

‘A’ LEVEL ZIMBABWEAN

HISTORY

4TH EDITION

TURN-UP COLLEGE

Publication Staff

Publishing Director

Sam Madzingira

Copy Proof Reader

Curriculum Development Unit Zimbabwe

General Editor

C.K. Mhuri

Contributors

M. Magate

Text Printers

Chiedza Muchena; Crystabell Mudzingwa

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Foreword

I had the opportunity of discussing this book with several educationists, teachers and students when it was in the process of making, and I felt at once that it was likely to prove unusually useful. It gathers together a great deal of information which must otherwise be delved for in many books and all this is arranged judiciously and on practical lines. The authors' outlook might be described as one of liberal commonsense clarity, simplicity of expression, and examination - skills - focused. Our study packs are there to offer a canvas for Zimbabweans to showcase their best ideas to help transform the country into a knowledge- based society where citizens are free to express their creativity, knowledge and ingenuity. We have set challenging objectives, but we believe that only by striving to achieve the highest, can we elevate ourselves above the elements which tend to hold our country back. However, if you see anything where you feel we may have failed to deliver, and where we may have failed on issues such as content, depth, relevance and usability, please let us know by using the contact numbers

(09) 61226/61247, 0773 247 358; or Box 2759 Byo; email at turnupcollege@yahoo.com. We are here to listen and improve.

In my days as a teacher and as a student I should have welcomed this book warmly because:

- (i) It approaches the syllabus wholistically
- (ii) It uses simplified expression
- (iii) It has an in-depth coverage of content
- (iv) It provides examination skills at the earliest stage of studying.
- (v) It provides local, international and commonplace examples; illustrations and case studies.
- (vi) It provides intelligent questions and answers of the examination type on a chapter by chapter basis
- (vii) Last but not least, it provides a clear platform for self-evaluation as one prepares for the final examinations.

I have no doubt that learners and educators would as well find this book to be the best. It is certainly a manual for success. Every one would find it worthy to have his own copy. I should not be surprised if the Turn-up College Study Pack became the best resource in school and out of school.

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We have taken every effort to try and get hold of the copyright holders of any information we have reproduced without acknowledgement. We will appreciate the help from anyone to enable us contact the copyright holders whose permission we have not yet obtained.

S. Madzingira

Director

PREFACE

The recent introduction of Zimbabwean History paper (9155/05) at Advanced level, has necessitated the production of study material which adequately prepares both the teacher and student of 'A' Level for it. The textbooks currently on offer are meant for the ordinary 'O' Level candidate, hence inadequate. Therefore, there is lack of reading material for this paper.

Apart from the scarcity of relevant reading material on this paper, there is also urgent need for expert advice on the right approach to use in handling this paper. The topics covered in this module are those prescribed in the syllabus. However these broad topics are broken down into specific aspects, which will help focus both the teacher and the student on relevant issues.

It is important at this juncture to emphasize the fact that 'A' Level candidates should desist from writing narrative/descriptive answers. Analysis is what is expected of them and their teachers are encouraged to assist in this regard.

In other words, it is not adequate to simply regurgitate facts without reflecting and commenting on them. Analysis involves the student in a number of activities, such as judgment, assessment, appraising, comparing and contrasting, just to mention a few. Candidates should show that they are widely read by referring to views of modern scholars on any given topic.

The motive of this Study Pack is to create a self-sufficient information base for the student. With this aim in mind, this Study Pack provides all the necessary topical material in a simplified manner. There after that the Study Pack provides a wide range of examination-type questions at the end of each topic area. Topic objectives are inserted at the beginning of each chapter to guide and focus both the teacher and the student on what to achieve by the end of the chapter.

Syllabus Interpretation:
HISTORY OF ZIMBABWE PAPER 5

Syllabus 9155/5 is a syllabus developed for the Zimbabwean Advanced level student pursuing studies in History. This syllabus equips the child with historical content and awareness on Zimbabwe's past. It develops in children national consciousness and personal awareness. Historical content is structured thematically, meaning to say it starts with far remote events in the prehistoric era covering primitive communalism modes of production, cascading down to the contemporary issues. This makes this syllabus unique for it prepares the child's understanding of the current political, economic and social development by referring to the past because the present is rooted in the past. Besides, the syllabus arms the student with a variety of skills necessary for use in future.

PAPER COMBINATIONS FOR 'A' LEVEL HISTORY (9155)-ZIMSEC)

This European History syllabus is studied in conjunction with another different area to

constitute a complete subject at Advanced Level. For instance, European History can be studied together with another separate Advanced Level History component such as Tropical African History (9155/2) or Zimbabwean History (9155/3).

However, the Zimbabwe Schools Examinations Council (ZIMSEC) allows paper combinations to follow any pattern i.e. Tropical African History can be studied in conjunction with Zimbabwean History and or Zimbabwean History can be studied in conjunction with European History. No single component is therefore complete in itself.

The European History Paper is code-numbered 9155/01 in the Zimbabwe School Examinations Council (ZIMSEC) examination. Technically speaking, it is not a compulsory paper although the majority of candidates register for it. The other papers on offer are 9155/02 (World Affairs since 1960), 9155/03 (History of southern Africa 1854-1914), 9155/04 (Tropical Africa-1855-1914) and 9155/05 (History of Zimbabwe). The European History Paper (9155/01) can be combined with any of the papers stated above. Below are the Advanced level History paper combinations offered by ZIMSEC.

OPTION	PAPER COMBINATIONS
A	1 and 2
B	1 and 3
C	1 and 4
D	1 and 5
E	2 and 3
F	2 and 4
G	2 and 5

Option D has clearly become the most popular in schools as evidenced by the increased candidature. Option C is now trailing in second position. The other options have registered a very low candidature to date.

History of Zimbabwe is not studied in isolation. Ever since its inception in 2002, syllabus 9155/5 has been studied in conjunction with paper 1 which is European History. Paper 1 focuses on European History from 1789 up to 1960. This paper combination is ideal for Advanced level History students for it makes the study a complete study suitable for advanced level. It is also ideal because it exposes the child to both national and international events giving the student a wider menu of international events from which one can refer to when analysing events.

Topics that are included in this syllabus have been unanimously approved by the Zimbabwe Curriculum Development Unit (CDU) together with Zimbabwe Schools Examinations Council. (ZIMSEC)

Content:

Syllabus 9155/5 is divided into four (4) sections, each section focusing on activities of a

certain period:

Section A-Prehistory-(1450). Topics to be covered include:

-Sources of historical knowledge e.g Archaeology, written records and oral tradition. Focus is on how each source complements the other in acquiring historical knowledge. The weaknesses of one source are catered for by the strengths of another source.

-Early Iron Age cultures in Zimbabwe, Ziwa, Mapungubwe, Leopold Kopje, Gokomere etc

-Rise and decline of early Shona states.

Although the rise and fall of states like Mutapa, Great Zimbabwe, Torwa and Rozvi prominently feature in Section A these states are not early iron age states.

Section B

Comprises topics like Mutapa, Rozvi, Torwa and Ndebele focusing on internal and external impact to the growth and decline of each state. Influence of trade with foreigners is emphasised in the study.

-Missionary Activities in Zimbabwe, Activities of hunters and traders as well as concession seekers in the colonisation of Zimbabwe.

-Impact of European occupation on the Shona and Ndebele-1890- 1898

-Anglo-Ndebele war

-Shona-Ndebele uprising

Section C

-Emphasis on colonial rule and the struggle for independence from 1900-1979.

-Topics include-Company rule up to 1923. Mining, farming, labour issues

-Settler rule up to 1953, colonial strategies for survival, land appropriation and dispossession.

-Mass nationalism, federation

-Rhodesia under Ian Smith-UDI

-Sanctions and their effect on Smiths government.

-internal settlement 1979,

Lancaster conference 1979.

Section D

Post Independent Zimbabwe 1980 to the present. Achievements/failures of the present government.

-Topics include: Mugabe's foreign policy, opposition politics in Zimbabwe from 1980 to the present,

-The role of the media and arts in nation building and elections.

-Zimbabwe's economic policies: ESAP, ZIMPREST, Relations with IMF and World Bank.

-Land reform programme- Successes and challenges.

Candidates are expected to answer 4 questions from at least two sections in 3 hours. Four questions are set on each section.

Assessment aims

-The aims of the syllabus of the History of Zimbabwe were designed with the knowledge that history is not events, but people. It is not just people remembering but it is about people acting and living, people engaged in productive work at every stage of human development. In light of this background knowledge of the history of Zimbabwe aims to:

-Develop an interest in and enthusiasm for the study on historical events.

-Acquisition of relevant knowledge leading to an awareness of personal and national identity.

Promote critical study of the subject.

-Promote independent thinking and make informed judgements on different issues and situations.

-Sensitize students on issues of human rights, gender and democracy.

-To cultivate empathy with people living in diverse places and at different time frames.

Assessment objectives

By the end of the course, candidates should display the:

Ability to make effective use of relevant factual knowledge, to demonstrate the understanding of an historical period or periods in outline and of particular topics in depth;

The ability to distinguish and assess different approaches to, interpretations of and

opinions about the past;

The ability to interpret and evaluate historical evidence

Analyse interpret and evaluate historical evidence, points of view, opinions and value judgements and detect bias.

Present a clear, concise, logical and relevant argument.

The above objectives attempt to avoid mere singing of content by focusing assessment on objectives stated above. All essay answers should be marked in such a way that the final mark awarded is a true reflection of attainment in the assessment, objectives. Marking should be responsive enough to reward answers which demonstrate different combinations of argument and historical knowledge.

Generic Mark Bands for Essay Questions

Examiners will assess which level of response best reflects most of the answer's contents. An answer will not be required to demonstrated all of the descriptions in a particular level to quality for a mark band.

In band 3, markers or, examiners will normally award the middle mark, moderating it up or down according to the particular qualities of the answer. In band 2 markers or, examiners should award the lower mark if an answer just deserves the band, and the higher mark if the answer clearly deserves the band.

Examiners will assess which marking band best reflects the quality of the answer. They should not expect answers to show all the qualities included within the band description. The choice of the mark within the band will depend on the analysis and amount of supporting information. Essays in bands 1-3 will clearly be question focused, whereas those in lower bands will show a primary concern with the topic rather than with the specific question asked.

Bands

Marks

Quality of the Answer

1

21-25 The approach will be consistently analytical

Or explanatory rather than descriptive or narrative. Essays

will be fully relevant.

The writing will be accurate, supported by appropriate factual knowledge. The overall quality will show that the student is in control of the argument

The best answers must achieve 25 marks

2 18-20 Essays will be clearly focused on the demands of the Question but there will be some unevenness. The approach will be mostly analytical or explanatory rather than descriptive. Answers will be mostly relevant, and supported by accurate factual material. The writing will be mostly accurate.

Bands	Mark	Quality of the answer
-------	------	-----------------------

3	16-17	Essays will reflect a clear understanding of the question, and constitute a fair attempt to
---	-------	---

provide an argument and factual knowledge to, answer it. The approach will contain analysis or explanation, but there may be some heavily narrative or descriptive passages. The answer will be largely relevant. The essay may lack balance but at the same time achieve genuine argument Most of the answers may be structured satisfactorily but lacking full coherence.

4.	14 15
----	-------

Essays will attempt to argue relevantly though often implicitly. The approach will heavily depend on descriptive or narrative passages than analysis or explanation. Factual knowledge may be used only to impact information or describe events without directly addressing requirements of the question. The structure of the argument could be organised more effectively. The writing will be accurate.

Band	Marks	<u>Quality of the answer</u>
------	-------	------------------------------

5	11-13	Essay will offer appropriate elements but with little attempt to link factual material to the demands of the questions. The approach will lack analysis and the quality will not be linked to the argument. The structure will weaknesses and treatment of topics with the answer will be unbalanced. The writing may show some accuracy but there will be frequent errors.
---	-------	---

Band	Marks
------	-------

Not properly focused essays fall into his band. They are characterised

by supported assertions and commentaries which lack factual support. The argument may be of limited relevance to the topic and there may be confusion about the implication of the question. The writing may show significant weaknesses.

Words commonly used in essay questions

Examine: Look at a theory viewpoint, event, closely in order to find out more about it by describing its nature or position and finally making judgement as to suitability, adaptability or affordability.

Discuss: Elaborate on the subject by tracing its development, arguments for and against, and relationships to other facts or ideas.

Analyse: separate or split a theory, idea or view point into its constituent elements while expressing thoughts and judgements about it. Also determine its essential features and their relations.

Assess: Give arguments for and against an issue, point, theory or system, then take a stand in support or against it while giving appropriate examples.

Define: show or explain the qualities, nature or limits of a term, subject or concept. Place it in a category and distinguish from everything else-by stating the distinguishing features.

BACKGROUND TO THE HISTORY OF CENTRAL AFRICA; THE ZIMBABWE PLATEAU INCLUDED

AS P.E.N. Tindall (1983) pointed out that, the history of central Africa is fraught with difficulties. Central Africa, which includes the Zimbabwe Plateau, is unique when compared to Asia and Europe. Infact Africa South of the Sahara has but a short written history.

Central Africa in general and the Zimbabwe Plateau in particular, before the 16th century is only referred to in the form of occasional comments in the writings of Arab geographers and travellers. Also, the last four centuries are only sparsely covered by the writings of European travelers and settlers.

African oral traditions, the customs of different ethnic groups, and the study of the derivation and growth of African languages provide a guide to the events of the past few hundred years and cast some light on the controversial problem of ethnic or “tribal” movements.

