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FACULTY OF ARTS HISTORY DEPARTMENT

**IDENTITY AND BURIAL: THE HISTORY OF THE JEWISH
CEMETERY IN NORTH END SUBURBS, BULAWAYO**

A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED

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TO THE HISTORY DEPARTMENT

**IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
AWARD OF THE BACHELOR OF ARTS HONOURS DEGREE IN
HISTORY**

ZVISHAVANE, ZIMBABWE

NOVEMBER 2016

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Degree Title Bachelor of Arts in History
Honours Degree.

Year this Degree granted 2016

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DEDICATION

To my late uncle Mr Joseph James who always inspired, motivated and encouraged me to do my best in my academic pursuits.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation was made possible by the encouragement and help I got from many people. However, granted their countless number space can only allow me to mention out a few. I am greatly indebted to Dr T Mashingaidze my supervisor who critiqued, inspired and provided the intellectual and professional guidance throughout the writing. I also owe special debt to the lecturers in the Department of History who laid the foundation of this research through their coordinated work of teaching. My sister Miranda James and the Maphosa family, I thank them for remaining a constant source of encouragement and for financial support.

This study will be incomplete without the excellent efforts exhibited by a number of organisations like the Bulawayo City Council, National Archives of Bulawayo, who accorded me the chance to research in their archives and carrying out interviews.

To all my friends Bridget, Vimbayi, Thandolwenkosi, Methembe and Adrian I thank you for remaining steadfast and exhibiting your unlimited energy in helping me in your own right. I owe you the greatest gratitude.

Last but not least, to the Almighty God for the guidance and protection.

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ACRONYMS

BCC	Bulawayo City Council
BDPA	Bulawayo District Publicity of Association
BHC	Bulawayo Hebrew Congregation
BSS	Bulawayo Service station
IAB	Industrial Advisory Board
NUST	National University of Science and Technology
PAD	Pro Africa Development
RJBD	Rhodesian Jewish Board of Deputies
RZC	Rhodesian Zionist Council
ZWP	Zimbabwe Water Project

Glossary: Hebrew Words

Ponikam or potanum: buried here

Se'udathava'h: a meal of condolence

Tohara: a ritual performed when bathing the body of the deceased

Chevra Kadisha: watchers of the body

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Abstract

The Jews came into Zimbabwe (formerly Rhodesia) in the nineteenth century following the Second World, the Rhodesian Jewish Board of Deputies (RJBD) was established in 1943 to organize national Jewish community in the country, and thus the creation of the Bulawayo Hebrew Congregation and Jews engaged in national pioneering activities such as transportation systems, mining and hotel corporations. He further argues that the Jewish contribution to early Rhodesia was not exclusively in terms of soldiers, traders and brawlers, but certain individuals played an important part in establishing modern civilized life in Salisbury and Bulawayo engaging in politics, for instance, Ralph Harris Mayor of Bulawayo in 1979 and in 2014 Eric Bloch being an economist thus the Jews have played a pivotal role in the society of Bulawayo.

The Jewish community have their own cemetery situated in North End this is due to their distinctiveness from other religions such as the Roman Catholic and the Protestants. The Jews uniqueness in rituals before and after burial and their beliefs in the Torah have made them to be separated in burial to the extent that they are neither buried with the white race. The Jewish tradition despises the use of caskets, cremation and the placing of flowers after burial as they argue that it is a pagan tradition as funerals are filled with emotions such as grief and anger that flowers symbolize a celebration. However it should be noted that the Jews instead of flowers they place stones and pebbles on the gravestones and this according to their customs symbolize love and the remembrance of a loved one. With the difference in beliefs, norms, rituals and customs it is then appropriate for the Jewish people to be buried alone as their grave stone making is different too, pictures of hands and trees are engraved, the cemetery has uniformity in the shape and width of the graves, and the Hebrew language is used on all gravestones.

INTRODUCTION

According to Webster, identity is defined as the qualities and the beliefs that make a particular person or a group different from others.¹ Gluckman states that Jewish identity is a multi-dimensional phenomenon consisting of ritual behaviour, institutional participation, social ties, attitudes towards Israel, religious belief, knowledge of Judaism, and philanthropy.² The Jewish Cemetery located in North End Suburbs came to existence in the nineteenth century due to the Jewish difference in religious ideology and racial lines amongst other groups in Bulawayo such as the whites, their unique character, ritual beliefs and individuality made them to seek for a separate burial and not to be buried with whites.³ In addition the Jewish have their own ritual beliefs, culture, mortuary and that identity's them as a different religion from Moslems and Hindus, their difference in tombstone making, language, signs and symbols makes it appropriate for them to have their own place of burial as the engraved meaning is understood by them.⁴ Cemeteries constitute a particular type of burial site and space that can be best understood through appreciating physical characters like ownership, meaning, the sites relationship to personal and community identities and its sacredness.⁵

Death ritual like much of human behaviour is an expression of a cultural blueprint of attitudes, values and ideas passed down by parents to the next generation, rituals can be consequently regarded as tools for the construction of individual and collective identity thus funeral rituals in Jewish are different and not the same as the funerary rituals in Islam.⁶ In contrast different cultures and religions employ a variety of rituals, so do Catholics and Christians hence people perform rituals to demonstrate where they belong, who they are thus Jewish funerals are distinguished by their simplicity, humility and solemnity.⁷ Roth states that gravestones and symbolism in the Jewish cemetery express the cultural and historic

experiences through universal visual elements; the gravestones serve as tools for presentation of self and identity.

To add on, the headstones which are raised above the deceased can be viewed as tools for the reconstruction of social order and the joint identity of the group.⁸ It should be noted that the change and time has greatly influenced the making of the gravestones in the Jewish cemetery as they are not diverse like other Jewish Cemeteries pictures such as flowers and hands have withstood time unlike images of animals. Identity and burial are of great significance the Jews are identified by the Magen sign of David, the cross identifies a Christian house of worship, it should be noted that the star is of great importance to the Jewish culture as it also appears universally on the flag of the State of Israel.⁹

Prominent man of Bulawayo are buried in the Jewish cemetery former lawyers Mr Bash, Mr Jacobs and Mr Barons, Mr E Bloch an economist and the former advisor of the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe (RBZ), despite how rich one is in the Jewish culture all people are buried in a cheap pine wooden coffin with robes by the sides that is their tradition.¹⁰ The Jewish cemetery is a symbol of diaspora unity as the young prominent Jews such as Diana Bloch located in New Zealand, Hila Solomon in the United Kingdom and many others working in various fields such as medical and law fund the cemetery with finances.¹¹ These finances are used to maintain the cemetery and to pay four caretakers working there; in July Mr Roth (Jewish Leader) used the funds to renovate the old Chapel that was built in 1930. The Jewish in the diaspora fund the Jewish Cemetery in North End as it is of great significance to them, it is a monument, holds great memories and it carries a history of the Jews in Zimbabwe.¹²

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The research sought to unravel the relationship between identity and burial in Zimbabwe and to show that the establishment of the Jewish cemetery is not only about burial but it is a resemblance of a spirit of togetherness and diaspora unity.¹³ To show the importance of signs and symbols to the Jewish culture and how their religious beliefs and rituals differ from other religions this making them appropriate to have their own place of burial.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To show the importance of signs and symbolism to the Jewish culture
- To show that the Jewish Cemetery is a symbol of Diaspora unity and identity in Zimbabwe
- To show that the Jewish community is coming to an end in Bulawayo (Zimbabwe too)

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is the history and nature of the Jewish Cemetery in North End?
2. What is the relationship between identity and burial in Zimbabwe?
3. Why was the Jewish Cemetery established in North End and who was the driving force?
4. Has change and time affected the making of the gravestones in the Jewish cemetery?
5. What is the significance of symbols on gravestones and burial rituals?

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Most of Jewish communities are acknowledged to have their own character and individuality; these arise from the composition and origins of the population in which they evolved. In Zimbabwe, the first adventurer to live in Bulawayo was Daniel Montague Kirsch born in England in 1840.¹⁴ Kosmin states that the Jews (Majuta) arrived in Zimbabwe formerly Rhodesia in the nineteenth century as result of the expansion of the South African Frontier by the British of the Cape Colony and many Jews arrived in Rhodesia before the Second World War.¹⁵ According to Cohen the Rhodesian Jewish Board of Deputies (RJBD) was established in 1943 to organize national Jewish community in the country, Jews engaged in national pioneering activities such as transportation systems, mining and hotel corporations.¹⁶ He further argues that the Jewish contribution to early Rhodesia was not solely in terms of soldiers, traders and brawlers, but certain individuals played an important part in establishing modern civilized life in Salisbury and Bulawayo engaging in politics, for instance, Ralph Harris Mayor of Bulawayo in 1973, Abraham Menashe and Justice Goldin, a Prominent Surgeon.¹⁷

