Primordial Ethnonational Ancestry and 'Indigeneity'

Chihobobo and fellow workers' reference to a metaphoric *"host"* implicates the state's centrality in adjudicating the politics of belonging on commercial farms. The *"host"* (Zimbabwean state) *"invites"* Chihobobo and fellow workers of non-Zimbabwean ancestry (*invitees)* through a citizenship criterion broadly understood as the *myth* of the *nation-state* (see

Yuval-Davis, 2006; Nyamnjoh, 2007a Mamdani, 2009; Isin, 2012; Nyamnjoh and Brudvig, 2014). The *nation*, reduced to mean sharing a *common ethnic descent*, becomes the single dominant logic of what Crowley (1999) and Geschiere (2009) see as the state's discursive work of producing and sustaining ethno-national frontiers, for instance, between Chihobobo and Mafiosi as '*aliens', 'foreigners'*, *'immigrants'*, or *'strangers'* on one hand, and Mai Ziruwi as full '*citizens', 'locals', 'autochthons'* or *'nationals'* on the other. Thus, to follow Turner (1997), the citizenship status of farm workers of non-Zimbabwean paternal ancestry is mystically essentialised to legal membership of a monolithic political community, namely the nation-state.

Interestingly, the Zimbabwean state, as a *'host'* to Chihobobo, Mai Ziruwi, and fellow Barura plantation workers, invites them to the *'party'* of national belonging, using *ethno-nationality* as the dominant criterion despite the reality that "the nation-state is historically specific and constitutes only one of the several layers of people's citizenship" (Yuval-Davis, 2006: 207). No wonder why, as part of the maize-field conversation above, Mai Ziruwi inquisitively ponders:

> *"… but, our children, all born after the colonial period, here in Zimbabwe, are still designated 'aliens' through their Malawian paternal ancestry … why not designate my children 'Citizens' by birthplace or maternal lineage?"*

Mai Ziruwi's sentiments attest to the systematic ignorance, by the Zimbabwean colonial and post-colonial states, of other equally relevant criteria of belonging like birthplace, shared political heritage, gender, etc. The culminating irony is that, while the state conflates legal citizenship status with the *nation-state*, complete congruency between the boundaries of the *national community* and the boundaries of the *actual population* living in a particular state is utopian (see Yuval-Davis, 2006; Nyamnjoh and Brudvig, 2014). Thus, at the centre of Chihobobo, Mai Ziruwi, and Mafiosi's *invitation* to membership of the Zimbabwean political community is the social fiction of a *common ethno-national descent*.

By restricting belonging criteria to common ethnic ancestry or indigeneity, the state aims to produce homogeneity out of heterogeneous criteria that could possibly qualify workers of non-Zimbabwean ancestry for full citizenship status (see Bourdieu, 1984; Geschiere, 2009). Chihobobo's testament to the effect that, *"… the criterion of ancestral origin seems to remain constant despite changes in circumstances …"* is paradigmatic of the state's arbitrary

privileging of a *nation-centric* belonging predicated on Yuval-Davis' (2006) *myth* of common ethnic descent. This myth explains why Chihobobo's Malawian father, despite having lived and worked on commercial farms in Zimbabwe from 1950 until death, both the colonial and post-colonial state still designated him 'alien'. Similarly, Chihobobo and his son Mafiosi are both Zimbabwean-born, and have lived in Zimbabwe their lifetime, yet their legal status on their IDs remains 'alien'. By contrast, Mai Ziruwi, wife, and mother to Chihobobo and Mafiosi respectively, due to her Zimbabwean paternal ancestry, is designated a full 'citizen'. Hence, to adapt Yuval-Davis (2006), common ethnic ancestry remains an arbitrary and mystic organising logic of 'invitational citizenship' or ethno-national citizenship.

Suffice to say that the commercial farm-specific 'alien' identities of farm workers of non-Zimbabwean ancestry are a localised expression of the state's national macro-politics of belonging wherein, to import Muzondidya (2007) and Raftopoulos (2014), the nation-state has been constituted as the political expression of a single dominant and homogenous *ethnic group* – 'native' or 'indigenous' African. Indigeneity or nativism, are thus, imaginary centrepieces of 'invitational citizenship' (ethno-national belonging) that present an illusion of 'authentic', irrefutable, primordial belonging (see Muzondidya, 2007; Geschiere, 2009; Nyamnjoh and Brudvig, 2014). However, the 'authentic' is not relational and context-specific, but an essence. It is within such an illusory schema that Chihobobo, Mafiosi, and fellow workers' 'alien' or 'foreign' identities are (re)produced.

Also noteworthy is the fact that Chihobobo and fellow workers insistently attribute their 'alien' identities to *'mitemo yehurumende', 'mitemo yeRhodesia'* or *'mitemo yezvitikinyani',* vernacular clauses which all refer to state citizenship laws. The state's judicio-legal influence is implicated in constituting and affirming 'invitational citizenship' as the routinised mode of belonging (see Hammar, 2002; Rutherford, 2008, 2017) that shapes livelihoods on plantations. This legal dimension of the findings therefore motivates us to trace and analyse how the *codification/legislation* of the arbitrary *common ethno-national ancestry* criterion into law was/is significant in the production of an 'alien' plantation workforce.

7.2.2 Codification of 'Ethno-national Ancestry' and Officialisation of Farm Worker 'Alien' Identities

Chihobobo, Mai Ziruwi and their workmates implicate colonial and post-colonial *state laws* in officially constituting their legal statuses as either 'citizen' or 'alien'. As noted earlier, these statuses were concretised in everyday life through their inscription on national identity cards (IDs). Be that as it may, the state's judicio-legal influence, and the resultant legal architecture became a significant conduit and context for (re)producing and legitimating the 'invitational citizenship' of farm workers of non-Zimbabwean paternal ancestry. Backed by findings, we trace and analyse the trajectory, dynamics, and significance of this codified (legislated) (re)production.

7.2.2.1 The Colonial State and Codification of Farm Workers' National Citizenship

Chihobobo and fellow workers' reiterative reference to *'mitemo yeRhodesia'* (colonial Zimbabwe citizenship laws) in connection with their 'alien' identities implicates the Government Notice No. 223 (Notice 223 hereafter) of 1898**.** In some blurred reference to Notice 223, Dongonda, a Barura farm worker of 'foreign' ancestry who was nearing retirement said:

> *"My late father and his friends, often got into highly animated debates in which an '1890s law' was often debated, they rubbished it as racist and nonsensical… dividing black Africans into 'vabvakure'* (native aliens) *and 'zvizvarwa zvevhu'* (autochthons)*…"* (Casual Chat, Dongonda, August 2016)

Notice 223 was therefore a milestone piece of citizenship legislation that pioneered the official constitution of 'alien' citizenship identities in Southern Rhodesia and also conditioned their subsequent affirmation in post-colonial Zimbabwe. To follow Muzondidya (2007), Notice 223 classified the colonised subjects into *natives* (of Africa) and *non-natives*. It further categorised *natives* into *'aboriginal natives of Southern Rhodesia',* i.e., subject groups constituted of people like Mai Ziruwi whose parents were on Zimbabwean soil before the imposition of colonial rule (i.e., considered *indigenous* to the land), and into *'colonial natives'*, i.e., any other African *natives* like Chihobobo and Dongonda who were not patriarchal descendants of aboriginals of then Southern Rhodesia.

Typically, the category *'colonial natives'* signified 'subject minorities' of migrant African workers. More so, first generation migrant workers like Chihobobo and Dongonda's fathers, who together with their descendants, were of Malawian, Mozambican or Zambian ancestry

who were designated *'alien natives'* (see Muzondidya, 2007; Mpondi, 2012; Daimon, 2016). An everyday lived manifestation of this 'alienness' as constituted by Notice 223 was, and still is, the official annotation of an uppercase 'A' (for 'alien') on Chihobobo and his father's national IDs. Conversely, the IDs of *'aboriginal natives'* were, and still are, annotated with an uppercase 'C' (for *full* citizen). Thus, registry and native affairs specialists, via authority from the Southern Rhodesian state, crafted Notice 223, and through it, concretised 'invitational citizenship' via official citizenship credentials, and also differentiated between the legal meanings of these credentials. To adapt Weininger (2002), IDs annotated 'A' (alien), or 'C' (citizen) came to carry a more or less universally recognised symbolic value at the expense of a continuum of possible heterogenous citizenship criteria in Southern Rhodesia. The difference between the legal status of a farm worker bearing a national ID annotated 'A' and another with an ID annotated 'C' became a difference in kind as later sections will reveal.

Meanwhile, interlocuters' narratives further indicated that 'invitational citizenship' extended beyond the civil order to the labour (industrial) relations realm. We thus propose that while Notice 223 set the legal stage for a racialised and ethnicised national citizenship for *'alien natives'* (e.g., farm workers with a migrant labour history), it was also localised and institutionalised at the farm worksite as industrial citizenship in the guise of the Masters and Servants Act (MSA) of 1901.

7.2.2.2 The Intersection of Codified Ethno-nationhood with Codified Industrial Servanthood

To adapt Rutherford (1997a, 2004, 2008), until 1979, the MSA legislated and governed both labour and socio-politico relations on white-owned commercial farms in colonial Zimbabwe. Sorojena's reflections below are a partial articulation of the nature and dynamics of the MSA as a codified order of industrial workplace citizenship.

Seventy-nine-year-old Sorojena, is a farm work old-age pensioner, and a first-generation Zambian labour migrant to then Southern Rhodesia. He has worked for a combined forty-six years on both Barura and the nearby Utakataka forestry estate. Hunched by the hearth in his farm kitchen, and exuding a sharp memory and some eloquence uncharacteristic of a man of his age, he says:

> *"… forced invitation in the mid-50s, to work for white Rhodesian* (colonial Zimbabwean) *farmers or miners… Oooh, a cruel law that made us, black male migrant workers, white farmers' servants! Paid in kind, food handouts…no workers committees, no strikes, no workers' rights… This law and the other one* (Notice 223) *fixed us like permanent pegs to both the farmer and his farm…"* (Informal Interview, Sorojena, May 2016)

Sorojena's testament attests to the complementarity of Notice 223 and the MSA in codifying and officialising the precarious national-cum-industrial identities and sealing the livelihoods of African migrant workers at the work-place level. To follow Rutherford (2000), instead of governance through the Industrial Conciliation Act (which governed all other workers), farm workers fell under the draconian MSA. As a codified, conditional 'invitation' to industrial belonging, the MSA, criminalised industrial action amid exploitative labour relations (see Rutherford, 2000, 2001b). Also drawing from Sorojena's emblematic narrative, and from Rutherford (2000, 2004), this codified 'invitation' to belong and participate in commercial farm labour relations sanctioned white farmers to strictly monitor and control farm workers' participation in wider publics such as trade unions, political movements, or non-mainstream religions. As confirmed by Sorojena and most workers, the workplace simultaneously became everyday life-place. This became a typical conflation of everyday civil belonging with workaday membership of a wage livelihood to form quasi-feudal relations and identities. Yet, interestingly, as a legal symbolic order, the MSA did not legislate minimum living and working conditions resulting in farm wages being token and paid through rations (see Rutherford, 2000).

In fact, the MSA legally sanctioned and reinforced the tacit subjugation of an African migrant workforce under the patriarchal authority of the white Rhodesian farmer under Rutherford's (1997a, 2001a, 2008, 2016) *domestic government*. Domestic control, "in the sense of promoting the 'private' over the 'public' domain and of valuing paternalist family-like relations between male workers and their wives and children" Rutherford (2004: 133). Thus, the MSA institutionalised this 'exploitative mix' of quasi-feudal relations of affinity and mutualism with those of farm hierarchy and authority to manage and control the labour and life conditions of farm workers (see, e.g., Wisborg et al., 2013). Suffice to say that, Notice 223 and the MSA, legislated and officialised the farm-level production of Sorojena and fellow workers' 'alien' national identities and 'servanthood' labour identities. We thus can locate this legislated 'alien' identity production at the convenient intersection of the colonial state's institution of patriarchal, racialised, and ethnicised citizenship legislation (see Muzondidya, 2007), and the demand for a farm-domiciled, exploitable labour by nascent agrarian capitalists (see Arrighi, 1970: van Onselen, 1973, 1980). Consequently, colonial Zimbabwean commercial agriculture was reliant on a migrant workforce of Malawian, Mozambican, and Zambian origin (see Sachikonye, 2003, 2012; Muzondidya, 2007) whose legal citizenship status was 'alien' and

has, ironically, remained so in the *post-colonial context* of Zimbabwean-born farm workers. Let us pursue this irony further.

7.2.2.3 The Post-Colonial State and Codification of Farm Workers' National Citizenship

In light of findings, we note that the legal and official constitution of the monolithic ethno-national citizenship and 'alien' identities of farm workers, and other citizens of non-Zimbabwean paternal ancestry did not end with colonialism in 1979. To this end, Sorojena chronicled the following:

> *"The colonial law* (Notice 223) *that pioneered our foreignness was said to have been removed after Independence, yet up to today, farm workers, or anyone born of fathers of non-Zimbabwean ancestry still get IDs that are marked 'A'* (for Alien) *... 37 years after Independence! So, we could actually say that, that colonial law* (Notice 223) *continued to work underground... It then openly resurfaced in the guise of this 2001 law..."* (Informal Interview, Sorojena, March 2017)

Similarly, but more specifically in relation to *"... this 2001 law...",* mentioned by Sorojena above, Mbuya Shedia spotlighted the persistence into post-colonial Zimbabwe, of the Rhodesian colonial legacy of the legislative production of '*alien'* farm worker identities when she asserted:

> *"...in 2001, a citizenship law, asserted this 'Alien' nonsense inherited from Rhodesia...this law required citizens and farm workers of non-Zimbabwean ancestry to go to registry offices to renounce their 'foreign' citizenship. Nonsense, since most of these so-called aliens are now mostly Zimbabwean-born and have never taken any Malawian, Zambian citizenship..."* (Conversation excerpt, Mbuya Shedia, March 2017)

The two archetypical excerpts highlight continuities into the post-colonial era, of the legislative legacies of Notice 223 in affirming the 'foreignness' of farm workers. Despite the repealing of Notice 223, post-colonial legal and public discourses took after Notice 223 and continued to constitute Zimbabweans of non-indigenous ancestral origin as 'aliens'. In congruency with Sorojena's narrative, Amanor-Wilks (2000) asserts that although many farm workers (and other Zimbabweans) of Malawian, Mozambican, and Zambian ancestry were born and/or have lived in Zimbabwe for a lifetime and no longer have any legal or social links to the countries of their ancestral origin, they continue to be either issued national IDs annotated 'Alien' or denied identity credentials. The *de jure* legislative milestone referred to in the vignettes, which officially reproduced and entrenched farm workers' 'alienness' and an 'invitational' national belonging steeped in the monolithic criterion of indigeneity or ethno-nationality came in the form of the Citizenship of Zimbabwe Amendment Act (CZAA hereafter) No. 12 of 2001.

The CZAA was crafted by the ZANU (PF) government-nominated Registrar General's office amid tumultuous electoral politics (Muzondidya, 2007; Mandeya 2012; Rutherford, 2004, 2008, 2016). It was thus, a highly politicised citizenship law. In February 2000, a new opposition political party, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), successfully mobilised "many white commercial farmers and farm workers, against a referendum for a new constitution drafted by a government-appointed committee" (Rutherford, 2004: 124). Consequently, Barura farm workers like Sorojena and Mbuya Shedia (and their families) became a potential electoral liability to the governing ZANU (PF) party. Hence, given the imminent 2000 parliamentary and 2002 presidential elections, the ZANU (PF)-led state, "countered [the referendum defeat] with a vengeance" (Ibid). This vengeance was symbolically effected through the CZAA (also see Southall, 2013). The CZAA required that Zimbabweans of 'foreign' paternal descent, who sought to either retain or acquire Zimbabwean citizenship, provide documentary evidence to the Registrar General that they had legally renounced their *potential* claim to foreign citizenship which, in fact, they had never claimed (see Rutherford, 2004; Muzondidya, 2007; Sachikonye, 2012; Daimon, 2016).

As chronicled by Mbuya Shedia, the Act put farm workers of 'foreign' ancestry in a legal bind. These workers could not renounce a citizenship status which in reality, they had never claimed in their countries of ancestral origin (see Sachikonye 2012; Daimon, 2016). More importantly, in terms of legal citizenship status, Chihobobo, Sorojena, Mbuya Shedia, and fellow plantation workers instantly became 'stateless' since they had never had any citizenship claims in their countries of ancestral origin, nor registration documents to qualify them as 'native' Zimbabweans (see Magaramombe and Chambati, 2008; Sachikonye, 2012). Hence, the CZAA reproduced and affirmed the historically liminal legal status of farm workers (among other citizens) of no-Zimbabwean ancestry as 'aliens'. Through the Act, state-nominated specialists (i.e., Registry officials) arbitrarily adjudicated "that up to one third of the farm workers should be considered foreign, despite the fact that they had lived and worked in Zimbabwe for more than a generation" (ICG Africa Report no. 85, 2004). Thus, the Barura farm-based famous metaphor of 'invitational citizenship' is a micro-level or trans-localised manifestation the state's CZAA-legislated ethno-national citizenship, which predicates membership of the nation-state on primordial notions of a common ethnic descent or nativism.

Interestingly, as insinuated by Rwizi below, 'invitational citizenship', in the guise of its legal mediation through the CZAA, implied the effective non-participation of all 'aliens' and 'alien' farm workers in local and national elections. To this effect, among many of Barura farm worker statements, Rwizi's was more elaborate:

> "… *'Huyeni hwekukokwa uhwu'* (this belonging by invitation) *intensified more when 'vabvakure vese'* (all 'aliens'), *including us farm workers, suddenly became ineligible to vote in the Presidential elections in March 2002…we were reduced to spectators, passive invitees… we work for the nation but can't decide our preferred leaders for that same nation!"* (Informal Interview, Rwizi, June 2016)

Although Rwizi and most Barura farm workers did not directly implicate the CZAA, we note how this legislative order actually set in motion and legitimated their disenfranchisement in 2002. As mentioned before, after the ZANU (PF)-led state witnessed political surprises such as its constitution referendum defeat and its parliamentary election near-defeat in 2000, it began to regard most commercial farm workers as MDC supporters (Raftopoulos, 2004; Muzondidya, 2007; Southall, 2013). Subsequently, given the pending 2002 presidential elections, the ZANU (PF)-delegated Registrar General manipulatively enacted the CZAA in order to facilitate the disenfranchisement of all 'aliens'. So, in addition to legally affirming the nationhood of farm workers, and others of non-Zimbabwean paternal ancestry as 'alien', the CZAA also mediated their estrangement from active political citizenship. Accordingly, Magaramombe and Chambati (2008) note that a large constituency of farm workers among an estimated four million Zimbabwean-born citizens of 'foreign' ancestry was considered not 'indigenous' or 'ethnic' enough and therefore lacking the legal status to vote in the March 2002 Presidential elections.

However, most workers on Barura commercial estate, in layman terms, also mentioned the state's subsequent amendment of the CZAA's renunciation clause in the form of the 2003 Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA hereafter), and the further relaxation of citizenship laws in 2007. Regarding these seemingly 'foreigner-friendly' legal reforms, Kapfupi, an official in Barura farm's human resource department sceptically insisted:

> *"… the 2003 Act now exempted farm workers…of foreign ancestry from renouncing their potential foreign citizenship. I think the ZANU (PF) government now expected farm workers to vote for it in the 2005 elections … Also, in 2007, just before the 2008 elections, the Registrar General's office suspiciously relaxed citizenship regulations with the same motive."* (Key Informant Interview, Kapfupi, March 2017)

Actually, Sachikonye (2012) confirms Kapfupi's position by highlighting that the state repealed the CZAA's renunciation clause via the 2003 CAA. The latter Act now exempted farm workers and citizens of Southern African parentage from renunciation. Thus, through the CAA, the state, in principle, re-enfranchised all 'aliens' hoping that they would vote for ZANU (PF) in the 2005 parliamentary elections. Similarly, Musiwaro (2011: 24) explains the shifts "from strict citizenship laws" in 2004 and 2007 were meant to ensure that poor African migrants on commercial farms and elsewhere who had previously been disenfranchised by the 2001 CZAA could vote. Despite the farm workers' earlier notoriety as an anti-ZANU (PF) electorate, the party's dominant groups capitalised on farm workers' increasing destitution and used drought relief to secure their votes both in the 2005 and 2008 elections (see Musiwaro, 2011; Daimon, 2016).

The upshot of the foregoing is the state's manipulative institution of racialised, ethnicised, and politicised citizenship legislation in order to constitute the *legal status* of migrant farm workers *as and when* it suited the politico-economic interests of its dominant groups. Overall, since the 1890s right through Independence after 1979, and then post-2000, the state codified arbitrary citizenship categories (e.g., 'alien'/ 'native') into law and enforced them to exercise subtle political and economic control over farm workers with a migrant genealogy. This builds a compelling case for us to make sense of legislative statutes like Notice 223, the CZAA and CAA as modalities of a form of symbolic domination namely *symbolic violence*.

7.2.3 Codified Ethno-national Citizenship as a Modality of Legitimate Symbolic Violence at Barura Estate and Elsewhere

Earlier, we revealed how a host of Barura farm workers who include Chihobobo, Mai Ziruwi, and Mbuya Shedia attributed 'alienness' to colonial and post-colonial *citizenship laws.* Chief among these laws were Notice 223, the CZAA, and the CAA. In light of these, and more findings, we argue that the *codification* of an arbitrary citizenship criterion (ethno-nationality) into *law* transforms it into a more solid, legitimate, and enforceable relation of symbolic domination namely *symbolic violence.* Guided by fieldwork evidence, we largely draw from Bourdieusian insights on symbolic violence. Our departing premise is that legislated ethno-national citizenship subjugates Barura and other farm workers both as an official *separative* force, and as a socially *recognised* (i.e., legitimated by the workers themselves) symbolic order.

Below, we illuminate the social actors, dynamics, and effects associated with this form of subjugation on Barura commercial plantation.

7.2.3.1 Setting the Scene for Symbolic Violence: Specialists, Symbolic Capital, and Alienness

Through cordial relations, the author had the privilege to physically hold and examine the national IDs of some of the Barura farm workers. Noteworthy was the fact that the old metallic IDs were *officially* annotated with either a 'C' or an 'A' acronym, while the recent plastic ones were annotated in full, either with 'Citizen' or 'Alien'. Importantly, the Barura workers associated the production of these divisive labels with state professionals. Most workers deciphered, as Mai Joliti did, when she said:

> *"Look at my ID…these marks of 'Alien' or 'Citizen' inscribed on our IDs show that this is a special job, only done by qualified people in high government offices. Also, the laws for these ID marks cannot be made by mere layman, but the educated and deserving!* (Interview, Mai Joliti, November 2016)

Another animated dialogue with Dhoporo yielded similar sentiments, but added the experiential and competency dimension to the pre-requisite qualities of citizenship experts:

> *"… Not everyone can make such crucial government laws which decide whether you are 'mubvakure'* (an alien)*, or 'mwana wevhu'* (an autochthon) *…I think this is work for experts who have high certificates and a lot of experience, and therefore know what they are doing…"* (Interview, Dhoporo, October 2016)

These two quintessential excerpts direct attention to the *active* role of *institutional experts* in the discursive constitution of citizenship social identities and relations, which exert a subtle subjugation on social actors (see Weber, 1968; Foucault, 1979; Bourdieu, 1979). The equation or reduction of Mai Joliti and Dhoporo's ethno-national descent to the 'Alien' and 'Citizen' labels is *not* self-evident. Instead, to import Bourdieu (2001b), it results from the *active* and *creative* imagination of state-nominated specialists. Mai Joliti and Dhoporo refer to these specialists as *"…qualified people…"* or *"…experts…"*. Specifically, they comprise registry, legislative, and judicial officials who were/are nominated on a partisan basis by the political elite of a ZANU (PF)-led state.

These officials' *exclusive* designation of solid citizenship frontiers (i.e., 'citizen'/ 'alien'), which Mai Joliti, Dhoporo, and fellow workers allude to, can be analysed within Bourdieusian (1971b, 1979) *symbolic domination.* These specialists possess "the *monopoly* of the *legitimate* use of … *symbolic violence*" (Bourdieu, 1998b: 40, emphasis added). That is, they retain the

legitimate authority to craft and impose meanings, designations, and perceptions of citizenship, which are arbitrary but are not recognised as such (see Bourdieu, 1971b, Wacquant, 2013), for instance, by workers like Mai Joliti and Dhoporo. Therefore, registry and judicial *state-nominated* officials, by legislating ethno-nationality (i.e., as CZAA, CAA), retain the legitimate exercise of symbolic violence on farm workers (and other citizens) of non-Zimbabwean paternal ancestry. Interestingly, *state nomination*, itself an act of symbolic power, equips the specialists with a pre-requisite resource namely *symbolic capital* for the exercise of symbolic violence. This is elaborated below in the context of findings.

Mai Joliti and Dhoporo's characterisation of the specialists in terms of "*certificates*", *"qualifications"*, *"experience",* and *"high ... offices"*, predicates symbolic violence on accumulated symbolic capital. The latter takes the form of the professional, academic, and judicial *credentials*, which are/were *officially* conferred to registry and judicial specialists through nomination by ZANU (PF)-led statesman and/or agencies. So, following Bourdieu (1986: 21), these credentials become symbolic capital insofar as they are "officially sanctioned and guaranteed, and judicially instituted by the effect of official nomination". Hence, these credentials, as *official* definitions of *official* titles, acquire some universal and legitimate validity (see Bourdieu, 2001b; Wacquant, 2013) vis a vis any other unnominated credentials, which are constantly required to prove themselves.

Also, a further cue from the above excerpts is that the credentials become symbolic capital to the extent their acquisition is attributed to merit. In justifying the officials' suitability to institute citizenship laws and labels, Mai Joliti said, *"... a special job, only done by qualified people ... the educated and deserving!"*, while Dhoporo, similarly insisted, *"... work for experts who have high certificates and a lot of experience, and therefore know what they are doing..."*. Adapting Bourdieu's (1979, 1989) notion of symbolic capital as *misrecognised* capital, we assert that officially nominated credentials dissimulate their origins in politico-economic *self-interest* into *disinterested* relations of *merit*. The latter (i.e., merit), despite being the distorted expression of the underlying politico-judicial clout of dominant ZANU (PF) classes, ironically become the same schemes of perception that Mai Joliti, Dhoporo and other farm workers use to perceive and evaluate the credentials. So, the workers come to (mis)recognise the credentials as self-evident, and the bearers (i.e., registry officials, legislators) as the sole "repository of common sense" (Bourdieu, 1986: 22). Misperception of

the true genesis of the credentials by the farm workers tacitly legitimates the credentials and confer upon their bearers (officials) the legitimate authority to monopolise the institution of arbitrary citizenship laws and classifications. Hence, earlier accumulation of symbolic capital in the form of (mis)recognised, state-accredited credentials and politico-judicial clout sets the stage for the symbolic domination of 'foreign' farm workers through the imposition of a fieldwork-specific modality of power namely *codified* ethno-national citizenship.

7.2.3.2 Ethno-national Citizenship and its Codification into an Official Mode of Separative Power

Numerous empirical excerpts in most of the foregoing sections reveal that farm workers on Barura plantation variously attribute their legal statuses to citizenship laws. Mai Joliti and Dhoporo are no exceptions in their excerpts immediately above. Earlier, we also deduced these landmark laws to be Government Notice 223 (Notice 223) of 1898, the Citizenship of Zimbabwe Amendment Act (CZAA) No. 12 of 2001, and the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA)of 2003.