However, it is mainly to the archaeologist that we turn to on written history. By

excavating the sites occupied in the past and studying the remains of metal or stone implements, pottery, and the bones of human beings and animals found there by archaeologists and gradually building up a picture of the long pre-historic period.

Recently, new scientific methods of dating past events have been devised. Nuclear physicists have discovered the rate at which certain radio-active substances disintegrate and they have been able to use this information to date past events. One substance, potassium argon, has been used in American laboratories. Tests have been made to date specimens of certain rocks which are many millions of years old, but this method is of more use to geologists than to prehistorians. It has however, been used to date rocks derived from volcanic lava at Olduvai in East Africa which interest archaeologists as they are associated with early stone implements and fossil skulls which may be a million or more years old. Unfortunately this method is not yet proved to be reliable. Some dates have been published but experts are not agreed on their validity.

Another substance, far more important for the prehistorian is carbon 14. This is contained in organic matter such as charcoal and shells. Samples of these materials collected by archaeologists from sites which they have excavated are submitted to laboratory tests and an approximate date is worked out. Carbon 14 dates are not completely reliable, but where a number of tests on material from the same strata provide similar results, we can be confident that they are reasonably correct.

The method is most satisfactory for dates during the last 30 000 years; earlier than this they become increasingly unreliable. So it has become possible to give an approximate date for many living sites occupied in the past and build up a roughly dated sequence for the different cultures (ie ways of living) discovered.

PRE HISTORY TO 1450

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

After studying this chapter students should be able to

Define the various sources of our knowledge of history i.e. oral, tradition, archaeology, written records and anthropology.

Discuss the origins of Great Zimbabwe.

Explain the various theories behind the stone walls of Great Zimbabwe.

Assess the various theories on the fall of Great Zimbabwe.

Explain the relations between Great Zimbabwe with the Mutapa, Torwa, Mapungubwe and Rozvi states.

BACKGROUND

Any pre-colonial study of the origins of Zimbabwe, must essentially, first focus on the pre-history of Great Zimbabwe. Such a study must of necessity highlight the debates on the origins a of Great Zimbabwe, illuminate the structuralist and architecturalist arguments regarding the settlement at Great Zimbabwe, and in the process, review the historical sources of our knowledge of Great Zimbabwe namely, archaeology, oral tradition and written records. The Great Zimbabwe gave rise to later settlements such as the Mutapa, Rozvi, Torwa, Khami in one way or the other.

GENERAL BACKGROUND ON GREAT ZIMBABWE

Great Zimbabwe is a ruined city that was once the capital of the kingdom of Zimbabwe, which existed from 1100 to 1450 AD during the country's Late Iron Age period. The monument, which first began to be constructed in the 11th century continued to be built until the 14th century, spanned an area of 722 hectares (1 784 acres) and at its peak could have housed up to 18 000 people. Great Zimbabwe acted as a royal place for the

Zimbabwean monarch and would have been used as a city of their political power. One of its most prominent features were its walls, some of which were over five metres high and which were constructed without mortar.

Eventually, the city was largely abandoned and fell into ruin, first being encountered by Europeans in the early 16th century. Investigation of the site first began in the 19th century when the monument caused great controversy amongst the archaeological world, with political pressure being placed upon archaeologists by the-then white supremacist government of Rhodesia to deny that Great Zimbabwe could have ever been produced by native Zimbabwean.

The word “Great” distinguishes the site from the many hundreds of small ruins, known as Zimbabwe or MaDzimbabwe, spread across the Zimbabwe Highveld. There are 200 such sites in southern Africa, such as Bumbusi, Chipadze, Tsindi, Khami in Zimbabwe and Manekweni in Mozambique, with monumental, mortar-less walls and Great Zimbabwe as the largest.

CONSTRUCTION AND GROWTH

Construction of the stone buildings started in the 11th century and continued for another 300 years. Of course it is important to remember that the Great Zimbabwe area had been settled as early as the fourth century. In fact, between the fourth and seventh centuries, communities now identified as Gokomere or Ziwa cultures formed the valley, mined and worked iron, but built no stone structures. These are the earliest iron-age settlements in the area identified from archaeological diggings.

Its most formidable edifice, commonly referred to as the Great Enclosure, has walls as high as 11 metres, extending approximately 250 metres, making it the largest ancient structure south of Sahara desert. The city and its state, the kingdom of Zimbabwe, flourished from 1200 to 1500 and its decline has been linked to the decline of Mapungubwe from around 1300; due to climatic change or due to over farming, the population depleting the land resources and a decline in the important gold trade. The settlement was mainly abandoned around 1450.

FEATURES OF THE RUINS

In 1531, Vicente Pegado, Captain of the Portuguese Garrison of Sofala in some of the earliest written records, described Zimbabwe thus; “Among the gold mines of the island plains between the Limpopo and Zambezi rivers there is a fortress build of stones of marvellous size, and there appears to be no mortar joining them. This edifice is almost surrounded by hills, upon which are others resembling it in the fashioning of stone and the absence of mortar, and one of them is a tower more than 22 metres high (12 fathoms). The natives of the country call these edifices symbaoe, which according to their

languages signifies court”.

The ruins form three distinct architectural groups. They are known as the Hill complex, the Valley Complex and the Great Enclosure. The Hill complex is the oldest, and was occupied from the ninth to thirteenth centuries. The Great Enclosure was occupied from the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries and the Valley Complex from the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries. Notable features of the Hill Complex include the Eastern Enclosure, in which it is thought the Zimbabwe Bird stood, a high balcony enclosure overlooking the Eastern Enclosure and a huge boulder in a shape similar to that of the Zimbabwe bird. The Great Enclosure is composed of an inner wall, encircling a series of structures and a younger outer wall. The conical tower, 18 feet in diameter and 30 feet high, was constructed between the two walls. The Valley Complex is divided into the upper and lower valley ruins, with different periods of occupation.

There are different archaeological interpretations of these groupings. It has been suggested that the complexes represent the work of successive kings: some of the new kings/rulers founded a new residence. The focus of power moved from the Hill Complex in the twelfth century to the Great Enclosure, the upper valley and finally the lower valley in the early sixteenth century. The alternative structural interpretation holds that the different complexes had different functions: the Hill Complex as a temple, the Valley Complex was for the citizens and the Great Enclosure was used by the king. It will be indicated later in the chapter as local archaeologists, Pikiraryi and Chirikure have convincingly argued, that the complexes in fact belonged to different time frames and therefore the dating would not support this interpretation. Some researchers claim that the ruins may have housed an astronomy observatory, but no concrete evidence has been found to back these claims.

TRADE

Archaeological evidence as well as written records, especially Portuguese diaries mostly presented by historian David Beach, suggests that Great Zimbabwe became a centre for trading; with arti-facts suggesting that the city formed part of a trade network linked to Kilwa and extending as far as China. This international trade mainly in gold and ivory, was in addition to the local agricultural trade in which cattle were especially important. The large cattle herd that supplied the city moved seasonally and was managed by the court. Chinese pottery shards coins from Arabia, glass beads and other non-local items have been excavated at Zimbabwe. Despite these strong international links there is no evidence to suggest an exchange of architectural concepts between Great Zimbabwe and centres such as Kilwa.

The Mutapa state arose in the fifteenth century from the northward expansion of the Great Zimbabwe tradition. Great Zimbabwe also predates the Khami and Nyanga cultures.

THE CONTROVERSY ABOUT THE ORIGINS OF GREAT ZIMBABWE: A

STORM IN A TEA CUP

The Portuguese traders were the first Europeans to visit the remains of the ancient city in the early 16th century. The ruins were rediscovered during a hunting trip by Adam Renders in 1867, who then showed the ruins to Karl Mauch, a German geologist in 1871. Mauch refused to believe that indigenous African could have built such an extensive network of monuments made of granite stone.

He writes;

“I do not think that I am far wrong if I suppose that the ruin on the hill is a copy of Solomon’s temple on Mount Moriah and the building in the plain a copy of the place where the Queen of Sheba lived during her visit to Solomon”.

Mauch stated, later that,

“a civilized (white) nation must once have lived there”.

In 1890, British imperialist and coloniser Cecil John Rhodes (1853 – 1902) conquered a large portion of southern Africa and renamed the region after him self. Rhodes equally echoed the theme of Mauch as he argued that the Great Zimbabwe was built by foreigners. To promote his goal of misrepresenting the origins of Zimbabwe, Rhodes established the Ancient Ruins Company and financed men such as James Theodore Bent, who was sent to Zimbabwe by the British Association of science. After his investigation Bent concluded in his book, *Ruined Cities of Mashonaland* (1892) that items found within the Great Zimbabwe complex “proved” that the civilization was not built by local Africans.

In 1902, the British continued with their falsification agenda as British archaeologist Richard Hall was hired to investigate the Great Zimbabwe site. Hall asserted in his book, *The Ancient Ruins of Rhodesia* (1902) that the civilization was built by “more civilised races”. He argued that the last phase of Great Zimbabwe. Was the transitional and “decadent period”, a time when foreign builders interbred with local Africans. Hall went out of his way to eliminate archaeological evidence which would have proven quite easily that an indigenous African people build Great Zimbabwe. He removed about two metres deep of archaeological remains, which effectively destroyed the evidence that would have established an African origin of the site. This was treasure-hunting and looting at its worst.

Nevertheless, in 1905, soon after Hall’s destructive activity, British archaeologist David Randall-Maclver studied the mud dwellings within the stone enclosures, and he became the first European researcher of the site to assert that the dwellings were “unquestioningly African in every detail”. After Maclver’s assertion, which was almost equivalent to blasphemy in those days of British imperialism, archaeologists were banned from the Zimbabwe site from the next 25 years.

It was in 1929 that a British archaeologist Getrude Caton-Thompson led the first all-female excavation. Caton-Thompson investigated the site and was able to definitely argue in her work, *The Zimbabwe Culture: Ruins and Reactions* (1931) that the ruins

were of African origin. She assessed the available archaeological evidence (artifacts, nearby dwellings etc) and the oral tradition of the modern Shona-speaking people and compared them to the ancient sites to determine the African foundation of Great Zimbabwe. Despite Caton-Thompson's conclusive evidence, the myth of a foreign origin of Great Zimbabwe continued for another half a century until Zimbabwe's independence in 1980.

Ian Smith was the last major British colonial figure to falsify evidence of Great Zimbabwe's origin. During his reign archaeologist Peter Garlake was deported for publicly asserting that the Great Zimbabwe was built by none other than Zimbabweans of Shona origin.

Peter Garlake wrote thus:

“From about the late twelfth century, diversification, expansion, affluence and a concomitant of these, increased social, economic and functional specialization took place in both cultures so that in the end entire settlements could, like areas within sites, be built and used for limited functions by certain groups or clusters of people”.

Garlake's evidence is corroborated by John Llyffe who noted that the expansion of the metal trade and textile production as demonstrated by the increase of spindle whorls, Zimbabwe became a flourishing feudal state from AD 1250 – 1750: stretching over 500 miles from the Zambezi river to Transvaal. (*Africa: the History of a Continent*, 1995, p.101).

Moreover, historian D.J. Niane also affirmed the view that Great Zimbabwe was built by the Shona. He argues,

“Most historians agree that gold was not the origin of wealth of Zimbabwe but the considerable development of cattle on the grass plateau which was free of Tsetse fly”.

(*Africa from the twelfth to the sixteenth century*, ed. D.T. Niane, 1985, p533).

Not only that, B.M. Fagan, an archaeologist from the University of California and Oxford reports that,

“The architecture of Great Zimbabwe is a logical extension of the large enclosures and chiefs' quarters which were built of grass, mud and poles in other African states but merely constructed here in stone. The great enclosure itself was divided into a series of smaller enclosures in which the foundations of substantial pole-and-mud houses are to be seen. It was presumably the dwelling place of the rulers of Great Zimbabwe, an impressive and politically highly significant structure... With the exception of the conical tower which is a unique structure of unknown significance, there is nothing in Great Zimbabwe architecture which is alien to African practice”.

The Heritage of World Civilisations, a book compiled by Harvard and Yale historians, asserts that the...

“Civilization was a purely African one sited far enough inland never to have felt the impact of Islam”.

Historian Basil Davidson wrote the following choosing to compare Great Zimbabwe monuments with similar archaeological and historical developments elsewhere in Africa. He wrote the following passage on Zimbabwe’s place in medieval Africa:

“The foundation of Zimbabwe go back to much the same period as the foundations of Ghana. The initial raising of the walls of the “Acropolis and the “elliptical building” was not much later than the time when Mali grew strong, and Timbuletu and Djenne saw their transformation into seats of thought and learning. The miles of careful terracing and the hilltop forts and store-pits and stone dwellings of Niekerk and Inyanga were made while Mohammed Askia and his successors ruled the western Sudan”.

It is important to note that the foregoing academic consensus on the origins of Great Zimbabwe indeed served to endorse the findings of local and southern African historians on the topic. Thomas N. Huffman who conducted extensive archaeological research on the monuments and was based in South Africa noted, for instance, that,

“we know from oral tradition and written history that, like other centres in the complex, Great Zimbabwe was ruled by Shona Kings. Indeed Shona oral tradition, Shona custom and sixteenth to eighteenth century eyewitness accounts help us reconstruct the spatial organisation of Great Zimbabwe and explain the meaning of its most famous symbols - the Zimbabwe birds”.

As already highlighted, Peter Garlake has gone to lengths and breath to move that indeed the great Zimbabwe was built by the Shona. Not to be left out of course, are David Beach, Innocent Pikirayi, Shadreck Chirikure and many others, have convincingly argued that Great Zimbabwe was build by non other than Zimbabweans.