A synagogue is the most important physical expression of the Jewish presence as it serves as a place of their own, where Jews can gather to fulfil both religious and social needs. The religious and social life of the Jewish community was organized by various Jewish societies such as Zionist groups.¹⁸ The need for burial facilities and high holy days services was the drive behind the formation of the Bulawayo Hebrew Congregation (BHC) in 1984 and the inaugural meeting was held in the tent of Messrs Moss and Rosenblatt and the first Jewish service being held in the dining room of the Charter Hotel.¹⁹ It should be noted that they were leading supporters outside Bulawayo and in the diaspora such as Coleman Joseph of C Joseph and Co of London, Joseph Jacobson of Johannesburg and S. Hyman of Salisbury. Interviewed

by Joseph Jameson from the Bulawayo City Council (BCC) the Jewish community managed to obtain two freehold stands for a synagogue and a large plot for a cemetery.²⁰

LITERATURE REVIEW

J.S Curl is of the view and defines a cemetery as a burial ground laid out expressly for the deposition or interment of the dead and not being a church yard attached to a place of worship.²¹ However, Kolbuszewski takes a broader approach in his discussion of a cemetery as a text of culture, in proposing the view that not every place of burial is a cemetery, thus he states that a cemetery comes with two necessary interconnected requirements priori formulated resolution and the ability of the space to facilitate burial carried out in an appropriately ritualized way.²² The site has to be constituted that ritual- customary religious, ethnic and cultural funeral practices can be readily accommodated this stance will help the researcher to understand identity and burial as the Athlone cemetery has been divided into sections for the Hindu, Royal Air force, Catholics and the Jewish this enables the various people to carry out various rituals when burying loved ones. Meyer points out another point that cemeteries contain gravemarkes that describe characteristics of a deceased person's life, dates of birth and death hence the site carries the purpose of enshrining the identity of the deceased as an individual.²³

He further argues that sacredness which may be defined in religious terms but can also include as assessment of pilgrimage to the site, its permanence and its ability to act as a context for grief.²⁴ Davies states that epitaphs, inscriptions and art reflect emotional bonds between family members and the degree of religious immanence in everyday life. Ethnic difference in death can be expressed either through separate ethnic cemeteries, separate

ethnic sections in cemeteries or ethnic symbols inscribed on grave markers as cemeteries are sites where family and communal loyalties are linked and re-affirmed.²⁵

Religion, burial and identity are correlated. Religion is more likely to play a significant role in identity formation in a culture. For instance, religiosity is found to be relevant in explaining commitment and purposefulness in terms of identity formation and burial.²⁶ Griffiths states that the influence of religion on identity formation might also arise from community influence, for instance, that members of a particular community are mostly religious.²⁷ It would be the case that, most people would adhere to the norms of the community. If it is the case that the norms of the community is binding on most, if not all the members of the community, then, religion might play significant role in identity formation.

Different religions tend to associate sacred objects or symbols to the Supreme Being, as man cannot see God in person, this association of sacred objects to Supreme Being may arguably help to fill the gaps created from his supposedly inability to be in direct contact with the Supreme Being.²⁸ Anih views religion as a coherent embrace of convictions, ceremonies and customs associated with a deeper and greater reality Supreme Being compared with material reality. This suggests that religion deals with upholding of one's beliefs as it relates to the Supreme Being, the ceremonies that go with the sustenance of the belief system.²⁹ He views religion as the recognition of our duties in accordance with divine commands. The role of religions in different societies and epochs vary. Religion might be a powerful force in one society, less powerful in another and in some societies might have a negligible influence. The differential role of religion in different societies and epochs arguably does not eliminate in its entirety the influence of religion on identity development and evolution over time. In summary, religion seems to be instrumental in the formation of identity and burial.³⁰

Hammond citing Durkheim notes that religion is a copied of the social circumstances that create the enabling environment for involuntary acceptance of a way of life, especially as a consequence of group membership.³¹ For instance, people are made to manifest their sense of unity and belonging as a result of group membership through participation in rituals, ceremonies, belief systems or orientations and behaviour towards symbols and objects perceived to be sacred and treated with sense of awe and wonder (Jews). He argues that groups such as the Jews fall under the category of direct relation between religion and ethnicity. The strong link suggests that nonexistence of religion implies the high likelihood that the ethnic group would not exist. In some instances, religion plays a forceful foundational role in the formation of ethnicity; but its foundational influence is diluted by other important foundational factors such as: unique territory origin and perhaps, a distinctive language and asense of self.³² Erikson contends that religion is and remains the oldest and long-lasting institution that creates the enabling environment for attachment to an ideology that arises at the successful conclusion of the psychological crisis associated with identity formation.³³

Kings insight suggests that religion provides both an inspiring view point that helps to forge moral beliefs and religious norms also play an important in transition of religious beliefs to a community of believers. This implies that religious beliefs, values and morals help to empower a community to better understand the world and their unique place in it. It is more likely that ideologies generated through religion helps to deepen one's understanding of events and experiences as well as associating meanings to these events and experiences.³⁴ scholars claim that identity is circumscribed both by social norms and practices as one understands them and by beliefs and behaviours of other members of that society. In Islam deceased are buried within 24 hours, no use of caskets the upper body, the head is turned towards Mecca, with Protestants they is no required time frame work for the burial of the

deceased, cremations are also acceptable with Roman Catholics the priest blesses the graveside and lastly with Hinduism they is no burial of the deceased as the bodies are burnt and the head points to the south. Thus one can conclude that identity and burial are correlated as religions have different values, beliefs and rituals thus making it sacred and of great importance to the various religions.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researcher used a multi-dimensional methodology that apprehended the views, thoughts and perceptions from various people and stakeholders. Harwell states that a qualitative method was used to gather information. Qualitative data was obtained through key informant interviews this method was flexible as it is a two way communication and provides vital information.³⁵ The researcher managed to read verbal and non-verbal responses as one conducted interviews with Jews staying at Savyon Old People's Home, the Caretaker at the Jewish Cemetery, A Jewish Lawyer, Petkar, Roth the Jewish leader who manages the cemetery and people in the North End community The researcher interviewed prominent Jewish families in Bulawayo, the Jewish Rabbi, the old aged Jewish people, people in North End and also to have guided and clarified questions as the researcher had direct contact with the respondent.

Archival documents were consulted; Primary sources such as past reports and minutes were mainly taken from National Archives of Zimbabwe, BCC archives and the Jewish Archival Centre. These documents evoked critical thinking and this enabled the researcher to come up with a relevant conclusion. It also helped in illustrating how other researchers have dealt or discussed the subject in relation to their past time similar to the research question which one is dealing with. Therefore, all relevant secondary sources were consulted in an attempt to achieve open and sound facts.

The researcher also used secondary sources so as to strengthen the study published books, journals, e journals, newspapers and previous researches helped the researcher to deal with the research topic and also to see how other researchers have dealt with the subject in relation and also to concretize and validate opinions. Secondary sources also helped in illustrating how other researchers have dealt or discussed the subject in relation to their past time similar to the research question which one is dealing with. Therefore, all relevant secondary sources were consulted in an attempt to achieve open and sound facts.

In carrying out the research the researcher paid particular attention to ethical issues so as to avoid conflicts and disturbances that would affect the research results. Confidentiality, respect and protection of respondent names were issues taken into account hence the use of false names and the researcher agreed not to divulge any information found at the institution researched at.

DISSERTATION LAYOUT

The introductory chapter comprises of the introduction which highlights the major issues the whole dissertation focuses on. It gives brief information about the relationship between identity and burial in Zimbabwe, the history of the Jewish Cemetery. In this chapter views by different scholars on cemetery, symbols and place will be unpacked. The sources and methods used to collect data are also present.

The first chapter examines the origins of the Jewish Cemetery and why it was established in North End. It also focuses on the rituals performed before the deceased is buried and after and the correspondence they take their burial with the Holy bible. It looks at the various symbols used on the gravestones and their meanings as they act as a visual reference of the values, beliefs and cultural environment of the Jewish community. It will look at the influence of time and place in the upholding of gravestones in the Jewish Cemetery, symbols and dynamics.

The second chapter unravels the death of Eric Bloch a Jewish and prominent accountant in Bulawayo (died 22 September 2014). A case study of his background, his role in the Jewish community and Bulawayo at large will be observed. Literature such as various newspapers the Herald, Southern Eye, Chronicle, Sunday news and Zimbabwe independent will be revisited to see how different people from prominent members of the society to minor people reacted to the sad news of death such as David Coltart, Gideon Gono, SimbaMakoni, V Dube President of the ZCC only to mention a few. An analysis to Bloch's beliefs and how religion was important to him will be done, how he managed to work with people from various faiths as he understood the difference between Judaism and Christianity.

The third chapter interrogates the relationship between the Jewish community in Zimbabwe and the re located Jews in the Diaspora as it shows that the cemetery is a place of memory, a

monument and is sacred to the Jewish community, it reveals how the cemetery is maintained and managed by the Jewish Leader Roth (74 years of age). It also shows that religion and identity are linked, as religion deepens an insight on identity formation thus one can clearly understand the Jewish culture, norms, values and the core responsibilities that closely hold Jewish values together.

The fourth chapter discusses on the pull and push factors that have led the Jewish people to move abroad. The reason why they are now few Jews in Zimbabwe as compared to the 19th Century where they were more than 3000 families and now there are only 39 members in Bulawayo and in Midlands non exist, the challenges that the Jews faced while in Zimbabwe and lastly it will answer to the question, is it a farewell to the Jewish community?