We thus make sense of the specialists' symbolic power to subjugate farm workers of a non-Zimbabwean paternal origin insofar as this power reaches its threshold when an arbitrary citizenship criterion (ethno-nationality or common ethnic descent) is *codified* into law (see Bourdieu, 1987; Weininger, 2002). Codification entails the official and enforceable imposition of a qualitative discontinuity (i.e., either 'Citizen' or 'Alien' marks on national IDs) in the continuum of other many possible citizenship classifications. Laws like Notice 223 and CZAA mediate the manipulation of arbitrary citizenship criteria (i.e., race, ethnic descent) and confer upon farm workers of non-Zimbabwean genealogy official frontiers such as 'native aliens' or 'aliens'. To follow Bourdieu (1989: 22), codification renders these labels an *absolute universal* value, which exempts them from "a relativity that is…inherent in every point of view". The 'alien' label attains a more compulsory validity than other potential criteria and becomes enforceable at law. Legislation of the farm workers' 'foreign' ancestry by ZANU (PF)-led state-nominated registry and judicial experts entails transformation in the mode of symbolic power into an officially enforceable, solid, divisive force. Indeed, says Bourdieu:

> [the] capacity for bringing into existence in an explicit state …of making public (i.e., objectified, visible, sayable, and even official) that which, not yet having attained objective and collective existence… represents a formidable social power, that of bringing into existence groups… (Bourdieu,1991: 236)

So, once ethno-nationality-based citizenship and the designations ('citizen'/ 'alien') thereto are legislated, they officially attain seemingly "indisputable natural properties" (Bourdieu, 2001b: 13). They become *essentialised* more or less effectively as a form of *symbolic violence*, which divides the farm workers and other citizens into arbitrary distinct collectivities, for instance of 'aliens' versus 'citizens'. Ultimately, this legal institution of ethno-national citizenship by state-nominated officials is a symbolic practice, which exudes a "separative power, …diacrisis, ..." (Bourdieu, 1984: 479). It *officially* separates, categorises, and identifies farm workers on Barura and elsewhere in more or less exclusionary ways either as 'citizens' (us) or 'aliens' (them). Interestingly, as well as separating farm workers and other citizens into collectivities, legislated ethno-national citizenship and its labels also subtly command *recognition* from the workers. Thus, symbolic violence through legislated ethno-nationality reaches a full circle as detailed below.

7.2.3.3 Codified Ethno-nationality as Legitimate and Constitutive Violence on Barura Farm

Interestingly, the 'alien' category so formed for Barura workers such as Chihobobo, Sorojena, Mai Joliti, Dhoporo, etc. stands juxtaposed to the dominant legitimate culture (i.e., *full* citizenship through *nativism/indigeneity/common ethnic origin*). Subsequently, as well as being symbolically violent by being a subtly separative/classificatory force (via official 'citizen'/ 'alien' binaries), codified ethno-nationality simultaneously mediates the *expression* and *recognition* (or rejection) of claims for social honour or acceptance as the citizenship norm. The empirical vignettes below are paradigmatic cases, which demonstrate the unwitting *recognition* of codified ethno-national citizenship as the *legitimate culture* of belonging and entitlement by 'foreign' farm workers. This *recognition* marks the penultimate mode in which the symbolic violence of ethno-national citizenship is manifested, sustained, and reproduced. This was all the truer when Gambiza, with conviction, confided:

> *"…Yeah, we abide by 'mitemo'* (state citizenship laws) *which make us* '*vabvakure'* (aliens). *Us, workers of Zambian, Malawian descent, have long accepted that we are 'vakokwi'* (invitees)*, 'vabvakure' in accordance with 'mitemo' We don't even need to think about it, it's normal because no one is above 'mitemo', which decide who is local and who is not ..."* (Informal Conversation, Gambiza, September 2016)

Likewise, Dhoporo both implicitly and expressly *accepts* legislated ethno-nationality (and its divisive designations), by cognitively assigning the laws a *sui generic* existence. Specifically, Dhoporo, like Gambiza, considers citizenship laws such as Notice 223 and CZAA to be actually over and above everyone, including the specialists who craft them when he says:

> *"The law is the law, ever heard of the saying that 'no one is above the law'?... Yes, laws about whether you are 'mubvakure'* (alien)*, 'mwana wevhu'* (citizen/autochthon)*, 'mukokwi' (invitee), or any other laws are even used on those who make them!"* (Interview, Dhoporo, October 2016)

Gambiza, Dhoporo, and fellow farm workers' worldviews insofar as explaining their identification with arbitrary citizenship laws are illusory. Much as the workers regard the law specialists a "repository of common sense" (Bourdieu, 1989:22), they consider the law itself as common sense par excellence. However, to adapt Gramsci (1971) and Burawoy and Holdt (2012), the 'common sense' lacks a kernel of 'good sense'. The acceptance is *not* founded on some genuine understanding, but the illusion that the law itself is a 'point of view' par excellence. Loyalty to the citizenship laws is predicated on the tacit inculcation of *belief* in the laws as an *official point of view*. We explore this dynamic in detail hereunder. Curiously, the deep rootedness of this *official* belief also extends in the form of its *everyday* manifestation (as public discourse), through emblematic statements like:

> *'Hahaha, we no longer even think about it, it's like blinking, it's normal, when everyday here on farms, villages, anywhere, when we identify each other, or are identified, as 'bwidi'* (foreigner)*, 'mubhurandaya'* (Malawian foreigner*) 'musena'* (Mozambican foreigner) ..." (Interview, Sokostina, November 2016)

From the vignettes, we explain the farm workers' acceptance of ethnicity-based citizenship in its official and everyday (public) forms, through the Bourdieusian (1984, 2000) lens of *misrecognition.* Gambiza and his colleagues' *recognition* (acceptance) of the 'alien' label is based on a *misrecognition* of the *objective conditions* (political, economic, and judicial capital) from which such labels obtain and are a part of. Subsequently, we claim that Barura workers' complicit submission to the arbitrary institution of legislated ethno-nationality (i.e., Notice 223, CZAA, and CAA) and the designations ('alien' / 'citizen') it entails as the legitimate culture of citizenship entails a "legitimising theatricalisation … of power" (Bourdieu, 1990a: 139) through the symbolic labour of registry and judicial specialists as agents of dominant ZANU(PF) groups. We explain this 'theatricalisation' below.

Earlier, we identified the credentials of registry and judicial specialists as one objective condition upon which codified ethno-national citizenship and its labels subsist. To this, we add the distribution of politico-economic, and juridical clout, which is skewed in favour of the dominant ZANU (PF) groups and their specialists. Following Bourdieu (1989: 21) we identify all these as the "objective relations of power", or the politico-economic *self-interest* of the dominant groups. However, we adopt Bourdieu's (1989: 21) thesis that, "objective relations of

power tend to reproduce themselves in relations of symbolic power". So, the seemingly *disinterested* (i.e., neutral and objective) citizenship legislation (e.g., CZAA, CAA) and the attendant ''citizen/ 'alien' labels, are thus, a *transfigured* or *dissimulated* symbolic expression of the underlying uneven objective power relations that reinforce them (also see Weininger, 2002; Desan, 2013). We concur with Bourdieu (1991: 238) that the citizenship laws and labels are actually "symbolic transformations of *de facto* power relations". The symbolic arena of ethno-national citizenship laws and designations thereto, mask the class stratification upon which it is founded. So, for instance, in 2001 the state's affirmation of the 'citizen'/ 'alien' labels (through the CZAA), served as a *symbolic veil* to ZANU (PF)'s political *self-interest* of disenfranchising a constituency of 'foreign' farm workers, whom it suspected to be MDC supporters. Interestingly, most farm workers were oblivious to this curious connection.

Likewise, Gambiza and his colleagues, regard their own identification and/or of others with labels like *'mubhurandaya', 'mubvakure', 'bwidi',* etc. as *"normal"*. This is an unwitting *recognition* via the *misrecognition* that these labels are in fact, a symbolic veil to their conditioning in an underlying *uneven distribution* of politico-economic, judicial, and cultural capitals. Due to this misrecognition, symbolic violence sets in when *subtle normalisation* obtains through a *spontaneous, unwitting 'consent'* (to the labels), which the farm workers inevitably concede to the ZANU(PF) politico-economic elite and its registry and judicial specialists (e.g., see Bourdieu, 1989, 2000). This is so because the workers' schemes of perception and evaluation (*habitus*) of their 'alienness' are drawn from the self-same taxonomies ('citizen'/ 'alien') as these dominant groups (e.g., see Bourdieu, 2000; Weininger, 2002; Desan, 2013). So, the Barura farm workers' habitus, being merely the *internalised* form of the underlying power relations and labels thereto, make codified ethno-national citizenship appear as *self-evident,* and thus legitimate. Ironically, the farm workers' resultant recognition/acceptance of citizenship based solely on common ethnic origin is a subconscious outcome of the "incorporation of the (thus neutralized) classifications of which their social being is the product" (see Bourdieu, 2000: 170).

It therefore follows that a complicity, which is increasingly recalcitrant to change, develops between the Barura farm workers' habitus and the underlying uneven distribution of the above-mentioned capitals. Insofar as this is the case, the workers become *complicit* in their unwitting submission to codified ethno-national citizenship as the legitimate culture of belonging (see

Swartz, 1996: Bourdieu, 2000). Thus, through a Bourdieusian (1986, 2000) lens, this is a *spontaneous* subjugation, based *not necessarily* on the imposition of the labels, but on the functional homology, which the specialists create between the explicit symbolic space (of citizenship laws and labels) and its masked objective space (of skewed power relations and resources). Hence, codified ethno-national citizenship is a symbolic violence par excellence, which is invested with the "power of constitution" (Bourdieu, 1989: 22) to the extent it *preserves* or *reproduces* the underlying unequal class structure through the symbolic smokescreen of the legitimated 'citizen'/ 'alien' binary. However, at this point we also need to consider Burawoy and van Holdt's (2012) critique, that the Bourdieusian lens of *symbolic violence* portrays a rather *deep* notion, in this instance, of the *social reproduction* of ethno-national citizenship and the workers' pre-reflexive submission to it. Yet, in light of the foregoing evidence, we submit that it has sufficient traction to explain Barura workers' unquestioning acceptance of ethno-nationalist citizenship labels, and therefore, the ethno-national citizenship legal criterion in their everyday lives. However, the successive Chapter 8, which attends to the Barura workers' everyday/hidden resistance to this state-centric notion of citizenship (and partisan political discipline) also forms a critique of our current power analysis by demonstrating how such symbolic forms of domination are not necessarily over-mastering or absolute.

We conclude that codified ethno-national citizenship subjugates as a separative force by categorising Barura farm workers into rigid, enforceable group identities namely 'aliens' and 'citizens'. Simultaneously, the subjugation peaks when the identities beget the workers' tacit recognition. This cultural dispossession, which also implies some objective dispossession, has profound implications on the allocation of material [dis]advantages. Codified ethno-national citizenship, being a narrow, essentialised mode of citizenship, ensures that those such as 'foreign' farm workers who do not meet the aboriginal citizenship criteria are effectively excluded from legal access to rights and resources (see Adjai and Lazadiris 2013). Accordingly, a crucial livelihood resource, which most workers highlighted they were being denied (owing to their 'alien' legal status) was land, and by extension, land-based resources. Subsequently, we explore the dynamics and implications of this symbolic alchemy on the material dimension of subjugation on Barura plantation.

7.3 'Invitational Citizenship', Land rights, and Wage Labour Exploitation

7.3.1 'Vabvakure' ('Aliens'), Land Access, and Proletarianisation: A Colonial Lens

Drawing from an earlier fireside conversation with age-old pensioner Sorojena, we observe a curious connection between the 'alien' legal citizenship status and access to livelihoods. He took us back to the colonial era and spotlighted the historical genesis of this connection when he said:

> *"... a significant colonial law ... that made us 'vabvakure'* (aliens), *but also created land in rural reserves strictly for those already living here before colonisation* (aboriginal natives) *but nothing for 'vabvakure'* (aliens)*...also a lot of land laws that gave land only to white settlers and black aboriginal natives... two bad and lasting results of all this ... making us 'vabvakure' and on those grounds denying us land...meaning very few ways to survive outside our low farm wages..."* (Informal Interview, Sorojena, March 2017)

We assert that the significant colonial citizenship legislation that Sorojena mentions, once again, is the Government Notice No. 223 (Notice 223). Also, a landmark land law we insinuate from the excerpt is the 1930 Land Apportionment Act (LAA). Therefore, as elsewhere in Africa, commercial agrarian capital in colonial Zimbabwe significantly benefited from a cheap supply of wage labour. This supply was facilitated by the state's intervention insofar as it enacted a racialised, politicised, and ethnicised citizenship, and land ownership legislative architecture (see van Onselen, 1973; Muzondidya, 2007; Wisborg et al., 2013). Overall, as mentioned by Sorojena, the net effect of such a regulatory control system was the economic exclusion broadly of 'aliens', and particularly of 'alien' farm workers from legal entitlement to land, land-based resources, and land rights.

Specifically, to follow Muzondidya (2007), Notice 223 also legislated the Rhodesian state's creation of residential and subsistence rural communal land (*native reserves)* which was strictly reserved for 'native aborigines'. Yet, as Sorojena attests, Notice 223 also officially prohibited those whom it had legally designated as 'alien natives', (who included farm workers of non-Southern Rhodesian descent and their families), from settling in these 'native reserves'. Ironically, these reserves were the colonial state's only targeted sites for development interventions for black Africans (see Worby, 2001; Muzondidya, 2007). Exclusion from these reserves, primarily on the basis of an 'alien' legal status implied denial of access to off farm non-wage livelihoods. So, as a divisive piece of citizenship legislation, Notice 223 officially excluded all generations of migrant farm workers from full citizenship status and entitlements.

There was exclusion regarding one's sense of belonging to the Rhodesian land as a nation, and as a livelihood resource.

Furthermore, a legislative complicity between Notice 223 and an equally racialised and ethnicised land policy, notably the 1930 LAA, solidified the migrant workers' denial of rights to and in native reserves. Streamlining Magaramombe (2001) and Muzondidya (2007), the LAA also legislated that, all the *'non-indigenous'* Africans, especially farm workers like Sorojena, Gambiza, etc., who had permanently settled in colonial Zimbabwe, had no rights to and could not legally acquire land nor access state projects in the 'native reserves'. Owing to their earlier legal constitution as 'alien natives' (through Notice 223), and then via the LAA, and related land Acts, migrant farm workers were subsequently not considered a relevant category in land distribution. Thus, in colonial Zimbabwe, citizenship and land statutes failed to offer "any middle ground for the unique economic interests of immigrant subjects whom the state saw as *alien* and as living in the country solely to work and not to settle" (Muzondidya (2007: 329). The net effect was the genesis of a typical Marxian *proletariat* which, bereft of the land and land-based rights, became almost entirely dependent on agrarian wage labour under Rutherford's (1997a, 2001a, 2016) *domestic government* (described earlier on). So, the *symbolic violence* of racialised, politicised, and ethnicised laws (Notice 223, the LAA, etc.) set the migrant farm workers up for an increasingly inevitable wage labour exploitation. Ultimately, the *symbolic violence* of arbitrary citizenship laws and *wage labour exploitation* became mutually reinforcing forms of subjugation on the farms.

Interestingly, Sowa's emblematic narrative below shows that the colonial legacies of the complicity between an ethnicised citizenship, and economic citizenship continued into post-colonial Zimbabwe.

7.3.2 'Vabvakure'('Aliens'), Land Access, and Proletarianisation: A Post-Colonial Lens

Sowa, a security guard, Malawian ancestry but Zimbabwean-born, has worked at Barura estate for twenty years. Like most of his co-workers of 'foreign' ancestry, he is a *farm dweller* since neither his (grand)parents nor himself has ever owned land in the nearby rural villages or elsewhere. His, is a paradigmatic case of the worsening precarity experienced by his kind who have to rely almost solely on poorly paid wage labour. One evening we were relaxing in the sagging veranda of Sowa's dilapidated compound quarters, when he reflected:

> *"…no change after independence… we were and are still 'vabvakure'* (aliens), *our IDs continue(d) to be labelled 'Alien' … more so, now with the 2001 law that certified us as 'vabvakure'… worse with ZANU (PF) politics suspecting us 'vabvakure' to be election sell outs since 2000… the land reform rules* (Acts) *also continue(d) to side-line us … so, still no lawful way for us to get land…the farm is workplace, home and deathplace…"* (Informal Interview, Sowa, March 2017)

According to Sowa and Sorojena's earlier excerpt, since 1980, farm workers and citizens of non-Zimbabwean ancestry still retain their 'alien' legal status especially through the 2001 CZAA and the 2003 CAA. In fact, Sowa's mention of *"ZANU (PF) politics"* suggests a more or less politicised undercurrent to the crafting of CZAA and CAA. This has already been detailed early on. What is remarkable from Sowa's testament is the continued landlessness of farm workers on the basis of their foreign or migrant heritage in the post-colonial era. More so, in a context of numerous post-colonial land reform programs (see Moyo et al., 2000; Moyo 2011; Sachikonye, 2012).

Sowa and many other farm workers' cases of landlessness indicate that in the first two decades, after 1980, the state's land reform processes barely considered the economic needs of 'foreign' commercial farm workers (see Muzondidya, 2007, Sachikonye, 2003, 2012). According to Moyo et al. (2000), the Zimbabwean state adopted the colonial dual economy discourse which flowed from the colonial 'alien'/ 'native' labels, from which land access got bifurcated into respective categories of *proletarians* (fully-fledged wage workers) and *peasants* (subsistence farmers, in the main.). After maintaining the 'alien' status of migrant farm workers, and relegating them to proletarians, the post-colonial state only addressed the land rights of peasant 'natives' who owned rural communal homes (Moyo, 1995; Sachikonye, 2012; Rutherford, 2016). It is, therefore, unsurprising that as a legal order, the 1992 Land Acquisition Act, excluded 'foreign' farm workers as potential recipients of land. However, for Moyo et al. (2000), from the mid-90s land policy was reformulated to officially accept farm workers as a category for land resettlement. Noteworthy was the first ever incorporation of farm worker land rights in the 1999 draft Land Policy Document (LPD) in terms of their residential rights and rights to resettlement (Ibid.). Unsurprisingly, despite the LPD's recognition of farm workers alongside land-poor peasants, those living outside communal areas (i.e., 'aliens') were excluded (Sachikonye, 2003; Muzondidya, 2007). That is, between 1980 and 2000, 'foreign' farm workers and dwellers such as Chihobobo, Sorojena and Sowa were practically excluded from the land reform process.

Overall, a legislated foreign ancestry, intertwined with a colonial history of having worked almost entirely as proletarians (under domestic government), resulted in the official and public constitution of farm workers as *persona non grata* on resettlement programs, and as lacking the capacity and credibility to be their own subsistence farmers (Moyo et al.2000; Sachikonye, 2012; Rutherford, 2016). In an agro-based economy like Zimbabwe and where access to land is a source of both one's livelihood and belonging, the continuous exclusion of 'foreign' farm workers from the non-commercial rural sphere means serious marginalisation from both the economy and the nation (see Muzondidya, 2007). It also implies increased susceptibility to full proletarianisation, and thus, exploitation through intensified and compulsive participation in low-paying, servile farm wage-labour.

However, the worst in terms of the land rights of farm workers bearing the 'alien' label occurred in the post-2000 era, especially between 2000 and 2003. In light of evidence, the key defining moments of this era were the emergence of the MDC as a strong opposition political party, ZANU (PF)-led state's loss in the February 2000 constitutional referendum, and ZANU (PF)'s near-loss (to MDC) in the June 2000 parliamentary elections (also see Southall, 2013). Interestingly, farm workers and their white employers were among those who actively mobilised for such political novelties (see Rutherford, 2008). Relatedly, scholarship (Rutherford, 2000; Raftopoulos, 2008; Sachikonye, 2012; Daimon, 2016) attests to how these novel political events kickstarted the ZANU (PF)-led state's suspicion of the national and political loyalty of farm workers and their (white) employers. Thus, the state actively affirmed the latter's 'foreignness' (via legislation e.g., CZAA), and also politicised it by conflating it with alleged anti-ZANU(PF) politics. This had a major bearing on the farm workers' exclusion from land rights as evidenced in the 2000-2003 era of the fast-track land reform programme (FTLRP). To this effect, Lucia, a farm worker of Malawian ancestry shared:

> *"... early 2000s land program the worst! ZANU (PF) emphasised our foreignness and that of white farmers... said we sold out because we are foreigners... partly pinned the 2000 referendum loss on us... accused us of supporting the opposition party* (MDC), *so when 'hondo yeminda'* (FTLRP) *came, they said as foreign sell-outs we did not deserve land unless we repented to support the liberation party* (ZANU PF) *... violent farm invasions by ZANU (PF) people ... loss of jobs and nowhere to go for 'vabvakure'* (aliens) *...some became squatters near the farms..."* (Interview, Lucia, January 2017)

Both Lucia and Sowa's narratives attest to continuities in the state' manipulation of a primordial and politicised ethno-national citizenship criterion to deny farm workers of non-

Zimbabwean paternal ancestry land rights. Ironically so, since according to Sachikonye (2003: 66) "by the late 1990s, more than 70% of farm workers were Zimbabwean born". However, Lucia's reflections portray a unique land reform, which unlike its precursors, was conditioned by and marred in *violent* and *polarised* electoral and partisan politics (see Daimon, 2016). So, in addition to excluding farm workers (and others) from land and land rights on the basis of their 'foreign' heritage, real or imagined political disloyalty to ZANU (PF) and its policies also became a confounding criterion (see Worby, 2001; Mpondi, 2012; Rutherford, 2008, 2016). To follow Lucia, ZANU(PF)-sanctioned land-giving authorities viewed farm workers as sell-outs, and according to Rutherford (2008: 90), "as foreigners under the control of white farmers", and the MDC. A dialectic of criteria emerged: being *not* indigenous enough (i.e., not having ancestors who were born in Zimbabwe) became conflated with *not* being pro-ZANU (PF) and pro-land reform enough, and therefore not deserving of any land and land rights.

However, based on findings, we propose that with the emergence of violent polarised politics, a unique class of 'aliens' emerged. We coin it *'native aliens'* to denote farm workers and others who despite being the so-called 'indigenous' or 'ancestral' Zimbabweans, became viewed and labelled by the state in public discourse as *not* indigenous enough by *not* being *pro*-ZANU (PF). Rishon's case was emblematic when he resignedly presented his situation thus:

> *"… see my ID, bears a 'C' for 'Citizen', I am indigenous … but we are in 2016 and I am still on small, poor land … during the historic 2000 FTLRP, and other later phases of land programs, I took all the necessary procedures, but I, and others who were rightly or falsely accused to be opposition* (MDC) *supporters haven't been resettled to better land… only ZANU (PF) politics is the 'correct' politics everywhere… passport to land…"* (Informal Interview, Rishon, September 2016)

Rishon's case confirms that in the post-2000 era, national politics became conflated with political allegiance to the ZANU PF political party (see Muzondidya, 2007; Mpondi, 2012; Rutherford, 2016). Being Zimbabwean became increasingly defined more by political affiliation and allegiance to ZANU (PF)'s political ideology than mere ancestral origin (see Mlambo, 2013; Daimon, 2016). Subsequently, *partisan politics* emerged as the alternative 'cultural politics of recognition' (Englund, 2004; Rutherford, 2008). It became the *acceptable* everyday political conduct informing eligibility for land and related livelihoods. What is special with cases like Rishon's is that partisan politics actually came to transcend and sometimes supersede ethno-nationality (indigeneity) as the dominant criterion for land rights. Thus, being 'alien' transcended its *official* meaning (i.e., codified ethno-nationality, as on national IDs) to

include its *public* political expression through *'native aliens'.* That is, despite bearing the legal 'citizen' (indigenous) label which would *in principle* qualify them for land, in practice, such farm workers become 'aliens' insofar as political disloyalty (real or imagined) to ZANU (PF) disqualified and alienated them from land, land livelihoods, and land rights. To adapt Yuval Davis (2006), citizenship transcended its *legal limits*, for instance, to include an everyday imposition, by state agents, of *partisan* [i.e., pro-ZANU (PF)] *political participation*. Overall, since 2000 henceforth, being 'alien' in the Sowa sense (legal status), and/or in the Rishon sense (political disloyalty to ZANU(PF)'s governance) has resulted in a majority of farm workers being effectively excluded from land (re) distributive schemes.

In all, the ZANU (PF)-led state has since 2000 manipulated, in a mutually reinforcing way, citizenship legislation and partisan politics to (re)produce and affirm the 'alienness' of farm workers. The state has then turned these arbitrary distinctions into monolithic criteria to exclude Barura commercial farm workers from the land and land rights. The spinoff for plantation capital and its managerial agents has been the guaranteed (re)production and control of an agrarian *proletariat*. To borrow from Marx and Engels (1948: 15), the *(near) landless* 'alien' workers have almost become "the proletariat…a class of labourers, who live only so long as they find work, and who find work only so long as their labour increases capital". Bereft of the land and land rights, "workplaces are life places" (Bolt, 2015: 5) for these landless farm workers. Consequently, they have become almost fully reliant on wage employment, and hence, more predisposed to *exploitation* and a modified *domestic government* (more under black capital and management). True to Bourdieu's (1979) notion of *sociodicy*, by constituting Barura and other farm workers as 'aliens', ZANU (PF)-led state agents (registry, judicial, and land specialists) incidentally serve the economic interests of agrarian capital (e.g., Barura plantation employers) and its managerial agents. So, at the intersection of the statist production of exclusionary ethno-national citizenship, exclusionary (partisan) politics, and capitalist agrarian accumulation at Barura farm is the (un)intentional (re)production of a guaranteed, plantation-domiciled, cheap, and exploitable stock of agrarian labour. Symbolic logic entangles with material logic to subjugate the (near)-landless plantation workers.

Part of our discussion spotlighted the emergence of state-sanctioned *violent partisan politics* as subjugating plantation workers by depriving them of land and land rights, and then, predisposing them to intensified wage labour exploitation at Barura commercial forestry estate.

Below, we initially analyse how this partisan politics increasingly got mediated through spectacular violence on the commercial farm(s), between 2000 and 2008. We then illuminate its (open violence) subsequent (post-2008 era) penetration and undermining by a complementary mode of power, which we coin *panoptic political surveillance* by ZANU (PF) paramilitary agents.

7.4 Plantation-based Partisan Politics: Overt Violence and/or Panoptic Paramilitary Discipline

Here, we argue that post-2008, panoptic paramilitary surveillance (of political allegiances and activities) has been the main strategy of exercising partisan political discipline on workers at Barura plantation estate. We also propose that this surveillance has penetrated, and increasingly undermined overt violence, rendering ZANU (PF)'s exercise of political domination on Barura estate more subtle, pervasive, economic, and effective. Yet, to contextually sustain these claims, we necessarily begin with the interlocuters' historical portrait of the ZANU (PF)-led state's excessive use of overt violence to elicit partisan political submission. This portrait of spectacular violence is a predecessor to a situated analysis of its continuities and/or discontinuities into the current era in the commercial farm space. Accordingly, we begin by drawing from the interlocuters' earlier experiences of and with spectacular violence on the farms and elsewhere.