HISTORICAL SOURCES AND THE RECONSTRUCTION OF GREAT ZIMBABWE

According to Peter Garlake,

“Any study of the Great Zimbabwe has to rely a great deal on re-examining and re-assessing the work of early investigators, the men who removed all the most important finds from the ruins and stripped them of so much of their deposits”.

Put differently the study of Great Zimbabwe is mostly possible through analysis of archaeological material and equipment such as carbon dating to determine exactly when

the related pottery and arti-facts were produced.

As indicated already, the first Europeans to visit Great Zimbabwe were the Portuguese traders in 1531, meaning that all the details relating to the origins, epogee and eventual decline of the city could not have been recorded. It becomes clear that our knowledge of Great Zimbabwe would chiefly have to be through archaeological remains.

Oral tradition is another significant domain through which we can learn about the Great Zimbabwe. Nevertheless, this avenue is limited, in that any data that does back more than four centuries has to be treated with extreme caution, as D.N. Beach warned. Where then, is the place or oral tradition in the study of Great Zimbabwe history? How significant is it?

Oral tradition does very little to explain the origins of Great Zimbabwe. We know for a fact that as a source of historical knowledge it does a lot to explain the material culture at Great Zimbabwe. While archaeology explains the periodisation of the monuments, that is, the Hill Complex, (early to late 13th century); the Great Enclosure; Lower Valley Enclosures (late 13th early 14th centuries continuing right through the 15th to mid 16th centuries). Such progression in the construction of Great Zimbabwe actually indicates that the place was dynamic and not static; that whereas the Hill Complex might have been the oldest, as indicated by the less sophisticated nature of the walls, the upper and lower valley walls increasingly became more sophisticated. Archaeology has proved that, far from events and ceremonies, being structured, as T. Huffman had originally argued, Pikirayi and Chirikure have disapproved that, indicating that different kings occupied different complexes at different times. In coming up, with such an analytical conclusion, obviously written records and oral tradition play a minimal role.

Oral tradition, however helps to interpret the utility value of some of the key arti-facts found at the monuments. For instance, T.N. Huffman's "The soapstone Birds from Great Zimbabwe" in determining the meaning and significance of the soapstone birds had to rely on oral tradition in order to link the birds to the cultural norms and beliefs of the Shona people.

Hence Huffan cites that

"Eagles, being the largest and most powerful birds, are appropriate messengers for the most important people".

There is obviously a difference between Shona cultural beliefs in general and oral tradition, but both have been passed down from generation to generation by word of mouth and the former by practice as well.

What needs to be emphasised is the fact that the sources of our knowledge of the past are not always mutually supportive, for instance, if prehistoric data can only be fully dated and examined through archaeological means it may be very difficult to find written records to support archaeological findings. However, it would almost always be easier to back up written records and oral tradition with archaeological findings on common

prehistoric grounds.

THE GREAT ZIMBABWE IN HISTORICAL CONTEXT

In emphasising the vital importance of Great Zimbabwe to the prehistory of the Southern African region, we do not intend to argue a new model, that the Great Zimbabwe tradition and culture was the first to exist, that would be historically and logically impossible to prove. Beach (1980) has written that the Shona, who migrated into Southern Africa as part of the Bantu-speaking people, were indeed not the first Bantu people to arrive. In fact, controversy surrounds area settlements such as Gokomere (AD 180) and Ziwa (AD 300) located in the south central and east of the Zimbabwean plateau respectively. Beach (1980) and Taruvanago B. Et al (2008) believe that these areas had already been settled by non-shona Bantu groups before the Shona had arrived in the area. Therefore the Shona, in this regard, appear to have continued with the tradition of hill settlements already set in motion by earlier Bantu groups.

GOKOMERE PEOPLE

What the Shona seemed to have perfected during the Gokomere and Ziwa culture was the tradition of hill settlements. Hill settlements according to I. Pikirayi (The Zimbabwe culture: origins and decline in southern Zambebian states, p. 35) marked a historical transition in the development of the Shona people. Pikirayi sees in hill settlements the emergence of a new complex dimension in the political and economic organisation of the shona people. He associates the hill settlements with the emerging of an elite African ruling class on the Zimbabwean plateau, and once settlement occurred at Gokomere and Ziwa, hill settlements in pre-colonial Zimbabwe acquired a valence and momentum of their own.

By the 7th century, settlements had spread to many parts of the plateau to include settlements in the Matopos area at Zhizo hill as well as Leopard's Kopje (Ntabazingwe) and Manyanga (Ntabazikamambo) in the west of the plateau. These hill settlements formed the early phase of Zimbabwe's pre-colonial hill settlements and they are commonly referred to as the Gokomere phase.

LEOPARD'S KOPJE CULTURE PEOPLE

The settlers from Leopard's Kopje included the Shona who soon spread their tradition of hill settlements into the region of the plateau's Shashe-Limpopo basin in the south. One such community initially settled at Bambadyanalo hill but later at Mapungubwe at the confluence of the Shashe and Limpopo rivers in the border area of Zimbabwe and South Africa. Thus the Mapungubwe hill appears to have been cultivated for 70 years (AD 1220 – 1290) while the southern terrace below appears to have been cultivated for 260 years (AD 1030 – 1290). Taruvanango B. Et al, 2008/www.mapungubwe.com/culture. It

is important to note that the settlement at Mapungubwe itself represented the first expression of the Great Zimbabwe phase of Shona stone buildings in the hills in which the shona soon established more settlements in the vicinity and further north, Great Zimbabwe itself became the most notable of the hill settlements north of Mapungubwe.

With the fall of the Great Zimbabwe during the 15th century, a new phase of hill settlements known as the Khami phase (AD 1450 – 1640) came into being. In the west of the plateau, it was mainly represented by hill settlements at Khami, Danamombe (Dhlodhlo), Nhandare (Naletale) and Manyanga (Ntabazikamambo). These settlements were also linked with the Torwa state and its successor, the Changamire/Rozvi state. In the north and in the north-east, the Khami phase was represented by hill settlements at Chesvingo, Ruanga, Zvengombe and Tsindi. These hill sites were closely associated with the Mutapa state. In addition, the Nyanga hill settlement and its associated terraces appear to have been initially settled by the Sena-speaking people who were later conquered by the Manyika in the 18th century. As a result, the tradition of hill settlements continued until the subjugation of the shona by the Europeans in 1890. Taruwanago B., et al: “Zimbabwe Hill Settlements in Proceeding Colonization: A study in Location Factors”, in the journal of Pan African Studies, Vol 2, No. 3, March, 2008.

Examination Type Questions

- 1) To what extent has archeological evidence assisted in the reconstruction of Zimbabwe pre-recorded history?
- 2) Oral tradition is a powerful tool used to pass on aspects of the rich Africa’s unrecorded past, Discuss.
- 3) Evaluate the relevance of written records in the reconstruction of the Zimbabwean past before 1450.
- 4) “The San are an integral part of the Zimbabwean past and present” Discuss the validity of this assertion.
- 5) Critically analyse the written sources which have been used to recover the history of both Great Zimbabwe and Mutapa State before 1570.

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THE LATE STONE AGE CULTURES OF ZIMBABWE

Chapter Objectives

After studying this chapter students should be able to

Define the terms ‘San’ and ‘Khoikhoi’

Trace their origins in the early history of Southern Africa.

Explain the classification of the San and Khoi

Discuss the ways of life of the San and the Khoi.

Definitions: The San

The San are the oldest genetically known inhabitants of Southern Africa where they have lived for at least 20 000 years. The term San is commonly used to refer to a diverse group of hunter-gatherers living in Southern Africa who shared historical and linguistic connections. The San were also referred to as ‘Bushmen’ which came from the Dutch term “bossieman” which meant “bandit” or “outlaw”. There is on the whole approximately 90 000 San people left in southern Africa today, with the largest numbers living in Botswana and Namibia and a few smaller groups living in South Africa, Angola and Zimbabwe. Their distinct rock paintings are spread across southern and central Africa although archaeologists have not yet established which particular groups of the San were responsible for the paintings. Moreover, archaeologists now believe that some of the rock paintings may also have been produced by the Khoikhoi.

Who were the Khoikhoi?

The Khoikhoi – meaning “men of men” or “real people”, or Khoekhoe as the name is spelt in Nama orthography, were closely related to the San and they lived in southern Africa since the 5th century AD. M-L. Wilson writes in the South African archaeological Bulletin that there is current consensus among scholars that the Khoikhoi originated in a region centred around the junction between Zambia, Zimbabwe and Botswana. It is possible that the Khoikhoi developed their pastoral culture about 2 000 years ago through contact with migrating Bantu groups from the north who were travelling down through Africa with domesticated herds of cattle, sheep and goats.

Archaeological evidence shows that the Khoikhoi entered South Africa from Botswana through two distinct routes – travelling west, skirting the Kalahari, to the west coast, then down to the cape. They also entered through the south-east into the

Highveld and then southwards to the coast. When the European immigrants colonised the cape in 1652, the khoikhoi were already practising extensive pastoral agriculture in the area with large herds of Nguni cattle. The European immigrants labelled them “Hottentots” in imitation of the sound of the Khoekhoe language, but this term is today considered derogatory. As the Dutch took over land for farms, the Khoikhoi were dispossessed, exterminated or enslaved and smallpox, which was brought by the Boers, sharply dwindled their numbers.

THE KHOIKHOI-SAN CLASSIFICATION DEBATE

LINGUISTIC CLASSIFICATION

Modern specialists in Khoisan languages have failed to give a clear division between Khoi languages and San languages. According to Alan Barnard, in his article “Kinship Language and Production: A Conjectural History of Khoisan Social Structure”, published by the Cambridge University Press (1988), there have been serious overlaps between the Khoi and San languages. For instance, the Khoi-speaking peoples were the most numerous and the most culturally diverse. They inhabited the central Kalahari dessert, the Okavango swamps and other areas of northern Botswana, as well as southern and north-eastern Namibia. Formerly there were also Khoe-speaking groups in parts of South Africa. What is important to note is that the Botswana Khoe/Khoi are hunter-gatherers (Bushmen) whereas the Namibian and South African Khoi are pastoralists (non-Bushmen) and the precise distinction between these two life styles is problematic. Ethnically, the Khoi-speaking peoples include the Khoikhoi, or Hottentots, the Damara, the Bushmen of central and eastern Botswana, the Hai Bushmen of Etosha pan in northern Namibia and possibly other smaller groups in Angola. The Khoe languages were therefore spoken by both the san and the Khoikhoi in many respects.

The word “Khoe” designates the linguistic division which includes both those peoples today commonly called Khoikhoi or Hottentots (the Khoi-speaking herders) and those peoples central or Khoe Bushmen. As a linguistic term it also includes the languages of one or two people not commonly classified as Khoisan, namely the Damara and perhaps the Kwadi. The Damara speak a Nama dialect of an Angolan people who number only a few living speakers, have a language which might relate to some Khoe-speakers.

What is clear is that the Khoisan languages were characterised by implosive consonants or “clicks” and this made them a totally different language family from those of the Bantu speakers. Moreover, in contrast to the San who spoke highly divergent languages, the Khoikhoi spoke closely relate dialects of the same language. Nama, previously called Hottentot, is the most populous and widespread of the Khoikhoi and San languages. It must be noted, however that this is a general stand-point as the San, upon mingling with the Khoikhoi, more often than not adopted their neighbours language and vice versa! More painstaking research is thus still to determine the differences between these two main ethnic groups via the language

route. Fortunately, such a process is under-way already.

ECONOMIC CLASSIFICATION

According to Monica Wilson in her article “The hunters and herders” published in *The Oxford History of South Africa*, 1969, all the Khoisan people may be classified crudely as either hunters or herders. The hunters include those people whose economy before contact with Bantu-speakers, Khoikhoi and whites was based exclusively or mainly on hunting and gathering or, in the case of the northern Khoebushmen, on hunting and gathering and fishing.

The herders include those people whose traditional economy was based on cattle and sheep herding, as well as on hunting and gathering. In historical times, herders are known to have taken to a purely hunting and gathering lifestyle, for example, if their animals were lost through drought or theft, and archaeologists have recently reported significant evidence of long periods of hunter-herder contact.

The ethnic division generally classified as herders were the Khoikhoi. The Khoikhoi groups which include the Nama, the Korana or Ora and others are cattle and sheep herders. Unlike the Bushmen, they traditionally lived in circular encampments which were made up mainly of patrilineally related kinsfolk. Until the German colonisation of Namibia in 1885 and subsequent warfare and subjugation by whites, their tribes, clans and lineages were hierarchically ranked in Nama ideology and each tribe had its own independent and often powerful chief.

The Damara as pointed out above are usually distinguished as a separate group, neither Bushmen nor Khoikhoi and therefore not Khoisan. They are believed to have a separate biological origin yet this is not sufficient reason to exclude a people from an area. At one time, perhaps for centuries, the Damara worked as servants and blacksmiths for the Nama. They also herded livestock, although various Damara groups in the late nineteenth century lived entirely by hunting and gathering. They now live mainly in north-western Namibia. Their language and a good part of their culture is Nama.

What is important to note, however, is that while the Khoikhoi could assume both lifestyles of the San, and their own as cattle herders, the San rarely changed their roles as hunter-gatherers. Their industry and technology remained primitive and their accumulation and distribution of food narrow in scope, hence, real necessity drove them to work for even the Boers or the Khoikhoi. As soon as they acquired what they thought was reasonable, they would, if given the chance, abscond. Hence most of the Boer ranchers and farmers employed them, together with the Khoikhoi on a debt-bondage system in order to perpetually retain their labour.