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Chapter 1: The Establishment of the Jewish Cemetery: A Place of Identity: A Place of Burial

This chapter aims to provide the reasons that led to the origins of the Jewish cemetery in North End, Bulawayo. It brings to light that the cemetery is a place of identity and also the relationship between identity and burial in Zimbabwe. It focuses on the gravestone and symbolism in the Jewish cemetery that expresses cultural and historic experiences through universal visual elements. Gravestones serve as tools for presentation of self and identity, through choice of language for the inscription and symbols pertaining to different cultural contexts. The headstones which are raised over the deceased can be viewed as tools for the reconstruction of social order and the joint identity of the group and they are 1369 graves in the Jewish Cemetery in North End.

Jewish mortuary practises, customs and beliefs are based on the Torah. The process of funeral practises has several formal stages a period of mourning for a week after the burial, certain regalia is worn at the funeral as a sign of respect to the deceased, males are expected to wear yarmulke and women to wear somber colours and modest apparel. Beliefs and norms are of importance in the Jewish religion, at the cemetery the Rabbi cuts the black which symbolizes the individual breaking away of the deceased from the loved ones. The quick burial of the deceased is because the Jews believe that it is a release of the soul to a safe passage to heaven.

Fig 1.1



Jewish Chapel



cemetery gate

(Source: Nakai V James)

1.1.0 Origins of the Jewish Cemetery

The Jewish Cemetery originated in the 19th Century, their identification as a multi-dimensional phenomenon consisting of ritual behaviour, institutional participatory, social ties, attitudes towards Israel, religious belief knowing of Judaism and philanthropy led to the opening of the cemetery, to cater for the homogenous Jewish community.¹Phinney states that self-identification is an ethnic identity, a sense of belonging, positive and negative attitudes towards ones group and ethnic involvement which may include religious practice, friends, language and political activity.² There are 1369 graves and the first graves in the Jewish Cemetery are of 1907 and the first person to be buried there being Arthur Grenspar (male) on the 5th of July 1907 ,the Jewish cemetery is managed by a Jewish man Rothand is opened from Monday to Sunday from 9am to 3pm.³

1.1.1 Rituals Performed at the Jewish Funerals

In all societies, when a person dies, family, friends and neighbours respond in structured, word patterned ways to the death this shows the diversity and difference of beliefs and cultures.⁴ In and through rituals the deceased and the bereaved become anchored in a specific common culture. Death ritual like much of human behaviour is an expression of a cultural blueprint of attitudes, values and ideals passed down by parents and their parents which an individual's learns as a member of society, besides being means to show respect to the

deceased.⁵ To the bereaved death rituals can consequently be regarded as tools for the construction of individual and collective identity, funeral rituals in Jewish are different and not the same as funerary rituals in Islam. Different cultures and different religions employ a variety of rituals, Catholic and Christianity thus people perform rituals to demonstrate where they belong and to show who they are, thus Jewish funerals are distinguished by their simplicity, humility and solemnity.⁶ Wallace defines behaviour as a religion in action, as a private and personal behaviour as it is social, as it involves sacred and secular symbols and attended by sentiments, values and beliefs which transcend the utilitarian.⁷ Gluckman emphasizes the social attributes of rituals and the importance of supernatural sanction in enforcing conformity and points that ritualization refers to a certain performed action to express and amend social relationships and to help to blessings and protection.⁸

The analysis of the Jewish mortuary practices provides rich data of the behaviour between kin and community. Moose states that Jewish funeral practices have traditionally followed a strong set of customs and beliefs based on the Torah which encompasses the first five books of the Old Testament thus Genesis, Exodus, Numbers, Leviticus and Deuteronomy and there are various elements of the traditional Jewish mourning process.⁹ The process has several formal stages, including an intense period of mourning for the first week after the burial, followed by a transition period of another thirty days during which continued mourning begins to combine with daily life. Poporsky asserts that Judaism views mourning as part of a year-long cycle, throughout that cycle there are moments for healing, growth and acceptance and also a license for intense emotion such as anger, fear, sadness, isolation, and grief.¹¹

At the end of a year, a certain closure is brought to the process by the marking of the anniversary of the death. In subsequent years, the memory of the deceased may be celebrated in a number of ways. Petkar argues that the Jewish people hold on the philosophy that one should embrace life while accepting the inevitability of death. Jewish burials are to take place

as soon as possible, this is done as they believe that the soul does not die thus it has to travel to its final destination (God) so as to find rest and peace.¹² The Jewish people emphasize simplicity thus whether rich or poor they are all buried in cheap wooden pine coffins with robes to avoid embarrassment of the poor, however in Israel Jews are buried in blankets. It is traditional Jewish practice to perform a ritual washing of the body (Tohara) and then dress it in a plain burial shroud , Chevra Kadisha (watchers) remain with the body around the clock until the funerals.¹³ According to traditional practices the funeral should be held a day after the death, but due to family members being located abroad it is now taken to Farley funerals services while it awaits its burial the body is placed in a simple wooden coffin or cloth so as not to disturb its decomposition it should be noted that the burial of the deceased in an open casket or cremation is a taboo in the Jewish tradition.¹⁴

Fig 1.3



Mortuary fridge

Fig 1.4



Basin where bodies are washed

(Source: Nakai V James)

During the funeral certain regalia should be worn both by men and women as a sign of respect, male guests are expected to wear a jacket and tie with a yarmulke as a head covering

available at the synagogue and at the funeral home. Women are to dress modestly conservative apparel that's a dress or skirt of somber colours and not to wear a head covering such is done as a way of showing respect to the deceased and they believe it's a noble way for bidding goodbye.¹⁵The community is obligated to offer comfort and support and the Jewish law forbids mourners from eating any food they have prepared for themselves on the day of the burial. This forces friends and others to come to the home in person, sustaining the mourners physically with gifts of food and emotionally with their presence. The religious obligation to visit a Shiva house falls on the entire community; there is no expectation that a visitor should have known the deceased well, or even at all. Mourners are known to experience profound comfort from condolences and support by community members who were virtual strangers to them. A sense of the emotional and physical support generated by the practice of Shiva can be gleaned from a woman's description of her experience:

When I sat Shiva, about fifty people would pass through my house every day. They would bring food and speak with each other. I had this incredible realization that all of these people cared about me and I could call on them anytime¹⁶

The first meal in a Shiva house is called a se'udathavra'ah— meal of condolence. It usually begins with a blessing over the bread; the Jews regard it as a simple act of offering gratitude for what one has at a time when mourners are normally focused on what they have lost. The menu traditionally includes round foods such as lentils and eggs, symbolizing the cycle of life.¹⁷Often, guests serve the mourners before partaking themselves. Jewish law prohibits mourners from attending work or school during Shiva as it is a time to begin processing one's grief and acknowledging the loss.

Cameras and tape recorders are discouraged at the funeral as mourners are known to experience profound comfort from condolences and support; the service is conducted by a Rabbi whose first act is the cutting of a black ribbon which symbolises the individual

breaking away from loved ones.¹⁸ At the cemetery more prayers are read and the family members participate unlike other religion funerals, the Jewish place dirt on the coffin before it is buried thus symbolising their acceptance of the finality of death the placing of flowers is in appropriate at most Jewish Funerals and hence they place smooth small stones on the grave after the burial.¹⁹

With the Jewish belief the mourning period lasts for seven days and called Shiva with accordance to Hebrew 7, it is during this period that the bereaved family may practise traditions that include: covering of mirrors, burning memorial candles, wearing black ribbons, men do not shave, women do not wear makeup and couples refrain from intimacy. This break away from daily routines symbolizes the disruption that death has brought to their lives and the family and thus they demonstrate grief through self-sacrifice.²⁰

1.1.2 Burials Performed According To the Bible and the Torah

The Jewish believe in the philosophy that letthe Dead Bury Their Own Dead, an interpretation based on the First Century Jewish Burial practises.McCane suggests an interpretation that is consistent with first-century Jewish burial practices. After a body was placed in a burial cave, it was left to decompose. The family mourned for seven days, this initial mourning period was followed by a less intense 30-day period of mourning, called *shloshim*.²¹ However, it should be noted that the entire mourning period was not fully over until the flesh of the deceased had decomposed, usually about a year later. The Jerusalem Talmud states that the flesh had wasted away, the bones were collected and placed in chests (ossuaries), on that day (the son) mourned, but the following day he was glad, because his forebears rested from judgment (*MoedQatan* 1:5).