7.4.1 Workers' Portraits of Partisan Politics mediated by Spectacular Violence (2000-2008)

In an emotional flashback which situated the trends and nature of *farm party politics* on Barura farm within the broader *national politics*, official B said , " … a strong opposition party (MDC) born in 1999, its threat to ZANU (PF)'s dominance in 2000, getting 57 of the 120 parliamentary seats…the government's referendum defeat … the chaotic land-reform politics… all precipitated the birth of state-driven political violence and, so, the active entry of violent, polarised politics into commercial farms…bloody violence in the 2000, 2002, 2005 elections, worst in 2008 ones." A brief pause and then, "Specifically, white farmers, farm workers, thought or known to be MDC, and so, against ZANU (PF)'s policies, became victims of state-backed political punishment through fear, pain, intimidation … rape, kidnaps, arson, vandalism, mostly executed by ZANU (PF)-aligned militia groups on MDC sympathisers…"

In another related and equally emotional recital, Marizani recalled *"the bloody birth, and horrific entry"* of violence on farms in 1999. First, through the violent, countrywide, war veterans-initiated, commercial farm occupations and the associated evictions of 'anti-land take-over' white farmers and farm workers. Then, through the official sanctioning, in 2000, of this violence-driven land initiative by the ZANU (PF)-led state in the guise of a violent FTLRP. Marizani linked all this to successive episodes and tactics of "bloody" violence associated with election periods, saying:

> *"… then from 2000 to 2008, every election time…more bloody violence … by soldier-like trained youths, war vets, undercover police…with the blessing of ZANU (PF) government… punishing anyone associated with MDC on this farm, other farms, in nearby rural villages … burning down houses, beatings, rape, kidnapping, killings, vandalism, police arresting victims of violence instead of perpetrators … Oooh, the 2008 election violence was the worst, ask anyone on this farm!"* (Informal Interview, Marizani September 2016)

An intriguing motif running through these excerpts is not only ZANU (PF)'s exercise of violence "immediately and directly on [bodies] of others" (see Edkins and Pin-Fat, 2005: 10) through spectacular tactics, but also through paramilitary agency. To this end, Official B, Marizani and related scholarship (Amnesty International, 2008, Raftopoulos, 2013; Mvundura, 2014) associate the exercise of this physical violence on the workers with quasi-military graduates from the ZANU (PF)-manipulated national youth training service, ZANU (PF)-aligned ex-military fighters of the liberation war (colloquially known as 'war veterans'), and undercover security personnel. To adapt Bates (1975), we have a paramilitary arm of the Gramscian political society exercising direct political repression on unarmed civilians. In fact, there obtained a quasi-military dictatorship on Barura and other commercial farms whereby the paramilitary arm of a ZANU (PF)-led state resorted to coercive techniques (physical assault, rape, abductions, killings, etc.) to punish and frighten any workers who opposed the state's partisan nationalist discourse of land reform, and the state's legitimating insistence on ZANU (PF)'s liberation war credentials. The latter was a prototypical case of the peaking of ZANU (PF)'s ongoing political discourse of reducing ruling party politics to national politics and policies.

Furthermore, physical violence on the commercial farms was a technique of power which fits into Foucauldian (1978) sovereign power. That is, it concerns the state's systematic claim to the monopoly to spectacularly repress and/or command the political behaviour of the Barura farm workers. The quasi-military deployment of overt violent tactics (beatings, rape,

abductions, arson, etc.) is aimed to violently *forbid* and *punish* the politically 'deviant' farm worker through "a dramatic show of force, the use of examples, violent punishment and even extreme pain" (Lilja and Vinthagen, 2014: 112). To substantiate the latter claim were Mariga's sentiments which echoed those of most Barura farm workers. Part of these sentiments went thus:

> *"… mostly public shows. A typical case in 2008…war veterans convened a meeting at the farm school…four male teachers, publicly involved in MDC politics, savagely beaten with thick electric cables, hands tied to their backs, made to roll in mud military-style… Imagine, in front of pupils and workers! We then thought; if a teacher could be this publicly humiliated, what about us mere general workers? I vividly recall the spectators' fear, pain, disbelief… of course, such horrific shows frightened almost everyone into participating in ZANU (PF) politics and avoiding the opposition (MDC). With hindsight, I can say fear became daily bread…"* (Informal Interview, Mariga January 2017)

Pursuing Mariga's narrative, suffice to say that spectacular, paramilitary violence, as a form of sovereign power, does not tolerate public dissent, nor allegiance to any other commanding centre (e.g., the MDC). To this end, we draw from Lilja and Vinthagen (2014) who characterise violence as a form of power whose acceptance makes sovereignty possible by claiming monopolistic rule. In other words, spectacular violence forcefully elicits the target's absolute political obedience via the target's fear of being caught and punished. Meanwhile, Official B and Marizani attest to the peaking of electoral violence on Barura forestry estate in 2008. Similarly, Eppel (2013) and Raftopoulos (2013) give the escalation a national purview, while Mvundura (2014) documents its memorialization by rural peasants in another study located in the same district as the current study. Interestingly, this escalation exposed the political and tactical limits of the excessive use of public, spectacular, and instantaneous violence for political repression.

One major limit, for the ZANU (PF) government, was a local and regional legitimacy crisis obtaining from the unprecedented March 29 post-election violence (see Human Rights Watch, 2008b; Eppel, 2013). The violence rendered the presidential election re-run of 29 June 2008 a tragic farce and for the first time, SADC heads of states declined to endorse a Mugabe-led government in Zimbabwe (Eppel, 2013). Much to the political disadvantage of ZANU (PF), the result was a negotiated inclusive government (IG) between it, and the two MDC factions. The IG lasted from 2009 to the next elections in 2013. Considering further findings, noteworthy is the fact that post-2008, after suffering the political limits attendant to the excessive use of force, ZANU (PF)'s paramilitary wing modified its exercise

of political subjugation on Barura farm and elsewhere. This is an argument that we pursue in the next segment.

7.4.2 Spying by the Faceless Paramilitary Gaze: The Art of Plantation Surveillance Post-2008

Based on findings, we revisit our earlier claim that post-2008, *panoptic paramilitary surveillance* has been the *main* technique of exercising partisan political discipline on Barura commercial farm. An auxiliary claim is that this surveillance has penetrated, and increasingly undermined overt violence, making the political subjugation of the farm workers more subtle, pervasive, economic, and efficient. Thus, for analysis, we adopt, and adapt Foucault's (1979) general notion of 'Panopticism' (a general system of disciplinary techniques that permeate society), and its specific notion of panoptic discipline which are metaphors derived from Bentham's (1843) 'Panopticon' prison model (see Chapter 3 for more detail).

Daily interactions and observations on the forestry estate and in the nearby rural villages yielded the consensus that post-2008, ZANU (PF)'s paramilitary arm had increasingly shifted from the arbitrary use of spectacular political violence in eliciting pro-ZANU (PF) political obedience. To this end, in reference to the 2009 to 2017 period, Official C said, "Yes, mainly ZANU (PF) politics still active on commercial farms, but, unlike the 2000 to 2008 era, the use of threats, beatings, killings, abductions, arson, vandalism, has remarkably declined or in some cases disappeared altogether…"

Likewise, Faina, a general worker at Barura farm, who was a victim of the 2008 political violence in a nearby village reiterated:

> *"ZANU (PF) politics is still alive, but the bloody violence typical of, say, the 2000, 2005, 2008 elections is now low, in some cases like on this farm has nearly disappeared…who ever imagined that from 2008 to now* (2017) *the beatings, rape, vandalism, abductions, arson … would somehow disappear…"* (Informal Interview, Faina, July 2016)

However, Official B, Faina and most interlocuters also concur and believe that post-2008, ZANU (PF) has been resorting to the planting of spies, disguised as workers, on Barura and other commercial farms. They maintain that these spies are still from the ZANU (PF)'s paramilitary arm, comprised, as before, of quasi-military trained youths, undercover security officers and war veterans. The farm workers also seem certain that these spies secretly monitor and control the workers' political allegiances and activities. Melania attested to a scenario

wherein rural ZANU (PF) political elites claimed the *actual* presence of spies on farms, and the subsequent effects of such when she declared:

> *"… Increased ZANU (PF) presence on farms since 2016 … 2018 elections are close…more campaign and food-handout rallies… It's at such gatherings where ZANU (PF) village branch leaders don't forget to say, 'We do not live here, but we have eyes everywhere, daily, among you ... they see you, your political ideas and activities…either way we know...' We believe this! How come these leaders often reveal to us accurate details of cases that prove that they are privy to supposedly confidential information on MDC activists, supporters, and their activities on this farm?"* (Interview, Melania, January 2017)

The foregoing excerpt, which also bears intimidatory political remarks, which however elicit the desired political submission, attests to the real or *perceived* presence of spies on Barura farm. It also insinuates a strategic shift to a political subjugation that thrives largely on a subtle, micro-technique of surveillance namely spying. The latter fits well into Bentham's (1843) Panopticon and its Foucauldian (1979) metaphoric formulation to panoptic discipline. The Panopticon is a utilitarian prison model bearing a central watchtower from which a single guard, invisible to the inmates, observes them in separate cells which circle the tower. Foucault (1979) extended the Panopticon beyond an architectural model to a prototype of Panopticism, i.e., a modern system of subtle disciplinary techniques whose efficacy thrived on the organisation of individuals and space. Thus, real or perceived paramilitary surveillance (i.e., the spying) by the ZANU (PF) militia, on farm worker party politics, is a specific protype of Panopticism, which exercises partisan political control through the faceless "penetrating gaze" (Foucault, 2006: 488) of the militia. However, for the effective exercise of discipline, the gaze, as a power/knowledge regime, has to contain an *ideational* component, namely a *discursive norm*.

7.4.2.1 Producing a pro-ZANU (PF) Political Standard (Norm) on the Plantation

We assert that for the paramilitary gaze to produce ZANU (PF)-compliant farm worker political relations and identities, it has to contain the Foucauldian (1979) discursive norm. A homogenic code of the expected ZANU (PF) political conduct towards which every Barura farm worker must strive. In the spirit of such a norm, Zed revealed that at all farm or village socio-political functions, ZANU (PF) cell and branch leaders (village or farm political elites) always reiterated that the expected political behaviour entailed:

> *"…full loyalty only to ZANU (PF) beliefs and ideas on land reform and the sole claim to Chimurenga* (liberation war) *belief in its projects…diligent attendance of party rallies, functions… wearing and respecting party regalia and symbols… having active party membership cards, accurate chanting of slogans, indifference to MDC political leadership and activities…voting 'correctly'* [voting for ZANU

(PF)] *during elections…"* (Zed, Informal Discussion, December 2016)

Noteworthy from the excerpt is that the spying gaze, and its attendant discursive norm, are a power/knowledge regime. ZANU (PF)'s ideational *discourse* of land reform, and a 'legitimising' insistence on liberation war credentials, comes to be 'knowledge' of 'true' political participation on the farms, only because it is supported by practices of power (see Foucault, 1979, 2001). These practices include ZANU (PF)'s spying gaze, and the reiterative, and often intimidatory political statements by its 'expert' village elites at party gatherings. Drawing from Zed, both the ideational and practical (e.g., compulsory attendance of party rallies) parts of the norm are informed by ZANU (PF) electoral-political interests on the commercial farm spaces. Subsequently, the norm carried by the micro-technique of panoptic paramilitary surveillance on the farms "cannot be the discourse of right…has nothing in common with that of law…but a natural rule, a norm…" (Foucault, 1994: 44). Thus, the ideational and material code that the paramilitary gaze carries is that of *normalisation* of Barura farm workers into pro-ZANU (PF) political comportment and allegiance before and during elections. This discursive norm disqualifies other alternative political party affiliations and political ideas.

Normalisation, through the gaze, entails that each farm worker, despite being unique, has to act and be judged against and according to a homogenic political code. Accordingly, Lilja and Vinthagen (2014) consider the discursive norm as a space for comparison and differentiation. The norm enforces homogeneity, but also individualises since it allows for each farm worker to be compared to the other and be positioned differently (as normal or deviant) in relation to the norm. To import Foucault (1991: 177-184), the norm that informs the spying on the farms, is intended to normalise the farm workers who are expected "to eventually become, speak, think, and act in a homogenous" pro-ZANU (PF) political manner. Below, we therefore engage *how* panoptic surveillance, through spying, produces normalised political relations and identities on Barura farm.

7.4.2.2 The Invisible Gaze of the ZANU (PF) Militia and Political Subjection on the Plantation

Spying on the farms is an exercise of power that thrives on the arrangement of the workers' bodies and plantation space. Bentham (1843: 45) asserts, "Power has its principle …in a certain concerted distribution of bodies… gazes; in an arrangement whose internal mechanisms

produce a relation in which individuals are caught up". Foucault (1979) refers to this arrangement as *architecture*. Space both as social relations and identities, and as spatial (physical) [see Soja, 1989; Shields, 1991] resulting in *socio-spatiality*. The interview excerpt below shows how docile bodies with maximum utility (i.e., enhanced compliance with ZANU (PF)'s political ideology and practices) are produced by locating workers socio-spatially through surveillance, to *train* and normalise political conduct according to the ZANU (PF) discursive norm. In a summative statement of a major dynamic of this panoptic surveillance, Chihobobo said:

> *"ZANU (PF) spies put among us, on the farm … we know they are here, but we cannot put faces nor names to the real spies…Always guessing, is it my friend, is it the foreman, is it my wife, …a new recruit? A spy is like an invisible ghost…it always sees you everywhere or you think it does, but you cannot see it … it doesn't have to physically attack you for you to run for your life… pressure and fear created by its invisibility is enough…that's a spy for you …"* (Chihobobo, Informal Chat, November2016)

Chihobobo's portrait of the 'ghostly' spying translates to the farm workers' constitution as objects and subjects of panoptic surveillance. Politically obedient farm workers are produced through a socio-spatiality that separates the see/being-seen dyad. Following Chihobobo's 'ghost' analogue, and Benthamian (1843) and Foucauldian (1979) panoptic settings, we assert that the disciplinary effect of the faceless paramilitary gaze obtains from the *total invisibility* of the spies, and the *universal visibility* of the farm workers. Invisibility also implies unverifiability (Jespersen et al., 2007). The *actual* presence or absence of the spies therefore also remains unverifiable to the workers. Accordingly, in the vignette, Chihobobo laments how the workers can neither verify the spies' identities nor if the gaze is a permanent one. The spies' invisibility/unverifiability also entails the omnipresence of the paramilitary gaze. But, unlike Bentham's (1843) single-guard Panopticon, on Barura farm, the alleged ZANU (PF) spies constitute *multiple* and *ever-mobile* panopticons. This arguably intensifies and amplifies the omnipresence, and therefore the subtle constraint of the invisible gaze. So, like Bentham's (1843; 1995) prison inmates, Barura farm workers end up assuming that their political conduct is under continuous, ubiquitous surveillance. They are thus subtly coerced to behave according to the norm (i.e., partisan allegiance to ZANU (PF) practices and ideology).

Meanwhile, the spying also ensures that the farm workers' political conduct remains universally visible (or at least appears to be) to the spies' "penetrating gaze" (Foucault, 2006: 488). To this effect, Chihobobo says, *"A spy is like a ghost, it always sees you everywhere or you think it does …"* Relatedly, Melania's earlier revelation that, at rallies, "*ZANU (PF) village*

branch leaders don't forget to say, '…We have eyes everywhere … they see you…you know the consequences of betrayal…" shows that the surveilled also have to be conscientised of their real or perceived universal visibility, and actual susceptibility to penalty. Thus, the farm workers' conscious, ubiquitous visibility and penalty are a trap that assures the subtly *repressive* exercise of punishment and restraint over their political conduct (see Bentham, 1843; Manokha, 2018). To this effect, Japi's insights below, which complement Chihobobo's, aptly capture the effects of spying on the two farms as:

> *"… their* (spies) *invisibility punishes you into uncertainty… but the assumption of being seen by the spies puts even more pressure on you not to do, or to stop doing what they don't like… spies mean hidden punishment, hidden warnings to danger… So, you stop or avoid MDC politics since you are always not sure who is watching you and when you are being watched …"* (Japi, Informal Chat, December 2016)

Japi and Chihobobo's narratives resonate with Bentham (1843) and Foucault's (1979) persuasion of one side of the 'power of the gaze' as being repressive. Therefore, spying epitomises a panoptic gaze, which subtly punishes and pressures the Barura farm workers into political submission in a non-violent way. However, punishment, as presented by Japi, somehow breaks with Bentham's dynamics. For Bentham, punishment mainly consists in *confinement* in the Panopticon prison itself. On Barura farm, to follow Japi and Chihobobo's narratives, the "*pressure"* and "*uncertainty"* created by the panoptic setting (spying) itself, is some form of subtle 'punishment' that elicits the desired pro- ZANU (PF) political behaviour, via the workers anxiety and fear of imminent or anticipated punishment. The latter is, for instance, imagined through the painful tactics of earlier (2000-2008) cycles of spectacular violence. Thus, the spying gaze itself, and the anxious premonition of penalty that it invokes, actually *deter* political deviance to any other political party other than ZANU (PF). This is more like Foucault (1979: 138; emphasis added) where the gaze elicits a "*perpetual penalty* that traverses all points and supervises every instant…". The upshot is that the imminent penalty associated with the multiple and mobile gazes of the ZANU (PF) spies imposes some continuous subtle pressure on the workers insomuch as to stop current and deter future political deviance, for instance, to the MDC party. Hence, the spies' gaze largely represses in a proactive, preventive, and spontaneous way (e.g., Manokha, 2018). Political repression is thus realised economically in terms of minimal or no personnel at all and less tactical effort. Spectacular tactics such as arson, beatings, abductions, etc. become increasingly unnecessary on Barura estate farm.

In all, the partisan political repression of Barura farm workers is realised through the subtle, deterrence-inducing gazes (coupled with their discursive norm), which "have a hold over [their] bodies…so that they may…operate as one wishes, with … the speed, and the efficiency that one determines" (Foucault, 1979: 138). Surveillance is exercised directly on the everyday physio-social identities and political relations of the workers. This enables the repression of the farm workers' political deviance at the point of contact. Subsequently, real or imagined spying, by ZANU (PF)-led state militia, epitomises the economic, efficient, and pervasive administration of partisan (i.e., pro-ZANU (PF)) political training *over* the farm workers. However, further findings reveal that real or assumed paramilitary surveillance, at some point, can actually be internalised and result in the workers exercising *self-discipline* and *self-restraint*.

7.4.2.3 The Social Fiction of the 'Permanent' Gaze and the Reality of its Indelibility for Barura Workers

According to more findings, apart from being a disciplinary technique that represses, paramilitary surveillance also effects the self-objectification of the Barura farm workers. In this regard, the power/knowledge regime of the gaze and its norm of the ZANU (PF) discourse of land reform, ultra-nationalism, and a 'legitimising' insistence on liberation war credentials actually become *inscribed* in the *minds*, bodies, and socio-spatial relations of the workers insomuch that they self-police. Accordingly, part of a key informant interview with farm Official Q went:

> *"… workers could now be at a point of being used to or having absorbed the spying and its purposes… like a sponge absorbs water. No more reminders of the presence of spies from ZANU (PF) rural leaders… Surprisingly, it now seems natural, ordinary for the workers to be pro-ZANU (PF) in ideas, regalia, activities…Honestly, I doubt if they* (spies) *need to be even here on the farms for workers to obey…"* (Official Q, Interview, June 2016)

In a similarly emblematic discussion, Magwinhi also confirmed the disappearance of ZANU (PF)'s active reminders of the workers being "watched". He believed that most workers had actually "subconsciously adjusted" to a spied political life. Bhokoro, his workmate, also insightfully added:

> *"…Ohh, I am only thinking of it now because you talked about it… I no longer have to sit down and think about whether to support ZANU (PF) things, ideas …or not. It now looks like this long-established thing of spies 'chakatobaya chikatyokera'* (vernacular idiom for; It is now part of our being) *…You just find yourself doing ZANU PF politics 'auto' 'auto'* (slang for automatic) *…"* (Bhokoro, Casual Discussion, July 2016)

An insidious revelation informing these anecdotes is the farm workers' *internalisation* or *embodiment* of the faceless paramilitary gaze (and its norm) into their minds and social relations insomuch as to exercise self-discipline. Official Q speaks of farm workers "*having absorbed the spying and its purposes… like a sponge absorbs water…"* and also says, "*… it now seems natural, ordinary for them to be pro-ZANU (PF) in ideas…"* Likewise, Magwinhi refers to the workers having *"subconsciously adjusted"* to spying, while Bhokoro testifies that spying has in fact *become a part of his being*. In fact, the farm workers have turned themselves into objects and subjects of ZANU (PF) political surveillance by being controlled by the gaze and identifying themselves with the ZANU (PF) political norms, which the gaze carries.

We thus, witness the *self-aided* "productive penetration and subjectivizing subjugation" (Foucault in Habermas, 1994: 63) of the workers' minds and physio-social bodies by the gaze and its homogenic code. This resonates with the principle that, at some point, panoptic surveillance gets permanently inscribed into the minds and social beings of the surveilled (Bentham, 1843; Foucault, 1979, 1985; Manokha, 2018). To appropriate Foucault (1979), the paramilitary gaze and its discursive norm subtly invest the farm workers' minds and quotidian political relations to constitute them as *subjected minds* and *docile bodies* given to self-restraint. So, in addition to punishing and repressing, surveillance also elicits political loyalty to ZANU (PF) through the farm workers' insidious *self-policing*. In this way, the paramilitary gaze partly epitomises the Foucauldian (1985: 367) "technologies of the self" whereby individuals, aware of being under surveillance, may end up exercising power over themselves without any external force.

In the excerpt, Bhokoro says, "*You just find yourself doing ZANU (PF) politics 'auto' 'auto'*". Similarly, Official Q insinuates the possibility of the actual absence or discontinuation of the spying while still realising partisan political obedience. In this instance, to import Foucault (1979), the cost-effective exercise of power is realised since only a few or no spies may be needed. Spying, by simultaneously organising the total invisibility of the spies and the conscious ubiquitous visibility of the workers, enables the automation of discipline (e.g., Bentham, 1843; Foucault, 1988b; Manokha, 2018). Barura farm workers, conscious of the gaze and expectations (discursive norm) thereto, end up *assuming* that they are under continuous surveillance. Thus, without any physical force, they end up exercising self-restraint to be in

conformity with the political expectations of the ZANU (PF) spies and the class-status fractions they represent. Accordingly, Foucault insists:

> [s]o it is not necessary to use force to constrain the convict to good behaviour ... He who is subjected to a field of visibility, and who knows it assumes responsibility for the constraints of power; he makes them play spontaneously upon himself; he inscribes in himself the power relation in which he simultaneously plays both roles; he becomes the *principle of his own subjection.*
>
> (Foucault, 1979: 202-203; emphasis added)

Be that as it may, this implies a perfection of the power of surveillance, which renders its actual exercise unnecessary. Surveillance is depersonalised – it becomes detached from its actual/imagined exercise by the spies, and therefore automatically infiltrates the infinitesimal details of the farm workers' minds and relations. The power of the gaze becomes *anonymous* and *plural* thereby trapping the farm workers in a power relation of which they are themselves the bearers (see Foucault, 1985,1988b; Manokha, 2018). Under the gaze, workers effect, "by their own means", the discourse of pro-ZANU (PF) politics "on their own bodies…their own thoughts, their own conduct…in a manner so as to transform themselves, modify themselves…" (Foucault, 1981: Interview). We thus have a real self-objectification and self-subjection by the workers, born out of a fictitious physio-spatial relation of an *assumed* permanent presence of the faceless spies. That is, a 'chilling effect' (Dolich, 1993) where the imagined 'permanent' gaze penetrates each farm worker's political behaviour who then *modifies* it to be in conformity with ZANU (PF)'s political ideologies and practices. Thus, paramilitary spying constitutes workers who act 'on their own' within ZANU (PF)'s electoral/national political interests, on the farm and elsewhere. Meanwhile, we also developed a findings-based modification of the original Panoptic power dynamic, which we coined 'surface-opticon' discipline. Yet, due to length concerns, this modified panoptic strategy is explored in Chapter 8 simultaneously with the hidden forms of resistance that engage it.

To conclude this section, we assert that real or imagined partisan political surveillance, as located as it is at the plantation farm site, facilitates the production of farm workers who submit to pro-ZANU (PF) electoral and party politics. Incidentally, this complicates and reinforces *exploitation* on Barura plantation. Disciplinary training and *normalisation* into and of strictly pro-ZANU (PF) politics, *abnormalises* and *disqualifies* any other seemingly 'deviant' forms of political engagement and struggle at Barura. Typical here, is shopfloor and sectoral industrial

dissent through workplace labour activism/unionism (strikes, demonstrations, etc.). Such farm labour politics can either be manipulated by estate farm management and/or conflated with or misconstrued by farm-domiciled or village- based ZANU (PF) activists of sympathisers as anti-ZANU(PF) or anti-state politics. Since paramilitary spying elicits the Foucauldian (1979: 38; emphasis added) "*perpetual penalty* that … supervises every instant", Barura farm workers more or less cautiously evade or minimise any political conduct, which management and/or local ZANU (PF) political agents may deem or misconstrue as a potential threat to ZANU (PF)'s political credibility and profile, and therefore *abnormal.* Industrial action or labour unionism (as closely linked as they are to state-capital alliances), being such evaded or avoided 'abnormalities', ensure the sealing off of an exploitative and highly insecure (in this instance, representational insecurity) capitalist forestry labour process. In light of the entire analysis, we make the following concluding remarks.

7.5 Conclusion

This chapter interrogated and transcended *capitalist* labour politics scholarship, which inordinately frames workplace relations and identities within the *innate economic* logic of the capitalist production-cum-labour process. We switched lenses to also give prominence to the complementary *semi-autonomous* (from the economic base – i.e., a capitalist labour process) status-based relations, which actually get trans-localised into and become an integral part of the worksites of the Barura commercial forestry production-cum-labour process. We thus foregrounded how these often understudied seemingly 'external' politico-cultural relations, in their own right, (re)produce, get reproduced by, and reinforce the privileged class relations (i.e., labour subordination and exploitation) of a post-colonial forestry capitalist labour process at enterprise level. We argued that Barura worksite labour politics is not exclusive to the subjugating and exploitative relations of *wage labour* employment but is also mutually inclusive of legislated ethno-national citizenship and partisan electoral and national politics. This constitutes the complication of shopfloor agrarian labour struggles beyond class/economic cleavages and struggles.

So, empirically, we discovered the state's exclusionary legal production of Barura workers (and other citizens) of non-Zimbabwean ancestry as 'aliens' and its imposition of partisan (i.e., strictly pro-ZANU (PF)) politics in commercial farm spaces (via violent-cum-disciplinary mechanisms) as the relatively autonomous politico-cultural rationalities of power, which

mutually reinforce with *wage labour* employment (i.e., exploitation) to subjugate and exploit the Barura estate workforce. In this way, we transcended the one-dimensional notion of power, which is synonymous with an overprivileged immanent class/material struggle of any capitalist labour-cum-production process and demonstrated its mutual constitution with and complication by 'external' status-inclined politico-cultural struggles.

Theoretically, our power analysis surpassed the characteristic *structuralist* framing of power to casting it as a relational and contingent *practice,* which more or less reconciles social structure (institutions), interaction, and agency. To this end, exclusionary ethno-national citizenship, and partisan political subjugation on Barura estate were read through the Bourdieusian 'structuralist constructivism' as *symbolic violence* and Foucauldian 'micro-physics of power' as *panoptic discipline*, respectively (also see Chapter 3). Consequently, commercial farm labour worksite politics were re-centred as the *exercise* and *interactive reproduction* of dialectical, diffuse, indeterminate interactions between historical institutional processes, context, and the infinitesimal everyday dynamics of individual and/or collective relations and identities on and around Barura commercial estate farm. We therefore deduce that the *exercise* and *reproduction* of and *resistance* to ethno-national citizenship, partisan political discipline, and labour exploitation is constituted at the complex and fluid intersection of the histories, contexts, and biographies (i.e., the meso-level) of the social agents, spaces, and strategies involved.