Inevitably, the Khoikhoi and San competed for land. As grazing herds increased, especially on the more marginal lands, the pastoralist Khoikhoi took the upper hand, having a more consistent food source, a centralised and stable community, and much

larger number. Bands of San were occasionally incorporated into the Khoikhoi society, but only as clients (working on land “owned” by the Khoikhoi and receiving limited payment in terms of cattle or sheep or as servants, again working for the Khoikhoi but without the option of owning land or animals. Conflict with those San who remained as hunter-gatherers resulted in their indiscriminate “ailing” (a method also later used by the Bantu peoples and Europeans) or by their being driven into more inhospitable lands. Either way, the San were seen as low-status people compared to the Khoikhoi.

THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE SAN

The San are widely recognised as the most impoverished, disempowered and stigmatised ethnic group in southern Africa. Yet the San have also received the attention of anthropologists and the media with their survival and hunting skills, wealth of indigenous knowledge of the flora and fauna of southern Africa and their rich cultural traditions.

The terms San, Khoe, Sho, Bushmen and Basarwa (Botswana) have all been used to refer to this hunter-gather people of southern Africa. Each of these terms has a problematic history as they have been used by outsiders to refer to them, often with pejorative connotations. The individual groups identify by names such as Ju/hoansi and !Kung (the punctuation characters representing different click consonants and most call themselves by the term Bushmen when referring to themselves collectively. One broad study of African genetic diversity completed in 2009 found the San people were among the five populations with the highest measured levels of genetic diversity among the 121 distinct African populations sampled. The San are one of 14 known extant ancestral population clusters from which all known modern humans evolved. Made up of small mobile groups, San communities comprise up to about 25 men, women and children. At certain times of the year groups join for exchange of news and gifts, for marriage arrangements and for social occasions.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Not related to the Bantu tribes the San are descendants of Early Stone Age ancestors. Clans and loosely connected family groups followed seasonal game migrations between mountain range and coastline. They made their homes in caves, under rocky overhangs or in temporary shelters.

These migratory people do not domesticate animals or cultivate crops, even though their knowledge of both flora and fauna is vast. The San categorised thousands of plants and their uses from nutritional to medicinal, mystical to recreational and lethal.

San men have a formidable reputation as trackers and hunters. San trackers will follow the tracks of an animal across virtually any kind of surface or terrain. Their skills even enabled them to distinguish between the tracks of a wounded animal and

that of the rest of the herd. At about 5AD, the Khoikhoi moved into South Africa and lived by gathering wild plants and domesticating animals. These pastoralists were similar to the San, but were taller and moved in larger groups than the San's numbers of about twenty to fifty members.

Coincidentally in the eastern parts of South Africa the Bantu speaking people were moving southward into South Africa bringing with them large herds of cattle, the concept of planting crops and settled village communal life. Ultimately the "Hottentots" met these black-skinned farmers and obtained from them cattle in exchange for animals skins and other items. However it must be noted that archaeological records differ, some say that the Khoikhoi already owned some cattle before the arrival of the Bantu speakers. No concrete carbon-dating record has ever been established.

At first the San lived peacefully with the Nguni (Zulu, Xhosa, Swazi and Ndebele) who intermarried with the San and incorporated some of the distinctive characteristics such as the "clicks" of the San language into their own languages. The presence of similar patterns of rock paintings all over central and southern Africa as well as parts of east Africa has convinced the historians of another important dynamic. That the Bantu did not necessarily find the San only restricted to Botswana and South Africa, which two countries had been the focal point of research, rather, the San must have been progressively and systematically pushed to the south of Africa by the more powerful Bantu groups. Hunter-gatherers could not permanently co-exist with extensive crop farmers and larger cattle herders. Nevertheless, the fact that the San artists started including representations of cattle and sheep as well as of people with shields and spears in their paintings mostly in South Africa shows a greater interaction with the Bantu in that part of southern Africa.

When, the San fought against the Bantu mostly over common grounds, they were at a huge disadvantage not only because of their relatively smaller numbers, but also because they lacked weapons. With the Europeans they were at an even greater disadvantage. The Europeans owned horses and firearms. In this period, the number of the San was therefore greatly reduced as indicated earlier, the Europeans also brought in strange diseases such as smallpox which the San had not built immunity towards and this proved to be a shattering blow.

Colonialism destroyed the San migratory way of life as they were no longer allowed to roam freely and trophy hunters destroyed the vast herds of game that formed their principal supply of food. Both black and white farmers built up huge herds of cattle that destroyed the foods that had been the San staple diet for centuries.

Enslavement and sometimes mass destruction of San communities by both black and white farmers followed. Many San became bondmen and unwillingly changed in their ways of life.

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL LIFE

The San have no formal authority figure or chief, but govern themselves by group consensus. Disputes were resolved by lengthy discussions where all members involved have a chance to make their thoughts heard until some agreement is reached. Although certain individuals may assume leadership in specific spheres in which they excel, such as hunting or healing rituals, they still could not achieve general positions of leadership or power. White colonists found this status-quo very confusing when they tried to establish treaties with the San. However, leadership roles tended to come by natural methods, those who had lived in the group the longest, achieved a respectable age and character etc, otherwise the prevailing ethos of egalitarian society prevailed among the San. Land was owned by a group and claims to its inheritance were held by whole groups. There was therefore no distinct social exploitation as in Bantu societies where tribute and retribution could be encountered.

Kinship bonds provide the basic framework for political models. Membership in a group is determined by residency. As long as a person lives on the land of his group he maintains his membership. It is possible to hunt on land not owned by the group but permission must be obtained from the owners.

The San will eat different types of foods available – both animal and vegetable. Their selection of food ranges from antelope, zebra, porcupine, wild hare, lion, giraffe, fish, insects, tortoise, flying ants, snakes (both poisonous and non-poisonous), hyena, eggs and wild honey. The meat is boiled or roasted on fire. The San were extremely cautious not to exhaust the game or vegetables in “their” area. They were economic and game animals were killed only when it was necessary. Hides were tanned for blackest and the bones were cracked for marrow. More beautiful leopard skins were carefully tanned and traded with either the Khoikhoi or the Bantu groups for grain and milk.

Water was stored in ostrich egg shells and certain wild roots known to contain moisture were often squeezed in the dry season for water. They would also dig holes in the sand to find water, a vital resource.

HUNTING METHODS

The San remain excellent hunters although they did a fair amount of trapping. The San arrow does not kill the animals straightaway but it is laced with deadly poison which eventually causes the death of the animal. In the case of small antelope such as Duiker or Steenbok, a couple of hours may elapse before death.

For large game such as giraffe it could take as long as 3 days. Today the San make the poison from the larvae of a small beetle but will also use poison from plants, such as the euphorbia and snake venom. The poison is neurotoxic and does not contaminate the whole animal. The spot where the arrow strikes is cut out and thrown away but the rest of the meat is fit to eat.

The San also dug pitfalls near the larger rivers where the game came to drink. The pitfalls were large and deep, narrowing like a funnel towards the bottom. These pitfalls were cleverly covered with branches which resulted in animals walking over the pit and falling onto the stake.

When catching small animals such as hares, guinea fowls, steenbok or duiker, traps made of twisted gut or fibre from plants were used. These had a running noose that strangled the animal when it stepped into the snare to collect the food that had been placed inside it. Not only that, the San were also brilliant trackers who knew the habits of their prey pretty well.

It is important to note that hunting was a team effort and little boys as young as four years old were initiated into the art of hunting. Women too, often joined the men in hunting and skinning animals. The man whose arrow killed the animal has the right to distribute the meat to the tribe members and visitors who, after hearing about the kill would arrive soon afterwards to share in the feast. According to San tradition, they were welcome to share the meal and would in the future, have to respond in the same way.

ROCK ART

Until recently, most amateur and professional anthropologists looked at the rock paintings of the San and thought that they could decipher them without any problems. The pieces that they did not understand were passed off as crude art or that the artist had too much to drink or smoke! This is far from reality as San paintings have been found to convey deep religious and symbolic meaning. For instance, painting the picture of an eland, the San's most sacred animal was believed to open portals to the spirit world.

The San mainly used red, brown, white, yellow and black paint, but blue and green were never used and this is not obvious why such colours were never used. Another feature of San art is the embodiment of action and speed. Human figures are stylised and depicted as having long strides and the animals are either galloping or leaping or, more subtly, flicking a tail or twisting a neck. Most of the paintings have an underlying spiritual theme and are believed to have been representations of religious ceremonies.

THE SAN BELIEFS

The San belief system generally observes the supremacy of one powerful god, while at the same time recognising the presence of lesser gods along with their wives and children. Homage is also paid to the spirits of the deceased. Among some San, it is believed that working the soil is contrary to the world order established by the gods. Some groups also revere the moon and held danced around bon fires in full moon.

The most important spiritual being to the San was Kaggen, the trickster-deity. He created many things, and appears in numerous myths where he can be foolish or wise, tiresome or helpful. The word Kaggen can be translated as “mantis” and this led to the belief that the San worshipped the praying mantis. However, Kaggen is not, was not always a praying mantis as the mantis is only one of his manifestation. He can also turn into an Eland, a hare, a snake or a vulture – or even an ordinary San.

The San held several dances such as Boys’ first kill, Girls’ puberty, Marriage and Trance dance. All these had religious validity.

THE KHOIKHOI

STOCK OWNERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Although known as herders or pastoralists, the Khoikhoi also obtained food by hunting and gathering. The sharing of food was an important aspect of village life. Any significant kill was shared, and sheep or cattle killed during ceremonial feasts were eaten by all present. Although wealth was measured in terms of livestock ownership, hunting and gathering was open to all members of the tribe.

The Khoikhoi kept large herds of fat-tailed sheep, long-horned cattle and goats. Livestock were used for milk and were slaughtered only on ritual occasions. Oxen were used as pack animals especially when camp was moved.

There was probably a strict division of labour among the Khoikhoi. Herding cattle was usually man’s work whilst women and children looked after the small stock. During the day the adults might have remained in the kraal manufacturing utensils and weapons or doing domestic chores. Men also went out hunting and the women gathered wild plant foods (veldkos). Hence their core methods of accumulation of both wealth and food were vastly different from that of the San.

SOCIAL ORGANISATION

The village settlement of the Khoikhoi was relatively large, often well over one hundred persons. The basic housing structure was a round hut made of a frame of green branches planted into the ground and bent over and tied together. This was covered with reed mats. It could be dismantled and re-erected in a new location when grazing in the area became depleted. Sometimes the mats were simply removed and rolled up. People left the frames behind if they knew they would be returning to the same site. During the warm weather, it was cool inside with the crevices between the reeds allowing the air to circulate. During winter, the inside could be lined with skins to offer extra insulation against the elements.

Each village encampment consisted of members of the same part-lineal clan – a group

of male descendants of a particular ancestor – with their wives and children. Villages also included some members of other clans as well as some descendants or servants. These could be Bergdama, San or even impoverished Khoikhoi.

Each village had a headman, a hereditary position passed on to the eldest son of the founding ancestor for every generation. Headmen made decisions such as when and where to move. They acted as mediators or judges in criminal or civil disputes. In this way the Khoikhoi completely differed from the egalitarian principles of the San.

Several villages were usually united into a much larger unit called a tribe by some and home by others. Tribes had a kinship base and were made up of a number of linked clans with the seniority of one of the clans being recognised. The head of the senior clan was recognised as the chief of the tribe.

The extent of tribal land was defined less in terms of exact boundaries than with reference to land around key water holes, and the tribal chiefs controlled outsiders' access to the local resources. The rights granted to outsiders were merely temporary users' rights – the willingness to share local resources in one area might be repaid in another at a later stage.

Men from one clan had to seek wives in another. Because related clans within the tribe were geographically close to one another, it is likely that most men found wives within the tribe. Marriage was a powerful social mechanism to invite different groups. The custom was that the bridegroom had to spend the first months of marriage until the birth of the first child at the village of his parents-in-law. Thereafter, the bride was expected to spend the rest of her marriage in the village of her husband.

The tribal council consisted of the headmen of all the other clans and served as a body which linked the various clans together. Such links were further strengthened in those tribes where the older members of the various clans would act as clan “representatives” and live permanently at the main tribal “headquarters”, the village of the superior clan.

RELIGION AND NATURE

The Khoikhoi attached special significance to the moon. The new and full moons were important times for rainmaking rites and dancing and it seems that the moon was viewed as the physical manifestation of a supreme being associated with heaven, earth and especially rain.

Amongst the Nama two prominent figures stand out in their religions mythology. The first is Tsui goab, the deity who was sometimes seen as the founding ancestor of the Khoikhoi. He was the creator, the guardian of health, the source of prosperity and abundance and above all, the controller of the rain and its associated phenomena of clouds, thunder and lightning.

By contrast, Gaunab, was primarily an evil being who causes sickness or death. The other major figure is Haitisi-aibib, a folle hero and magician of great repute who could change his form. Haitisi-aibib, according to Khoikhoi mythology died many times in different places, but had the ability to come to life again – often being reborn in a different form.

It is important to note that the Khoikhoi were more of pastoralists than crop farmers and because they could fall back on hunting and gathering when live-stock keeping failed and due to the fact that the Khoi and the San had a lot of similar languages and dialects, they were more like the San than the Bantu. The Khoikhoi's origins and appearance can be traced to southern Africa and were equally more light-skinned than the Bantu. They however, differed in that they looked taller than the San.

Examination Type Questions

Discuss the significance of archaeological evidence on the reconstruction of the history of the San.