The final act of mourning, of the Jewish custom is an interpretation as to the harsh response that the Lord gave to his disciple when he requested to bury his father, as he said let the dead bury their own, two incidents are recorded in the Gospels (Luke 9 vs. 59-60 and Matthew 8 vs. 21-22), the gathering of the bones in the Jewish culture into a bone box called an ossuary, was called *ossilegium*,” or “secondary burial.” It is this act that is in view with the Lord’s response, the disciples’ request and Jesus’ response makes good sense in light of the Jewish custom of secondary burial. When the disciples requested time to bury their fathers they were actually asking for time to finish the rite of secondary burial. Their father had died, been placed in the family burial cave, and the sons had sat *shivah* and most likely *shloshim*. They had requested anywhere from a few weeks to up to 11 months to finish the ritual of *ossilegium* before they returned to Jesus.²²

Jewish custom insists on quick burial as a matter of respect for the dead, a consideration of particular relevance in hot climates. According to one kabbalistic source, burial refreshes the soul of the deceased, and only after burial will it be admitted to God's presence (Midrash ha-Ne'lam to Ruth; Zohar, Ex. 151). The examples set by the quick burials in the old testament of Sarah (Gen. 23) and of Rachel (Gen. 35:19) are reinforced by the Torah's express command that even the body of a man who had been hanged shall not remain upon the tree all night, but "thou shalt surely bury him the same day" (Deut. 21:23).²³ The Talmud (BK 81a) states that speedy burial of a corpse found unattended (*met mitzvah*) was one of the ten enactments ordained by Joshua at the conquest of Canaan and is unavoidable even on the high priest who was otherwise forbidden to become unclean through contact with the dead (Nazir 7:1). Josephus records that it is forbidden to let a corpse lie unburied in the torah, and consideration for the dead is one of the central features of Tobit (2:8). Some delays in burial are, however, justified as the honouring of the dead who demands that the proper preparation for a coffin and shrouds be made, and that relatives and friends pay their last respects. Even

then, however, only a few hours should pass concrete examples are of David and Solomon death. In talmudic times, while the burial was not delayed, graves were "watched" for a period of three days to avoid all possibility of pseudo-death (Sem. 8:1).²⁴

In addition certain delays are unavoidable, as funerals may not take place on the Sabbath or on the Day of Atonement; and although the rabbis at one time permitted funerals on the first day of a festival, provided that certain functions were performed by gentiles, and regarded the second day of Yom Tov as a weekday as far as the dead are concerned (Bezah).²⁵ Where there are two interments at the same time, respect demands that the burial of a scholar precedes that of an am ha-arez ("average citizen"), and that of a woman always precedes that of a man. The duty of burial, although primarily an obligation mandatory on the heirs (Gen. 23:3 and 25:9; Ket 48a), ultimately rests with the whole community.²⁶

1.1.3 Form of the Gravestones in the Jewish Cemetery

The Jewish community enforce a degree of uniformity on their headstones as their gravestones are similar in height, width and shape which articulates the homogeneity within the community, their tombstones are simple engraved with the name and date of death both in Hebrew and English and installing a tombstone costs \$1500.²⁷ A series of Hebrew letters is included a short hand for the phrase, "May his or her soul be bound up in the bonds of life" and is read from right to left in contrast with the Christians who write "May your soul rest in peace". It should be noted that graveyards and funerals function as a communicative symbol practise that construct and express individual and collective ethnic and cultural identity and also express social experiences and common ideas, gravestones also act as a visual reference of the values, beliefs and cultural environment of the people who use them²⁸

In ancient times traditionally Jewish gravestones were placed with little ceremony, however with the change of time Jews have adopted the practice of unveiling the tombstone by holding a brief graveside service within a year of the death sometimes on the First

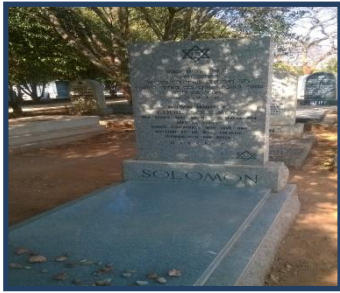
anniversary and the service is only attended by close friends and family.²⁹ The Rabbi chants Psalms and prayers, stories and memories are shared about the deceased this practice is the same with what Christians and Catholics do. Unlike other religions, in the Jewish culture mourners are discouraged from visiting the grave often specifically on festive seasons like the Sabbath or other Jewish Holidays, however it is custom for loved ones to visit on the anniversary of the death, in the autumn holidays and before important celebrations such as weddings or bar\ bat Mitzvah, mourners are also permitted to visit the grave on personal significant dates such as birthdays and wedding anniversaries.³⁰

The bringing of flowers to the graves is considered an echo of ancient pagan traditions and is prohibited under strict Jewish law; Jewish religion believes that it is customary for each person visiting a grave to place a stone or a pebble on top of the gravestone, scholars claim that this custom may date to biblical times when tombs were marked by a makeshift pile of stones were mourners would add to the people to the pile symbolically expressing their love for the deceased and their desire to care for him or her eternally, it is believed a gravestone with pebbles resting on top testifies that visitors have come remembering their loved one.³¹

1.1.4 Change, Time and Continuity with the Gravestones

A typical feature with the Jewish headstone art is its symbolism presented by the pictures of animals, plants and hands. According to Jewish law it is forbidden to paint people and angels on headstones like what other religions do for example the Roman Catholic can paint people on their headstone, with the Jewish culture symbols are supposed to symbolise the name of the dead, and animals can symbolize the powers of the God³².

Fig 1.5



Jewish Grave

(Source: Nakai V. James)

Fig 1.6



Roman Catholic Grave

Symbols in nature are communicative tools that cause a reaction as they communicate on different levels and they can be communal and universal, and these different levels can limit or enhance communicative properties. By overlooking the visual, intuitive and yet still organized elements of cemeteries, we are neglecting a significant portion of the material culture of the cemetery as these symbols are visual evidence of what the deceased, or the community who arranged the stone, wanted displayed and remembered.³³ Gravestones function as memorials: they offer details about the deceased, comfort to loved ones, yet eventually they become invaluable pieces of history that can teach us about the past.

The North End Jewish cemetery in Bulawayo is one such cemetery that has variety of gravestone inscriptions and most of all symbols offer endless opportunities for study. The Jewish cemetery in Bulawayo has very detailed gravestone images that reveal much about the people's lives, including decorative patterns and symbols on the gravestones, however there is no variety of languages used unless for English and Hebrew, as well as no representations of professions and ways that people died, and this shows dynamics and continuity as unlike what the ancient Jews did in cemetery in the diaspora these Jews in Bulawayo do not articulate the profession of the deceased by engraving a ship to show that one was a sailor, thus the important role of religion in interpreting changes in gravestone symbolism.³⁴

The distinctive symbols employed as decorative elements are in part a function of religion, and therefore changes in this aspect of culture can be investigated as they relate to other areas of change. For instance, a Jewish Cemetery in Curacao, the common factor behind the gravestones in the Beth Haim cemetery is that they all were members of the Jewish community on the island. Symbolism variations among gravestones in the Beth Haim Curacao can be understood as influenced by date, historical factors, individual design preferences, and also whether or not the individual or their family could afford to commission a detailed gravestone.³⁵

Time and change has greatly influenced the engraving of symbols of gravestones these scenes on the tombstones are also the most informative because they are the most personal. One does not need to know that the symbol of a woman dying in childbirth may be a biblical reference to the story of Rachel in order to understand what it is communicating at a basic level and feel it's symbolic significance, but one does need to know that the pitcher of water represents the Levites in order to understand it this symbol requires religious knowledge and limits the audience to whom the image communicates.³⁶ This is not to belittle the traditional religious symbols of their beauty and communicative quality, but rather is to note that the combination of more widely seen Jewish gravestone symbols and those less widely seen within the Beth Haim cemetery offers a variety of information to the viewer of the gravestones. It is important also to consider that the more personalized gravestone scenes, such as the grave of a woman who died in childbirth, are also the more universal.

In addition this type of symbol also is very emotionally evocative: the people viewing the stone remember that they are not just viewing artistic gravestone symbols, but that they are viewing a monument to a person and that the symbols were specially chosen to communicate a message about the person buried there thus the idea of monuments is important within any cemetery.³⁷ At a very basic level, the function of gravestones is to memorialize someone, and

even gravestones without symbols or any decorative quality still at least contain names and dates. It is the symbolic elements of gravestones, though, that speak at an emotional level and also act as material evidence of cultural values and ideas in graves without symbols or decorative elements, their lack of presence suggests much about the individual or community's understanding of the role of gravestones, including whether or not they could afford a decorated stone or whether they valued simplicity.³⁸

Weinstein considers the gravestones to be an expression of personal and religious celebration at finally being able to express themselves religiously in the tolerant Dutch communities in a time when Jews were suffering persecution all around the world, this relates back to the communicative quality of the gravestone images and symbols: behind the representations of people and professions in the Curaçao cemetery, which are not commonly recognized forms of Jewish gravestone symbols, there is a history being communicated to the viewer.³⁹ If we consider that gravestones and death monuments act as material tools that communicate cultural information, the cemetery in Curaçao presents images that illustrate values of the religious community (Hands of Blessing, Tree of Life) and also personal symbols (Ships, Death scenes). While epitaphs offer direct personal information such as birth dates and death dates, language however, images and symbols can potentially be universally understood based on their required background information thus one can state that in order to understand the function of the gravestone symbols, it is important to consider the cultural environment of the Cemetery.⁴⁰