Another upshot from our entire analysis is that codified ethno-national citizenship and partisan political discipline are *not inevitable* modalities of power on Barura estate, but are historically situated *variations* in their form, sites, meaning, and exercise. These are power forms, which may look as they now are in the present context, but the reality is that they have actually evolved from somewhere over time. Accordingly, at Barura, we discovered the gradual penetration and superseding of the once largely spectacular ZANU (PF)- led state-sanctioned political violence by its more or less disciplinary, invisible, and cost-effective counterpart of panoptic surveillance and normalisation. Not to mention the (dis)continuities from the colonial version of the largely racialised ethno-national citizenship criterion to its similarly exclusionary colonial version, which has increasingly become infused with and blended by worksite-localised national partisan politics. We thus conclude that, to the extent the invocation of the *historicity* of these mutual power modalities unveils their evolution and fluidity, they

significantly map and shape the attendant repertoires of everyday (hidden) resistance. Also, a multi-dimensional, intersectional, and heterogenous approach to these power configurations sets the scene for a similarly complex approach to the accompanying practices of resistance.

Subsequently, Chapter 8 concerns the discovery, description, and critical analysis of the forms, practices, relations, and dynamics of quotidian resistance to these foregoing power configurations. That is, while Chapter 6 concerned Barura farm workers' everyday resistance to labour subordination and exploitation, and their ideological bases, the successive related Chapter 8 further illuminates Barura workers' hidden resistance to the two plantation-localised mutually reinforcing modes of belonging namely codified ethno-national citizenship and state-sanctioned violet-cum-disciplinary partisan national politics. Of note is that we separate the current chapter on these *intersectional* modalities of power and the successive chapter on the forms and practices of hidden resistance they engage mainly for analytical purposes. In reality, they are in a dynamic, plural, intersectional, and mutually constituting relationship.

CHAPTER 8

‘FARMZENSHIP’: QUOTIDIAN RESISTANCE TO ETHNO-NATIONAL CITIZENSHIP AND VIOLENT-CUM-DISCIPLINARY POLITICAL SUBJUGATION IN THE FORESTRY LABOUR PROCESS

8.1 Introduction

Earlier, in Chapter 6 we discovered Barura workers’ practices of quotidian resistance that are rooted in the *post-colonial capitalist* relations (i.e., labour domination and exploitation) that are an *inherent* part of the labour process. This echoes dominant scholarship on the labour struggles of Zimbabwean workers (see e.g., van Onselen, 1973, 1980; Phimister and van Onselen, 1978; Bolt, 2015; Rutherford, 2016; Mutekwe, 2019), and their subaltern counterparts elsewhere (see e.g., Cohen, 1980; Scott, 1985, 1990; Kerkvliet, 2009), which portrays their identities and responses to capitalist production systems mainly in *class* terms. That is, in terms of the rigid *binary* identities and relations of, for instance, capital and labour or landlord and serfs. Backed by evidence, the current chapter surpasses this position by also exposing Barura workers’ practices of everyday labour resistance, which are rooted in and engage with *semi-autonomous* forms of power that seem ‘external’ to the commercial plantation labour process.

We therefore argue that beyond plantation wage work itself, everyday labour resistance at Barura commercial plantation estate is also constituted by simultaneous mutual engagement with relatively autonomous forms of power, which in their own right, complicate worksite labour struggles. That is, the workers’ resistance is also couched in *status* forms of domination namely state-legislated *ethno-national* citizenship (i.e., legislated ‘indigeneity’) and state-sanctioned ZANU (PF)-mediated violent-cum-disciplinary *partisan politics*, which are all *trans-localised* into and become an integral part of the Barura plantation labour process.

For our analysis, we maintain the self-same theoretical model of *everyday resistance*, which we developed in Chapter 3. However, below, we begin by tweaking our earlier (i.e., in Chapter 6) findings-derived notion of ‘farmzenship’ in accordance with the current *status*-oriented forms of power under investigation. We then proceed by exposing the resistance practices of

Barura workers who the state produces as 'aliens' (i.e., in the exclusionary legal ethno-national citizenship sense), and/or as what we coin 'alien natives' (i.e., in the 'disloyalty' to ZANU (PF) politics sense). The statist production of these specific two forms of 'alienness' was detailed in Chapter 7.

Thus, our exposition below will spotlight *how* these 'alien' workers navigate exclusionary ethno-national citizenship laws and the violent-cum-disciplinary ZANU (PF)-mediated partisan politics in ways that *contest* them. To this end, we discovered a repertoire of practices, which constitute symbolic, ideological, and/or material resistance to the above-stated two cultural forms of exclusionary citizenship. These practices comprise Barura workers' *inventive* production and *creative* use of *de jure* backdoor 'native' identities; a worker-centric civil society; *de facto* 'native' convivial identities and relations (i.e., underhand village land deals, and village land renting deals); counterfeit political loyalty to ZANU (PF) politics (i.e., staged political repentances from the MDC); and reversed discourses of and counter-memory to disciplinary partisan politics. We describe and analyse these practices in this entire chapter. Immediately below, we briefly begin by a chapter-specific tweaking of our earlier central notion (and practice) of *farmzenship*.

8.2 Farmzenship: Reimagining and (Re)inventing the Plantation Politics of Belonging

In the current chapter, farmzenship *specifically* denotes the idea and practice of plantation-*localised*, stratagems, tactics, ploys, and understandings of national and political *citizenship*, which 'alien' (i.e., both in the monolithic ethnic and political allegiance criteria) workers craft to survive and *contest* what they call 'invitational citizenship' (ethnicity-based membership of the nation as officialised by state laws) and partisan political discipline. These two state-sanctioned monolithic forms of citizenship, as shown in Chapter 7, restrict the idea and practice of citizenship to "the relationship between the individual and the state" (Werbner and Yuval Davis, 1999: 4). By contrast, farmzenship illuminates how the farm workers' informal everyday reading and *actual* practice of *belonging* on and off the farms subvert, evade, (re)appropriate, and navigate these two monolithic, statist forms of citizenship in ways that also *resist* them. There is a shift to "citizenship as a more *total relationship*, inflected by identity, social positioning …and a *sense of belonging*" (Ibid., own emphasis). Similarly, to import Turner (1997) farmzenship also underscores the 'alien' workers' entitlement to difference, to

re-value their stigmatised national and political identities, to full cultural participation and undistorted representation.

Farmzenship also entails that the state-produced 'alien' workers' membership of Zimbabwe as a *nation* and as a *resource* becomes a *multi-tiered* notion and practice. Empirically, below, farmzenship manifests largely as *inventive, organic,* and *creative* worker-centric *practices* and *notions* of national and political belonging on and off the plantations. These practices have the potential to oppose the two dominant (statist) forms of belonging at the material, status, and ideological levels. The next section commits to the discovery and dissection of practices that mainly contest legislated ethno-national citizenship. The latter manifests at the worksites of Barura's post-colonial capitalist labour process in the guise of the workers' state-legislated *'alien'/ 'foreign'* identities and experiences (see Chapter 7 for detail).

8.3 Barura Workers and the Invention of Alternative 'National' Citizenship from Below

In light of fieldwork evidence, we showcase a catalogue of practices of routine resistance and/or survival articulated by 'alien' (i.e., non-Zimbabwean paternal ancestry) farm workers in ways that (in)advertently contest codified ethno-national citizenship, a mode of belonging which they colloquially call 'invitational citizenship'. One scattered but pervasive technique of disguised resistance to the latter was the backdoor *invention* of official 'native' identities.

8.3.1 From Original de jure 'Alien' to 'Invented', but de jure 'Native' Identities

On Barura plantation, cases were widespread, of 'alien' workers attaining new legal *full* citizenship statuses (i.e., the 'Citizen' designation implying Zimbabwean paternal ancestry) through the backdoor procurement of *officially invented* national IDs. That is, either by totally replacing a current official 'Alien'- annotated national ID with a 'Citizen'-annotated one, or obtaining the latter, for the first time, despite *not* meeting the Zimbabwean paternal ancestry criterion. The same 'invention' was also done with the birth certificates for alignment with the new IDs. Below, is a fieldwork narrative of how 'invented' 'native' identities were produced from below, but with the complicit underhand help of Registry government officials.

After three months of socialising and trust-building at the farm commons beerhall, Zed, Manase, and Fokoro finally disclosed to me how they had managed to vote in the 2008 and 2013 harmonised elections and also get residential plots in nearby rural communities despite

their 'alien' status. Zed carefully fished out two national IDs from his old wallet, took a sip of the opaque beer and whispered into my ear, "This is top secret, see, I have two IDs … one designated *'Alien'*, the other, *'Citizen'*, both from the same Registry offices. But this *'Citizen'* one, (he proudly taps the ID) is the magical one … it earned me residential and tillage plots in the nearby communal villages. The *'Alien'*-annotated ID doesn't officially allow that …" Manase interjected, "The *'Alien'* one is now useless, Zed just brought it as proof of the original status the government gives us… See, one influential *Sadunhu* (kraal head), also Fokoro's in-law, is one mastermind of all this… all he needs are the complete personal details for your proposed new ID and the 'standard thank you' (a US$100 bribe) or an equivalent in kind, like three goats…". Fokoro, after scanning the vicinity for potential eavesdroppers, reiterated, "…top secret, so this *Sadunhu* has connections at the Registry offices … Say, in two weeks or less, one is already in possession of the magical *'Citizen'*-annotated ID, which potentially confers us, *vabvakure* (vernacular for 'aliens'), full citizenship rights. See, the 'thank you' is nothing compared to the real lifelong benefits of officially, but in a backdoor way, getting rid of the 'Alien' tag…We do the same with our kids' birth certificates or our first-time IDs…" He then winked at Zed to take over, "…this 'new' ID becomes your passport to the previously inaccessible rights like legally getting residential or tillage land in the villages, voting … But this is a risky deal, *ndere pasi pemvura* (vernacular for 'it is clandestine') … we have secret coded language to vet potential 'clients', lest they could be spies..." (Informal Conversation, October 2016)

The conversational excerpt above attests that the 'alien' workers' 'symbolic domination' (e.g., Bourdieu, 1984, 2000; Scott, 1989) through legislated ethno-national citizenship laws is not absolute. Zed, Manase, Fokoro, and fellow 'alien' workers' backdoor acquisition of 'new' *officially* invented national IDs (i.e., annotated 'Citizen') which in principle confer them full legal citizenship status, is a 'tactical ploy' (de Certeau, 1984; Butz and Ripmeester, 1999) which is parasitic on the state's own arbitrary privileging of the legal production of a national citizenship predicated solely on the myth of a *common ethnic ancestry*. This tactical ploy thrives on the opportunistic poaching and reappropriation of an official statist production (i.e., ethno-national citizenship laws) to invent an own subversive production (i.e., *invented* 'native' identities). From the excerpt and to import de Certeau (1984: 31, own emphasis), the latter production is characterised by its "*ruses*… its *poaching*, its *clandestine* nature … its *quasi-*

invisibility, since it shows itself not in its own products… but in an *art of using* those *imposed* on it." Subsequently, the dominant symbolic order of a legal citizenship status, based solely on a state-codified common ethnic ancestry, is "tricked by an art" (de Certeau, 1984: 26). An art of a corruptly *invented*, but officially *legal* 'native' citizenship status whose own production draws from the 'self-same pool of resources' (see Ewick and Silbey, 2003) as the state's monolithic production of ethno-national citizenship. In the excerpt, these self-same resources include the experience and expertise of state-nominated Registry officials, local traditional elites, and the dominant 'indigeneity' criterion of a *legal* membership of the Zimbabwean nation.

However, not all deviant, inventive, and non-conventional uses of dominant systems entail resistance (see Vinthagen and Johansson, 2013). Yet Zed, Manase, and Fokoro's underhand acquisition of 'Citizen'-annotated IDs is both a *symbolic* and *instrumental* practice (Guha, 1987; Lilja and Vinthagen, 2009), which potentially *undermines* the statist arbitrary *production* and *representation* of citizenship through the narrow *legal* lenses of the nation-state (i.e., a common Zimbabwean ethnic ancestry). At the symbolic level, the backdoor acquisition of *official* 'Citizen'-designated IDs equates to the Scottian (1989, 1990) *hidden transcript* or *infra-politics* "intended as [a] *discursive negation* of the existing symbolic order" (Scott, 1985: 57, own emphasis) of the ethno-national citizenship criterion. This hidden transcript partly contests but also leaves intact the dominant *public transcript* of ethno-national citizenship laws (e.g., the CZAA of 2001). The latter produce and label workers of non-Zimbabwean ancestry as 'aliens' via the monolithic criterion of 'indigeneity'. The same backdoor practice also advances the 'alien' Barura workers' claims to *self-representation* as full 'native' 'Citizens' via an *undeclared* and implicit criterion of having been born and lived in Zimbabwean for a lifetime. The latter criterion is a *counter-hegemonic embodiment* (Kwan and Roth, 2011), which tacitly *undermines* the statist 'indigeneity' criterion of citizenship. However, some ambivalence obtains wherein the Barura workers unwittingly reinforce the dominant symbolic order (i.e., full citizenship via 'Citizen'-annotated IDs) by subscribing to its backdoor invention, while also resisting the 'alien' stereotype entailed by 'Alien'-annotated IDs. This typifies the conflicted relationship between domination and resistance.

At the instrumental level, we noted in Chapter 7 that statist 'alien' national identities deny farm workers (and others) of non-Zimbabwean ancestry legal access to alternative non-wage

livelihoods especially subsistence communal land and land-based resources. This in turn ties such workers almost permanently both to the plantation estate (i.e., as farm-dwellers) and to *exploitative* plantation *wage work* (see Rutherford, 2004, 2016; Sachikonye, 2003; 2012; Mpondi, 2012). So, when Zed, Manase, Fokoro, and their colleagues, through local traditional elites and local and national Registry authorities, poach and manipulate the state's registry system and its divisive 'citizen'/'alien' designations to acquire an invented 'native' identity, this is a *self-regarding* (de Certeau, 1984; de Heredia, 2017) practice that "cuts corners" (Kerkvliet, 2009: 237) for them to get immediate "tacit *de facto* gains" (Scott, 1989: 34). Such gains, as alluded to by Zed, include access to rural communal residential and subsistence land. So, as well as being a survival strategy, the practice constitutes tacit resistance to the state's exclusionary, ultra-nationalist land distribution and access criteria as well as to the plantation capital's exclusive claims on the farm workers' unpaid labour power. The 'alien' workers' access to subsistence land, and therefore to alternative non-plantation wage livelihoods potentially reduces the intensity and frequency with which they participate or toil in capitalist wage work. This entails reduced exploitation and therefore cumulative reduction in Barura farm capital's rate and levels of surplus value. To streamline Scott (1985), the material and self-centred gains associated with the tactical ploy of invented 'nativism' do not erode the political element of the act. The act is simultaneously a survival and resistance stratagem.

Meanwhile, similar to the Scottian (1985) acts that are 'weapons of the weak' in his Malaysian Sedaka case study, the backdoor acquisition of 'Citizen'- designated IDs does *not* advance a collective class and/or status agenda but is an individual representation of class-cum-status struggles on Barura plantation. However, the widespread nature of this tactical ploy implores us to appreciate its incrementally *collective* and *coordinative* appeal. For instance, regarding the backdoor acquisition of 'native' citizenship identities Zed said:

"… this deal is fashionable but risky, ndere pasi pemvura (it is strictly clandestine) *… for you to approach us you must know the coded language for such a deal… we also vet you, lest you could be a spy."* (Informal Chat, Zed October 2016)

Likewise, regarding the collective and coordinative character of the same tactic, Fred, a farm-school teacher, also reiterated:

"… this is a long-established, secretive, and well-coordinated syndicate…ZANU (PF) aligned traditional authorities -chiefs, village heads, use their state-based authority and links with influential officials in district and national Registry offices… my two cousins of Zambian origin, farm workers here, said that they 'greased the hands' (paid a bribe) *of two village heads, way back in 2000, to officially change their national ID status from 'Alien' to 'Citizen' …"* (Interview, Fred, January 2017)

The two excerpts demonstrate that invented 'Citizen' (i.e., 'native') designations on national IDs, despite being typical of the many small-scale, *individualistic* practices of defiance that thrive on disguise, secrecy, and relative safety, also require some level of *informal coordination* and *cooperation* (Scott, 1985, 1989; Vinthagen and Johansson, 2013) among social agents. In this instance, the *bribe*, euphemised in the excerpts as 'a thank you', and *underground* referrals (to key actors like chiefs and kraal heads) form part of the undeclared informal networks of understanding that bind these inventive, repetitive, transient alliances. To streamline Scott (1989), we witness a practice of mundane resistance that thrives on *passive* and *secret support* among 'alien' farm workers, chiefs, kraal heads, village heads, local and national government Registry officials. All these actors and their backdoor performance increasingly remain anonymous, but rely on the implicit, and sometimes ambivalent, understandings that permeate such informal networks (see Scott, 1989, 1990; Kerkvliet, 2009).

Yet, Ortner (1995) queries the self-interestedness and scatteredness of such acts to pass as resistance. The fact that Zed, Fred, and fellow workers regard the informal acquisition of 'Citizen'- annotated IDs as *"fashionable…common"* suggests that the practice, despite being scattered, self-interested, and embedded in ordinary farm and village life, has also developed into a *pervasive pattern* (Scott, 1985; de Heredia, 2017). Importantly, the aggregate consequences of such a scattered but widespread act potentially *undermine* the symbolic violence and socio-economic exclusion and deprivation entailed by legislated ethno-national citizenship. Overall, invented 'native' identities epitomise the *ambivalent entanglement* (Vinthagen and Johansson, 2013) of a statist symbolic *order/strategy* and worker-centric *tactic* (de Certeau, 1984), of a *public* and *hidden transcript* (Scott, 1990) in a quotidian struggle of trickery and reappropriation of ethno-national citizenship in ways that both contest and reinforce it as the legitimate culture.

Nevertheless, possession of IDs bearing either 'invented' or authentic 'Citizen' designations by both farm workers of non-Zimbabwean and Zimbabwean paternal ancestry, respectively, does not always guarantee them *actual* access to the symbolic-cum-material entitlements thereto. This can partly be explained by earlier findings in Chapter 7, which revealed that since 2000, unquestioning *political loyalty* to no other political party except the 'revolutionary' party ZANU (PF) has also emerged and even often superseded legislated 'nativism', as another significant criterion of constituting one as 'truly' Zimbabwean. This is a subject we detail later

in a section that concerns resistance to partisan political subjugation. Presently, suffice to say that Barura workers, who in *principle* (i.e., *officially* on their IDs) are 'fully' Zimbabwean either through 'invented' or authentic 'Citizen'-designated IDs, realise *actual* access to socio-economic rights and resources through alternative, grassroots, *polylithic* modes of belonging. Below, we spotlight a plantation-based, worker-crafted civil society as one such polylithic sociality.

8.3.2 Polylithic Belonging at Barura: A Worker-Crafted, Worker-Centric Civil Society

In light of findings, we adapt Gramsci's (1971) original notion of *civil society* to examine the workers' *tacit contest* of the symbolic violence of legislated ethno-national belonging, which mutually complicates an *exploitative* commercial forestry labour process. We adopt but contextualise Gramsci's conceptualisation of civil society as associations that are *nominally* autonomous from the state and economy, but are in *fact*, sanctioned and guaranteed by these self-same institutions. In Gramsci's European case, *civil society* produced hegemonic consent to domination by channelling subaltern dissent into civil organisations (e.g., political parties, schools, churches, trade unions, etc.), whose cultural mandate was set within *capitalist* regulatory and administrative *interests*. Similarly, Rutherford (2004) alludes to a Foucauldian persuasion of civil society as a form of modern political rationality, namely 'governmentality', which concerns the *official* promotion (by politicians and experts) of civil society to direct the politico-economic conduct and worldview of citizens. However, in the ensuing empirical setting, we encounter a *worker-invented* and *worker-centric* civil society, whose associational dynamics are largely predicated on the workers' *own* normative virtues and politico-economic interests. We submit that a *farm worker-invented* civil culture poses a tacit workplace-based symbolic-cum-material challenge (i.e., counter-hegemony) to statist ethno-nationality (and also to domestic governance). The nature and dynamics of this *resituated* civil society were encapsulated in Farmworker G's paradigmatic narrative:

"Us, of Malawian, Mozambican, or Zambian origin, whose IDs bear 'A' (for alien) *... together with most of our 'vemuno'* (natives) *fellows, have our own understanding and experience of real, real, belonging…being a true, full member of the farm or village community defies their* (i.e., the state's) *'A's and 'C's* (for citizen) *on national IDs… Real belonging which also means actually getting survival things is lived and realised by committed membership of close-knit groups of trust, support, camaraderie…groups where we have the unselective solving of spiritual, material, emotional problems - one's sex, possessions* (i.e., class)*, ethnic origin does not matter… common groups here, on the farms, in villages, are our own burial societies, our own 'mikando'* (stokvels or rotating money and grocery saving schemes)*, our own independent churches…All these fellowships defy the 'A's and 'C's on IDs… Ubuntu* (strong sense of solidarity irrespective of difference) *takes over as the real deal…"* (Interview, Farmworker G, January 2017)

Also, in keeping with a break from and tacit dissent to statist, monolithic notions of citizenship and a shift to more *polylithic* representations, worker K gave an emblematic case of a popular view of religious fellowship on Barura estate. K is a devotee of one of the numerous farm-based independent African apostolic churches which, overall, command large followings. K submitted:

"…This church founded by us workers for workers and other believers, is one such sincere community…unconditional recognition and acceptance prevail…It doesn't matter whether you support this or that political party, whether rich or poor, old or young, whether they say you are 'wemuno' (native) *or 'mubvakure'* (alien)*…We at least learn to accept, respect, and tolerate each other as is… Individual differences are harnessed into one tolerant communion of brotherhood, sisterhood … unconditional emotional, material support, despite our 'misiyano'* (different social stations)*."* (Interview, Farmworker K, February 2017)

In light of the excerpts, Rutherford's (2004) seminal work is a relevant point of departure as it deliberately locates the promotion of civil society in the Zimbabwean commercial farm space. As such, we juxtapose the work with our unfolding analysis. In the vignettes, workers G and K attest to a *worker-centric* crafting, membership, and administration of *localised* civil communions, namely burial societies, independent apostolic churches and stokvels. These constitute and typify what Comaroff and Comaroff (1999: 23) characterise as local "*analogues*" to the Gramscian (1971) and Rutherfordian (2004) Euro-Amero-type civil society. In his study, Rutherford's emphasis is on the *official p*ursuit of civil society in the 1990s, wherein its proponents were Western donor-funded civil organisations. In particular, these included nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) such as the Farm Community Trust of Zimbabwe (FCTZ) working with farm development committees (FADCOs) as liaisons between the NGOs and the farm workers. However, regarding the current (i.e., 2017) presence of NGOs on Barura, and other commercial farms, Official C, like many farm workers asserted:

"… NGOs on this and other farms peaked late 90s… since 2000 no more NGOs like FCTZ… their licences withdrawn by the ZANU (PF) government …suspicion that these foreign-funded NGOs on farms, elsewhere, were now part of the imperialist project… turning farm workers, white farmers, other citizens against ZANU (PF) to topple it from power…" (Key Informant Interview, Official C, November 2016)

So, contrary to the convention of the 1990s *formalised* dissemination of civil society by NGOs, which were "originally part of the *government's* adoption of a *neoliberal* mode of governance" (Rutherford, 2004: 124; own emphasis), workers such as G and K inadvertently reimagine and enact an *organic,* relatively *autonomous* (i.e., from Barura farm capital and the local state agents), *informal*, *everyday* form of civil society. A civil formation, which is relatively free from, and transgresses, the state-capital nexus' *self-interested* notions and practice of politico-economic citizenship. Also breaking from an equally official, and *hegemonic* Gramscian-type (1971) civil society, the worker-crafted one is *counter-hegemonic* by being largely *informal*

and *organic* (in its constitution and practise), tacitly evades the *official* legal and political policing of full citizenship as implied in codified ethno-national citizenship laws, and domestic government.

To this end, workers G, K, and fellows participate in a civil society underpinned by the advancement and recognition of a mutually interwoven *polylithic* criteria of cultural citizenship, which impartially and wholesomely incorporates political affiliation, gender, class, ethnicity, and age. All these criteria are *heterogeneously* incorporated in the burial societies, independent apostolic churches, and money saving clubs insomuch that each criterion cannot be reduced to the other. As such, cultural *difference* is (re)centred as a key *integrative* (solidarity) and *allocative* (resources) basis of citizenship. More so, communion-inspired heterogeneous labels like *"Ubuntu"*, *"brotherhood"*, or *"sisterhood"* override and contest *monolithic exclusionary* statist labels like 'citizen'/ 'alien' or 'pro-ZANU (PF)'/ 'anti-ZANU (PF)'. The workers' membership of these often-underappreciated subaltern politico-cultural communities (i.e., hegemonies from below), predicated as it is on heterogeneity, undermines the statist logic of membership that privileges *legal status* and that is homogenously *confined* to the nation-state, the workspace, or political party. As a result, we have greater potential for *inclusive citizenship* (Lister, 2007) wherein the workers' membership of the burial societies, churches, and stokvels becomes much about norms, practices, identities, and recognition as about *formal* legal rights and obligations. Also, to import Werbner and Yuval-Davis (1999), such a civil culture is an embodiment of *cultural citizenship* (i.e., subaltern hegemony) in terms of privileging the workers' rights to be *different,* to re-value stigmatised identities, to legitimately embrace their hitherto marginalised lifestyles, and to advance them without hindrance.

Therefore, the civil associations in the vignettes, as with the FADCOs and women's clubs in Rutherford's (2004) study, are the cultural or ideational *grassroots* vehicles informing the Barura farm workers' enhanced politico-economic and cultural well-being. However, with Rutherford's FADCOs and clubs, this mandate was mainly exercised "*within* the *administrative* arrangements of *farms* and *local government* bodies" (Rutherford, 2004: 129, own emphasis). This being the case, we cannot help but envisage a civil project that was susceptible to socio-economic capture by a farm capital-management dyad, which would prefer paternalistic relations, and to political capture by local ZANU (PF) agents who would prefer

partisan political citizenship on commercial farms. By contrast, G and K's worker-directed and worker-reconstituted civil society, as informal and remotely connected as it is to the legislative and administrative shackles of the local state and farm capital, *resituates* citizenship as "a more *total relationship*, inflected by identity, social positioning, cultural assumptions, institutional practices and a *sense of belonging*" (Werbner and Yuval-Davis, 1999:4 in Lister, 2007; own emphasis). Through an own 'tailor-made' civil society and culture, Barura workers reconstitute citizenship as a multi-tiered context-specific inclusive concept and practice. Given the foregoing analysis, it follows that a worker-crafted civil society is a *dissident sub-culture* (Scott, 1989) or a *counter-hegemony* (Gramsci, 1979) which poses some *hidden challenge* to the material exclusion and symbolic violence, which underlie *dominant cultures* of belonging (i.e., codified ethno-national citizenship and domestic government on farms) on Barura plantation. This is illuminated further hereunder.