Evaluate the assertion that the Khoisan's survival depended on their knowledge of the environment.

THE IRON AGE CULTURES OF ZIMBABWE

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

After studying this chapter students should be able to

Describe the development of Iron Age culture in pre-colonial Zimbabwe.

Identify and explain the Iron Age sites.

Discuss the migration theory in light of the rise of Iron Age communities.

Assess the impact of the use of iron upon

- (i) Agriculture
- (ii) Hunting
- (iii) Warfare
- (iv) Technological development

Demonstrate the impact of internal and external trade upon Iron Age communities.

Account for the fall of later Iron Age states.

BACKGROUND

The name “Iron Age” has been given to a complex of post-stone Age cultures in Zimbabwe and Southern Africa in general. According to Roger Summers, these cultures vary quite considerably but all are characterised by the use of iron for tools and weapons. Unlike the sequences in Europe and the Near East, that of South Central Africa shows no copper or bronze using stage between the stone and iron-using phases and even the Neolithic seems to be missing from this part of the world.

The sudden appearance of iron in the archaeological record has therefore been attributed to the arrival of metal-working people from the north and, indeed, the whole period of the Iron Age has, somewhat loosely, been termed “the Bantu migrations”. The word “Bantu” is itself a cause of confusion, since it is now applied indiscriminately to a group of languages, a complex of cultures and a racial group. A century ago the word was invented to classify the languages spoken in Southern Africa, but since we do not know the language that was spoken by the iron-using migrants it is incorrect to use this word in reference to culture or race. For that reason, the term “Iron Age” was introduced in 1950 when the first overall survey of the period was made.

It is now realised and acknowledged by archaeologists that the local Iron Age can be divided into two distinct complexes: Southern Rhodesian Iron Age A (Zimbabwean) which runs from the earliest metal-using period, possibly 100 B.C., up to 600 AD. Although Roger Summers (1961, p1) had stated that the early Iron Age period stretched to the beginning of the nineteenth century, this misconception was corrected by later archaeologists, (T.N. Huffman, p360). The Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) Iron Age B started around 600AD and ran right up to the beginning of the nineteenth century, often running independently of A (R. Summers, 1961, p1, T.N. Huffman, 1972, p360). After this terminal date, the two complexes/periods became intermingled and were then classified as Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) Iron Age A + B. There are of course several sub-divisions of these complexes, to mark the Early, Middle and Later Iron Age periods. The chronology of the period is based mainly on radio-carbon dates. These fit in well with the few dates deducible from oral traditions and the Portuguese records.

IRON AGE A₁ – THE EARLIEST IRON AGE

The first traces appear in rock shelters in the Matopo Hills where pottery of a sophisticated type has been found mixed with stone implements of the Later Stone

Age, (The Southern Africa equivalent of the European Mesolithic period). Although this pottery, like all Rhodesian (Zimbabwean) Iron Age ceramics, is Land-made and unglazed, it is clearly the product of a long ceramic tradition. This earliest Iron Age culture has been called by the name of Bambata after the cave site where its pottery was first found in 1917.

A somewhat similar ware comes from the Zambezi Valley, and to differentiate it from the preceding, it has been named Zambezi Channelled Ware, since the principal decorative motif is deep channelling round the necks of the pots. Ware of this type from Zambia has been dated about AD90 by a radiocarbon test on associated charcoal. This channelled pottery is similar to wares from Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and Kasai province of the Congo, but how these are related to Zambezi Channelled Ware is not yet fully known. This could perhaps indicate the migratory patterns of the Bantu.

While, still on the Early Iron Age, one important issue has been pointed out by archaeologist Gilbert Pwiti (1995, p3) that the mentioning of the phrase “Iron Age”, during this particular period, might be misleading. This is because it gives the impression that iron was of over-riding importance among the communities involved, when in fact we know that it was just one branch of production and part of their livelihood. We know, for example, that farming was a more important part of their cultures. Even though iron became important for agricultural production, it is known that this could be achieved with wooden technologies. Nevertheless, we keep on calling this period the early Iron Age because of lack of alternative terms. Pwiti chose to call early Iron Age communities of the Zambezi Valley, Early Farming Communities.

The Bambata Ware is a very distinctive pottery and as it was first described in 1940 it is remarkable that it should have been found only in very limited areas in Zimbabwe and not at all south of the Limpopo. One must conclude, therefore, that the bearers of the earliest Iron Age cultures that crossed the Zambezi did not cross the Limpopo. Zambezi channelled Ware is at present known only in the Zambezi Valley and, unlike later wares both of the earliest, have a westerly distribution.

A close association between sherds of Bambata pottery and Later Stone Age artefacts has led to suggestions that pottery was part of the material culture of the Wilton people i.e. the Bushmen. However, this is now regarded as unlikely owing to the advanced type of pottery, which has nothing experimental or tentative about it. The consensus of opinion now is that pottery is an intrusive element and it is regarded as a sign of “trade” between the Bushmen hunters and pottery makers.

Trade implies peaceful intercourse without any rivalry between the groups concerned. Latterly this was not to be the case, for Bushmen groups were pushed into marginal and infertile country until, in the nineteenth century, they were hunted as vermin by Hottentots, Bantu and Afrikaner alike: the reason for this oppression is that Bush hunting lands had been restricted and they were preying on herded cattle. At the beginning of the Iron Age conditions were apparently different, either there were no

immigrant cattle or else they were too few to cause concern to the Bushmen. There is evidence that the earliest immigrants of which Bantu tradition speaks were without cattle. Possibly therefore, no cattle came before A₂.

It is important to note that G. Pwiti (1996, p4) in his excavations in the Zambezi Valley near the Musengezi and Kadzi rivers (which provided some meaningful dividers) more information was revealed during this early Iron Age and Middle Iron Age periods. Firstly, he noted that farming was mostly done along the river bank – thus streambank cultivation – and that in the settlements dated to the 11th century, the excavations of a wide range of faunal remains, including cattle, sheep and goats were made.

However, Pwiti pointed out that of all the animals kept in the Zambezi Valley areas, as early as the 5th century, cattle were either the least in number or none at all due to the prevalence of tsetse fly. Nevertheless, Pwiti highlights the fact that one Musengezi Tradition occurrence, Kamukonde, is stratified above a six hectare Early Farming Community (Early Iron Age). This indicates that the change in settlement preference is not abrupt. In general, he points out, that the partial behaviour of the farming communities in the Zambezi valley through time reflects a pattern which has been noted all over Southern Africa. What was characteristic of the Early Iron Age period, wherever the settlement pattern and culture were found, were increased hunting activities, slash and burn agricultural activities as well as gathering of wild plant foods. These, together with wild fruits, supplement dietary patterns, especially in drought years when crops fail. Their staple crop was sorghum.

Archaeologist C.S. Lancaster, whose work has shaped the direction of research into the Late Stone Age and Iron Age cultures, cites four factors which determined where such communities were to settle. These are; the availability of good soils for growing sorghum, the staple crops, the availability of water for drinking and other domestic use; the potential danger of damage to crops and relative security of village sites from wild game as well as social and political factors. Now, in ranking these factors, Lancaster concludes that although all the cited factors are relevant the overriding factors in deciding where to settle are good sites for the subsistence agricultural economy and availability of water. Such sites are invariably along the river and stream valleys rich in alluvial loam soils. “A major feature of the settlement pattern is that almost all the villages exploit alluvial soils within convenient daily walking distance from their sources of water, whether the sources are rivers, streams or springs” (Lancaster, 1981, p97).

Moreover, another consistent feature of the Early Iron Age is that while political and social factors were considered important, “such largely political population movements and redistribution always depended on ample supplies of good temwa (field) soils and the availability of sufficient year round drinking water” (Lancaster 1981, p76).

In the final analysis, archaeologists noted that the Early Iron Age communities tried to avoid residential isolation and preferred crowded neighbourhoods, provided there was enough agricultural land and water. This settlement pattern seemed to have been broadly similar to the Later Iron Age, showing continuity in the social sphere.

IRON AGE A2 – MINING CULTURES

Some time before 300AD a new element appeared in the local archaeological records – a new type of pottery which had the impression of a square-toothed stamp.

There are a variety of wares which bear these stamps, called from their type-sites: Gokomere, Ziwa, Mashonaland, Leopard's Kopje, Hillside, Northern Transvaal No. 1. These are local variants and they are also of different dates. The earliest to appear is Gokomere i.e. before 300AD and the last are Leopard Kopje and Hillside whose earliest date is at present unknown, but which seem to have lasted until the early nineteenth century by which time they had lost all trace of stamped decoration.

The most characteristic feature of these cultures, and the one which gives them their generic name, is their connection with pre-Europe and mining or "ancient workings" as they are known locally.

LOCATIONS OF THE EARLY IRON AGE SITES.

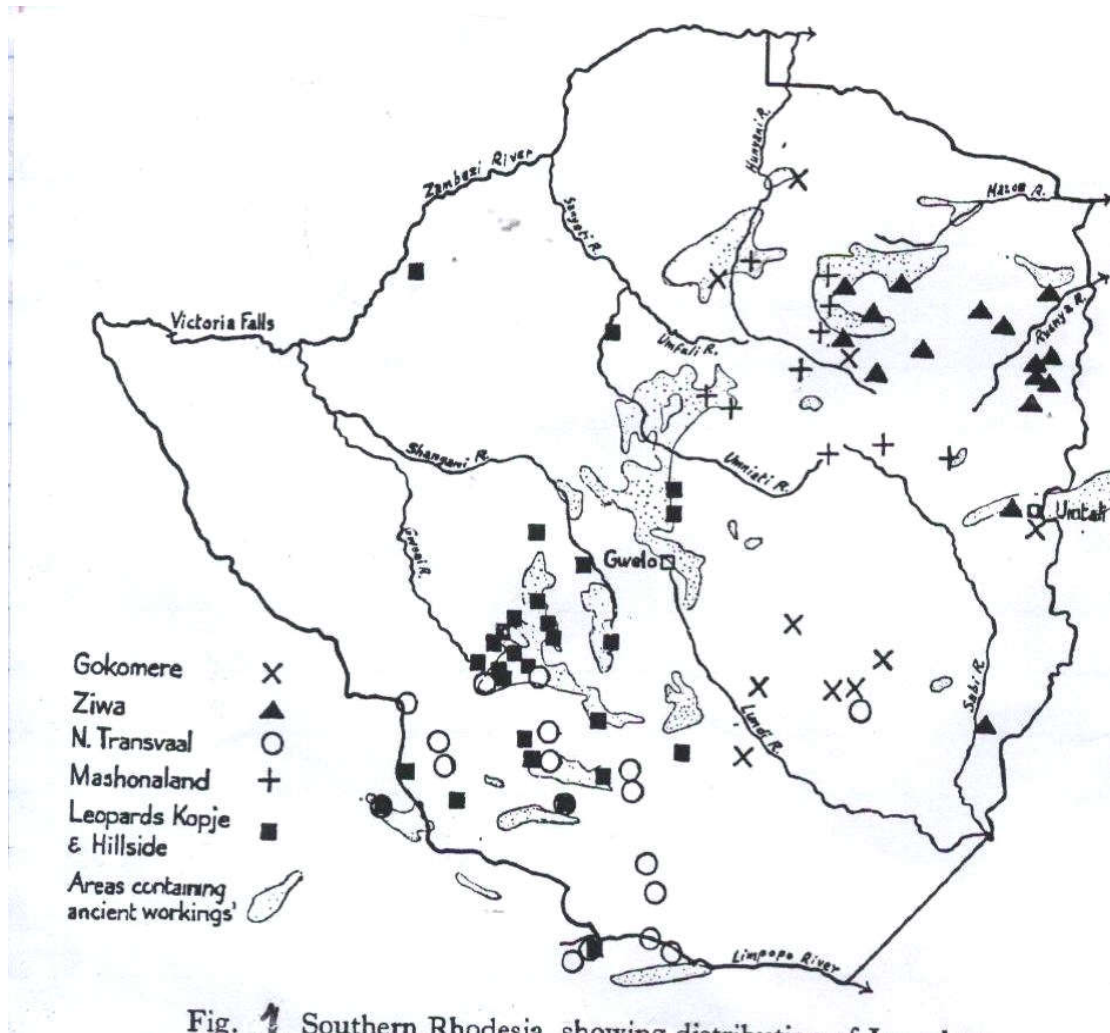


Fig. 1 Southern Rhodesia showing distribution of Iron Age A2 sites and of 'ancient times' workings

Fig 1: Southern Rhodesia, showing distribution of Iron Age A₂ sites and of 'ancient times'

These mines were primitive operations, mainly open stocks which followed the ore body down as far as possible but open to the sky at the top. The minimum amount of surrounding rock was cut, so the actual working was often very narrow indeed.

The 'miners' had no knowledge of explosives nor had they any hard steel tools, and as the ore body consisted in most cases of quartz, it was necessary to split the rock by alternately heating and cooling it before using soft iron picks. Despite their very limited equipment, the Zimbabwean miners (i.e. pre-colonial) reached very considerable depths. – sometimes over 100 feet, being stopped only by water or insufficient ventilation. From the frequent occurrence of skeletons of young females in the fillings of old workings, it appears that much of the under ground work was done by girls.

Most of the mines were concerned with the mining of gold, and any ore over 3 ounces

to a tonne seemed to have been regarded as payable; poorer ore, if brought to the surface, was left in rubble dumps untreated. "Payable" ore was, however, carried to the nearest stream, crushed and concentrated in running water.