1.1.5 Signs and Symbols in the Jewish Cemetery

Signs and symbols in the Jewish culture are followed due to Deuteronomy 6 verse 9 the symbolism on the headstones in North end Jewish Cemetery are not so diverse like other Jewish cemeteries in the diaspora due to change of time.⁴¹ Walking through the cemetery allows one to understand that the headstone decoration represents a change of Jewish thought,

it should be noted that symbols on the headstones are influenced by time, place and the environment where the cemetery is located. Common symbols found at the cemetery are of the blessing hands which symbolize that the deceased was a descendant of Aaron and plants that represent the fruits of the Israel soil offered at the temple or used for religious customs and at times plants can be used just as a decorative motif on the headstones.⁴²

In the Jewish cemetery all headstones have the sign 'ponikman' or 'potamun' which can be translated as hidden here or buried here and all inscriptions in Hebrew finish with a verse from 1 Samuel 25 verse 29 (but the soul of my Lord shall be bound in the bundle of life with the Lord thy God).⁴³

The sign engraved on the Jewish temple and grave stone of stars symbolize the stars of David or Magen of David. It is the symbol mostly associated with Judaism/ Jewry, Rosenzweign notes through theological significance that the top triangle strives upwards towards God, whilst the lower triangle strives downwards towards the real world, this may show the connection between God and the world some scholars are of the view that the intertwining makes the triangles inseparable which can be a symbol of the unity amongst the Jewish people.⁴⁴ It is said that the triangles has 12 sides , 3 interior and 3 exterior each and this may represent the 12 tribes of Judah. However, these theories are interesting but have little basis historical facts. In the Jewish custom the intertwined triangles are believed to bring good luck especially in the Middle East and North Africa.

Fig 1.7



Magen sign of David

Magen Star of David (source: Nakai V James)

The Magen David is a sign that identifies the Jewish houses of worship the same way as the cross identifies a Christian house of worship. It began to appear on synagogues and Jewish communal buildings in the 19th C, in 1897 the first Zionist Congress in Basel chose the Star of David as the symbol of the Zionist movement. It should be noted that the star is of great importance in the Jewish culture, as it also appears universally on the flag of the State of Israel and the Israel equivalent of the Red Cross is known as the Red Magen of David.⁴⁵

Conclusion

In conclusion the chapter has shown that the origins of the Jewish cemetery is due to self-identification and cultural differences with other religions and the need to uphold their values and sentiments this includes the difference in ritual beliefs performed by the Jews. It should be noted that different cultures and different religions employ a variety of rituals, catholic and Christianity thus people perform rituals to demonstrate where they belong and to show who they are, thus Jewish funerals are distinguished by its simplicity, humility and solemnity this is an indication of the need of sense of belonging. The significance of signs and symbols in the cemetery play a role of identifying the Jewish people. The making of their gravestones shows a uniqueness of the Jewish from other religions as the engraftment done includes the use of plants and animals and the engraving of a person is forbidden. Symbols create a Jewish identity as they communicate and construct and express their collective and cultural identity.

However, it should be noted that change and time have affected the gravestones of Jewish cemeteries as they are no longer the same because of the place where the cemeteries are situated and because some Jews are now adopting the Christian lifestyle. The bringing of flowers to the cemetery is considered an echo of pagan tradition and is prohibited under strict Jewish law; it is customary that when Jews visit the cemetery they place stones or pebbles on the gravestones as this is a symbol of love and remembrance.

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CHAPTER 2: The Death of Eric Bloch (case study)

The society's cultural and individual alignments towards death are intimately interwoven. Death has been understood firstly by denial then one accepts with time, the pausing of questions when one hears such bad news it is as if an explanation will bring the deceased back to life. Cultural groups deal with grief in various ways including in how they express their grief through rituals, ceremonies, different rules and in what they consider respectful. We are at once a product of our culture and a participant in its ongoing evolution. Without death life would be as monotonous and devoid of strength, pathos and joy as to render the human condition meaningless. Indeed, it is not necessary to say that death gives life meaning to note that death may be necessary for life to meaning the impact of death on human life extends beyond the fact of our individual mortality.

For although human beings are individuals alone, each person also exists in relationship to others. Individuals do not live in isolation, but instead in families and communities. A case study of the death of Eric Bloch will show how the community reacted to it. Prominent people from Bulawayo and Zimbabwe posted their condolence messages from Facebook, obituary articles were seen in newspapers such as the Herald, Sunday News, Chronicle and the Zimbabwe Independent Newspaper.

2.1.0 Brief History on Eric Bloch

Eric Bloch was born in South Africa in 1939 in Johannesburg and moved to Zimbabwe as a child in 1950. He qualified as a chartered accountant in 1964 and after 15 years in an audit and accounting practice was professionally engaged as a financial, management, taxation and economic consultant.¹ He was a director of larger companies and trustee of the committee for the development of Bulawayo and Bulawayo District Publicity of Association (BDPA), the chairman of the advisory board of the National University of Science and Technology (NUST) in the Faculty of Architecture and Quantity Surveying and also a member of the

Industrial Advisory Board (IAB) of the Faculty of Journalism and Media.² Bloch was also a patron of the NUST Student Bankers Association (NSBA), Matabeleland Taekwondo Association (MTA), Saint Joseph's House for boys, a trustee of the Pro Africa Development Trust (PAD), black umfolosi, the Ulwazi institute, Girls College, the Junior Achievement Zimbabwe Trust (JAZT), the Maxwell Zimbabwe Trust and the National Gallery in Bulawayo and an international trustee for the Centre for Peace Initiatives in Africa (CPIA).³

In May 1999, Solusi University consulted upon him an Honorary Doctorate in Business Administration, in recognition of his service to the Zimbabwean community. Bloch was a regular contributor to the Zimbabwean and International financial, professional and general press and he undertook extensive public speaking engagements throughout Zimbabwe and further a field. He was first a columnist for the Financial Gazette and later for the Zimbabwe independent from May 1996 up to a few weeks before his death.⁴ With his love and passion for Bulawayo, Bloch, became a member of the Zimbabwe Water Project (ZWP) with the hope of solving the water problems faced in the city one day.

2.1.1 Eric Bloch and his Role with the Community (Jewish and others)

Despite business Eric Bloch had strong beliefs in the Jewish customs and traditions, he once commented on the differences between Christianity and Judaism that they are only in the packaging of the two religions. He noted that both Jews and Christians believe in the Supreme God and Creator.⁵ Bloch stated that there is no big difference between Christianity and Judaism; the difference is in rituals, ways of observance and in some interpretations, but the essence is just the same. Dr Bloch, who was a renowned economist preached to Christians and gave talks that touch on his religion (Judaism), this he did because he had nothing against the Christians and other religions.⁶ Dr. Bloch gave weekly Sabbath sermons to all the Jews in Bulawayo under the leadership of Mr. Hylton Solomon, Bulawayo Jews meet for their Sabbath services at the Sinai synagogue situated at the intersection of Coghlan Avenue this shows

how Bloch was dedicated about his religion and other different faiths in Zimbabwe, as he had preached among the followers of other religions. He once delivered a message on the love of God to members of the Seventh Day Adventist Church (SDA) at Solusi University.⁷

During the Catholic Lent in 2013 April, Dr. Bloch gave a talk on how Jews celebrate their Passover to parishioners of Our Lady of Lourdes parish in Khumalo at the invitation of Fr. Charles Rensburg. However, unlike some branches of Christianity, Dr Bloch said, Judaism does not recognise the doctrine of the Trinity (Father, Son and the Holy Spirit) as constituting the God-head, arguing that Jews believe in God as an indivisible “single entity”, a belief in total monotheism.⁸ All services are conducted primarily in Hebrew with translations into English for those who are not conversant in the ancient language. Dr. Bloch said Judaism has strict Biblical dietary laws meant to preserve holiness of members for example, after having meat, Jews have to wait for an interval of between three to six hours before taking milk basing that on Exodus 23:19: “Thou shall not eat a kid in his mother’s milk.” Non-ruminant animals among other specified animals, such as pigs, are considered unclean and unfit for human consumption in the Jewish religion.⁹

Dr. Bloch once commented on the issue of Judaism and new comers in the religion and said it is not easy for people of other religions and nations to be part of the religion. The rabbis teach that if outsiders come expressing interest in Judaism, they must be refused three times in a bid to test their seriousness this is done as the Jews value their beliefs and are of sacred nature.¹⁰ It is said their request is considered when they return for the fourth time then they can be acknowledged in the Jewish community. Jews believe that Jesus Christ is one of the greatest preachers that ever lived and that God is going to send the Messiah, who is not necessarily Jesus, he added that the coming of the Messiah would be signalled by Prophet Elijah a contrasting idea with the Christians who believe that darkness, a loud thunder shall indicate the coming of Jesus (Revelation).¹¹

According to the Financial Gazette reporter, Bloch earned his title as the most frequent flier on Air Zimbabwe as he travelled every week in search of solutions between Bulawayo and Harare occupying the same seat 1C.¹² It is stated that he would refuse to stay one day longer in Harare or anywhere else believing that there was no better place on planet earth than Bulawayo regardless of its water challenges.¹³