Both Rutherford's (2004) and the current analysis *resituate* the cultivation of civil society in the Zimbabwean commercial farm space. Rutherford's main thesis is that this cultivation *articulates* with other localised practices neither in a transformative nor singularly hegemonic way. However, while we think *with* Rutherford, we also transcend his thesis by arguing that a *worker-crafted* civil society is in fact, a potential site of *hidden resistance* to some of the localised citizenship practices (i.e., domestic government), which Rutherford alludes to. Not to mention legislated ethno-nationality and ZANU (PF)-centric politics on Barura plantation.

Suffice to assert that G, K, and other workers' crafting, membership, and cultivation of a relatively autonomous (from the state-capital nexus) civil society somehow synonymise the Gramscian (1971) *war of position*. However, in the current empirical context, it is a *quotidian* and *disguised* 'war', which culminates to an everyday 'Modern Prince' of a localised bottom-up rationality of civil association (i.e., subaltern counter-hegemony). In keeping with a workplace-specific *tacit* 'war of position', G, K, and workmates *reconstruct* the idea and practice of civil society insomuch that the nature and dynamics of its civil culture of farmzenship exponentially *delink* from and *evade* the *self-interested* economic and politico-legal limits set reciprocally by state agents and farm capital.

That is, first, the 'indigenous' counter-hegemonic civil formations in the vignettes, unlike those in van Onselen's (1976) colonial Zimbabwe mine workers' study, do *not* cultivate work relations that are akin to Rutherford's (1997, 2001a) *domestic government* (see Chapter 7).

That is, these civil groups do not cultivate *paternalistic relations* between workers and the capital-management dyad wherein the latter manipulates such civil associations, to induce in the former, patterns of obedience (i.e., free consent), service, and habituation to the exploitative and debilitating conditions of farm work. Second, the formation and functions of such worker-crafted civil socialities, as largely informal and quotidian as they are, increasingly detach from the statist politico-legal constraints and the symbolic violence and/or hegemony thereto. Thus, in the vignettes, the largely informal *worker-invented civil culture* of integration and allocation, in *tacit opposition* to *statist* codified ethno-national citizenship and domestic government, principally operates under and through the *direct ownership, control*, and *worldviews* of group members like G, K, and colleagues. Relatedly, also in keeping with the resistance logic, an import of Lilja and Vinthagen's (2014) appropriation of a Foucauldian approach to everyday resistance invites the framing of these worker-cultivated voluntary associations as 'techniques of the self'. We explore this below.

The vignettes further attest that the *'alien'* (both in the ethno-national and anti-ZANU (PF) citizenship senses) workers' reading of and activity in this bottom-up civil society becomes *personalised* insomuch that the integrative and allocative functions of citizenship assume relatively *autonomous* private meanings and dynamics. The workers *alternatively* view and enact these functions as fluid, unconditional, inclusive, and empowering within terms set and defined by the member workers. For instance, G and K portray a civil membership predicated on the *"…unselective…"* or *"…unconditional…"* allocation of socio-economic resources, and the *"…unconditional recognition…"* of membership diversity. In an inadvertent counter-hegemonic fashion, workers like G and K *denigrate* and *rescind* exclusionary, divisive statist ideational binaries like 'Citizen'/ 'Alien' or 'pro-ZANU (PF)'/ 'anti-ZANU (PF)' and reconstruct 'neutral' relations of flexibility and inclusivity such as *'Ubuntu', 'camaraderie',* etc. Social divisions *solely* based on ethnicity, gender, or political affiliation become largely irrelevant in deciding each worker's acceptance as a *full* member deserving of *full* socio-economic rights and resources. Subsequently, the workers' membership of this grassroot civil culture (i.e., a technique of the self) entails their unwitting "training in thought and reality" (Foucault, 1988b: 37 in Lilja and Vinthagen, 2014). Some (un)intentional training and normalisation, which entail some *embedded resistance* (Mihelich and Storrs, 2003) to the

integrative and allocative exclusions associated with legislated ethno-national citizenship and domestic government.

In all, this analysis reveals that an organic *worker-invented* civil society cultivates inclusive *polylithic cultural identities* and *relations* of citizenship, which increasingly attract *unconditional* recognition by group members. Such a dynamic inadvertently affords Barura 'alien' workers more opportunities to somewhat lay claims on scarce integrative and allocative stakes of socio-economic belonging. This epitomises the 'alien' workers' unwitting piecemeal *contest* of state-sanctioned ethno-national citizenship and domestic government, which are all originally meant to exclude them from full membership of Zimbabwe both as a nation and as a resource. Overall, a worker-cultivated civil society is an exemplar case of a visible "*counter-hegemonic* embodiment" (Kwan and Roth, 2011: 194; own emphasis), which is *politically invisible* (to observers and targets) as it does not conform to conventional understandings of resistance. We have identifiable civil group affiliates like G and K, who *unwittingly oppose* dominant forms of citizenship by creating an own civil society and actively participating in it. While part of our analysis and convention may rightfully position such a worker-crafted civil culture as the Barura workers' daily social-safety net (survival strategy), suffice to assert that it also doubles as hidden resistance. It is an everyday sociality, which simultaneously exudes an *oppositional* undertone to exclusionary, exploitative, and subordinating forms of citizenship on Barura forestry plantation.

Relatedly, below, we unpack the claim that a seemingly *apolitical* survival practice such as the Barura 'alien' farm workers' underhand informal access to rural communal land, via *convivial relations*, also constitutes embedded resistance to the monolithic codified ethno-national citizenship. This becomes all the more valid given the fact that in Zimbabwe, land access is one major signifier of full citizenship (Hammar and Raftopoulos, 2003; Mpondi, 2012; Sachikonye, 2012).

8.3.3 When *de jure* 'Alien' Identities become *de facto* 'Citizen' Relations: Conviviality and Informal Land Access

In Chapter 7, we detailed how, in keeping with the colonial legacy, the Zimbabwean state continues to deploy *legislated* ethno-national citizenship to produce the *'alien'* farm worker identity, and then use 'alienness' or 'foreign' ancestry as a *legal* basis for exclusion from residential and subsistence land (and land rights) in the rural communities and elsewhere. So,

in *principle*, codified ethnicity-centred citizenship *legally* denies 'alien' Barura farm workers full *membership* and *ownership* of Zimbabwe as a *nation*, and as a livelihood *resource*, respectively. However, in *practice*, the findings below reveal that localised *convivial social relations* (between the (near)landless 'alien' workers and their village-dwelling, land-owning, and/or land-controlling counterparts) unsettle and reverse the *legal* criterion (i.e., Zimbabwean ethnic ancestry) in shaping land access. In this instance, *conviviality* becomes the main *cultural politics of recognition* (see Englund, 2004; Rutherford, 2008) – i.e., the *acceptable* social decorum and morality informing the 'alien' workers' *actual* access to land and land-based livelihoods.

Thus, in light of findings, and Nyamnjoh and Brudvig's (2014) notion of *intimate strangers*, we use *conviviality* to refer to the idea and practice of *living together* and *interdependence* irrespective of *difference* or *diversity*. The anchoring logic is that individuals interact in a *creative*, *autonomous*, but *interdependent* way mainly to satisfy pressing individual needs. Thus, conviviality is somehow the equivalent of Durkheimian (1985) *organic solidarity* wherein difference, diversity, and interdependence are the bases of social cohesion. The individual largely becomes an "exchangist" (Ibid: 32) whereby they rely on each other for resources and rights but may not have common values or beliefs. Below, we showcase quintessential cases of how conviviality plays out with land access regarding Barura 'alien' workers. We focus on legitimate, but unofficial and/or 'illegal' land access deals. However, a profitable background especially to the *underhand* land deals involving rural traditional leaders concerns the leaders' emic portrait of the current state of their land roles in Zimbabwean rural communal settings.

8.3.3.1 Background: Traditional Elites, Rural Land Access, and the Zimbabwean State

The author engaged two chiefs and two kraal heads, separately. They all concurred that, as had been the case with both the pre-colonial and colonial eras, they still remained the custodians of rural communal land and its resources (and rights thereto), which they held in *trust* of the *ancestors*, the *rural communities*, and the *state*. Also, the four traditional authorities elaborated that, through trans-generational *customary* heritage, they still wielded the *traditional/ancestral authority* to parcel out residential and/or subsistence plots and grant usufruct rights to communal resources. However, for all the four interlocuters, a significant development, since 2000, has been the unprecedented *direct* and *intensified* involvement of the ZANU (PF)-led

state in the (once purely traditional) selection processes and land mandate of traditional leaders. According to the four, this twist entails unprecedented political constraints on the traditional *autonomy* they once held in land parcelling. The state's reasons for this political move need not detain us here. Suffice to say that, in the current context of underhand land deals involving traditional elites and 'alien' farm workers, the implications of this move were encapsulated in Chief B's emblematic testament:

"…Any chief, any kraal head, whether you truly like ZANU (PF) or not – the fact that you're now ordained via ZANU (PF)'s keen involvement, inevitably makes you ZANU (PF)! … now, land parcelling… In our 'mitemo' (citizenship laws)*, village land is strictly for 'vana vevhu'* (natives)*. But listen, since we now practically work with ZANU (PF) village cells, branches, one's active support of this liberation party, which fought and still fights for the land becomes the most important ticket to village land and its wealth…"* (Key Informant Interview, Chief B, August 2016)

In the excerpt, as with the dominant view on Barura estate and in the villages, traditional leaders, by merely being ordained through the now *quasi-traditional* (i.e., within the partisan political interests of the governing party) procedures, become perceived or known ZANU (PF) agents. This somehow situates their *political* and *national* identities in stark contrast with the Barura workers' own 'alien' and known or perceived *anti*-ZANU (PF) identities, which the dominant legal and political discourse produce (see Chapter 7). To import Martiniello (2015), this is illustrative of the multi-layered nature of traditional authorities and tensions that inhabit the 'customary'. Interestingly, as the ensuing vignettes show, despite the foregoing socio-political cleavages and tensions, the traditional leaders and the 'alien' workers significantly remain bound by one common interest of material well-being/necessity. So, in *principle,* being 'alien' both in being of non-Zimbabwean ancestry and being known or perceived to be 'disloyal' to ZANU (PF) (i.e., 'native alien' in Chapter 7) disqualifies farm workers from land and land rights. However, in *practice,* these two criteria are sometimes *transgressed* and *reversed,* as illustrated in the prototypical fieldwork evidence hereunder. We begin with underhand land deals, then, enroute, factor in the related land rental deals, and finally analyse them concurrently.

8.3.3.2 Underhand Land Deals with Communal Traditional Elites and Land Rentals from 'Native' Villagers

Findings confirm that Barura 'alien' workers realise the *de facto* procurement of economic citizenship through underhand dealings with state-ordained traditional elites of nearby rural communities to access land and land-based resources, (also see Muzondidya, 2007). The author established cordial relations with seven households, whose heads were male farm workers of

non-Zimbabwean descent. These *'alien'* household heads were Barura wage workers, who ironically, doubled as land-owning peasants. Ironic, since ownership of rural communal land or any other land is the legal preserve of 'aborigines'/'natives'. The author engaged all heads in regular casual chats. The most revealing chat was the one, which the author had with worker P while sauntering around his three-acre plot of maize crop at the western end of his half-acre residential plot.

After asking P how, as a so-called 'alien' (i.e., non-Zimbabwean ancestry), he had managed to acquire residential and subsistence land in a rural communal village, a space *legally* reserved for the predominantly peasant 'native' Zimbabweans, a significant part of his response was, "… then some time in 2009, I paid the *'Sadunhu'* (kraal head) the third and final secret visit… under night cover, once in the *Sadunhu's* compound, I did exactly what he, and his trusted *'Sabhuku'* (village head) had instructed in an earlier meeting… we headed straight to the *Sadunhu's* cattle pen and left the small gift, a healthy heifer, in his cattle pen… a week later, the *Sadunhu* parcelled out a virgin piece of land to me, this very land we are standing on …" At some point I asked, "…aren't you afraid that, as a so-called *mubvakure* ('alien'), you risk losing the land one day?" He calmly replied, "…very slim chance, look, this is 2017, I got the land way back in 2009… since then, I have religiously stuck to the *Sadunhu's* terms, that I must always subscribe quarterly for my ZANU (PF) membership card…to also always ensure that my family actively participates in ZANU (PF) *poritikisi* (politics), but come elections, vote for my real party … It's a win-win scenario, see, *Sadunhus* have land-giving power, but they don't have a salary or stable income, so they need the gifts 'income', while us as *vabvakure* ('aliens') we need land… Major conditions for all involved – stick to the terms, and keep the deal under wraps, don't deal and say!" (Field notes, January 2017).

Before analysing the excerpt above, we showcase similar and complementary evidence, which emerged of the 'alien' workers' *actual* access to rural communal land and land rights through a similar but a less risky form of *conviviality*. The latter involved 'native' land-owning Barura farm workers or their predominantly peasant village counterparts *renting out* small plots of tillage land (in the villages) to their landless 'alien' farm-dwelling counterparts. Among the many 'alien' Barura workers who testified to their involvement in such informal transactions, worker O's narrative was more revealing and paradigmatic:

*"… Many such deals – leasing or renting **tillage land** is **not outlawed**. Via networks, most of us rent a rain-fed piece of tillage land from a fellow worker, a present or absent villager, who as 'vemuno'* ('natives') *all own subsistence land in the villages… We pay a negotiable rent in cash or kind… based on honesty, these contracts can last many years…A really unusual but prevalent occurrence is that in these deals, the leaser or lessee's political affiliation is irrelevant! There is a mutual silence…no need to mind or disclose the other's political party … the leaser and lessee come to belong to one political party named 'Poverty', with a major common goal of meeting pressing material needs… even well-known ZANU(PF) village activists rent out land regardless of the lessee's political affiliation…"* (Worker O, Interview, February 2017)

In both vignettes, despite their *de jure* 'alien' status, as well as their known or perceived disloyalty to ZANU (PF) (i.e., 'native aliens'), workers such as P and O still realise *de facto* economic citizenship (i.e., *actual* access to land and land-based livelihoods) through a *location-specific* citizenship of *convivial communal relations*. The latter relations destabilise and reverse the legislated statist 'aborigine' criterion of citizenship and therefore become the 'new' *cultural politics of recognition* (see Englund, 2004; Rutherford, 2008) facilitating both the covert and overt land deals in the vignettes. In both land deals, conviviality manifests when social actors, who despite their diverse and different ethnic, political, and class standings, become 'intimate strangers' (Nyamnjoh and Brudvig, 2014) who *coalesce* mainly out of economic necessity. There obtains the convenient suspension of class, ethnic, and political cleavages. In the two anecdotes, we thus witness *contradictory* alliances between *landless, 'alien'* workers of known or perceived *ZANU (PF) disloyalty* and *land-owning* traditional leaders and/or villagers of *'native'* origin and known or perceived *ZANU (PF) loyalty*.

This scenario resonates with Cousins and Claassens's claim in Rutherford (2008: 22, own emphasis) that "land rights" in Africa are embedded in *overlapping social relations* and *identities* and can be acquired through "…*transactions* of various *kinds* (including *gifts*, loans…)". In the vignettes, P's 'gift' of the heifer, and O's rent in cash or kind epitomise such transactions, which also attest to how land rights in Africa are not solely shaped by statist legislation, but also by *negotiation* and *fluidity* (see Sara Berry in Rutherford, 2008). So, material struggles over land double as symbolic struggles over the meaning of citizenship. In the anecdotes *lived* citizenship (i.e., 'farmzenship') entails miniscule convivial communal relations, and not *necessarily* the *ideal* monolithic statist ethno-national citizenship laws. Meanwhile, the *'illegality'* (especially of the underhand land deals), and the contradictory convivial networks that facilitate both land deals necessitate an analysis of *how* they then become *feasible* and *sustained* both as the Barura 'alien' and/or 'native alien' workers' *unwitting resistance* to statist ethno-nationality-centred citizenship, and as their conduit to *de facto* economic citizenship.

The *effective articulation* especially of the underhand land deals largely depends on the "pervasive use of disguise" (Scott, 1989: 54). This is realised in various but related ways. First, the deal is done secretly (at night) so that *Sadunhu, Sabhuku*, and worker P's personal identities and the transaction are anonymised. Second, by its *own practical properties* (Vinthagen and Johansson, 2013) an act can render itself to concealment when it *avoids* being detected as resistance or as 'illegal'. So, P's land ownership, instead of coming across as unwitting resistance (to statist land exclusion), ordinarily presents itself as 'self-help' (Scott, 1985; de Heredia, 2017) – a *normal* livelihood strategy far from any dramatic seizure of land. Also, P's membership of ZANU (PF) and his active participation (either simulated or real) in its politics veils and 'sanitises' the illegality stemming from P's known 'alien' (i.e., non-Zimbabwean ancestry) identity, which would otherwise legally disqualify him from land ownership. The feasibility and legitimacy of the latter ruse hinges on the political development spotlighted earlier by Chief B wherein, since 2000, loyalty to the governing party [ZANU (PF)] has often superseded ethno-national origin as the main criterion for land access. Therefore, the physical properties of the underhand land deals bear a Scottian (1989: 54) "…double meaning…so that [they] cannot be treated as a direct open challenge" to the statist *ethno-national* and *partisan* criteria of accessing land and land rights. Last, and importantly, no matter how individualistic the two land deals may appear, they still have to depend on a "minimal level of group cohesion" (Scott, 1989: 36). In the excerpts such cohesion derives from a "normative consensus" (Ibid.: 39) of material necessity between participants like the *Sadunhu*, and P, as well as land leasers and lessees like O. Let us explore this further.

This consensus around a common material need is enunciated in part of O's narrative which emphasises how land leasers and lessees of different political affiliations *"…come to* ***belong to one*** *political party called 'Poverty', with a* ***major common goal*** *of* ***meeting pressing material needs****…".* It is this very solidarity which foregrounds and informs the participants' *encouragement* of and *tolerance* to the informal and/or 'illegal' land deals, amid the participants' contrasting class, ethnic, and political statuses. In fact, the material necessity resolves itself into a conspiratorial silence, which derives from the participants' *self-interested muteness* (see Scott, 1989). A muteness which, in the case of underhand land deals, is illustrated when P warns, *"…keep the deal* ***under wraps, don't deal and say****…".* Likewise, in the land rental deals, worker O insists on "… *a* ***mutual silence****…"* around the leasers and lessees'

political allegiances. However, apart from the direct participants, the two land deals also get muted secret support from the generality of fellow observers as typically represented by peasant Q who said, "… let's say one becomes aware of such deals or those involved, why snitch? All we know is, it's for a common cause…poverty is one common enemy that transcends our differences…so the common stance in the villages, farms, is, hear no evil, see no evil, and say no evil…". In all, in addition to the two earlier sources of disguise, a *collective conspiracy of silence* gives the informal and/or 'illegal' land deals some semblance of a public portrait of *normalcy* and *compliance*. Consequently, such land deals become relatively safe, feasible, and legitimate. How then, as disguised, and seemingly 'normal' as they are, do these land deals come to qualify as resistance? We explore this below.

It is important to note that the 'alien' and 'native alien' workers' informal access to land and land rights (i.e., economic citizenship) in the villages is a *function* of the convivial relations (i.e., organic solidarity), which are cultivated at the rural communal level. Therefore, these two components of *lived* citizenship mutually constitute and reinforce each other as *hidden resistance* to the integrative (solidarity) and allocative (resources and rights) exclusions associated with codified ethno-national belonging and/or partisan (i.e., strictly pro-ZANU (PF)) politics. However, for a clearer analysis, we separately engage the symbolic and material dynamics of the resistance.

At the symbolic level, convivial communal relations typically represent Scottian (1990) *hidden transcripts* (i.e., private meanings and understandings of citizenship) of subversive citizenship *against* ethno-national citizenship's divisive legal categories (i.e., 'citizen' vs 'alien') and exclusionary meanings of belonging. Similar to a worker-crafted civil society, convivial relations also epitomise a 'Third Space' (see Bhabha, 1994; Soja, 1996). An in-betwixt socio-political space of belonging which, *contrary* to ethno-nationality-oriented citizenship, *destabilises* citizenship binaries (e.g., 'native'/ 'foreigner') through the cultivation of creative, polylithic, and elastic identities and associations. For instance, Zimbabwean citizenship legislation and the dominant political discourse divisively classify and represent workers like P and O as 'alien' and 'anti-ZANU (PF)' respectively. Yet, by contrast, convivial communal associations tacitly (re)represent and socially *incorporate* them as *de facto* 'citizens', who can also realise an *effective* politico-economic *sense of belonging* (see Werbner and Yuval-Davis, 1999 in Lister, 2007) through informal incorporation in both land-based livelihoods and

simulated loyalty to ZANU (PF). Thus, in the vignettes, conviviality entails an undeclared cumulative *symbolic denigration* and *negation* (Scott, 1989), of the separative and reproductive symbolic violence of ethno-national citizenship and/or the discipline of partisan national politics. It also entails the tacit *undermining* of their (ethno-national citizenship and partisan politics) legitimation (via legislation and public political discourse) by the Zimbabwean state agents as modes of belonging par excellence on Barura estate, the nearby villages, and elsewhere.

At the material-cum-symbolic level, the same convivial relations become the silent localised criterion informing the 'alien' farm workers' ownership of and/or usufruct rights to rural communal land. This is an "almost unwitting resistance" (Mihelich and Storrs, 2003: 419) wherein all the accomplices in the land deals *inadvertently undermine* the statist criteria (i.e., legislated indigeneity and being pro-ZANU (PF)) while being motivated by material necessity and *not* by a consciously articulated resistance. Therefore, a statist politico-legal criterion of land access gets transgressed and *tacitly challenged* by an organic context-specific socio-cultural criterion of conviviality. To adapt Bauman's (2005) contrasting metaphors of *liquid* and *solid* (modernity), conviviality typifies a *liquid* criterion/rationality to rural land access by Barura farm workers. It is a *fluid* criterion that is easily *adaptable* to *change* as and when needed. This is *opposed* to the statist *solid* criteria of rigid habituated definitions and meanings of citizenship, which are resistant to diversity. Meanwhile, at a more material level, any successful informal and/or 'illegal' land deal is *itself* a survival strategy which, to follow Scott (1989: 35), confers "*de facto* material gains", for instance, in the form of land-based livelihoods to workers like P and O. Overall, 'alien' Barura workers come to *practically* lay *effective* claims on land and land rights, which, in principle, the state designates as the *legal* preserve of 'indigenous' Zimbabweans. Such a creative and location-specific laying of claims by 'aliens' *implicitly subverts* and is a *counteraction* to statist interests to exclude Barura farm workers of 'foreign' ancestry from land resources and rights.

To conclude this section, ordinarily, the informal and/or 'illegal' land deals and the convivial communal relations that shape them correctly qualify as coping and/or survival strategies. Nevertheless, they simultaneously constitute the 'alien' Barura workers' *creative ways* of *using* (e.g., de Certeau, 1984) dominant statist practices and meanings of citizenship in order to subvert or evade them in relatively safe, piecemeal, and non-confrontational ways. More

importantly, closer analysis has also revealed that these subversive and evasive self-help practices, despite being seemingly mundane, could also be quite *political* (i.e., resistance) in nature. First, this is evident when, the subversive practices, in variously (in) advertent ways, result in the *mitigation* or *denial* of the state's symbolic violence of 'alien' labels on Barura farm workers. Second, disguised resistance is also evident when the so-called alien workers *advance* their own citizenship claims (i.e., *de facto* access to land and land rights) in ways that *oppose* the Zimbabwean state's legal and politico-economic interests to arbitrarily exclude them from land and land-based dependencies.

Meanwhile, Chapter 7 highlighted how, post-2000, partisan political affiliation [i.e., loyalty only to ZANU (PF) or to a ZANU (PF)-led state] has, alongside legislated 'indigeneity', also become a really significant and sometimes a primary criterion informing 'full' membership of Zimbabwe as a nation and as a resource. Accordingly, Barura workers' quotidian resistance simultaneously engages statist strategies aimed at both their *violent* and *disciplinary* political (i.e., everyday national and electoral politics) subjugation. It is the workers' hidden resistance to these complementary forms of subjugation that we now turn to.

8.4 Workers' Opposition to Physically Violent and/or Disciplinary Partisan Political Subjugation

The post-2000 assignment of prominence (mostly by ZANU (PF)-aligned state bureaucrats) to the public discourse of pro-ZANU (PF)/ 'liberation party' national politics as a *de facto* criterion for 'full' Zimbabwean citizenship entailed the following on Barura plantation. It produced farm workers who, in *principle*, had a 'full' citizen legal status via either 'invented' or authentic 'Citizen'-annotated IDs, but who in *practice* [owing to their known or perceived disloyalty to ZANU (PF) or a ZANU (PF)-led state], remained *unrecognised* by state agents regarding *actual* membership of Zimbabwe as a nation and as a land resource. Thus, in Chapter 7, we coined *'native aliens'* to refer to a category of Barura workers (and others), who on their national IDs are 'native' but are politically 'alien' (i.e., disloyal to ZANU (PF) and/or loyal to the MDC). The other common category concerns 'alien' (i.e., non-Zimbabwean ancestry) Barura workers, who could also be politically 'alien' in the sense of either known or perceived disloyalty to ZANU (PF) and its politics. Thus, the ensuing sections illuminate practices of hidden resistance by these two categories of Barura workers to the initially mostly *physically violent* and the later more *disciplinary* modes of partisan political subjugation by political

agents of a ZANU (PF)-led state. Specifically, the sub-section below concerns the workers' mundane practices of dissent to ZANU (PF) partisan politics mediated mainly through spectacular political and/or electoral violence (see chapter 7). We begin with what we call counterfeit political allegiances and symbols.

8.4.1. Everyday Resistance to Physically Violent Partisan Politics on Barura Estate

Chapter 7 has already detailed how, from 2000 to 2008, paramilitary agents of the ZANU (PF)-led state mainly deployed *spectacular* political violence to impose strict pro-ZANU (PF) *political* citizenship on Barura plantation. However, findings demonstrate that the effective articulation of this largely *physical* and *malignant* form of political repression became *entangled* with and tacitly *undermined* by a repertoire of localised, inventive, and subversive forms of political citizenship, which we broadly coin *counterfeit political loyalties and symbols.* To import Rutherford (2008), the latter epitomise a localised 'cultural politics of recognition'. That is, creative grassroot political interactions and identities, which became the *accepted* forms of political conduct informing *national* and *political* citizenship and dependencies on and around Barura plantation. Below, we describe and analyse these simulated political relations, identities, and symbols.

8.4.1.1 Counterfeit ZANU (PF) Political Loyalties and Symbols

The pervasive production of simulated political loyalties, identities, and symbols by 'alien' (in both the non- 'native' and the ZANU (PF) disloyalty sense) workers on Barura estate was a culmination of the ZANU (PF)-led state's heightened labelling of these two categories of farm workers 'dissidents' and 'sell-outs' in the post-2000 era (see Chapter 7). This was attributed to the workers' 'foreign' heritage, and/or their imagined or known political disloyalty to ZANU (PF) and a ZANU (PF)-led government (see Raftopoulos, 2004: Muzondidya, 2007; Mpondi, 2012; Mvundura, 2014). The 'sell-out' tag became entrenched especially after commercial farm workers and their employers, among other citizens, were known or alleged to have voted against the state-driven constitutional referendum of 2000 and to have contributed to the near-defeat of ZANU (PF) by voting for the new opposition MDC in parliamentary elections of the same year (Ibid). Overall, as detailed earlier in Chapter 7, between 2000 and 2008, Zimbabwean commercial farms, white farmers, and farm workers became *targets* of state-sponsored physical violence associated with both the Fast Track Land Reform Program and electoral politics (Hammar and Raftopoulos, 2003). Paradigmatic empirical excerpts in Chapter

7 have already attested to this spectacular political violence. However, to reiterate, one farm worker O of Mozambican descent elaborated:

"I would say between 2000 and 2008, every election period, unimaginable violence targeted mainly at us 'vabvakure' (aliens) *and others suspected or known to support the opposition (MDC) … setting houses on fire, threats, false arrests and incarcerations, beatings, torture, rape, abductions … on estates and nearby villages…since then people are forever afraid, 2008 was the worst…"* (Interview, Farm Worker O, October 2016).