There is hardly a modern gold mine in modern Zimbabwe which is not on the site of an "ancient working", so it is clear that the "Miners" had a good knowledge of prospecting. It has been deduced that originally the zone from the surface down to about 20 feet was exceptionally rich in gold and it seems very probable that immense quantities of gold were exported. India was probably the market and Indian brassware has recently been found in some of these old mines.

Besides gold, copper was also mined, the oxide or carbonate ores being smelted with charcoal in simple furnaces. Tin was also mined in the country and bronze alloy was made, the tin content was, however, variable.

There is an argument, backed by both oral tradition and archaeology that these mining cultures arose in Abyssinia, and that the "miners" migrated southwards through East Africa. Despite the probability of the first mining cultures being immigrant, a great deal of local development seems to have taken place in Zimbabwe and the adjoining areas west and south. The above map shows the general distribution of the various cultural traits of A₂ throughout Zimbabwe. Gokomere was an early manifestation, but it is not yet clear what happened in the south-eastern parts of the country after Gokomere gave rise to the development of other A₂ cultures. That area is fairly well-known archaeologically and so it seems likely that the A₂ people (for we cannot, with certainty give them a name) tended to settle in the mineralized belts which are distributed on a NE – SW line right across the country. From evidence deduced from ceramic typology, archaeologist Schofield suggested that this pottery gave rise to that of the Sotho peoples of South Africa and this may be so. Sotho traditions suggest that their group, which introduced iron to South Africa, did not begin to arrive in the Transvaal until at least the fifteenth century. Presumably, therefore, the "miners" were exploiting the easily available mineral wealth of Zimbabwe for at least 1 000 years before any of them felt an urge to see fresh mines.

Although some of the "miners" may have moved southwards during the fifteenth century, the bulk remained in Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) and mining activities were pursued by these groups until well into the nineteenth century. Iron Age A, therefore lasted for at least 1500 years. However, as pointed out earlier, there was no clean break from one episode to the next. Early Iron Age traditions survived in some respects right up to the nineteenth century.

IRON AGE B1 – THE FIRST BUILDINGS

The existence of “ancient ruins” was the first item that attracted unwelcome curiosity and attention, since the first investigators were mere treasure-hunters and plunderers who ransacked Zimbabwe and many other ruined stone buildings for the sake of a little gold. At one time Southern Rhodesia ruins were treated as if they were mere gold mines, thus generating a hive of activity and thuggery. By the time this iniquitous practice was stopped, the archaeological potential of many ruins had been greatly impaired, if not entirely destroyed. Despite this, we still possess a great deal of useful information and it is being added to rapidly.

During the eleventh century walls built of rough course stone were constructed. Zimbabwe Hill and later others were built in the valley. A number of other buildings, in the south-eastern part of the country were built about the same time.

It appears that the south-eastern area which was a good cattle country did not bear any great population at this time, it is not surprising therefore that the “Builders” should have chosen this as a place for their first settlements. It is here that the granite of the country rock splits easily into regular blocks of about 6 inches thick and since earliest extensive stonework also occurred here, it has been suggested by Whitty that this is an example of an independent invention of stonework, arising from both gradual advancement in Iron Age technology and building skills.

Roger Summers’ (1963, p6), earlier argument that the Zimbabwe ruins’ building method do not appear to owe anything to other building traditions, civilised or barbarous, and that they are peculiar to Zimbabwe has been widely supported by the subsequent researches by P. Garlake, T. Huffman, D. Beach, S. Chirikure and of course I. Pikirayi.

The “Builders” were apparently quite distinct from the “miner”. They used different and much plainer pottery and avoided statuettes and they had a different taste in beadwork; they could make more sophisticated shapes out of traditional, home-made beads as well as the modern, imported beads. Moreover, their pottery appears only on ruin sites and accordingly it has been suggested that they were few in number.

Evidence gathered hitherto from archaeology, oral tradition and the earliest Portuguese documents leaves no doubt that the ruins were built by the Shona-speaking people.

Nevertheless it is not clear enough who the “Miners” were and exactly what language they spoke. Roger Summers has suggested that the “Miners” must have been equally Bantu speaking people of Southern Africa. This is because prior to the beginning of the Early Iron Age, the population of Zimbabwe was predominantly Bantu-speaking. Immigrants practising more advanced cultures then began to trickle in into the area, being at first very few in relation to the existing population. Some of these immigrants could have come as far afoot as West Africa, Ethiopia, the Congo and Kenya. Number were, however, small when compared to the existing Bantu-speaking

population.

Of the B1 immigrants, some could have been Shona speakers, like the Zezuru who were tall, well built with large, plain faces and large brains. These were among the earliest arrivals into Zimbabwe. B2 people were, on the other hand, well-known. These were later immigrants from South-Western Congo, Angola and West Africa.

TRADE AT THE GREAT ZIMBABWE SITE

The external trade on the Zimbabwe culture, whose main occupation at Great Zimbabwe dates from the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries was linked to world demand, especially from India. Its primary exports were gold, ivory and copper; its major imports were cloth and beads followed by ceramics. We do not know yet whether Early Iron Age peoples practised reef mining in the Zimbabwe area, but the presence of small amounts of beads in inland sites and tenth and eleventh-century Arabic references to gold trade from Sofala on the southern Coast of Mozambique suggest that at least some gold washing and mining went on prior to the main occupation of Great Zimbabwe.

Both reef and alluvial gold mining were in full swing between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries, however, and by the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the Shona-speaking Zimbabwe peoples were trading the metal with India. During this period Shona miners were mining and washing and milling gold, Shona traders were taking gold to coastal parts, and coastal Muslim Africans, whom the Portuguese, later called “mouros”, were coming inland to buy. Some of these Swahili were light-skinned and spoke Arabic, but contemporary sources describe most as either dark-skinned or black, apparently distinguishable from other more-or-less Islamicised or traditional Africans principally by their style of clothing.

The gold trade was politically important because of its diplomatic prestige value; on the other hand, both gold mining and gold washing were nearly always seasonal and secondary occupations carried on during the lack dry period in the annual Shona cycle of subsistence cultivation. Patron-client relations between Shona groups were often expressed through limited symbolic tribute in agricultural labour, food, military service, slaves, gold, ivory, cattle, wives and other locally produced prestige items which the leaders could use in external trade, but basic control over social and political groupings seems to have been exercised through a belief in various levels of spirit cults, ranging from the system of individual guardian spirits (mudzimu) controlled by village elders at the level of the extended family and descent group, through a progressive hierarchy of virtually senior, loosely territorial land spirits (mhondoro) holding sway over the progressively larger realms of neighbourhood leaders, petty chiefs and paramounts.

Some time after 1200, a Shona confederacy apparently grew up in this general fashion at the nuclear site of Great Zimbabwe in association with external trade. It reached its peak in the late fourteenth century, had fallen by 1500, and been replaced in the north,

south and west by the successor dynasties of Mwene Mutapa, Torwa and Changamire respectively. Parallel developments on the East African coast saw the rise of cosmopolitan Swahili cities and ports stretching south to Quilimane, Sofala and Inhambane to serve as links connecting the Shona and other inland groups with the Indian Ocean trading system. These were largely eclipsed after 1500 by the Portuguese conquista.

At approximately the same time as the Portuguese coastal victories and the fall of Great Zimbabwe as a trading centre in the far interior, Shona trade with Sofala in the south, where the Portuguese had focused their attention, was increasingly deflected to the northern routes by Swihili and Shona traders passing through the Zambezi Valley and the recently established Mwene Mutapa confederacy. This activity included the area occupied by the well-known archaeological site of, Ingombe Ilede.

It is important to note therefore that trade was an extremely vital economic activity during the middle and Later Stone Age periods and in turn, trade served to stimulate mining activities across the country. Trade therefore quickened the pace of technological transfer and change in Zimbabwe, enabling the historical movement from the Early, middle and Later iron Age epochs,. The wealthier a group became, the greater it controlled mining claims and the faster it laid claim to the ruler-ship of the respective area. Therefore trade, especially external trade, by being royally controlled and centralised, had a vast political impact.

IRON AGE: B2 CHANGE IN THE BUILDING STYLE

During the fifteenth century a change in building style occurred at Zimbabwe and the earlier rougher style was replaced by one which is not only more mannered but is technically of a lot better quality than the earlier work. The new style shows signs of a steady improvement for some centuries.

The change in architectural style was, but one facet of a new culture. Pottery was sometimes profusely decorated, and there was a greater variety of beads used, copper and bronze ornaments appeared in larger quantities and gold began to be used as an adornment both of persons and also of objects (which were covered with gold plate). Oriental (from the Far East) imports occur in the more important sites and altogether appears to have been a very rich one.

Once again, the number of people enjoying this high culture seemed to have been comparatively small and these “Builders” are now considered to have been an aristocracy.

MAPUNGUBWE AND KHAMU

Although this culture appeared in about AD1450 at Zimbabwe, it is rather earlier in

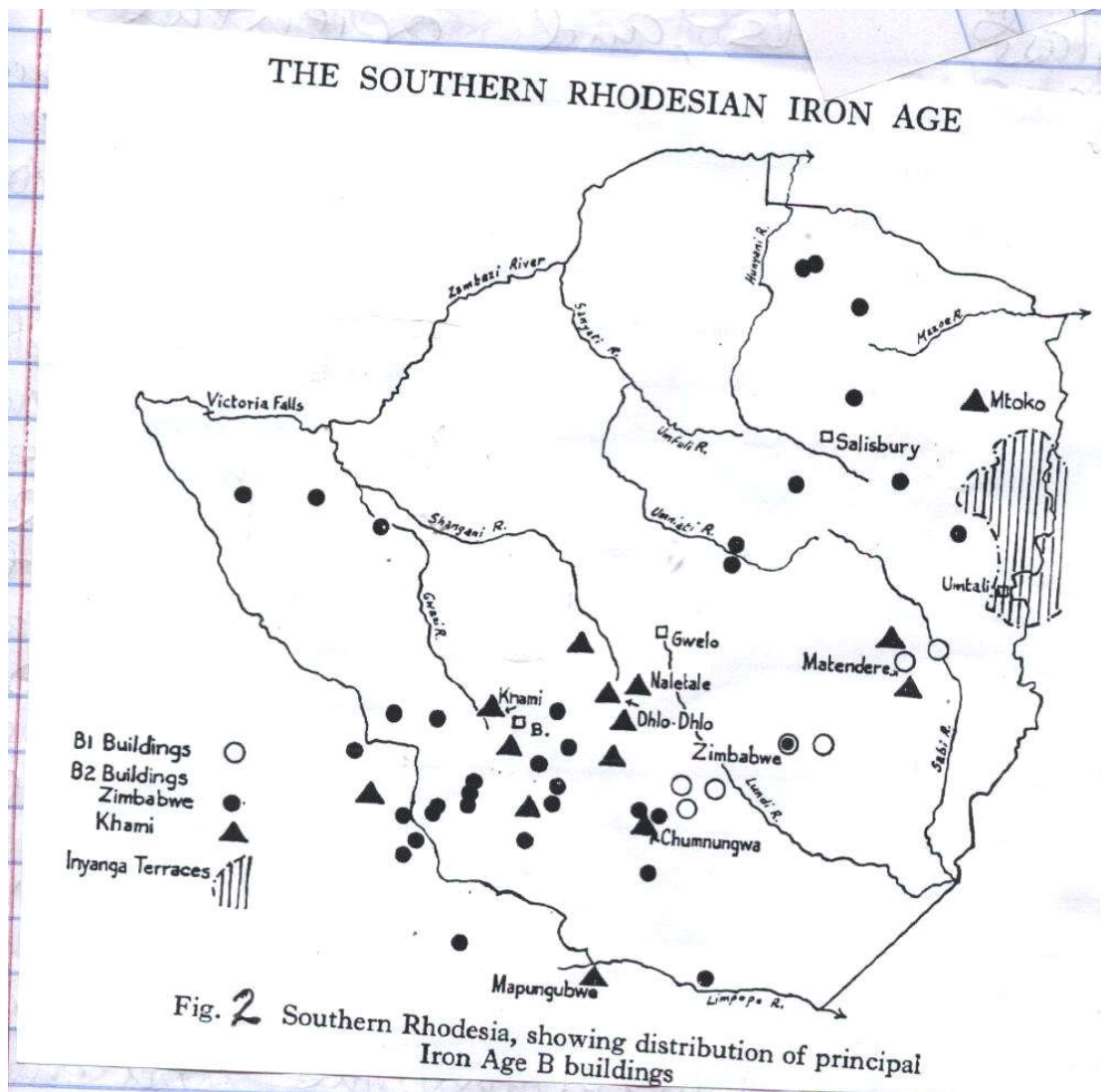
the South-West, at Mapungubwe on the Limpopo River.

Mapungubwe ceramics and certain aspects of Zimbabwe iron work connect these classical building cultures with the Southern Congo and West Africa. These are the first such contacts visible in the Rhodesian archaeological record, all earlier contacts having been with East Africa.

Khami, just like Great Zimbabwe, has free standing structures/walls where the principal stonework is concentrated on the building of platforms. Khami's technique, however, appears to have been an independent and probably later development. There are oral traditions which connect "Khami-type" buildings with the later Rozvi Chiefs of the Changamire dynasty and it may well be that the Zimbabwe type gave a hint to the Mwene Mutapa dynasty which was at one time paramount over the whole area and was later confined to the north-east.

The splendours of the Monomotapa's court have been recorded by Portuguese writers and many of its features, especially those relating to divine kingship, have been considered critically by cultural anthropologists such as Saclebista and, later Wieschhoff. Certainly the distribution map shows that "Zimbabwe" – type buildings tend to be all over the rain areas whereas "Khami" buildings are densest in the south-west. This distribution reflects the division of our area into two units called by the Portuguese "Monomotapa" and "Butwa" and when read with the distribution of gold mines given in figure 2, also shows why it was that Butwa maintained a control over the main mines of gold production, to the detriment of the Portuguese gold trade.