2.1.2 Business People Mourn Eric Bloch

The business community on the 24th of September 2014 mourned the death of the prominent Bulawayo based economic analyst Eric Bloch, describing him as astute accountant and business man in his own right who was a valuable asset for the city, he put on the map with his analytical economic ability.¹⁴ As the news of Bloch passing spread nationwide condolences messages poured in from the local business community via the media and Eric was described in many ways. Bloch died at Khumalo at his home at the age of 75 suffering from cancer, pneumonia and chest pains. According to Ncube, Affirmative Action Group Vice presidenthe stated that Bloch was a business advisor of the black empowerment grouping .¹⁵ The Zimbabwe National Chamber of Commerce regional marketing officer Mr V. Dube argued that Bloch played a major role in resuscitating the Bulawayo industries, describes his death as a big blow to the business community in Bulawayo, he further noted that it is a very sad loss to Bulawayo because he was a contributing to the revival of our industries; we have definitely lost an economic cornerstone.¹⁶

This shows that the late Eric Bloch played a significant role in the city of Bulawayo and Zimbabwe as a whole. Condolences were poured out by many prominent men in Bulawayo, Msipha the president of the Confederation of Zimbabwe industries pointed out that Bloch was forthcoming with business ideas and his death was hard to believe he added that Bloch was generous, not shy and deeply committed economically.¹⁷ This is further cemented by the business writer comments Jonah Nyoni who stated that, Eric was a mentor and an advisor to

most business and financial journalists, financial and business journalists electioneered by Southern eye argued that Bloch was readily available to offer analytical comments on the economy, Nyoni further noted that:

There are doors I would not have entered if I had not met this man, he opened them to me and that helped me see the world of executives, captains of industries and great business men and women.¹⁸

Tributes of Eric Bloch flood social media Robertson's a friend and a renowned economist of many years described Bloch as a man of enormous integrity who was committed to making Zimbabwe a better country. Simba Makoni stated that Eric was knowledgeable and professional; he was described as a strong supporter of the Jewish faith and a person who also served the country in honour holding various advisory roles in the government institution particularly the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe (RBZ) and the finance ministry.¹⁹

Hundreds of people attended the burial of Eric Bloch, according to the chronicle reporter, Kazanga he stated that Eric was buried next to his wife Baileh Thelma Bloch who passed away in 2011 due to heart attack.²⁰ It is noted that Gideon Gono and David Coltart were pall bearers at the funeral and Bloch was encased in a simple Kosher casket the reason being that for fast decomposition and that it can also take place in a natural fashion.²¹ To add on it should be taken into consideration that in the Jewish culture no matter how wealthy and famous one is tradition requires them to be buried in wooden coffins. Eric Bloch is survived by his children Ralph 52 lives in Israel, Mark 50 in Scotland, Barry 48 in Australia and Ruth 45 lives in England.

Fig 2.1



Eric buried next to the wife
(source: Chronicle, 24 Sept 2014)

Fig 2.2



D. Coltart and G. Gono as pall bearers

Kan states that the emotional nexus surrounding death is only partly expected from structural understandings: the emotions experienced by persons in particular relations to the deceased may follow general social expectations or depart from them. Mortuary rituals often provide a setting for the display of formally expected emotional reactions, and may simultaneously provide forms in which to express emotional states that are personal and distinctive.²² Metcalf et al argues that death initiated a complex series of adjustments including competition over the framing of the memory of the deceased. But it is well in the end to return to a consideration of the emotional reactions that death would have called into being and that mortuary rituals would have confronted and formalized.²³

Conclusion

In conclusion various scholars have shown the meaning of death and how various people react to it through the rituals performed. The case study of the death and mourning of Eric Bloch shows that despite how important one may be values and tradition should be followed,

for instance instead of an expensive casket, he is buried in a wooden coffin as this is the Jewish tradition. Different sentiments are felt and condolences are poured out by various prominent men to the Bloch family who had the opportunity to work side by side with Eric Bloch, messages of sympathy flood the media. Lastly the chapter also showed that Bloch had a strong belief in his Jewish culture and knew the importance of religion despite the faith one belongs to, there is need for one to have a strong tower to cling on and believe in.

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Chapter 3: Jewish Cemetery A Symbol of Diaspora Unity and Religion in Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe is a multi-religious country with the Christians constituting 70 per cent of the population and African traditional religions 24 per cent, Muslims make up about 2 per cent and other religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism and Baha'i faith account for 1 per cent this shows that there are diverse faiths and beliefs. The essential message of Judaism is to reinforce the ethnic of Jewish Unity, and this has enabled them to create a common core of respect and honour regarding their own understanding of Jewish ideas, values and practices. However there is need for a common language which will enhance a sense of people hood. The Jewish cemetery is a symbol of Diaspora unity and religion, as the Jews believe in the Torah and are buried differently from other religions because of their rituals and its sacredness.

Other stated faiths have various beliefs, norms and core values too, the Jews are however distinctive because of their own cemetery in North End Suburbs which is funded by the Jews located abroad who cherish the cemetery and is sentimental to them for example Diana Bloch , these Jews have endeavoured in different fields such as engineering, medical, law and humanities. Mr Roth a Jewish Leader in Bulawayo monitors the upkeep of the cemetery since Mr Solomon's who was once responsible for the maintenance of the Jewish Cemetery located to South Africa.

3.1.0 Common Jewish Responsibility Values

Despite appearances the Jews share a huge cultural heritage, the common base of Jewish actions being of holidays such as Yom Kippur, Rosh and Hashanah and life cycle events. Wallace states that the common components that hold Jews together, other religions can be taken into consideration too, for instance the Christians are united by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Roman Catholics by the use of the rosary, the Hindus are

held together by the Diwali and Shiva, the Moslems festive seasons such as Ramadan and Hajj unite them.¹

The Jews are a group that preserve their unique record of struggle at the same searching for peace and justice, it should be noted that although these people may share a common ancestor but the Jews in Zimbabwe, Mexico and Yemen are different in commonality and language as a participant stated that there is something that tells that we bound together, we feel it I our bones and it runs along our heart.²This statement clearly shows that the Jews are bound in unity and they have a spirit of togetherness and a sense of belonging.

Israel represents the revival of the Jewish people following the Holocaust, and its existence which meant that Jews would never again find themselves defenceless and deprived of a sanctuary from anti-Semitism, as a young democracy with a strong welfare state. Israel represents the Jewish commitment to social justice and progressive values and as a regional military power whose prowess was evidenced most dramatically in the Six-Day War, Israel represents the emergence of a new kind of Jew, tough and resourceful the antithesis of Diaspora bookishness.³ Jews viewed Israel's as "young, tough, hardworking, idealistic pioneers, struggling in the midst of a backward and hostile world, balancing a reverence for Jewish tradition with a socially progressive commitment to build a modern, democratic society and make the desert bloom."⁴

In this context, Israel becomes a source of personal pride, a source of self-assurance for contemporary Jews worldwide. In order to understand why Zionism has gained dominance as a Jewish response to the question of modernity and post modernity out of a wide spectrum of responses one needs to explore the legacy of the holocaust and the near extermination of the European Jews. In the 1940s in the midst of Second World War a significant narrowing Jewish internal debate and a significant disqualification of previously pertinent interpretations

of possible relation between political self-determination and Jewish identity, the holocaust has vindicated Zionist narration of Jewish History and destiny an ethos that has resulted in the conflation of nationality, ethnicity and religion.⁵

From a homogenous and cohesive community, the Jewish identity has a strong Zionist identity, the (RZC) Rhodesian Zionist Council and the Rhodesian Jewish Bureau developed institutions to serve and strengthen the community apart from the cemetery they established the Sharon school in Harare, Carmel primary school in Parkview Bulawayo, Zionist youth movements and Savyon old age home.⁶

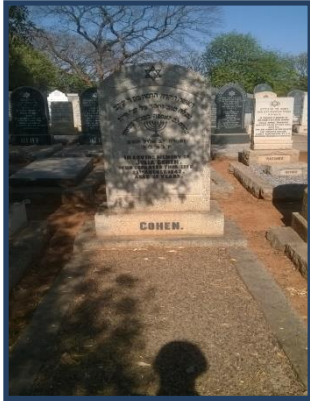
The strong commitment to Israel , the identity to Zimbabwe are enhanced by a feeling of pride in the multi-racial democracy and constitution which bans all forms of discrimination including racial and religious, the homogeneity of the community is being challenged by geopolitical reality changes globally. Bellah states that communities have a history in an important sense are constituted by their past and for this reason we can speak of a real community as a ‘community of memory’, one that does not forget its past and in order not to forget that past, a community is involved in retelling its story, its constitutive narrative.⁷

3.1.1 The Jewish Cemetery as a Symbol of Diaspora Unity and Religion in Zimbabwe

The Jewish cemetery is mostly funded by the young prominent Jews who have located abroad to countries like as Ruth Bloch located in New Zealand, Hila Solomon in the United Kingdom and many others working in various fields such as medical and law fund the cemetery with finances.⁸ These finances are used to maintain the cemetery and to pay four caretakers, in addition a small fee is charged on the burial of the deceased all these help in the up keep of the Jewish cemetery and finances are sent via a bank account to Mr Roth.⁹ In July money was sent to renovate the old chapel built in 1930 which they regard as a monument this clearly shows that the cemetery is of great importance to the Jews abroad as they unite and still have their cemetery at heart although staying abroad. An interviewee stated that