Interestingly, the specific period (i.e., the rest of 2016 and first quarter of 2017) of the execution of the current ethnographic study coincided with increased cell, branch, and national campaigning on Barura plantation estate, other commercial farms, and elsewhere in preparation for the impending 2018 harmonised elections. In brief, the country was in 'election mode', and so were commercial farm spaces, especially given their 'newly' found prominence as potential support and voter bases in the context of polarised violent politics since 2000. So, still bearing the indelible painful memories of the physical penalties and losses associated with the state-sponsored political violence alluded to in Chapter 7 and in the vignette above, most Barura farm workers resorted to the crafting of counterfeit political allegiances, identities, and symbols, which turned out to be both tacit resistance and coping tactics. One specific form of such simulation comprised stage-managed public 'repentances' or 'deflections' from opposition [i.e., pro-MDC and/ or anti-ZANU (PF)] politics.

8.4.1.1 (i) 'Alien' and 'Alien Native' Workers and Counterfeit Political 'Repentances' and Testimonies

The author attended a total of seven localised election campaign rallies (spread over four months), four on Barura estate and three in the nearby villages. He noted that only the governing ZANU (PF)'s campaign rallies were publicly condoned in these two rural spaces. One spectacular and consistent practice at all these rallies was that, amid trademark ululations, whistling, and standing ovations, several farm workers (and villagers), standing in front of campaign crowds, would give animated individual testimonies of their 'repentance' or 'defection' from the opposition MDC to the 'liberation party' (i.e., ZANU-PF). Such public spectacles were often preceded by equally animated 'sermons' of welcoming the 'once-lost-sheep' back to the 'one and only' liberation party, ZANU (PF). These 'welcome sermons' were masterminded by the local ZANU (PF) youth militia, village or farm cell or branch party leaders and ZANU (PF)-aligned former liberation war fighters (colloquially known as 'War Veterans') of the 1970s anti-colonial armed struggle. One such emblematic 'welcome sermon'

was given by a rather overzealous ZANU (PF) branch leader X (from a nearby village) prior to the public showcasing of eleven 'repentant' Barura plantation workers. Part of the sermon went:

"…great! Look at our prodigal sons and daughters… finally seen the light and now permanently back home, to ZANU (PF)…the light that changed Saul to Paul…all our lost sheep, repenting from the party of sell-outs, MDC… Forward with repentance! You, repentees, now qualify for milk and honey (state benefits) *… you have opened the new gates to Canaan…to your piece of farming land, to your state relief schemes, to membership of a winning family!"* (Field notes, Branch Leader X, March 2017)

These sermons were then immediately followed by the 'once-lost-sheep' [i.e., Barura farm workers, of either 'alien' or 'native' descent, who were suspected or known to be anti-ZANU (PF) and/or pro-MDC] giving detailed testimonies of their 'heartfelt', and 'permanent deflection' from opposition MDC politics to permanently join 'the one and only party that brought political independence in 1980 and gave black people land in 2000'. The latter common statement (from the repented) was a calculated, plantation-level *mimic* of what Hammar and Raftopoulos (2003) call ZANU (PF)'s parody of exclusionary nationalism that serves the party's hegemonic claim to a historical 'truth' that excludes both alternative versions of colonial liberation history and those subject-citizens deemed to be 'outsiders'. A quintessential simulated 'defection' testimony was delivered by one seemingly repentant farm worker J. After the enthusiastic and pinpoint chant of ZANU (PF) slogans, a 'repentant' J gave a familiar but compelling testimony:

"…Trusted ZANU(PF) cadres… I quit my post as the secretary of the plantation branch of the MDC today, forthwith!... I submit before you as a fully and truly converted comrade of the one and only revolutionary party… a complete U-turn from the deceit of the MDC to the party with liberation war credentials … the champion party that showed Africa in 2000 that land belongs to sons and daughters of the soil!! Forward with ZANU(PF), down with puppets of the white (the MDC) *… I feel like a heavy burden has been lifted off my back by coming back to where I must have been all along!... ZANU* (ZANU-PF) *is now my home forever!"* (Field Notes: Part of J's Testimony at a Rally, March 2017)

Although, one could have at least spared room for doubt regarding the authenticity of some of the testimonies, J's was compelling enough to have convinced anyone that he had truly defected from the opposition MDC. However, the author later struck cordial relations with worker J via a farm worker-friend who, coincidentally, was J's close relative. Almost a fortnight after J's rally testimony, I was shocked in a casual chat with these two, at J's quarters. I had said "…so it seems ZANU (PF) will get the most votes next year (2018) at Barura and other commercial farm-stationed polling stations…" Both of them burst into dismissive hysterical laughter before J confided, "Believe me you, eight out of any ten of those 'repentances' you witness at rallies are staged. In my specific case, I made them believe, at that rally, that I had quit as the farm

branch secretary of the MDC…in reality, my vote is my secret …You truly think A, B … and E actually repented? No… since 2008, us farm people, as the so-labelled notorious 'sell-outs', have connived that let's behave exactly as ZANU (PF) wants … need to protect ourselves from their beatings, arson, abductions, threats ... So, denouncing the MDC and then seemingly joining ZANU (PF) at a rally…will never erase my real commitment to the MDC deep in my heart… and importantly, during elections, most 'repented ones' actually vote against ZANU (PF) …" (Field Notes, Worker J March 2017)

Worker J's two excerpts above (among several similar others), as confirmation of disguised political trickery by publicly visible tricksters, left the author astounded. Simulated repentances such as J's in the first vignette above constitute disguised (i.e., double meaning) and relatively safe practices of coping and defiance insofar as they are products of marginal or 'third space' (see Bhabha, 1994; Soja, 1996). That is, the 'repentances' neither show themselves as open antagonism to ZANU (PF)'s violent partisan national and/or electoral politics nor open allegiance to alternative opposition MDC politics. They epitomise an oblique creative relational political space, which culminates from the paradoxical entanglement of ZANU (PF)'s violent partisan politics and the *parasitic* tactical responses of defiance, which such a violent political order *inherently* (re)produces and conceals. The physical presence of and 'sermons' by locally based ZANU (PF) agents like Branch Leader X above, embody and symbolise ZANU (PF)'s violent partisan politics at the plantation site. An embodiment, which evokes (in workers like J) the *repressive* fear, pain, harm, and loss that are synonymous with assumed or known disloyalty to ZANU (PF) politics of ultra-nationalism and exclusionary claim on the liberation struggle. Simultaneously, this self-same symbolic presence of a violent partisan political order immanently (re)produces its own contradictory manipulation by enabling worker J and others to *use* it, *poach* it, in order to invent and conceal simulated or counterfeit ZANU (PF) political support. Thus, the latter stratagem largely remains *veiled* (as resistance) insofar as it does *not* reveal itself in its *own products* but those *poached* from the dominant ZANU (PF) political order (e.g., see de Certeau, 1984). The simulations blend with and exude the qualities of authentic allegiances to the governing ZANU (PF) party and its partisan political ideas and practices.

That is, the faked ZANU (PF) affiliations are *tactical ploys* (de Certeau, 1984), which safely *evade* potentially and actively violent ZANU (PF) partisan politics by being *parasitic* on it.

That is, these counterfeit loyalties draw from the self-same nature and dynamics of authentic ZANU (PF) loyalties, thereby camouflaging themselves in the latter. Drawing on Vinthagen and Johansson (2013), the specific concealment of the antagonistic [i.e., inner aggression to and voting against ZANU (PF)] quality of this stage-managed ZANU (PF) support lies in its poached *practical properties*. In worker J's case, the latter include his declared public deflection from and denigration of MDC politics, his public praise of ZANU (PF) politics, and the accurate chanting of its slogans. It is these *pseudo* pro-ZANU (PF) properties which, ironically, *avoid* the 'repentances'' own detection as *anti*-ZANU (PF) tactical ploys. We thus have a "disguised message" of *inner defiance* to ZANU (PF)'s violent partisan politics, which is publicly "delivered by clearly identified" (Scott, 1989: 54-55) 'repentant' Barura workers. More so, from a Scottian (1989: 56) view, the oppositional character of these 'repentances' is also hidden by the workers' "public discursive affirmation of the very arrangements being resisted". To this end, the workers' public testimonies of 'repentance' constitute *euphemised* forms of such affirmation. Overall, the Barura 'alien' and 'native alien' workers enact the Scottian (1990) *public transcript* of open seeming allegiance to ZANU (PF)'s politics while also maintaining a *hidden transcript* of private dissent to it in order to minimise the risk of physical retaliation from the party's paramilitary agents.

Furthermore, feigned support for ZANU (PF) partisan politics may also be made 'invisible' (its agenda at least) by observers and targets through *disregarding* it as resistance since it largely deviates from conventional readings of resistance as *organised* and *confrontational* (see Vinthagen and Johansson 2013). In the vignettes, this 'invisibility' or disregard is, for instance, evident when local ZANU (PF) elites like Branch Leader X publicly praise the 'repentant' via celebratory 'sermons'. Hence, counterfeit ZANU (PF) support constitutes a Scottian (1984) 'weapon of the weak' which, paradoxically, gains *unwitting* complicit support even from local ZANU (PF) representatives. For the latter (and other ZANU (PF) supporters present at these rallies) this practice remains increasingly *politically* invisible [as anti-ZANU (PF) politics] since it is mundane and more or less individualistic. Meanwhile, counterfeit ZANU (PF) loyalty was further given a façade of authenticity through complementary acts of spectacular public denigration and physical destruction of MDC political symbols.

8.4.1.1 (ii) Staged Public Denigration, Surrender, and Destruction of MDC Political Symbols

The foregoing 'repentancies' were always immediately followed and affirmed by what local ZANU (PF) agents such as Branch Leader X metaphorically termed 'cleansing ceremonies'. The latter comprised the public slur, surrender, and destruction by the 'repented', of both their personal MDC party regalia and paraphernalia such as T-shirts, headgear (caps, berets, bandanas), wrappers, whistles, party membership cards, and campaign banners. Below is the author's recital of one quintessential 'cleansing ceremony' out of the many he witnessed at both plantation and village-based ZANU (PF) campaign rallies.

Standing, facing the rally crowd, fifteen 'repentees' stand in a cow-horn formation. Each 'repentee' holds any MDC paraphernalia and regalia they once owned in their "soon-to-end 'sinful' political past". A safe distance, almost mid-way between the standing 'repentees' and the sitting audience, one overzealous ZANU (PF) youth lights a fire. Then, in unison, the 'new converts', emphatically chant ZANU (PF) slogans with calculated precision. Also, amid spectacular ululation and whistling from the audience, the 'repentees' chant the pre-requisite slogan, "Pasi ne MDC!" (Down with MDC) *and then take turns to throw their MDC party cards, T-shirts, caps, shirts, wrist bands, placards, etc. into the "…consuming' fire..." Once all these MDC symbols have been burnt to ashes and charcoal, as per ritual, each 'repentee' is then awarded a new ZANU (PF)membership card, T-shirt, headgear, wrapper, etc., and then given ample time to chant ZANU (PF) slogans as part of the 'new' induction into the "one and only revolutionary party". The 'repentees' articulate all these drills with an astounding measure of accuracy, enthusiasm, and emotion insomuch that a neutral observer cannot help but get convinced that they are witnessing heartfelt repentances. After this "cleansing", an unmistakable sight is the expression of satisfaction and victory on the faces of ZANU (PF) cell and branch representatives and supporters present at such rallies.* (Field Notes, December 2016)

This attendant denigration and destruction of the MDC and its symbols assumes invisibility (as resistance) in similar ways as articulated above for the simulated deflections from the MDC. Interestingly, per se, both these complementary poses appear like the 'alien' and 'native alien' Barura workers' *accommodation* (Vinthagen and Johansson, 2013) to the dominant ZANU (PF) ultra-nationalist political norms and practices. Thus, true to a Scottian (1989: 57) analysis, by *not* openly contesting norms of loyalty to ZANU (PF)'s violent partisan politics, J and fellow workers leave "the dominant in command of the public stage". The latter partly affirms Vinthagen and Johansson's (2013) claim that accommodation denotes the reproduction of domination. Be that as it may, the resultant puzzle then becomes how such practices (in the vignettes) of public political compliance (i.e., seeming accommodation to ZANU (PF)'s politics) also come to ambivalently pass as resistance. As well as the end-most section of J's earlier narrative above, another empirical cue to resolving this puzzle was drawn from a quintessential part of worker K's testament to the effect that:

"… from outside, we staunchly appear ZANU(PF), but inside, we retain deep everyday loathing, aggression toward it - its bloody, ruinous politics! … a secret final moment of our vengeance is most of us, alleged 'sell-outs', outrightly denying it our votes during elections… Wine and dine with the enemy (ZANU (PF)) *daily, yet also hate*

them with passion from inside, then finally hurt their ambition through secrecy of the ballot… Disowning or denouncing the MDC at a rally cannot erase my secret commitment to it by giving it my vote come elections..." (Interview, Worker K, January 2017)

In light of K's portrait above, much as the simulated repentances and the complementary denigration of the opposition MDC and its symbols constitute some seeming accommodation to ZANU (PF)'s violent ultra-nationalist partisan politics, these very practices paradoxically harbour undertones of K and fellow workers' *everyday* inner vengeance against the self-same politics. Thus, on one hand, *resistance* to ZANU (PF)'s violent partisan politics manifests in the form of J, K, and other 'alien' or 'native alien' Barura worker "retreating into one's mental world; by showing *outward compliance* while *maintaining inner aggression* towards … discipline" (Lilja and Vinthagen, 2014: 115, own emphasis). On the other hand, this *ongoing* inner defiance cumulatively resolves itself into its definitive *oppositional* moments when J, K, and others claim to vote *against* ZANU (PF) and *for* the MDC during polls. So, the flip side of the everyday simulated loyalty to ZANU (PF) partisan politics is the 'protest vote', a vote that fits Scott's (1989: 56) description as a "hidden transcript of anger, aggression and revenge". Hidden, given that J and K's votes are *private* in terms of candidate/party selection and vote casting. The resistance dynamic of the 'protest vote' is in keeping with Bayat (1979a) and Scott's (1989) shared view to also focus on the actual or potential *cumulative consequences* of practices. To this end, we draw from J and K's narratives that while *per se* counterfeit deflections to ZANU (PF) and its politics and the affirmatory destruction of MDC symbols pass as coping and/or accommodation, their cumulative *oppositional* effect lies in their actual or potential *denial* of ZANU (PF)'s political candidates and dominant groups the vote that confers political legitimacy and relevance.

So, in light of the latter above, we witness the 'repentant' Barura workers' manipulation of and part-accommodation to the dominant ZANU (PF) political order, not only to *evade* or *trick* it (see de Certeau, 1984), but in Scott's (1985, 1989) resistance framing, to also *undermine* and *negate* its partisan ultra-nationalist ideals and interests that are mediated through open violence. To follow de Certeau (1984), counterfeit ZANU (PF) allegiances and identities constitute *anti-disciplinary* practices. That is, at the local (i.e., plantation) and national levels, these practices, in a *silent cumulative* (i.e., from the inner everyday aggression right through to the voting moment) manner, mitigate and/or deny ZANU (PF) political agents' *extractive capacity* (de

Heredia, 2017) of or claims on Barura workers' authentic/unconditional loyalty and effective positive vote.

Overall, noteworthy from the two foregoing sub sections is the seeming *accommodation* exuded by the counterfeit ZANU (PF) loyalties and the subsequent staged denigration and destruction of MDC political activities and symbols. We draw from these practices and literature (i.e., Scott 1985, 1989; Vinthagen and Johansson, 2013) the significant dynamic that the whole point with disguised acts of resistance is that resistance does *appear* as if it were accommodation. It is both as accommodation and resistance, simultaneously that counterfeit political defections to ZANU (PF), the stage-managed denigration and burning of MDC symbols and subsequent recognition (at rallies and elsewhere) of ZANU (PF) symbols, become *hidden* and thus largely *feasible* tactics of resistance for the 'weak' Barura workers. This is analogous to Camp's (2004) study of slave resistance in the United States South, where she demonstrates that accommodation and resistance are not mutually exclusive concepts, but instead, spaces within which slaves move back and forth, with parts of their activity, body, or time - just as the 'repented' 'alien' and 'native alien' Barura plantation workers do in the foregoing emblematic vignettes.

Meanwhile, we also submit that simulated allegiances to ZANU (PF) political activities, identities, and symbols also constitute the 'alien' and 'native alien' Barura workers' tacit symbolic-cum-material resistance to the state's monolithic criteria of effective access to resources and therefore implicit resistance to labour domination and exploitation. We explore this proposition in detail below.

8.4.1.1 (iii) Counterfeit ZANU (PF) Loyalty: Tacit Dissent to the Ethno-national and pro-ZANU (PF) Criteria for Resource Access and to Labour Exploitation at Barura

Striking findings prove that feigned loyalty to ZANU (PF) political discourse and identification with its symbols can (in)advertently avail Barura workers like J, K, and fellows *de facto* material gains (Scott, 1989). That is, such simulations can, despite the workers' 'alien' (i.e., non-Zimbabwean ancestry) identities, enable them to effectively advance claims on land, land-based livelihoods, and government relief schemes. This epitomises the workers' inventive criterion, which is tacitly at odds with the state-sanctioned criteria of legislated 'indigeneity' and (true) loyalty to ZANU (PF). The following extract from a local ZANU (PF) leader at a rally speech at Barura estate partly attests to the latter:

"… Great, you prodigal sons and daughters… you're now ZANU (i.e., ZANU (PF)), *repenting from the party of sell-outs, MDC… You now have a passport that qualifies for land…especially you, 'vabvakure'* (i.e., workers of non-Zimbabwean ancestry- 'aliens'), *who the law does not allow to own land. Now that you have repented, you now have the rare chance to access or own land… residential, farming, land…get a ZANU membership card, participate, stay loyal, three, four months later, see a local leader X, produce your fully subscribed ZANU card, get your land…Your continued support of ZANU also passport to rural relief projects from our government…"* (Field Notes, ZANU (PF) Leader Y, March 2017)

In order to verify the actual fulfilment of the promises of land, land-based wealth, and rural relief schemes such as those made to the 'repented' by the local ZANU (PF) leader Y above, the author interviewed several *'vabvakure'* (i.e., Barura workers on non-Zimbabwean ancestry). Nine of them confirmed that they had actually acquired residential and tillage land in the nearby rural villages through the political criterion of showing open and sustained loyalty to ZANU (PF). Interestingly, they also confided that such loyalty was highly simulated. Part of worker L's interview narrative was the most emblematic in confirming the foregoing dynamics:

*"… us '*vabvakure' (i.e., of non-Zimbabwean ancestry) *are farm-dwellers…no land anywhere, government laws do not allow … So, most of us have grabbed every available opportunity from the local ZANU* (i.e., ZANU (PF)) *leadership, more so in election periods…repent, join ZANU, get a party card, participate diligently in the party's activities, promise to vote for it…as a reward get decent land via the local ZANU leadership…A big cohort of us 'vabvakure' simply appear to religiously do all this like fools, to get valuable land…This is how I, my 'vabvakure' friends A, B, and C, all got land for a home and subsistence…also government relief programs. So, our tactic is; religiously continue the faked support to assure all these benefits so that you survive in other ways outside the farm job…… ZANU badly needs the support base of workers and other 'vabvakure' across the country, so the offers of land in most cases are fulfilled, but after what they call serious vetting…but alas, how can the ZANU local leadership easily distinguish fake from genuine support especially with the way we clinically simulate it!. Come election time, put your X* (i.e., one's vote) *on the MDC…Keep the fake ZANU support even for as long as it helps you secure and retain your land and other benefits…"* (Interview, Worker L, February 2017)

From the two vignettes, we gather that Barura workers (and other citizens) of non-Zimbabwean ancestry (i.e., 'aliens' or *'vabvakure'*) are not *legally* entitled to land (and thus land-based livelihoods) and village-targeted state relief schemes. Earlier in Chapter 7 we identified the specific Zimbabwean 'indigeneity'- centric legal instruments (e.g., the CZAA of 2001) responsible for such exclusion. However, according to the local ZANU (PF) leader Y and worker L above, 'alien' workers can actually own or get access to rural land, land-based resources, and state relief programs on the basis of what local ZANU (PF) leaders (such as Leader Y) believe to be the workers' genuine loyalty to ZANU (PF). Yet, Barura workers J, K, and L above confirm that such loyalty is largely stage-managed. Thus, to the extent worker K and fellow workers' actual access to land and other resources becomes actually based on the 'invented' criterion of feigned political loyalty to ZANU (PF), this is in contradistinction to the ethnicity-based (i.e., ethno-national citizenship) legal criterion, which produces their exclusion.

Not to mention the complementary equally exclusionary criterion of genuine partisan loyalty to ZANU (PF). At the symbolic level, this implies a subtle (in)advertent *refusal* of or a *reverse-discourse* to the statist criteria of legislated ethno-national citizenship and/or partisan loyalty to ZANU (PF), by 'alien' workers like J, K, L, and fellows.

At the economic level, the workers' feigned accommodation to ZANU (PF)'s partisan politics, to follow Scott (1985, 1989), also avails them '*de facto* material gains' as shown in the vignettes. 'Alien' workers J, K, and L through the *parasitic tactical ploy* (de Certeau, 1984) of counterfeit ZANU (PF) loyalty, are able to *advance* and realise *their own claims* (Kerkvliet, 2009; de Heredia, 2017) to non-estate farm wage dependencies such as land, land-based wealth, and state relief programs. This is in contradistinction to the state's material interest to exclude them from such strategic resources through a monolithic citizenship legal structure. More importantly, workers J, K, and L's access to strategic access to alternative non-plantation wage livelihoods, by extension, can reduce their dependency on and intensity and rate of participation and toil in Barura wage employment. In fact, the latter was corroborated by worker K in a casual chat when he said:

"…now with the land, I can grow crops, rear livestock for self-sustenance…Often, I get a surplus to sell for monetary income…given that we now have to wait for our farm wages for as long as four months, which we sometimes receive in kind, I see no reason to do overtime at Barura…or to commit my effort while there…sometimes I absent myself in order to attend to my crops or livestock… This pattern applies to most workers who own or have access to rural land…you can check…" (Worker L, February 2017)

Overall, worker L and similarly positioned Barura workers, can cumulatively reduce the rate, intensity, frequency, efficiency, and commitment with which they participate in the highly insecure and exploitative Barura farm work. This entails overall reduced rate of and efficiency in estate management and capital's extraction of surplus labour from workers like L, who now conveniently double as wage workers and peasants. This whole dynamic is in contradistinction to Barura capital's claims on surplus labour and surplus value (i.e., profit) from the same workers. So, counterfeit loyalty to the governing ZANU (PF) politics, by extension, also constitutes indirect material resistance to labour subjugation and exploitation at Barura plantation estate.

To conclude, Barura 'alien' workers' counterfeit affiliation to ZANU(PF) entails a *clinically simulated* (see worker L in the vignette above) mirror image of what Cousins and Claasens (2008) call 'accepted affiliation to a group and its political authority'. In our case the latter concerns uni-linear allegiance to the governing ZANU (PF) party. To import Rutherford

(2008), the worker-invented simulated version of the desired authentic ZANU (PF) loyalty constitutes a *localised social project*. This localised project gets entangled with *statist practices* (i.e., ideal forms of power) such as ethno-national citizenship and partisan ZANU (PF) politics, in ways that also *contest* their exclusionary meanings and criteria of citizenship and resource allocation to 'alien' and 'native alien' Barura workers. By extension, this also entails quotidian resistance to the exploitative Barura labour process.

The sub-section below concerns the striking observation that, while the foregoing public 'repentances' to ZANU (PF) and denouncement of the MDC seemed dramatic and once-off, the workers were tactical enough to develop them into an enduring pattern of behaviour, which gave some semblance of permanent loyalty to ZANU (PF) politics. We expose this stratagem below.

8.4.1.1 (iv) From Spectacular to Enduring Counterfeit Loyalty – "The same old MDC wine in 'new' ZANU (PF) wineskins."

The author observed that, immediately after the public 'repentances' (to ZANU (PF)) and the destruction of MDC symbols, the 'repented' Barura workers were often 'rewarded' with new ZANU (PF) party regalia and paraphernalia such as T-shirts, bandanas, caps, wrappers, wrist bands, etc. by local party representatives presiding over the rallies. Instead of waiting until later, the 'repented' would instantly adorn the new regalia right in front of the rally crowds and seemingly reward their 'new' party by breaking into one or two revolutionary songs associated with ZANU (PF)'s exploits in the armed liberation struggle of the 1970s against British colonial rule. However, there was an interesting tactical twist to the dramatic ploys.

In a striking manner, the dramatic shows of 'loyalty' would then be transformed into the long-term religious wearing of the ZANU (PF) regalia and frequent participation in the party's day-to-day political projects at the cell, branch, and district levels. The author observed that it became an everyday staple to see the 'repentant' Barura workers, peasants, and/or villagers wearing ZANU (PF) regalia and paraphernalia in the farm compounds and at multifarious social functions on and off Barura plantation. To this end, I had an insightful interview with 'native alien' worker M, to confirm what the 'repentees' continuous identification with ZANU(PF)'s symbols and their frequent active participation in its politics really meant. M had been a well-known activist in the MDC since its inception in 1999. Interestingly, he had been

one of the 'repentees' at a recent Barura farm-based ZANU (PF) rally. His paradigmatic narrative among the many I got revealed the following:

"…Our now frequent wearing of ZANU (PF) wrappers, caps, T-shirts, bandanas, doeks, our daily partaking in the party's activities… mostly staged by us 'repentees' and others on this farm, in the villages too. I speak from a position of facts, I actually know a whole lot of those in my real party (i.e., the MDC)*, who have since time immemorial used this tactic! It's not new… became prevalent in 2008, the peak year of election violence…Of course, they are* (i.e., ZANU PF local leadership) *not fools. After the 'repentances', they keep monitoring your loyalty…remember some got land as reward for 'repentances', so it's payback time… But we aren't fools too… We wear ZANU (PF)'s regalia, attend its meetings, rallies – very religiously… also constantly active in their daily politics here on the farm, in the villages! … Importantly, we get ZANU (PF) membership cards - a trademark show of long-term support … But all these tactics are our continual camouflage…hide in them, daily…use them to hide from open show of support to MDC … In fact, use this camouflage to convince anyone, even yourself that you actually support ZANU (PF), …Fool them, but come elections, my vote is my secret, I passionately deny them* (i.e., ZANU PF) *my precious vote …"* (In-depth Interview, Worker M, January 2017)

This striking interview excerpt encapsulates the 'alien' workers' tactical recrafting of the earlier largely spectacular 'repentance'-associated acts at rallies, in a way which gives them a veneer of permanence and authenticity under the watchful eyes of the ZANU (PF) local leadership. According to worker M, it is the *everyday* religious adornment of ZANU (PF)'s regalia, *frequent* active participation in its politics, and *constant* official party membership, which now serve to ensure the pro-longed 'camouflaging' of the workers' underlying dissent to the party's partisan politics. The 'tactical wisdom' (Scott, 1989) now lies in the *repetitive and continuous tentativeness* (see de Certeau, 1984) of these once-upon-a-time spectacular acts. That is, M and other 'alien' workers' extension of the exercise of the acts beyond the spectacular realm of ZANU (PF) rallies to the *daily* lived experiences on Barura and the surrounding villages ensures the acts' evolvement into an *enduring pervasive pattern* (de Heredia, 2017) of disguised resistance. We submit that Worker M and fellows' constant and consistent performance of these acts of loyalty (to ZANU (PF)) gradually transforms them into the Scottian (1990) *public transcript* or *onstage* space of seeming compliance. However, beneath the latter space of publicly granted legitimacy (i.e., false loyalty to ZANU (PF)) lies the *hidden transcript* or *offstage* space (Scott, 1990) of the "privately held opinions" (Guha, 1987: 2001), for instance, of workers M's cumulative conviction to deny ZANU (PF) his vote, come any election period.