The Map reflecting B₁ and B₂ Buildings



The richness of the B₂ building culture has been a matter for frequent comment.

Much of this wealth was locally produced. For instance, the spectacular gold ornaments, soapstone carvings and although items such as glass beads and oriental ceramics do occur, the amount of imported materials is much less compared with indigenous products.

The durable imports are naturally only a part of the whole volume, and we cannot form any estimate of the quantity of those such as cloth which have left no mark in the archaeological record. We can, however, look at the question from the other end, for there are Portuguese commercial documents to show that 'Monomotapa' was taking comparatively small quantities of cloth in 1508 – 1509 and although the quantity rose later in the century, cloth seemed to have been second to glass beads as an import. We know less still about the trade of Butwa, which presumably was carried through parts under Arab administration to the north of the Portuguese area. These parts were in decline by the sixteenth century and so the Butwana East Coast overseas trade was probably comparatively small. However, there was inter-African trade with the Congo and West Coast. By and large, however, Butwa's economy under the Rozvi seems to have been very largely self-sufficient.

IRON AGE B2: EASTERN TERRACE CULTURES

INYANGA CULTURE

The terrace cultures were located in the eastern highlands, in the Inyanga Mountains. Here, there are lots of miles of stone-faced agricultural terracing with which are associated many hundreds of stone-walled enclosures, stock pits and a certain number of strongholds and the remains covered about 3 000 square miles.

Unlike Zimbabwe (or Great Zimbabwe), Mapungubwe and other sites further westward, Inyanga displays an extremely impoverished material culture – inadequately fired pottery, very few beads, hardly any iron and a tiny scatter of copper ornaments.

Indeed one phase of this culture was so poor that there was no trace of large pots, interpreted by the excavators as indicating that the Inyangans were too poor to brew beer. Anybody familiar with Bantu life will appreciate what depths of poverty this implies.

The Terrace Cultures have made a great impact on the landscape of the eastern mountains of Zimbabwe where hundreds of square miles of mountain forests have been felled or burned out and where the hillsides have been covered from foot to summit with terraces and accordingly they have been given a great place in the archaeological record.

During A + B periods, one finds the Inyanga type of modified buildings, spreading west-wards but terracing along the eastern mountains. They surely make a mark in

the history of archaeology, but had little effect on the history of the country as a whole.

The interesting thing about Inyanga is that, here we can see, fossilised as it were, the life of the ordinary people, whereas, in Great Zimbabwe and Khami we see the relics of the life of the nobility and gentry of the realm.

Moreover the, Inyanga Culture merged imperceptibly into modern tribal cultures in that area so that local African working as labourers on the Inyanga excavations were able to identify every finding made, often giving the name of pots of which but a few sherds remained. Although Inyanga lives on in the Manyika, Wesa, and other ethnic groups today, the aristocratic Great Zimbabwe Culture has also most utterly disappeared.

It must be emphasised that Iron Age B did not surplant Iron Age A. The latter continues to function as the culture of the “lower classes” Iron Age B cultures (except at Inyanga) being of a dominant minority. From the fifteenth to nineteenth centuries the cultural difference was also a social one.

The arrival of the railway in Southern Rhodesia in 1897 may be taken as the end of the local Iron Age as it marked the introduction of heavy machinery and the commencement of the “industrial revolution” among the African people – that is – in the modern sense of the word. Technically speaking, the Later Iron Age may be marked as a period of irreversible technological innovation in Zimbabwe and therefore not be separated from the industrial revolution. This is because the same mines continued to be exploited and smelting technology was enhanced to industrial levels.

Examinations Type Questions

How valid is the view that the survival of the Khoisan depended on their knowledge of the environment?

Compare and contrast the social, political and economic features of the Khoikhoi and San people.

Explain the changes that were brought to the lifestyles of the San and the Khoikhoi through the use of iron tools.

Examine the various sources of evidence that were used to recover the history of any two pre-colonial Zimbabwe states.

- 5) Discuss the impact of the introduction of iron on pre-colonial societies of Southern Africa.

- 6) To what extent did agriculture revolutionize the economies of pre-colonial societies?
- 7) Iron brought wealth and a desire for Power and conquest. Discuss the validity of this statement with reference to the rise of Iron Age states.
- 8) Discuss the socio-political and economic organization of Iron Age communities.
- (9) What were the differences and similarities on the way of life of the Late Stone Age and Early Iron Age people?
- (10) How did the use of iron transform the social, economic and political bases of early pre-colonial Zimbabwean societies?

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THE GREAT ZIMBABWE STATE

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

After studying this chapter students should be able to

Account for the rise of Great Zimbabwe

Evaluate theories put forward on the construction and rise of Great Zimbabwe.

Assess the factors that led to the decline of the great Zimbabwe state

What is a State?

According to a Marxist view, a state is an instrument of class rule (control). It is an institution representing the interest of the ruling class. Garlake defines a state as a small political unit. D.N Beach outlines that the Shona were normally divided throughout their

history into territories under rulers of which many were in turn subdivided into wards under sub rulers and house heads, each made up of a number of villages under village heads. These territories varied in size and their rulers varied equally in their wealth and power. With this analysis, it is therefore easy to suggest that several states existed between Zambezi to the North, Indian ocean to the east and Limpopo river to the south, but it is difficult to draw a line between a large and powerful territory and a small area held by a minor ruler like Luteve and Bocha. (refer to map below adapted from Beach DN 1984).

Zambezi river .Tete

N

.Zvangombe . Sena

Urungwe plateau

Mupfure river Budya Maungwe Barwe

Buhera Bocha Teve .

Sofala

Kalahari desert

Changamire State
1680-1840
Danangombe

Sabi river

.Great Zimbabwe

Dande

Mape la

Limpopo river

Mapungubwe

Venda

Gambe

Key

Political units (authorities)

Political headquarters (capitals)

The above territories, political units, varied greatly in size and their rulers varied equally in their wealth and power. From the map above, it is easy to distinguish several political units that existed between 1200 AD and the major Shona political states up to the 19th Century.

These four major states namely Great Zimbabwe, Mutapa, Torwa and Rozvi state can be termed states because

They were able to raise large armies that in the long run assimilated smaller territories into their larger growing polities.

Were able to exact tribute or intervene in the politics of other territories over long distances for long periods. Most of these, especially Mutapa and Rozvi, were under the close control of the rulers of one dynasty. These dynasties controlled a much larger region which expanded in size from time to time and received tributes from the vassal chiefs.

The frequency with which the tribute was paid would have to do with the distance involved. As more territory was assimilated into a major political unit, more tribute was also expected. The polities that were able to subjugate the smaller states would form larger states and their tributaries. The sheer economic, political and social strength of Mutapa and Torwa states makes it probable to confer them with statehood title together

with Great Zimbabwe because the three- Mutapa, Torwa and Rozvi succeeded the Great Zimbabwe state from which they drew upon economic, political and social techniques that had to a larger extent, been spearheaded by the Great Zimbabwe state, argued D.N Beach in 1980

The Origins of Great Zimbabwe State

Great Zimbabwe lies some distance south and east of the auriferous belt. Iron Age people occupied the hill for a period during the first millennium and after an interval, it was reoccupied during the eleventh century for some next four hundred years. There are three controversies put forward by historians in connection with the origins of Great Zimbabwe. These try to answer the questions on When, Why, and who constructed the magnificent walls of Great Zimbabwe.

The state of Great Zimbabwe did not happen accidentally. Its origins are associated with the decline of Mapungubwe (see map above) and the rise of gold trade with the east coast. Mapungubwe probably declined as a result of the ruler's failure to control the international trade that brought in foreign goods. Vassal chiefs from Mapungubwe and Mapela may have manipulated the weaknesses of their ruling class and stopped payment of tribute. They transferred their loyalties to the new emerging Iron Age communities of Gumanye, Gokomere and Kutama cultures. The Gumanye culture is believed to have evolved into the Great Zimbabwe state.

Controversy A: Time sense

When was Great Zimbabwe built?

The Great Zimbabwe state started as a political unit before about 1250. Radio carbon dates for the stone walls are 1100, 1300, 1340 and 1350, says D.N Beach in 1980. Archaeology revealed that the few upper class huts of the rulers were basically a middle 13th century construction. The radio carbon dates indicate that the state thrived in the 14th century. As the power of the ruling class increased, it organised the construction of stone walls between 1000 and 1200 AD.

Architectural controversy:

This questions the purpose for which the walls have been constructed. Garlake argued that Great Zimbabwe was simply a symbol of rulers' status, prestige, honour and privacy. Phimister and Proctor supported this view when they added that the huge stone wall was built right round the King's complex for privacy and ritual purposes. This interpretation suggests that the walls may have been built for religious purposes. Archaeological evidence of bird carvings, polished clay pots and altars are in support of the religious purpose. Mufuka. K also suggests that the upright stone walls were associated with the religious beliefs of the Shona. The conical tower according to him suggests that they

wanted too be closer to Mwari. However, Mukanya has different views. He argues that the colonial tower was an expression of fertility and success. He uses the shape of the male organ to support his argument. This reveals the paternalistic nature of the Shona societies.

Another argument describes the stone walls as meant for defensive purposes. This argument has been dismissed by such historians like DN. Beach 1980, Garlake and Mufuka who argued that Great Zimbabwe had no permanent enemies that threatened them to the extent of building those complex walls. The building of other several Madzimbabwe dotted all over Zimbabwe may be used to explain the construction as a symbol of power, prestige and honour.

The Construction controversy

There are basically two theories that have been advanced for the construction of Great Zimbabwe. These conflicting theories try to answer the who aspect on the construction of the great walls.

The Non- African Theory

In the early published accounts of Great Zimbabwe, Europeans often insisted that the ruins must have had an exotic, non-African origin. To this day, some local Europeans cannot allow themselves to credit Africans, let alone the ancestors of the modern Shona inhabitants from the areas with the capacity to construct such elaborate buildings. This theory being Euro-centric in nature attributes the construction of Great Zimbabwe to foreigners like Phoenicians, Greeks, Arabs, Portuguese and Jews. Mauch , a German explorer, claimed that the ruins have foreign origins and are copies of king Solomon's temple and palace. Other proponents of this theory include Hall, Wilmot, Bent, and De Barros. The latter is known for supporting Mauch's argument that Prestor John, King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba are instigators of the stone buildings. Some non-African theorists suggest that the Shona people may have had long trading contacts with foreigners like Ptolemies of Egypt who finally settled to construct the Great Zimbabwe walls. This theory which is based on racial affiliations asserts that Africans lacked in technological ability to build architectural structures like Great Zimbabwe. The Europeans said the same about other impressive human achievements in Africa. However, this theory has been challenged in that, if Europeans, Egyptians, Arabs or Jews constructed the walls, why is it that there has not been any literature left behind on walls, stone slates or on papyrus since these were literate societies.

The African Theory

This theory seeks to dismiss the non- African theory that was based on racist bigotry by advancing the African theory. Proponents of this theory include Mufuka, Garlake, Thompson, Robinson, Roger Summers, Huffman etc. These advance the view on local origins of the stone walls pointing that stone walling began at Mapungubwe. It has been

demonstrated by more recent professional archaeologists like Rundall MacIver that Great Zimbabwe was The Headquarters of an indigenous African state that flourished for hundreds of years. Archaeologists also affirm the Shona origins of the stone structures when they indicated that artefacts at Great Zimbabwe like pottery, huts, ceremonial axes, indicate Shona traditional culture. Mud huts excavated at Great Zimbabwe give evidence of its local origins since they resemble the present day Shona structures. The Euro-centric theory has finally been dismissed for lack of substantial archaeological evidence.

The Rise of the Great Zimbabwe state

Just like its origin, the rise of Great Zimbabwe has divergent theories that try to play down one theory against the other. Beach D.N in 1984 describes the disagreement on the accounts of the rise of Great Zimbabwe as a 'pendulum effect' where one writer stresses one aspect at the expense of other aspects, whereupon another account will react against the other account to proceed and stress on another aspect. The process therefore continues back and forth like a pendulum. In the light of these observations no single proven theory can effectively explain the rise of Great Zimbabwe, but a combination of these theories.

Trade Hypothesis

This hypothesis associates Great Zimbabwe's rise with the flourishing gold trade that became the most important export exercise with the Arabs. The state's monopoly of the Save river trade route saw increased trade between the plateau and the east coast from as early as about 1100 A.D. Archaeological evidence of foreign objects like beads, plates, glassware, guns etc support the existence of this trade.

There is also evidence that reveal trading relations between the Great Zimbabwe state with northern Ingombe Ilede copper trader. Through the control of international trade, the rulers of Great Zimbabwe gained valuable gifts and items through which they built alliances with their neighbours to ensure the payment of tribute from other chiefly lineages. The rulers controlled the gold trade from which they derived power, wealth and prestige. Ownership of foreign clothes and ornaments was a symbol of wealth. Ceremonial hoes and spears were a symbol of status and were restricted to members of the ruling family.