Judaism is as a formality of every otherness that as such the church must learn to recognize, discern and celebrate.¹⁰

Fig3.1



Jewish clean cemetery

(Source: Nakai V. James)

A common aspect which links research on home and memory is that the connections between these two ideas often move beyond individual narratives to remember and create a sense of community.¹¹ In her research on Anglo Jewish, Alison Blunt analyses how connections between home, memory and community are reflected in a ‘productive nostalgia’ which recreates home as in the case of Savyon Old age home, an institution in Bulawayo as well as a wider sense of Anglo Jewish identity in diaspora.¹² In another context, Fortier traces connections between home, memory and community identity for Italian migrants in London. Focusing on how memories not only connect places but also members of a community, she describes Saint Peter’s Church in Clerkenwell as a place of remembering. The Jewish cemetery, in this case, becomes a space through which memories of place recreate a community by identifying members who fit in.¹³

Kelly, on the other hand, writes about re-memory in the context of domestic material space, re-memory, in her words, is ‘memory that is encountered in the everyday, but is not always a

recall or reflection of actual experience' (, she argues, memories of places do not have to follow a linear, biographical narrative and can be more complicated than a simple link between diaspora identities and place ,such complex connections between home, memory and community are reflected in the importance placed on reminiscence as a research technique in studying diaspora influence.¹⁴ Whilst reminiscence is a useful technique to understand connections between 'here' and 'there', and how it shapes diaspora and transnational identity, it has also been used to create connections between different communities. Thus the Jewish cemetery acts as a place of remembrance and of solace to the Jewish community leaving abroad.

In contrast, other religions taken into account such as the Roman Catholic and the Anglicans have their own norms and values that unite them with the diaspora, for instance, Rome and Spain play an important role to the two religions.¹⁵ However, it is argued that in Zimbabwe there is no state religion , although there is bias with Christianity, for example virtually all Christian ceremonies are public holidays although nothing is required by law to observe a particular holiday or do any rituals pertaining to a particular religion thus pupils who belong to certain faiths that observe protracted holidays might lose out in school should the pilgrimage take place during the school calendar unless they are learners at a specified school.¹⁶

Opping argues that religion and identity are positively correlated, as they consider religion to being instrumental for deepening our insight into the formation of identity, the interplay between religion and identity relates to the symbols with ultimate spiritual relevance and influence in worshippers way of life.¹⁷ Pecorino argues that religion is the most intensive and comprehensive method of valuing that is experienced by human kind, this clearly articulates and empowers that one should comprehend and explain the religious phenomena in a better way, it also empowers to comprehend the difference between religious experience and other

kinds of human experience and one to understand the relationship between religion and other forms of life such as beliefs, language and rituals performed.¹⁸

The distinctiveness between Christians and Jews rests on the Jewish people as qualitatively distinctive ‘sui generis’ (very unique), both religions have a distinctive place within the dispensation of Gods plan for the world, for some Christians the Israel of today is in essence of the Israel that was once and is still chosen by God.¹⁹ The Jewish people by implication Judaism itself as their religion continue to have a uniquely favoured position in the divine purpose, for some however the Jewish people no longer hold a particular place in Gods favour and such distinctiveness as Judaism has is a function rather of its uniquely repealed status than of its continuing validity.²⁰

Cemeteries are linked to religion and identity as they are biographies of communities and their social history , different religion and denominations are characterized by different styles of commemoration thus cemeteries can be seen that they are indicative of the history of every nation and city.²¹ The value of each community is of sublime and humans that provide services into the community must stay forever remembered in works, books art and poetry, script and grave monuments so that the future generation may be proud for their existence and its way will continue.²² Examples in Bulawayo are of the Jews have been in prominent professionals such as mayors the likes of Mr Bash, Mr Harris and Mr Menashe just to mention a few, lawyers such as Mr Jameson, Mr Jacobs and Mr Barons and business oriented people the Barons family owning the Bulawayo Service Station (BSS), the Chitrin family owning R. Chitrin and Co, the Solomon’s family running the Solomon’s supermarket located in 3rd Avenue and Fife street, this clearly shows that identity and religion are closely linked and the Jewish community.²³

Conclusion

The chapter has shown the relationship between identity and religion as different religions have various beliefs, commemoration and history, it also articulates that the Jewish cemetery is a symbol of diaspora unity, funds and assistance is being contributed by the Jews located abroad in Israel, Australia and United Kingdom and given to Mr Roth, so as to maintain the monument. To cement the discussion other religions are taken into consideration in light to show what keep Jews united thus creating an argument and showing the relationship between the phenomena of religion, identity and Diaspora unity. It has noted that the message that the Jews spread is of Jewish unity and the importance of their history, the Jews preserve their unique record of struggle and the history of the Holocaust and are in search of meaning, justice and peace. Thus one can conclude that a common history and destiny fundamentally defines the Jewish people.

The uniqueness between Christians and Jews rests on the Jewish people as qualitatively distinctive ‘sui generis’ (very unique), both religions have a distinctive place within the privilege of Gods plan for the world, for some Christians the Israel of today is in essence of the Israel that was once there and is still chosen by God. The Jewish people by insinuating Judaism itself as their religion continue to have a uniquely favoured position in the divine purposes.

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Chapter 4: The Tide of Migration: Is it a farewell to the Jewish Community in Bulawayo?

The Jewish community moved into Zimbabwe in the 1890s, always a part of the white minority society, they were involved in modernization and development of commerce and industry particularly in manufacturing and textiles. Members of the Jewish community involved in industries included: Bannet and Harris Future dealers, S. Grossberg wholesalers, Lobel Brothers Bakeries, Lepar and Partners, Rhodesian Paper Barons, M and E Solomon clothing, Phil Taube Modern motors (general motors distributors in Central Africa) and the A Zapper clothing –Zlatnner Textile works in 1949 the Marvo Stationery Private Limited formed and owned by a Jewish man Mr Kates from Israel running very well. The Jewish exit from Zimbabwe began when Ian smith white minority government declared unilateral independence from Britain in 1965. Massive unemployment and runaway inflation has made over eighty per cent of the black population now live below the poverty line in Zimbabwe meaning they extremely impoverished.

The number of Jews in Zimbabwe, specifically in Bulawayo has decreased from 30 000 Jews to only 39 people and not families in the city, amongst the few people all are of old age from 65 years and above, the decrease of the community can be attributed to death as many Jews are buried in the cemetery however it should be taken into account there are pull and push factors that have made young Jews to re locate abroad such as better education, marriage prospects, better employment and political freedom. It should be noted that in the years 2007 the education system declined in the country, in 2008 there was poverty, inflationfaced and political injustices and the closing down of industries too in the country, this led the Jewish community to feel threatened and move to Israel, Australia, London and Germany.

4.1.0 Push and Pull factors to the Jews

Migration is a global phenomenon caused not only by economic factors but by also social, political, cultural education and transportation factors. It commonly takes place because of push factors of fewer opportunities in the socio-economic situation and also because of pull factors that exist in more developed areas.¹ Kurunova states that international migration is an escalating practice of our times, the decision to emigrate depends on a combination of factors such as lack of social security, justice, political instability, a low level of confidence in the state as well as better opportunities to work abroad.² Kings argues that pull-push migration theory argues that migration comes about because of economic, social and political factors present in both the source and destination migration countries.³ Factors such as poverty , unemployment , political repression drive out people out of their home countries on the other hand , there are also other factors present in in the destination which pull or attract migrants these include better income , employment prospects , better social welfare services and political freedom.⁴

4.1.1 Farewell to the Jewish Community in Bulawayo period 2008-2015

Both home and community evoke and imply a sense of belonging. Crow states that community is seen to play an important role in ‘generating people’s sense of belonging’. A wide range of sociological and anthropological work shows how a sense of belonging is constructed through community organisations and a shared sense of identity.⁵ The Jewish community is part of a greater grouping the African Jewish congress (AJC) whose spiritual leader and executive director is Rabbi Mashe Silberhoft. Jewish settlements date back to the beginning of the 20th Century, and today more than two thirds of the community are old age and the community in the Midlands no longer exist and is it a way of bidding goodbye in Zimbabwe. The Zimbabwe Jewish Board of Deputies (ZJBD) is a leading communal organization; the Central African Zionist Organization (CAZO) is the umbrella that was established in 1898 in Bulawayo to cater for Jewish needs.⁶

The homogeneity of the Jewish community has been challenged by geo political factors globally that include the dwindling and ageing community from the peak of the 1960s, 30 000 Jews in the country and lost is 80 per cent due to deaths, this has created both a demographic sociological problem with ageing Jews remaining while their children have moved to Australia, New Zealand, North America, UK and Israel.⁷To add on, most Jews have moved abroad in search of employment, to create businesses, to better their education and for Jewish marriage prospects as a distinct identity and community they have a challenge of ensuring its growth, maintaining its number and at least reproducing itself a reduced size. Bulawayo once a vibrant hub of Jewish life in Zimbabwe is dying as far as Judaism is concerned as they are no more Jewish children left in Bulawayo, the last Jewish Pupil in the city only Jewish Primary School Carmel was Alanis Zlattner in 2013, the other 150 children left are Christians, Muslims and other faiths.⁸