Overall, through the 'alien' (i.e., both in the national and political citizenship sense) workers' *enduring everyday* performance of the *once-upon-a-time* (i.e., at the ZANU (PF) rallies) *dramatic* acts of counterfeit loyalty to ZANU (PF) politics, there is transition to what worker M metaphorically call "the same old MDC wine in 'new' ZANU (PF) skins". That is, we

witness the *sustained* existence of the Barura 'alien' workers' *opposition* to ZANU (PF)'s partisan political citizenship on Barura by its paradoxical *concealment* in the workers' public acts of seeming loyalty to the self-same political order. Below, we now turn to the more disciplinary component of partisan political subjugation and resistance thereto at Barura estate plantation.

8.4.2. Quotidian Dissent to ZANU (PF)-mediated Disciplinary Partisan Politics at Barura

While the foregoing segment attended to the workers' quotidian resistance to the physically violent modality of ZANU (PF)-mediated partisan political citizenship at Barura, the current segment, in a complementary fashion, illuminates the workers' resistance to the more disciplinary modality of the same political order. We begin with a portrait of the latter and then demonstrate the nature and dynamics of 'alien' Barura workers' quotidian resistance thereto. Once again, by 'alien' in this segment, we are referring to the workers' 'alienness' in the exclusionary *national* and/or *political* citizenship sense.

8.4.2.1 'Surface-opticon' Discipline and Barura Workers' Political Subjectivity

Earlier, towards the conclusion of Chapter 7, we made some brief passing reference to a findings-inspired prototype of Foucauldian (1979) Panopticism, which we coined *surface-opticon* political discipline (also see theoretical Chapter 3). It is a findings-modified derivative of Bentham's (1843, 1965) general model of the Panopticon prison, and more specifically, its 'central tower'. Be that as it may, this section details the actors, nature, and dynamics of this unique mode of disciplinary ZANU (PF) – mediated political power to set the scene for an ensuing analysis of quotidian resistance thereto by 'alien' and 'native alien' Barura workers.

We propose that in addition to panoptic surveillance by ZANU (PF)'s unverifiable spies on Barura farm (see Chapter 7), submission to ZANU (PF)'s partisan politics is also realised through *'surface-opticons'*. That is, both the animate and inanimate bodies or surfaces that are, or bear crystallised *visible markers* (reminders) of the mortal penalties of the 2000 to 2008 ZANU (PF)-led government-sanctioned, spectacular political violence. Empirically, surface-opticons comprise the victims' scarred, maimed, and/or raped *bodies*, *unpunished* perpetrators, and inanimate surfaces like graves, socio-physical sites of heinous acts of political violence, etc. Analytically, we frame them as having a family resemblance to the Panopticon's *central tower* (Bentham, 1843), whose authoritative *presence* and *visibility* (to inmates) are some of

the preconditions to the eliciting of disciplinary restraint. Below, worker E's narrative resonates with and condenses most farm workers' knowledge of and experiences of and with the *inanimate* 'surface-opticons':

"The mortal brutality typical of the 2000, 2005, 2008 election violence now mostly gone…but its fingerprints live on! Plenty, dreadful sights all over the farms, villages. Remains of so-called or real MDC supporters' burnt or vandalised houses …hair-raising sight of notable dark places where 'sell-outs' were tortured, abducted, raped… Pitiful visions of our vandalised livelihood and household property… seeing nerve-wrecking sites of unburied bones, skulls of suspected victims of abductions… graves of victims of the violence … All are yesteryear dark spots, but seeing them daily is a constant reminder, strong warning to abstain from MDC politics, a silent push to support the liberation party (ZANU (PF)*! Lest the same brutality of the past revisits us …"* (In-depth Interview, Worker E, March 2017)

Similarly, another insightful narrative, which was typical of the popular narratives on Barura farm concerning the workers' acknowledgement of and encounters with the *animate* and *mobile* forms of the surface-opticons came from worker F to the effect that:

"…many forbidding spectacles spread across this farm and nearby villages! The three wheelchair-bound victims, the crippled D, E, F, G who lost limps, ears, hands, arms in the 2008 election violence…H and J mentally ill since 2008 (election period) *when they were forced to jump off a moving tractor as known MDC activists … Many workers, villagers said to be MDC back then, still bear fiercely scarred faces, heads, legs… forbidding reminders of the arson, beatings, torture of past violence… shame all over X, and Y's bodies, gang-raped … Main culprits were ZANU (PF) people, who to date still mix and mingle with us scot-free, no conviction, no jail…for us this means ready punishment if you go anti-ZANU* (ZANU PF) *or show support for MDC things… So, you obey given all these plenty visible examples among us daily!"* (In-depth Interview, Worker F, February 2017)

E and F's exemplar snapshots above portray surface-opticons as the culminating *transcripts* of the 2000-2008, ZANU (PF)-led state-sanctioned, spectacular political/electoral violence. The surface-opticons are material-cum-symbolic enactments of the 'arrest' of the workers' 'past experiences' (Kalema, 2018) with and of the violence. For workers like E, the pain, fear, insecurity, and loss associated with this historical violence got permanently transcribed on and enacted as inanimate surfaces like vandalised or burnt homes, sites of heinous political acts, and the victims' graves. Similarly, F spotlights that the same painful, horrendous, and deathly moments of the violence are transcribed on, and enacted as animate bodies. These include the scarred, crippled, and/or raped bodies of victims, as well as the ZANU (PF)-sanctioned perpetrators of the violence. A special quality about *perpetrator* surface-opticons is that, to date, they remain *unpunished* for past acts of political violence (see Mvundura, 2014). In a way, unpunished perpetrators represent ZANU (PF) and the ZANU (PF)-led state's current *tacit* promise of imminent penalty on farm workers (and villagers) who dare go anti-ZANU (PF) or pro-MDC. However, noteworthy is that all the surface-opticons in the vignettes are

modified versions of Bentham's (1843) Panopticon model in that they are *decentralised, plural,* and sometimes *mobile* 'towers' (i.e., surfaces or bodies).

The above-stated material-cum-symbolic attributes of surface-opticons partly set the scene for their feasibility as disciplinary techniques. Further guided by the vignettes and scholarship (Bentham, 1843; Foucault, 1979; Manokha, 2018), we submit that the *exercise* of surface-opticon political discipline on E, F, and other workers is predicated on the *organisation* of the surface-opticons in the farm and village socio-physical *space*. The excerpts show that the surface-opticons must be *visible* to the Barura workers (and villagers). Accordingly, Bentham (1965: 60) asserts that in the Panopticon, "power must be visible" to inmates. In keeping with the *visibility* logic, worker E and F use reiterative clauses such as *"...dreadful* ***sights****..."*, *"...pitiful* ***visions****..."*, *"...****seeing****...sites"*, *"...forbidding* ***spectacles****..."* of the surface-opticons. As a modification of Bentham's (1843) Panopticon, the *decentralised* (and sometimes *mobile*) nature of surface-opticons gives them a wider socio-spatial spread across Barura farm and nearby villages. This entails their *ubiquitous visibility* (see Bentham, 1843; Foucault, 1979) to all farm workers and villagers.

Thus, instead of the Benthamian (1843) eye (i.e., the guard) that *sees,* but is *not* seen (by inmates), we have *numerous* surveillant 'eyes' (i.e., the surface-opticons on the farm and in the villages) that *must* actually be *seen back* by the estate workers. In fact, the *reciprocal visibility* between Barura workers and the fear-inducing surface-opticons foregrounds surface-opticon political discipline. Spatial-wise, the excerpts also attest that the exercise of partisan political discipline on the farm workers is further enhanced when the surface-opticons have a *localised presence* in the infinitesimal details of workers' daily lives (see Foucault, 1979, 1994; Manokha, 2018). For instance, F refers to the workers' *'daily' 'mixing'* and *'mingling'* with unpunished ZANU (PF)-aligned perpetrators of the 2000-2008 cycles of electoral violence. Hence, the fear-inducing attributes, and the utilitarian *decentralisation* and *localisation* of the surface-opticons across Barura farm (and villages), foreground the *repressive* and *productive* exercise (see Foucault, 1979) of surface-opticon discipline on any real or suspected anti-ZANU (PF) or pro-MDC farm workers. We explore the dynamics hereunder.

E and F's narratives reveal that daily sight of and interaction with the fear-inducing surface-opticons produce a coercive trap, which, according to Lilja and Vinthagen's (2014) Foucauldian lens, exercises some *repressive constraint* on any current or potential anti-ZANU

(PF) political comportment. For the workers, constant socio-spatial *sight* of and *contact* with scarred, crippled, raped, unpunished, mentally disoriented, and vandalised surface-opticons invoke fearful and painful memories of previous experiences with the 2000-2008 cycles of political violence. This in turn invokes an ongoing sense of imminent fear, pain, and death among alleged or known 'unpatriotic' [i.e., anti-ZANU (PF) or pro-MDC] workers such as E and F. The latter are subtly pressured to be on constant "look out for…danger before danger reveals itself to them in detrimental ways" (Vigh, 2018: 492). 'Unpatriotic' workers are coerced to 'correct' their political affiliation in light of the *visible* repercussions (lingering mortal danger mediated by surface-opticons) of historical non-allegiance to ZANU (PF) and its *discursive norm* (Foucault, 1994) of ultra-nationalist policies and a legitimating insistence on liberation war credentials.

Thus, decentralised, and localised surface-opticons according to worker F, are, *"…plenty visible examples…"* of *"…**forbidding** reminders…"*, or *"…**forbidding** spectacles…"*, which for worker E are also *"…strong warnings to **abstain**…"* from 'unpatriotic' political behaviour. The workers' daily interaction with the surface-opticons elicits a "*perpetual penalty* that *traverses* all points and *supervises* every instant" (Foucault, 1979: 183; own emphasis) of the Barura farm workers' political allegiances and identities. The ever-lingering ominous sense of punishment invoked by the material-cum-symbolic markers (surface-opticons) of the ZANU (PF)-led state-sanctioned electoral violence exert some continuous, tacit pressure on E, F, and other workers who may *stop* current, or be *deterred* from future anti-ZANU (PF) or pro-MDC political conduct. So, while the 2000-2008 open political violence, as a form of Foucauldian (1979) 'sovereign power', mainly acted "immediately and directly" on the bodies of the so-called 'unpatriotic' (i.e., anti- ZANU (PF) or pro-MDC workers), it now largely "acts on their actions" (see Edkins and Pin-Fat, 2005: 10) as surface-opticon discipline. The latter tacitly *represses* the workers' anti-ZANU (PF) political relations and identities in both a *pro-active* and *preventive* manner. Subsequently, the use of outright political force may become unnecessary or becomes significantly reduced. That is, on Barura, sovereign and disciplinary power become so heterogenous that they cannot be possibly reduced to each other. Interestingly, more evidence attests that surface-opticon discipline can become more utilitarian (i.e., efficient) to the extent it metaphorically becomes *'de-surfaced'* from the *external*

restraint-inducing surfaces and gets *infused* into the workers' *beings* as lasting *mental* impressions.

The *cumulative* mental *infusion* of surface-opticon discipline was insinuated in the farm workers' popular anecdotes, which broadly entailed more or less 'automatic' submission to ZANU (PF)'s political norms and activities. G's narrative was typical of such 'automation' when she said:

> *"Look, these frightful sights* (surface-opticons)*, been our staple since 2000…More so, since 2008* (peak year of political violence) *… they are now etched in, and now control our minds…so deep that one no longer needs to actually see them in order to obey…It's like you absent-mindedly obey ZANU (PF)… 'Zvinozvvita zvega'* (vernacular version for 'it's automatic') …" (In-depth Interview, Worker G, November 2016)

G's anecdote demonstrates the (near) permanent *inscription* or *internalisation* of surface-opticons and their transcripts (i.e., ominous markers of past violence) *in* the minds and social beings of the so-labelled 'unpatriotic' Barura workers. The latter may no longer need to physically see the surface-opticons in order to submit to ZANU (PF) political norms. Instead, we encounter the "productive penetration and subjectivizing subjugation" (Foucault in Habermas, 1994: 63) of the 'unpatriotic' farm workers' minds and physio-social bodies by the fear-invoking transcripts of historical violence. The workers *embody* the surface-opticons (i.e., as markers of the penalties of the 2000-2008 political violence) insomuch that they become *self-policing* or *self-restraining* subjects. The workers effect "by their own means" the techniques and transcripts of past cycles of open political violence "on their own bodies…their own thoughts, their own conduct" (Foucault, 1981: interview) resulting in *self-modification* toward partisan affiliation to ZANU (PF). G and fellow workmates get trapped in a power relation of which they are the *bearers*. In this way, surface-opticon discipline becomes a *cost-effective* and *productive* form of power. The agents of the ZANU (PF)-led state may no longer need to exercise outright violence to elicit partisan political submission. Instead, the fear-inducing transcripts of past violence get sufficiently inscribed in the farm workers' social beings insomuch as to *constitute* them as *subjects* and *objects* who 'act on their own' in a more or less pro- ZANU (PF) political manner. We therefore encounter the 'automation' (i.e., perfection) of surface-opticon discipline wherein it elicits a permanent *self-induced* restraint from 'unpatriotic' (anti-ZANU (PF)) political conduct in farm workers such as E, F, and G.

Nevertheless, evidence in the sub-section below proves that the surface-opticons and their dominant discourse (partisan allegiance to ZANU (PF)'s ultra-nationalism and legitimating rhetoric on liberation war credentials) are not totalitarian. There is a *conflicted intimacy* between surface-opticon discipline and the attendant *anti-disciplinary* techniques to it. To follow Allen (2011: 51; own emphasis), "since there is not outside to power", resistance to surface-opticon discipline involves the farm workers "*strategically reworking*" the self-same technique precisely to counteract the discipline. We give a close analysis of this proposition below.

8.4.2.2 The Workers' Discursive Reversal of 'Surface-opticon'- mediated Partisan Political Discipline

8.4.2.2 (i) Reversed Discourses of and Counter-Memory to Disciplinary Partisan Politics

Through long-standing cordial relations, both Barura farm and village-based MDC cell and branch leaders frequently invited me to secret cell-group political meetings. The latter were convened under the anonymity and safety of the night and small group numbers. The author noted that one of the most recurrent themes in these nocturnal gatherings concerned the participants' *re-reading* of the political surface-opticons. One MDC farm cell-leader gave a nuanced prototypical case of such widespread reinterpretation when in his hushed political speech, he reiterated:

"… let's uphold our slogan to see the best in the worst! The many sad reminders of past violence by ZANU (PF) thugs… our murdered comrades, crippled comrades, raped sisters…see them as 'magamba' (heroes)*… see them as symbols of courage, resilience, fearlessness, moral victory… Unpunished criminals* (perpetrators) *living among us… see them as dirty signs of ZANU's* (ZANU(PF)) *cowardice, and as the MDC's relevance as a meaningful threat to ZANU …let sight of ZANU criminals, the scars they left, the sites where they beat up, raped, tortured our comrades… see them as motivation to deny ZANU your precious vote in the around-the-corner 2018 elections…"* (Political Speech, MDC Cell Leader, January 2017)

Similarly, Farmworker F, like many of his colleagues, shared (with the author) a more personalised narrative, which also affirmed the permeative *reinterpretation* of the markers (i.e., surface-opticons) of the 2008 state-sponsored political violence. In the wake of another nocturnal political meeting, F, in a heroic tone, shared:

"This big scar across my face, my now-mentally-deranged cousin…the charred remains of my house … my best friend's grave, all aftermaths of the 2008 ZANU (PF)-led election violence… are bitter after-tastes in my mouth…but importantly, I have, like many other victims, taught myself to take myself, my cousin, my best friend, and other victims, as heroes…martyr-like figures who took bullets for others in this struggle against this 'monster' (ZANU (PF)) *… Also, all these sad marks, we regard them as enough stimuli to fearlessly, confidently, vote against the monster, come 2018!"* (Informal Chat, Worker F, February 2017)

The MDC cell leader and F's narratives epitomise 'alien' and 'native alien' Barura workers' *alternative* reading of the self-same surface-opticons, which, earlier, they simultaneously construed as fear-invoking technologies. In the excerpts, the surface-opticons are tacitly *reimagined* as a potential "network of *anti-discipline*" (de Certeau, 1984: xv) against normalisation into ZANU (PF) and the ZANU (PF)-led state's disciplinary partisan politics. The surface-opticons, as a *marginal* or *third space* (hooks, 1990; Bhabha, 1994; Soja, 1996) - an uncertain, insecure, physio-political space, also enable the workers to reinterpret that space's relations and identities in a *subversively creative* way. The latter is evident when the interlocuters reimagine the victims of past political violence as *"heroes"* or *"martyr-like figures"*, who embody *"courage, resilience, fearlessness, moral victory".* Also, unpunished perpetrators are reconstituted as signs of ZANU (PF)'s spinelessness, and as tacit legitimation of the MDC's political credibility. Overall, rather than exclusively sensing the surface-opticons as discipline-invoking, the MDC cell-leader, F, and other workers also sense them as compelling motivation to vote *against* ZANU (PF) in the impending 2018 elections. This widespread *discursive rearticulation* of the surface-opticons constitutes the workers' "hidden transcripts" (Scott, 1990: 157) or *backstage refusal* to recognise the disciplinary meanings insinuated by the ZANU (PF)-created surface-opticons.

The MDC cell leader and F's discursive reinterpretations of the surface-opticons constitute a form of Foucault's (1981) *reversed discourse*. The workers *use* the ZANU (PF) government-created surface-opticons precisely in order to *contest* them. Framed in de Certeau's (1984: 18) theorisation, the two workers' re-reading of the surface-opticons, in the excerpts, constitutes their "way of using imposed systems" to reverse "the actual order of things" through backstage meanings [e.g., *heroes, martyrs, stimuli to vote against ZANU (PF)*], which can *undermine* ZANU (PF)'s partisan political relations and symbols on Barura farm. Broadly, these reversed discourses are the Foucauldian (1988a) *techniques of the self*. Specifically, they are *narratives of the self* (Foucault, 1988b) as articulated by the MDC cell leader and F above. For these *personalised* narratives, the workers draw from the self-same pool of disciplinary techniques (i.e., surface-opticons), but they *reappropriate* and *rethink* them for political 'autonomy' (see Allen, 2011). Such 'autonomy' involves the workers' *critical reflections* on the ZANU (PF)-crafted subjugating relations of lingering political penalty.

The latter thus denotes some Foucauldian "epistemic insurrection" namely *counter-memory* (see Medina, 2011: 11) wherein the workers turn the ZANU (PF)-imposed hegemonic memories [i.e., surface-opticons as ever-lingering reminders of penalties attendant to being anti-ZANU (PF)] to enact their own backstage *counter-memories* of dissenting political relations (e.g., voting against ZANU (PF)) and identities (e.g., *heroes, martyrs*). Thus, counter-memory avails out-of-the-mainstream ways of reading the surface-opticons from marginal political spaces (positions). Its technique, on and off Barura, is to symbolically *contest* the epistemic omissions and distortions of the ZANU (PF)-imposed partisan ultra-nationalist political order. The workers' hidden transcripts (of autonomous political meanings, affiliations, and identities) can destabilise ZANU (PF)'s partisan political order via a *counter-perspective* that tacitly resists and invalidates the normative expectations insinuated by the ZANU (PF)-crafted surface-opticons. At this point, we now draw the following concluding remarks in light of the entire foregoing analysis.

8.5 Conclusion

This chapter discovered and dissected the quotidian forms and practices of resistance to two modes of citizenship that are trans-localised into the Barura labour process namely codified ethno-national citizenship and partisan national politics. We submitted that, beyond the immanent material relations of the Barura labour process, everyday labour resistance at Barura estate is also rooted in and engages these two largely ideational modalities of power, which are workplace-localised mirror images of their national versions. Subsequently, we discovered and analysed the following status and/or ideological practices of everyday resistance. That is, Barura workers' *inventive* production of *de jure* backdoor 'native' identities; a worker-centric civil society; *de facto* 'native' convivial identities and relations (i.e., underhand land deals, and land renting deals in nearby villages); counterfeit political allegiance to ZANU (PF) (i.e., staged political repentances from the opposition MDC); and reversed discourses of and counter-memory to disciplinary partisan politics.

As well as centring the above-stated Barura workers' everyday practices as *political* (i.e., resistance), we extended shopfloor labour politics by foregrounding the *semi-autonomous* ideational nature and dynamics of these practices. James Scott, our chief protagonist, does appreciate ideational acts of resistance, but we transcended his inordinate framing of such acts as a *reflection* of the economic base of production systems. In his milestone Sedaka case study,

the peasants' use of language as a *hidden transcript* of dissent is narrowly understood as a product of a shift in the *economic base* from a peasant economy to agricultural capitalism. However, in the current chapter we framed similar discursive acts of dissent as an integral part of *politico-cultural* cleavages (e.g., ethno-national citizenship) which are, in their own right, *relatively autonomous* from but co-exist with the economic base of the Barura labour process.

Foregrounding everyday labour resistance as a function of other semi-autonomous largely non-class forms of power gives a more concrete reading of Barura worksite labour struggles. We come to discern that Barura workers experience and resist domination and exploitation at the junction of mutually-reinforcing (and conflicting) *status-cum-class* identities, relations, and dynamics. Beyond being limited to the Barura *capitalist* labour process, the workers' labour resistance acts also come to mean a function of other diverse complementary *status hierarchies*. Thus, this chapter pushed everyday labour resistance at Barura past the rigid *binary* identities and relations of capital and labour to fluid ones, say of, 'alien'-cum-wage worker-cum-peasant-cum- 'native alien'. We complicated Barura agrarian labour struggles by demonstrating how such struggles (i.e., quotidian resistance) are a diverse product of class relations of wage labour getting mutually entangled with semi-autonomous symbolic orders such as statist ethno-national citizenship and partisan politics.

Relatedly, we further deduce that as much as the acts that we analysed *directly* constitute status and/or ideological resistance to workplace-localised ethno-national citizenship and partisan politics, they also *implicitly* contest the exploitative Barura wage work. On one hand, by these stratagems, Barura workers *invent* own discourses of dignity and dissident subcultures, which counter statist *assaults* on *status* (i.e., disprivilege) and *ideological control* (i.e., justifications for disprivilege) respectively. On the other hand, most of these practices are counter-discourses or subcultures, which constitute *tacit* resistance to Barura farm capital's extraction of surplus labour from the 'alien' workers. The *worker-invented* subcultures of national and political citizenship can facilitate Barura workers' access to other *non-farm wage* livelihoods (e.g., subsistence land) resulting in a cumulative reduction of the workers' rate, frequency, and intensity of toil in the Barura labour process. That is, while the inventive acts *directly* contest statist cultural forms of power trans-localised into the Barura shopfloor, they also entail an indirect challenge to labour subjugation and exploitation at the self-same shopfloor.

Furthermore, our analysis has also shown that whether the foregoing practices are articulated by identifiable or anonymous 'resisters', their hiddenness, and thus plausibility principally remains predicated on their *ambiguous meanings*. The acts exude a public discursive affirmation (i.e., compliance) of the very power relations being opposed - for instance, the exemplar case of political 'repentances' to ZANU (PF). The common central practical logic behind the hiddenness of these acts is that their underlying dissent does *appear* in public (i.e., *public transcript*) as it were accommodation with the dominant order being resisted. Dominant symbolic orders like legislated ethno-national citizenship and violent-cum-disciplinary partisan politics are 'poached' and parasitically 'used' to produce and veil their own resistance. It is as both accommodation and resistance (i.e., ambiguity) that the foregoing practices become disguised and thus more feasible and durable forms of resistance.

Last, and importantly, our foregoing exposition entails that Barura workers' quotidian resistance to ethno-national citizenship and violent-cum-disciplinary partisan politics concerns mainly targeting the *terms* and *conditions* of their articulation by the state, and not their historical bases. Barura workers (and other citizens) may have to accept (i.e., quiesce to) the historical reality of enduring ideational systems of colonial and post-colonial ethno-national citizenship laws and violent-cum-disciplinary partisan politics, while gradually navigating them in ways that also resist them from within. That is, Barura workers have to leave these two politico-symbolic orders of symbolic violence and physical violence-cum-discipline intact (i.e., accommodation), while simultaneously challenging their everyday dynamics bit by bit. The practices leave the dominant groups in command of the public stage of national and political citizenship, while gradually contesting them in the back or private stage. Once more, this epitomises the conflicted mutuality between accommodation to (cultural) domination and simultaneous resistance to it at the Barura shopfloor.

Noteworthy at this point is that the conclusion we made in Chapter 6 regarding the innovative *practice-centred* approach to everyday resistance at Barura estate also equally applies here. In all, the informal, inventive, localised material, ideological, and symbolic mundane practices that we demonstrated and analysed in Chapters 6 and 8 constitute what we have coined 'farmzenship'. The latter being constituted of plantation-specific forms of economic, political, and national belonging that are 'parasitic' on and oppositional to the statist form of citizenship that typically excludes marginalised groups like farm workers from membership of certain

formal groups and from access to rights and resources associated with such membership. In the next chapter, which is our last, we give overarching concluding remarks to the whole thesis.

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUDING REMARKS TO AN EVERYDAY APPROACH TO & ANALYSIS OF PLANTATION LABOUR RESISTANCE PRACTICES

This thesis explored and analysed the quotidian forms and practices of labour resistance that rural commercial forestry plantation labour crafts to navigate a highly insecure post-colonial capitalist plantation labour process. This exposition was guided by our discovery of the scholarly puzzle that in Zimbabwe, Africa, and elsewhere quotidian forms and practices of resistance are in a much less or barely empirically demonstrated and theoretically elaborated state in both resistance and labour resistance studies. We discovered this puzzle to be even more pronounced in (capitalist) agrarian labour politics studies. This is despite the fact that agriculture labour constitutes a significant proportion of the overall industrial labour-force in Africa and elsewhere and that it is arguably the most easily exploitable form of wage labour. This motivated our empirical focus on commercial plantation labour.

Our central argument is that Barura plantation workers may have to accept the fact of post-colonial capitalist plantation wage employment, the plantation-specific modalities of statist ethno-national citizenship, and state-sanctioned partisan national politics while contesting the *terms* and *conditions* under which these mutual systems of domination and exploitation occur. The practices do not seek to radically decompose the historical material-cum-symbolic *bases* of these systems of power. The plantation labour predominantly imagines, crafts, and articulates these quotidian practices within the class-cum-status logic of and parameters set by these intertwined mutually reinforcing post-colonial systems of domination and exploitation. The everyday practices of defiance mediate the workers' realisation of piecemeal *de facto* material and status gains more than the *de jure* recognition of those gains.

One of our major empirical contributions is the *discovery* and *foregrounding* of the taken-for-granted quotidian practices of subaltern groups as an integral part of *politics*. The study, in a specialised and methodical manner, re-centred what are normally considered as the mundane everyday acts of plantation labour as constituting a form of capitalist workplace politics,

namely labour resistance. This breaks with the conventional reading of politics (i.e., resistance) as spectacular, organised, and formal. We shifted lenses to discover labour protest in the 'nooks and crannies' of ordinary people's lifeworlds outside the over-privileged realm of institutional politics. In the process, we also contributed further to scaling down (i.e., scope) the phenomenon of (everyday) resistance from the classical Marxian macro-societal level to the micro-level daily dynamics of the capitalist workspace-the shopfloor.

Furthermore, with regard to these practices, both at the theoretical and methodological levels, the thesis pushed past the dominant actor-oriented or intention approach by foregrounding the *practice approach* to (everyday) resistance. Beyond the conventional scholarly focus on the actors' intentions in the discovery and analysis of the everyday acts of resistance, we shifted focus to the *practices* (i.e. the act and the art of its execution) themselves – the practical analysis of the act and its performance. That is, privileging *what* the act is and *how* it is performed, instead of *who* is and *why* they are performing it.

This thesis has shown this *practice-centred* approach to (everyday) resistance entails methodological merits compared to the intention-oriented approach. The main one is that it affords the field researcher an enhanced *practical* discovery of numerous acts that would otherwise go undiscovered as resistance if focus is placed solely on the social actors' intentions. Acts of resistance that a practice approach would discover, but that an intention approach would miss fall into three overlapping categories. First, practices that are not motivated by any openly declared intentions. Then, those that are not *recognised* by the 'resisters' themselves (and other social agents) as resistance since as ordinary acts they do not conform to conventional understandings of resistance, and last those acts that do not (yet) have manifest outcomes as resistance. Focus on the *practices* make (everyday) resistance a more practically *observable* and therefore more researchable and analysable empirical object than the actors' intentions, which could be ambiguous or multiple and difficult to establish.

Another conceptual-cum-theoretical upshot and contribution from this study is the fieldwork-inspired coining of the notion of 'farmzenship', which helps us illuminate the forms, nature, and dynamics that practices of everyday resistance and survival take in a typically remote and highly insecure commercial plantation space. It is not *necessarily* an antinomy to the official form of the state-legislated form of membership of a political community and access to resources thereto. Farmzenship concerns a plantation worker-invented, plantation-level,

bottom-up form of economic, political, and cultural membership of and resource access in a socio-economically and politically constrained or repressive capitalist agrarian labour process. So, it is 'street-level', ambulant politics of belonging that increasingly 'poaches' on the opportunistic loopholes of and exists alongside the statist version of citizenship at Barura estate and elsewhere in repressive commercial agrarian workspaces. However, farmzenship has the potential to *contest* the formal citizenship rights and obligations as enshrined in the legal state-centric definition and deployment of citizenship, which usually excludes subaltern groups like agricultural labour.

Thus, analytically this notion denotes the widespread, informal, routinised, *plantation-specific* practices, perceptions, identities, and relations wherein claims and interests are (re)invented, bent, adjusted, and (re)negotiated among plantation labour, members of nearby communities, the plantation capital-management dyad, and state agents. So, farmzenship ensures the *effective articulation* of the plantation workers' claims on socio-economic rights and interests they would not otherwise realise within the legal statist framing of citizenship. Empirically, we demonstrate(d) farmzenship through a *stock* of everyday *practices* through which the plantation workers can navigate and counteract labour subjugation and exploitation, state-centric legislated ethno-national citizenship, and state-sanctioned polarised partisan politics. We need not repeat the practices but suffice to say that they take material, symbolic, and ideological forms. So, in all, farmzenship is a lens that can help us understand how agricultural labour navigates and survive plantation-specific versions of economic, cultural, and political domination (from the state and capital) in ways that simultaneously contest them. Overall, we deduce that farmzenship is the largely feasible form of belonging by which agricultural workers can realise socio-economic rights in the typically remote, super-exploitative, closed institution run-like contexts of most capitalist agrarian workplace settings in Africa and elsewhere.

Also, a significant deduction concerning the nature and dynamics of the practices of resistance is that their *feasibility* and potential success is increasingly predicated on the *pervasive* use of *disguise*. This explains why some scholarship distinguish the acts as *hidden* resistance. This concerns the disguise or hiddenness of the practices, their performance, and the personal identities of their perpetrators or a combination of these as shaped by context. Overall, hiddenness obtains from the practices being *embedded* in the routine *day-to-day lifeworlds* of social actors insomuch that they are 'invisible' as resistance because they deviate from the

conventional reading of resistance as formal and spectacular. In particular, these self-same practices of dissent also get disguised through their innate physical properties, their socio-spatial contexts, and the identifiability of the actors.

Based on different combinations of these criteria of disguise there are largely material acts wherein both the personal identities of and the performance by the perpetrators largely remain anonymous. Exemplar cases are 'poaching' and arson. These acts may also send *ambiguous* messages where, for instance, arson could alternatively be (mis)read as accidental or natural veldfires. Then we could have material acts (e.g. absenteeism) that are executed by identifiable actors whose disguise is largely centred on double meanings. Also typically, most discursive (i.e., symbolic, or ideological) acts of resistance get disguised through ambiguous meanings. An exemplar case is the workers' feigned/staged political allegiances to despotic ruling political parties. Most such discursive acts exude a public discursive affirmation of the very power relations being opposed. The central practical logic behind the hiddenness of these acts is that their *underlying* dissent does *appear* in public as it were accommodation with the dominant order being resisted. Dominant discursive orders can be easily 'poached' and parasitically 'used' to produce and veil their own resistance. It is as both accommodation and resistance that such practices become disguised and thus more feasible forms of resistance. However, a common source of camouflage to these subterranean acts of labour dissent at Barura or elsewhere is the *complicitous silence* obtaining between the workers (or other subalterns) and any other social actors sharing a normative consensus around the practices.

The foregoing analysis also implies that practices of everyday resistance by agriculture labour or any other subaltern groups are not *'pure'* resistance since they are an integral part of everyday life. For instance, practices that we spotlighted such as witchcraft, arson, 'poaching', absenteeism, and goldbricking can simultaneously be resistance, accommodation, coping, or survival strategies in repressive and constrained rural agriculture production systems. Whether these or other ordinary mundane practices that constitute the material, ideological, or normative culture of subalterns more or less become resistance to material-cum-ideational systems of domination like super-exploitation, exclusionary citizenship legislature, etc. at Barura estate or elsewhere is *context specific*. It largely depends on the practices' potential to (in)advertently *undermine* domination, either by directly *denying* capital, management, state, or any other

dominant groups material and symbolic claims on the 'dominated' or indirectly by allowing the latter to advance their own claims at the expense of the former's interests.

Another overall takeaway from this research is the empirical and analytical upshot that power that subjugates, exploits, and is resisted by subalterns does *not necessarily* have to be reduced to capitalist relations that are inherent in capitalist plantation production systems or read as a reflection of these relations. Structural statist *cultural* forms of power that are 'external' to and *semi-autonomous* from the workspace capitalist relations also get *trans-localised* into and mutually entangle with the latter to (re)produce each other in ways that complicate the power-resistance synergy. We demonstrated state-legislated ethno-national citizenship as one such 'external' ideational modality of power. We thus push past early luminaries (e.g., Scott and Burawoy) of subaltern resistance by considering the influence of 'external' semi-independent structural non-class forces on the micro-level quotidian dynamics of subaltern resistance. We aim for a trade-off between the macro and micro-level analyses (i.e., a meso-level) and between class and status components and forms of domination.

Therefore, foregrounding workers and other subalterns' practices of everyday resistance as rooted in and as a function of both capitalist relations that mutually co-exist with other seemingly 'external' semi-autonomous largely non-class/ideational forms of power gives a more concrete reading of worksite labour struggles or other similar subaltern politics. We come to discern that subalterns experience and resist domination and exploitation at the *intersection* of mutually-reinforcing (and sometimes conflicting) *status-cum-class* identities, relations, and dynamics at the *meso-level* of the domination-resistance dynamic. For instance, in this thesis we discovered and dissected how post-colonial capitalist relations of labour domination and exploitation, plantation-specific forms of statist legal citizenship, and state-sanctioned partisan national politics mutually shape labour resistance. We have thus given prominence to the *inter-sectional* analysis of the domination-resistance synergy in capitalist agrarian labour politics.

Furthermore, in relation to intersectionality, the analysis has shown that what mainstream scholarship largely treats as separate realms of power and resistance can be productively researched, theorised, and analysed as mutually constituted parts of the fluidity, ambivalence, and complexity of social life. Power and resistance are not two related opposites – the power-resistance dynamic is not a zero-sum game where either of the two wins. Following the power dependency logic, we have a more realistic scenario wherein through intersectionality and

historical co-development, power and resistance become entangled, blended, and constitute each other in a dynamic inter-relationship. That is, there are elements of resistance in power institutions and relations and elements of power within resistance projects. This helps us understand the ambivalent or conflicted mix of power-resistance synergies wherein power (re)produces resistance and vice versa.

We also make a significant deduction regarding the understanding of everyday resistance that it should not be misconstrued as one polar end of a range of forms of resistance. There is more empirical and analytical value if it is considered as a transitional or transient phase within a continuum of the power-resistance synergy. That is, we need to make sense of it as a different form of resistance that relates to other resistance whereby it constitutes an initial *backstage* or *later stage* practice in relation to other more enduring, organised, and conventional forms of resistance. It occurs between or alongside the dramatic and collective forms of resistance.

Another critically important concluding remark concerns the solidarities and identities that inform the practices and dynamics of everyday (labour) resistance. Much as the practices are largely individualistic, they at least require and remain immersed in an informal co-ordinational ambience and tacit co-operation that are cultivated through networks of secrecy and understanding. All the actors directly or indirectly involved cultivate dissenting relations of complicitous silence - a self-interested muteness that is motivated by a popular sense of justice or a moral economy of collective empathy and sympathy. That is, in most instances, the actors involved quietly share a normative consensus that is predicated on the maintenance of a faithful eye on the collective being. The feasibility and dynamics of the practices are also guided by convivial relations. We pursue this further below.

The thesis has also shown that in everyday (labour) resistance, *conviviality* also becomes the cultural politics of recognition. That is, grassroot localised interactions and identities that become the secretly accepted forms of politico-economic and social conduct defining actual access to material-cum-status resources. In this instance, participants in resistance practices despite their different ethnic, political, religious, and class standings interact in creative, autonomous, but *interdependent* ways mainly out of material necessity. We therefore have cases of ‘intimate strangers’ who secretly coalesce basically to survive. This is unsurprising since everyday practices of dissent, whether material or ideational, are ‘heavy’ on or give prominence to the instrumental side – some kind of self-help. As a result, the individuals

involved increasingly become ‘exchangists’, who operate mainly under the different levels of disguise that we alluded to earlier above. Interestingly, both the conspiratorial and convivial relations are also complemented by the social actors’ public portrayal of compliance with but a backstage contest of the arrangements being resisted.

The two foregoing solidarities give rise to creative, polylithic, fluid, ambivalent identities of participants in the power-resistance synergy. The synergy does not give rise to solid, fixed, habituated definitions and meanings of identities and relations. There is for instance no absolute identity where one is strictly a ‘resister’, ‘target’, ‘dominator’, ‘dominee’, ‘accomplice’, ‘observer’, ‘worker’, or ‘capitalist’. The actors involved assume transient mercurial identities that are context specific. We could for instance have a Barura employee having a conflicted and blended identity such as ‘peasant-cum-worker-cum-resister-cum-target’ simultaneously. Thus, overall, the solidarities and identities informing the power-resistance synergy are as mercurial, conflicted, blended, and transient as the synergy itself.

Last, the fact and logic that all the quotidian acts of resistance that we discovered and analysed *avoid* some open *dramatic* confrontation with the material, symbolic, and ideological forms of power imply a certain *accommodation* to them. Here, everyday labour resistance leaves the dominant forms and logic of power intact. This is an equation to the upshot that workers or subalterns who resist through *disguised piecemeal* practices also somewhat tacitly *recognise* or *legitimate* the systems of power being resisted. So, their practices of resistance paradoxically reproduce and reinforce various forms domination and exploitation. This epitomises the conflicted entanglement of power and resistance. This also sustains our anchoring argument that we stated earlier above.

Meanwhile, in light of future research, the current research provokes debates on and therefore a point of departure for further specialised and systematic scholarship on how everyday forms of resistance complement each other with or transition to the more organised collective forms. Or even more interestingly, how the spectacular collective form transitions to more or less of the quotidian form. Also, by making some modest theoretical contribution (i.e., a modified framework of researching and analysing (everyday) resistance), this thesis partly sets the scene for further methodical theorisation of the under-theorised and developing field of resistance and everyday resistance in particular.

so, given the increasing proportion of women engaging in agricultural labour in Africa's agro-based economies and elsewhere, there is what we would call the increased 'feminisation' especially of seasonal and casual agricultural work. Therefore, this study through its deliberate adoption of an inter-sectional approach to the power-resistance synergy in an agrarian workspace setting opens up opportunities for research that gives prominence to the gendered dimension of (everyday) resistance in agrarian labour studies or other related fields.

As a parting emphasis, it is vitally important to note how scholarship and research on resistance is in itself a *power exercise*. How researchers and intellectuals include or exclude the resistance of subalterns is fundamental to resistance studies. In social sciences in general, scholars run the risk of marginalising, excluding, and silencing non-conventional forms of resistance while privileging the direct, formal, and conventional resistance as the 'legitimate' form. Empirical research, theories, and methodology on resistance must be wary of being embedded in power discourses that (in)advertently silence or marginalise non-conventional forms of resistance, which interestingly constitute the main recourse for subalterns. In light of this dynamic, this thesis is one exemplar case that offers a *critical approach* to resistance studies by uncovering and analysing under-appreciated assumptions, power-resistance dynamics, discursive structures, and change prospects of a form of resistance guided by *non-conventional* actors, practices, contexts, and means.

10

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11

APPENDICES

Appendix I: Class-cum-Status Locations of the Barura Post-colonial Commercial Forestry Production System

a) Plantation Capital/Owners: A location constituted of the *nominal* rights and powers of statist private 'ownership' of forestry plantation productive resources, which are conferred, by the Ministry of Agriculture, to state-nominated professionals. The latter include roles such as the Minister of Agriculture, their Permanent Secretaries, Heads of the Forestry Plantation Department, board of directors, and chief executive officers. These roles, on behalf of the state (i.e., the Ministry of Agriculture), retain the basic rights of and powers over the allocation of Ministry-sourced capital and the command of resultant profits (for e.g., Wright, 2001) both at the sector (Agro-forestry sector) and enterprise (i.e., Barura Estate Plantation) levels.

b) Peasants: A location that mainly concerns *subsistence land* as a central resource (and the *land rights* thereto) in the indigenous *agro-economy* (see van Onselen, 1973, 1980; Cohen, 1980). The distinct relation is the *communal/traditional* land *ownership*, *use*, and *appropriation* (of output thereto) for *self-sufficiency* by independent producers, who retain near-complete *control* over their living labour. In the current study, all these rights are typical in *rural communities* where they are largely products of inter-generational *local cultural* traditions and beliefs. This subsequently brings in a complementary class position, namely the **traditional elites**.

c) Traditional elites: An articulated class position of peasants who, also as special *traditional authorities*, mediate and sanction the *rights* and *cultural beliefs* that distinguish the peasantry. So, this location entails *traditional roles* such as kraal and village heads, chiefs, spirit mediums, etc. The latter are ordained *customarily* through *ancestral* powers, and in some cases *politically* through *state* privileges to hold rural common pool resources and rural land *in trust* of the ancestors, the rural communities, and the state and have the right to parcel out land (on behalf of the state) to *'native'* (i.e., of Zimbabwean paternal ancestry) villagers for residence and subsistence.

d) Commercial Plantation Workers: Overall, denotes a location of independent producers who own *labour power*, which they are however subtly 'forced' to sell to plantation owners for a *wage*. The 'enforced' increased reliance on wage work is necessitated through colonial capitalism-based land dispossession and/or subsequent post-colonial statist or private capital land grabs, which deprive the independent producers of land as an important subsistence resource. Based on Wright's (2009) notion of *strata within locations* this class location can be delineated into three fluid strata.

(i) Peasant-cum-workers: These are originally *peasants* (see (a) above) who simultaneously earn a wage through commercial plantation wage employment. Overall, it is a post-colonial capitalist location in which independent producers participate in both the peasant and commercial forestry systems of production. *Intensity* and *frequency* of participation in either of the two systems mainly depends on the *effort price* of participation in and the socio-economic viability of either of the two at any given time.

***(ii) 'Alien' Wage Workers/ 'Alien' Workers*:** An equivalent of the Marxian (1968) *proletariat*, which, bereft of ownership, usufruct, and appropriation rights over *privatised* land and incomes, almost fully relies on 'selling' labour power. However, unlike the Marxian proletariat, in the current post-colonial commercial plantation system of production, this location derives mainly from *ethnicised* and *racialised* colonial and post-colonial Zimbabwean *citizenship* and *land legislation* (e.g. Muzondidya, 2007). Thus, this class-cum-status position is comprised mainly of the so-called *'alien'* workers - *all* generations of African black workers of *non-Zimbabwean paternal ancestry* who originally came to the country mainly via the regional 'forced labour' migration regime from colonial Malawi, Zambia, and Mozambique (see van Onselen, 1973). Like its colonial counterpart, the post-colonial Zimbabwean state continues to legally exclude these 'aliens' from ownership of and access to any land and land-based resources using their 'foreign' heritage as the legal criterion. So, inevitably, this location comprises *farm-dwellers* (with no tenure security), who must rely almost entirely on a plantation wage livelihood.

***(iii) 'Native Alien' Wage Workers*:** A location constituted of peasant-cum-workers of Zimbabwean paternal ancestry (i.e., 'natives'/'aborigines') who are 'aliens' insofar as known or perceived disloyalty to either the governing ZANU (PF) party or the ZANU (PF)-led state

is concerned. Here, partisan political allegiance becomes a significant criterion for class-cum-status location and for effective access to socio-economic resources, especially resettlement land, state relief schemes, and government projects.

Appendix II: Participant Information Sheet (Workers)

Research Title: 'Operating under the Radar': Forestry Plantation Workers' Everyday Resistance in Chimanimani District, Zimbabwe

Research Protocol number: H15/11/20

Student name: Wellington Mvundura
Student email: mvunduraw@gmail.com
Student contact number: +27 73 908 1129

Supervisor name: Prof. Devan Pillay
Supervisor email: Devan.Pillay@wits.ac.za
Supervisor contact number: +27 11 717 4425

University of the Witwatersrand Research Ethics Committee (non-medical) contact:
Lucille.Mooragan@wits.ac.za
011 717 1408

My name is **Wellington Mvundura,** and I am a PhD student at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. I am carrying out research on how plantation wage workers cope with, survive, and navigate various forms of constraints they face in their work and home lives. If you are willing, I wish to interview you and participate in and observe some of your work, home, and social activities in that regard.

Participation in this study includes the following:

- One-on-one face-to-face interviews of at most 2 hours.
- Answering interview questions in spaces of your choice.
- The audio-recording of the interviews only if you agree.
- The researcher's participation in some of your work, home, and social activities.
- Being observed during your work, home, and leisure activities.
- Being asked follow-up questions to these observations.
- The occasional writing of notes by the researcher during interviews and observations
- Your free choice to withdraw from the interviews or decline being observed at any time without giving a reason.

Your anonymity to the public will be realized insofar as I identify you with a fictional name in any report. Your responses and notes from observations will remain confidential to the extent I will remove or not attach any identifying information to them and keep them secure in a password protected computer to which only I will have access. I will destroy the responses after 6 years. However, complete confidentiality may not be guaranteed since in some cases some people from this plantation who happen to read the

final report may readily attach your real name, even without it being directly mentioned, to some characteristic responses in the reports.

The potential **Risks** of your participation are:

- Because of the sensitive nature of the topic, you may incriminate yourself legally, jobwise, and socially in some of your responses, behaviour, thoughts, and activities. To minimize or eradicate the penalties and any harm associated with this, I will uphold the issues of anonymity and confidentiality as detailed above.
- I will observe, participate in, and ask you about some personal and sensitive aspects of your home and work life. So, you may experience some anxiety, discomfort, grief, pain during interviews, observations, and participation. So, may find it helpful to decline being observed, decline my participation, or to skip a question or choose to stop an interview at any time. If any of the topics discussed in the interview or during observations upset you, I can refer you to a counselor that you can talk with further.

  Counselling services can be obtained at: World Vision, Mutambara Mission Hospital; Tel: 020 654321; Cell: 0773 657 386

Benefits:

- You may not receive any direct financial or economic benefits from participating in this study. But this research will help us understand the day-to-day relations between farm labour, employers, and management. So, the indirect benefit is that your narratives will be shared with the wider society with the possibility of a positive influence on labour policy.

Costs: Participation in the one-on-one interviews may inconvenience you by taking you away from your daily routine or official work. To minimize this, I will respect your choice to abruptly postpone or abandon the interview at any point so that you address urgent issues.

The information that will be collected is purely for research purposes and may be written up in research reports in an anonymized form.

Participation is completely voluntary; you are under no obligation to take part in this project. You may withdraw from this project at any stage, and this will not affect you in any way.

Do you have any questions?

Would you like to go ahead with being part of this research project? YES NO (tick appropriate response)

I have read and understood what the study entails.

NAME/CODE……

DATE……..

Appendix III: Participant Information Sheet (Key Informants)

Research Title: 'Operating under the Radar': Forestry Plantation Workers' Everyday Resistance in Chimanimani District, Zimbabwe

Research Protocol number: H15/11/20

Student name: Wellington Mvundura
Student email: mvunduraw@gmail.com
Student contact number: +27 73 908 1129

Supervisor name: Prof. Devan Pillay
Supervisor email: Devan.Pillay@wits.ac.za
Supervisor contact number: +27 11 717 4425

University of the Witwatersrand Research Ethics Committee (non-medical) contact:
Lucille.Mooragan@wits.ac.za
011 717 1408

My name is **Wellington Mvundura,** and I am a PhD student at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. I am carrying out research on how plantation wage workers cope with, survive, and navigate various forms of constraints they face in their work and home lives. If you are willing, I wish to interview you in that regard.

Your participation in this study will include the following:

- One-on-one face-to-face interviews of at most 1 hour.
- Answering interview questions.
- Conducting the interviews in spaces of your choice.
- The audio-recording of the interviews only if you agree.
- The occasional writing of notes by the researcher.
- Your free choice to withdraw from the interview at any time without giving a reason.

Your anonymity to the public will be realized insofar as I will identify you with a generalized job designation and a fictional name in any report. Your responses will remain confidential to the extent I will remove or not attach any identifying information to them and keep them secure in a password protected computer to which only I will have access. I will destroy the responses after 6 years. However, complete confidentiality may not be guaranteed since in some cases some people from this plantation who happen to read the final report may readily attach your real name, even without it being directly mentioned, to some characteristic responses in the reports.

The potential **Risks** of your participation are:

- Because of the sensitive nature of the topic, you may incriminate yourself legally, jobwise, and socially in some of your responses. To minimize or eradicate the penalties and any harm associated with this, I will uphold the issues of anonymity and confidentiality as detailed above.
- I will ask you some personal and sensitive questions about your life and work. So, you may experience some anxiety, discomfort, grief, pain, in discussing some of the topics in the interview. So, may find it helpful to skip a question or chose to stop the interview at any time. If any of the topics discussed in the interview upset you, I can refer you to a counselor that you can talk with further.

  Counselling services can be obtained at: World Vision, Mutambara Mission Hospital; Tel: 020 654321; Cell: 0773 657 386

Benefits:

- You may not receive any direct financial or economic benefits from participating in this study. But this research will help us understand the day-to-day relations between farm labour, employers, and management. So, the indirect benefit is that your narratives will be shared with the wider society with the possibility of a positive influence on labour policy.

Costs: Participation in the one-on-one interviews may inconvenience you by taking you away from your daily routine or official work. To minimize this, I will respect your choice to abruptly postpone or abandon the interview at any point so that you address urgent issues.

The information that will be collected is purely for research purposes and may be written up in research reports in an anonymized form.

Participation is completely voluntary; you are under no obligation to take part in this project. You may withdraw from this project at any stage, and this will not affect you in any way.

Do you have any questions?

Would you like to go ahead with being part of this research project? YES NO (tick appropriate response)

I have read and understood what the study entails.

NAME/CODE……

DATE……

Appendix IV: Consent Form for Workers

Title of research project: 'Operating under the Radar': Forestry Plantation Workers' Everyday Resistance in Chimanimani District, Zimbabwe.

Research Protocol Number: H15/11/20

Student Name: Wellington Mvundura (PhD Candidate)
Student Email: mvunduraw@gmail.com
Student Contact: +27 13 908 1129

Supervisor Name: Prof. Devan Pillay
Supervisor Email: Devan.Pillay@wits.ac.za
Supervisor Contact: +27 11 717 4425

University of the Witwatersrand Research Ethics Committee (non-medical) contact:
Lucille.Mooragan@wits.ac.za
+27 11 717 1408

	Yes	No
I have read and understood the participant information sheet and have had the opportunity to ask questions.		
I understand that I am free to withdraw from this study at any time with no negative consequences.		
I understand that all information will be confidential, and my responses anonymized. However, it may still be possible for someone from this plantation to identify me with typical responses in any final report even when my real name has been anonymised		
I give consent for my responses and any other identifying details to be made available in an anonymized format for a variety of subsequent		

purposes, including for future teaching and research projects. I give my consent to be audio-taped during interviews.		
I understand that after the project the tapes will be kept for 2 years after publication, or for 6 years if no publication results.		
I also understand that I am free to withdraw this consent at any time.		
I consent to participate in this study.		

PARTICIPANT:

I herewith confirm that I have been fully informed about the study and have given consent to participate as indicated above.

Printed Name Signature Date

RESEARCHER (Wellington Mvundura)

Signature Date

Appendix V: Consent Form for Key Informants

Title of research project: 'Operating under the Radar': Forestry Plantation Workers' Everyday Resistance in Chimanimani District, Zimbabwe.

Research Protocol Number: H15/11/20

Student Name: Wellington Mvundura (PhD Candidate)
Student Email: mvunduraw@gmail.com
Student Contact: +27 13 908 1129

Supervisor Name: Prof. Devan Pillay
Supervisor Email: Devan.Pillay@wits.ac.za
Supervisor Contact: +27 11 717 4425

University of the Witwatersrand Research Ethics Committee (non-medical) contact:
Lucille.Mooragan@wits.ac.za
+27 11 717 1408

	Yes	No
I have read and understood the participant information sheet and have had the opportunity to ask questions.		
I understand that I am free to withdraw from this study at any time with no negative consequences.		
I understand that all information will be confidential, and my responses anonymized. However, it may still be possible for someone from this plantation to identify me with typical responses in any final report even when my real name has been anonymised.		
I give consent for my responses and any other identifying details to be made available in an anonymized format for a variety of subsequent		

purposes, including for future teaching and research projects. I give my consent to be audio-taped during interviews.		
I understand that after the project the tapes will be kept for 2 years after publication, or for 6 years if no publication results.		
I also understand that I am free to withdraw this consent at any time.		
I consent to participate in this study.		

PARTICIPANT:

I herewith confirm that I have been fully informed about the study and have given consent to participate as indicated above.

Printed Name Signature Date

RESEARCHER (Wellington Mvundura)

Signature Date