In 2002, after the Jewish survival was threatened by a food shortage and poverty in Zimbabwe led a mayor in of Ashkelon a city in Southern Israel to invite Zimbabwean Jews to migrate to Israel and offered in settling them at Ashkelon.⁹ One should take note that the Jewish community last had their own rabbi in 2011 due to financial hindrances, in 2014 Rabbi Eliezer Berland the head of the Shuru Banim one of the largest Jewish education institutions in Jerusalem accused of abusing underage girls and sleeping with numerous married women last led the service at the new Jewish synagogue in Conghlan avenue in 2014.¹⁰

In Zimbabwe with the throes of an economic and political crisis the country's tiny Jews community is holding steady. The president of the synagogue in the city of Bulawayo saw Zimbabwe says Zimbabwe approximately 320 Jews have been left largely unharmed by the violence surrounding last week presidential elections that drove opposition candidate Morgan Tsvangirai for the race.¹¹ It is stated that President, Mr Solomon (BHC) Bulawayo

Hebrew congregation once said the Jews of Zimbabwe have been accustomed to the grim situation in the country though they have been spared the violence, Zimbabwe Jews have been hit hard by the economic crisis, and the country has been beset electricity, food, and water and fuel shortages. Jewish aid officials assisting the community say however the few Zimbabwe Jews intend to leave the country.¹² The Jewish community that has dwindled in 2013 to 320 from a high rate of about 7500 in the 1970s when the country was called Rhodesia, from interviews done it shows that the Jewish community in Bulawayo is left with only 39 members only.¹³

It should be noted that all funds raised by the Zimbabwe Jewry is from both South Africa and internally and are channelled through the African Jewish Congress Zimbabwe Fund (AJCZF) assisting needy Zimbabwe Jews with food parcels rent and medication; while donations from South Africa comprise a significant component of the AJCZF budget overseas contribution including from the American Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) and Chai South Africa in the US were assuming increasing importance as of 2008.¹⁴

According to the Jewish chronicle it was said that a Jewish agency into South Africa refuted news that an emergency airlift was being arranged to evacuate the Jewish community from troubled Zimbabwe, however the agency official Ofer Dahan refuted that there was no such plan.¹⁵ He pointed that there is no Israel embassy in Harare and there are no direct flights to Tel Aviv , but the two countries Zimbabwe and Israel do have diplomatic ties, however sources close to the Jewish Agency said that, the Jewish agency is not planning to send an aeroplane to Zimbabwe and take out the Jews , Zimbabwe is a country where one can enter and leave at your own will.¹⁶

Rabbi Moshe Silberhaft, Chief Rabbi of African community outside South Africa noted that Zimbabwean Jews are safe but warned that claims of such an operation are dangerous to the

Jewish local population; he said that there are no supplies and no basic necessities and the Jews are feeling the same pain like every Zimbabwean.¹⁷ According to the Jewish chronicle, Silberhaft flew to Britain to raise funds to support an evacuation operation as Zimbabwe spiralling economy has forced many young Jews to flee in the past eight years as many Jews have seen their savings total eroding because of the sky rocketing inflation faced 40 billion Zimbabwe dollars to equal \$1.¹⁸ The remnants of Zimbabwe formerly middle class Jewish community in 2008 where at Rhodes Hall in Harare for “daily bread” handouts from South Africa including basic needs such as soap, sugar, tooth paste and washing powder¹⁹. The picture below shows the hand outs,

Fig 4.1



Basic supplies (source: Forward Newspaper)

However, it should be noted that there are various controversies about the fleeing of the Jewish community in the country according to the newspaper article, “*COMPANY CLOSURE ROCKET UNEARTHED*”, Madonko states and focused on the Broomberg family of Bulawayo, he argues that the collapse of the family community once the country’s leading textile manufacturing industry was engineered by the close knit community of Jews with interests in India, Germany, South Africa, Namibia and the United Kingdom.²⁰ He goes on to

accuse the Jews of a wider conspiracy and terms them as “racketeers” (criminals), the falling of the agricultural production drastically and the industrial production was blamed on the Jews this is articulated by the 3000 published word article alleging Jews to be responsible for the on-going economic problem facing Zimbabwe.²¹

To further cement the argument, the Jewish Telegraph Agency states that the critics paused upon the Jewish community for being responsible for the falling economy was to create the erroneous and highly offensive impression that there is a Jewish led conspiracy to undermine the Zimbabwean economy.²² It has been suggested that the real target was not the entire Jewish community but the late prominent Zimbabwe economist and business consultant Eric Bloch who had written for the opposition press, (Zimbabwe Independent Newspaper) and was a well-known critic of Mugabe.²³ He once stated that Zimbabwe has the resources and potential for economic revival but it needs international help and access to credit, it is illusory to believe that Zimbabwe can “go it alone” as recovery depends on actions to repair international relations.²⁴

Conclusion

The chapter shows that the number of the Jewish community has decreased in Bulawayo and the country and this is due to pull and push factors such as business opportunities in the diaspora. Zimbabwe has been facing an economic crisis, hunger and drought are mounting, the vibrant young Jews fled abroad for education opportunities in the engineering, medical and law fields so as to better their lives. There are only 39 members left in Bulawayo of which all are old age and it may be valid to say that it is appropriate to bid farewell to the Jewish community as of some years to come the Jewish cemetery is the only place that will convince the future generation that Jews once stayed in Zimbabwe.

From historic evidence in archives they will be informed that Jews in the past played an important role in the manufacturing and textile industries in Bulawayo, and where also

involved in the political sphere such as being Mayors of Bulawayo as presented by the City Council of Bulawayo, prominent lawyers and economists of the country. The Jewish community memory and the perpetuating of the Jewish life and culture in Bulawayo will be remembered and be restored through the monument (Jewish Cemetery) that will forever live.

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CONCLUSION

In conclusion the document has shown that the origins of the Jewish cemetery is due to self-identification and cultural differences of the Jews with other religions with the need to uphold their values and sentiments this includes the difference in ritual performance has led them to be buried alone. It should be noted that different cultures and different religions employ a variety of rituals, Roman Catholics and other faiths perform rituals to demonstrate where they belong and to show who they are, thus Jewish funerals are distinguished by its simplicity, humility and solemnity this is an indication of sense of belonging. The significance of signs and symbols in the cemetery play a role of sacredness in identifying the Jewish people. The making of their gravestones with birds and flowers shows a uniqueness of the Jewish culture and beliefs different from other religions and the engraving of a person is forbidden.

Symbols create a Jewish identity as they communicate and construct and express their collective and cultural identity. However, it should be noted that change and time have affected the gravestones of the Jewish cemetery. Various scholars have shown the meaning of death and how various people react to it through the rituals performed. The case study of the death and mourning of Eric Bloch shows that despite how important one may be valued tradition has to be followed as it is, for instance instead of an expensive casket, he is buried in a wooden coffin as this is the Jewish tradition. It is tradition that all Jews be buried in wooden coffins with ropes at the sides this is done for easy decomposition and also that it demonstrates that everyone is equal in death whether rich or poor and also frees the bereaved family of spending more than they can afford. Different sentiments are felt and condolences are poured out by various prominent men to the Bloch family who had the opportunity to work side by side with Eric Bloch, messages of sympathy flood the media. It is also shown that Bloch had a strong belief in his Jewish culture and knew the importance of religion

despite the faith one belongs to, there is need for one to have a strong tower to cling on and believe in. Religion is one of the more frequently mentioned determinants of the moral values that reinforces ethical standards. The major world religions have moral teachings and in a number of ways indicate disapproval of certain actions.

The dissertation has presented the relationship between identity and religion and also has articulated that the Jewish cemetery is a symbol of diaspora unity as funds and assistance is being contributed by the Jews located abroad in Australia, Israel and the United Kingdom and is transferred to the Barclays Bank where it is collected by Mr Roth, so as to maintain the monument and to pay the four caretakers. To cement the discussion other religions are taken into consideration such as the Anglicans and Roman Catholics in light to show what keeps them united thus creating an argument and showing the relationship between the phenomena of religion, identity and Diaspora unity. It should be noted that the message that the Jews spread is of Jewish unity and the importance of their history, the Jews preserve their unique record of struggle and the history of the Holocaust and are in search of meaning, justice and peace. Thus one can conclude that a common history and destiny fundamentally defines the Jewish people.

The number of the Jewish community has decreased in Bulawayo and in the country this is due to pull and push factors such as business opportunities in the diaspora. Zimbabwe has been facing an economic crisis, hunger and drought are mounting, and the vibrant young Jews have fled abroad for education opportunities in the engineering, medical and law fields so as to better their lives. There are only 39 members left in Bulawayo of which all are old age and it may be valid to say that it is appropriate to bid farewell to the Jewish community as of some years to come the Jewish cemetery is the only place that will convince the future generation that Jews once stayed in Zimbabwe and that they played an important role in the manufacturing and textile industries, and where also involved in the political sphere such as

being Mayors of Bulawayo, prominent lawyers and economists of the country. The Jewish community memory and the perpetuating of the Jewish life and culture in Bulawayo will be remembered and be restored through the monument (Jewish Cemetery) that will forever live.

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