Cattle Hypothesis

The growth of the Great Zimbabwe economy based on large herds of cattle is used to explain the rise of the state. The importance of cattle is evidenced by the influence cattle had on the choice of pre-colonial settlement. Almost all Madzimbabwe were built close to the edge of escarpments an ideal position for controlling the seasonal movement of

cattle between the summer highveld and the winter lowveld grazing. Most of the cattle belonged to the ruling class. Cattle became a symbol of differences between the rulers and the ruled. The Great Zimbabwe people used cattle to build up their numbers by acquiring wives, and hence, many children who developed into a military force that protected and dominated trade routes. The Great Zimbabwe army compelled traders from small states to pay transit tax. This increased wealth and prestige for the rulers, says D.N Beach (1984). Young men in the state had also the responsibility of looking after royal herds and raiding for more cattle.

However, the rise and growth of a state cannot be attributed to a single economic branch. The Cattle theory alone cannot be attributable to the rise of Great Zimbabwe, but all branches of production like mining, farming and trade were crucial. A combination of those economic activities ushered an increase in imports of beads and improved huts and pottery for the rulers.

Religious Theory

This theory stresses the role of religion as a means of accumulating wealth. The ruling class at Great Zimbabwe in particular and other pre-colonial states in general controlled important traditional institutions such as laws and beliefs. Ceremonies in which the ancestors were asked to increase the fertility of the land, the size of harvest, extent of rainfall and protection of the cattle were presided over by the ruling class. As a result, people believed that they could not harvest their crops until the king conducted a ceremony to honour the ancestors for the success of the harvest. This gave the ruling class the chance to control the harvest and could make sure that tribute was paid.

Religion cemented people together and guaranteed the ruling class loyalty from their subjects.

The fall of Great Zimbabwe

Various reasons have been advanced for the decline and fall of Great Zimbabwe. The obvious explanation, however, is that the decline of Great Zimbabwe cannot have been caused by the Portuguese or by the expansion of the Mutapa state's power, because the Torwa state at Khami was growing powerful at the same time using the same trade routes as Great Zimbabwe. The rise of the Mutapa can be used convincingly as a result of the decline of Great Zimbabwe, not as a cause for the decline of the Great Zimbabwe state.

a) Environmental Reason

This suggestion argues that Great Zimbabwe's population grew too big to be supported

by its environment. The presence of so many people at a site that had the circumference of seven kilometres would have seriously affected the ability of its site territory to supply crops, firewood, game, grazing areas, and all other necessities of life. The increase in human population meant an increase in households and hence an increase in animal population. This had a bearing on the grazing land for domestic animals.

Competition for the available resources between different branches of the ruling class and their supporters might have led to quarrels over grazing and hunting ground. The croplands and mines became exhausted. These might well have led to civil wars that made it impossible for the state to continue.

A (Shangwa) drought which occurred in successions at a point when the population had reached critical levels would have destroyed the ability of the territory to support its inhabitants. In the absence of technology that could transport sufficient supplies over longer distances, the only alternative would have been to disperse the people or possibly move the structure itself, argued Huffman.

b) Decline in Trade

Trade, both internal and external, had triggered the rise and growth of the powerful Great Zimbabwe state. The fall of Great Zimbabwe has been greatly associated with the decline in gold trade. Exhaustion of goldfields, drought and shifting of trading posts led to the failure by the Great Zimbabwe ruling class to control and manipulate trade. This led to the fall since the inflow of foreign goods was minimal. The expansion of Torwa and Mutapa weakened the rulers of Great Zimbabwe as they no longer controlled and acquired wealth from trade necessary for the sustenance of the state. Factors such as exhaustion of resources like land, woodlands, minerals and grazing areas subsequently led to the abandonment of the Great Zimbabwe state.

Examination Type Questions

“Oral tradition is the most important source of our knowledge of Great Zimbabwe”.
How valid is this view?

How important was mining to the economy of Great Zimbabwe?

Assess the various arguments for and against the fact that Great Zimbabwe was built by the Shona.

How valid is the claim that due to vandalism and theft, the evidence left is too little to reconstruct the history of Great Zimbabwe?

How important were written records in reconstructing the pre-history of Zimbabwe?

- 6) Account for the rise of Great Zimbabwe.
- 7) The Shona people never built Great Zimbabwe but settled into structures already in existence: Discuss this view on the origin of the Great enclosure.
- 8) How valid is the claim that trade was the mainstay of the economy of Great Zimbabwe
- 9) Political power struggles were the chief cause of the fall of great Zimbabwe. Do you agree?
- 10) Critically examine the possible reasons why the Great Zimbabwe declined as a center of political power and wealth during the 15th Century AD.
- 11) What evidence is there at G. Zimbabwe which helps us better understand the history and way of life of the Shona?

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THE RISE OF THE MUTAPA DYNASTY, DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE AND ORAL TRADITIONS (CASE STUDY ON SOURCES)

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

After studying this chapter students should be able to

- a) Critically examine the type of historical evidence in the recollection of the history of the Mutapa.
- b) Evaluate the contributions of various sources used in collection of historical evidence.

From the Mutapa dynasty, oral traditions and written documents give us a much more detailed and personal historical view. Much of African history relies on oral tradition. Hence lacking evidence and credibility. Origins of states always have different interpretations.

Oral Tradition:

According to traditions collected by D.P. Abraham during the fourteenth century a new group of Bantu-speakers, led by a mythical personality called Nembire, moved into Zimbabwe from the north during the North South migration.

Abraham suggests that these people may have crossed the Zambezi in about 1235: their origins are not known, but they probably came from the Katanga region, for copper artifacts reminiscent of the Congo are found in Period IV levels of occupation.

For almost a century the characters who figure in the traditions of the Mbire people as they are known, are impossible to identify as being real historical personalities.

However, at the end of the 14th century we are suddenly confronted by an individual, who though still in the realm of mythical founders, is Chikura Wadyembeu. Genealogically, he is said to be NeMbire's grandson, whom traditions identify as the first mambo (great chief of the Rozvi). A generation later, he is replaced as mambo by a man who may or may not have been his son, but who was the very first individual to bear the praise name of Mwene Mutapa/Munhu Muatapa.

Implications

One interpretation could be that here we have yet another group of chiefly invaders establishing their rule over the earlier population of Zimbabwe (D.P. Abraham). To support Abraham's view, there are the Katangese type of artifacts associated with period IV and the tradition itself. There is evidence of a decline at the end of the Shona period of domination at Zimbabwe. Still, none of these lead inevitably to such conclusion.

One can also argue that the new dynasty arose out of the old.

Who were the Rozvi?

The problem centres around the identity of the Rozvi who dominate the history of this region after 1450. There are numerous conflicting traditions concerning the Rozvi and various scholars have stood by each of these views. However, what emerges is that the Rozvi were a special group. They were not a clan, nor were they a tribe.

Edward Alpers's interpretation of the tradition is that the Rozvi were a particular Shona group who for some time had held positions of power, most probably ritual, in the Shona Kingdom of Period III. They may well have been the original ruling dynasty of the Shona. So during the warring, periods of this kingdom, a particular family amongst the Shona rose to prominence saved the state from total disintegration by virtue of its particular leadership skills, and eventually emerged as the ruling dynasty of a new successor state. This would be the Mbire. It is in this light that one should see Abraham's more recent (1963) hypothesis that the Mutapa dynasty broke away from the reigning Rozvi dynasty, for it is fairly based on this assumption.

What interpretation (3) implies is that there was a steady stream of Bantu-speaking peoples of Congolese origin entering Zimbabwe from about the end of the first millennium A.D. All of those people are now known to us as Shona; but they did not come as a single tribe. Over a number of centuries there was a continual process of integration of peoples and ideas, beginning with the first encounter of Congolese immigrants with the Ziwa, Leopard's Kopje, and Period II people who inhabited Zimbabwe.

At a certain point in time, this process gave birth to the predominantly Shona culture of the period at Zimbabwe. This culture was not static but like any civilization was constantly developing new ideas of its own and absorbing others which were injected into it by more recent arrivals in Zimbabwe e.g in this case the Mbire.

Who were the Mbire?

It is immaterial whether or not they themselves were Rozvi. What is of paramount importance is that under their leadership Rozvi ascendancy was established or re-established at Great Zimbabwe.

If the Mbire did not necessarily create a new Zimbabwean Kingdom, they certainly revitalized the old one. With the Mbire mambo leading this new Rozvi state we enter the great period of expansion which resulted in the formation of the empire of Mutapa.

Nyatsimba Mutapa:

He was the second Rozvi mambo of the Mbire line, that is successor to Chikura Wadyembeu. It was his peculiar genius which gave rise to the empire of Mutapa.

From about 1420 to the middle of the 15th century Mutota embarked on a major military campaign to create a vast personal empire over the entire Zimbabwe Plateau.

Reasons for the campaign and/ or the rise of Nyatsimba Mutota. The traditional explanation is that there was considerable over population in the nuclear Rozvi Kingdom in the Southern part of Zimbabwe as well as severe shortage of salt supplies.

Our main sources of information, Abraham and Alpers do not give much credit to these motivations. The reasons do not seem to be sufficient cause for the sort of empire building Mutota decided to undertake. According to Abraham, Mutota was stimulated by foreign influences. This leads us to written documents.

Documentary sources:

According to an early sixteenth century Portuguese documents, it was learned at Sofala from the African who came from the interior “that in the land of Munhumotapa (sic) there are more than ten thousand Moors”

Although this figure cannot be taken literally, there is no doubt that a great many Muslim traders were entrenched throughout the entire area. The importance of their economic stake there is attested to by their extended resistance after 1530 to Portuguese penetration into the interior. Nevertheless, this evidence is not sufficient to warrant Abraham’s conclusion that it was Muslim traders, seeking a wider protective political umbrella under which they could carry on and extend their trading activities who “conceived and implanted in the mind of the Rozvi King a desire for empire”.

Certainly this may have been a factor in influencing Mutota’s expansionist policy, but there does not appear to be any specific confirmation for this hypothesis. Furthermore, this interpretation leaves an unsatisfactory picture of Mutota as a passive character, who lacked a personal vision and was only spurred to action by the provision of a group of foreign merchants whose activities depended, in the first place, on his good will as monarch.

This is not the sort of man who wages for thirty years a struggle for imperial expansion. Abraham’s suggestion seems misdirected on these grounds too.

Mutota was already milling over a considerable kingdom's apparently an ambitious man, it is not great an assumption to believe that he contemplated extending his territory.

Mutota was the descendant of a dynamic new royal family which had perhaps even usurped power from the previous ruling dynasty of the kingdom. Such a tradition, still fresh and vital, is surely the stuff of which imperial ambitions are made.

Turning to the purely economic factor, the advantages of wider political hegemony must have struck Mutota as forcibly as they struck the Muslim traders operating within the sphere of his patronage.

NB: In other words, the influences which led to the formation of the empire of Mutota, like those which had marked the earlier progress of the Shona, Kingdom centering on Great Zimbabwe, are probably to be found within the internal dynamics of the society itself.

Antonio Fernandes accounts

In about 1511, the Portuguese decided to send Antonio Fernandes into the interior in their bid to control sources of gold. He was instructed to find out more about gold mines, to establish friendly relations with the Mutapa (Monomotapa) and other chiefs, and to report on ways of improving the gold trade.

Fernandes had first come to Africa in 1500, a convict working as ship's carpenter. He had learnt the local languages and gained considerable influence over the people. Probably barely literate, his report of these travels was written down by a clerk at Sofala and sent to the King of Portugal. The report gives some valuable details of what he found in the interior of central Africa.

From 1511 to 1515, Fernandes travelled extensively throughout Mashonaland. He visited some of the gold-bearing areas and watched the gold extracted, but saw only a few small nuggets, most of it was heavy dust. He also visited the Monomotapa's Zimbabwe at Mbire near Musengezi river, where he reported that he saw a fortress of the Monomotapa "which he is now making of stone without mortar"

Fernandes next visited the Kingdom of Butua, which he noted was rich in gold. He made a further journey across "the great river" which was probably the Zambezi. He reported seeing a great deal of copper and described how the people bartered this for trade goods from the southern side. They crossed the river in canoes and left their copper ingots on the southern shore and the buyers then placed a quantity of trade goods beside them.

If the sellers were not satisfied, they left the goods untouched, and the buyers gradually added more until an acceptable amount had been placed beside the copper. This was then taken back across the river. Fernandes described some of these people as having light skins and big buttocks, perhaps "Bushmen" or San survivors of the valley and also told of

cannibals he had heard of to the north of the river.

Fernandes recommended that Portuguese should develop the Zambezi route and establish a fortified warehouse on an island in the river in an effort to break Arab monopoly of trade in the area. As a result the Portuguese turned their attention to the Zambezi. They introduced a number of warships on the river to check the Arab traders, and during the mid-16th century established settlements at Sena and Tete and, somewhat later at Zumbo further up the river.

Documents from Portuguese Catholic Missionaries. Some Dominican priests went to the coastal ports to minister to the Portuguese traders and officials.

The first Christian Missionary to Penetrate the Zimbabwe Plateau: Father Goncalo da Silveira

According to reports, he was with two companions and arrived at the trading station of Inhambane in 1560. After converting a local chief, Silveira travelled up the Zambezi and on to the Monomotapa's Zimbabwe on his own.

It is reported in Christian documents that the ascetic priests refused all gifts of gold and rich food, and lived frugally on millet porridge and bitter herbs. He appeared strange, but his dominant personality and his eloquent preaching produced a quick response and after three weeks of instruction of the young Monomotapa and 300 of his relations and leading tribesmen were baptized.

Siveira's success aroused the opposition of the Muslim traders at the court. They persuaded the Monomotapa that Silveira was a powerful sorcerer, who was plotting to take his kingdom so he sanctioned the missionary's death. Despite being warned of the plot by Antonio Caiada, a Portuguese trader at the court, he refused to leave resulting in his death. Silveira was secretly strangled in the morning of 15th March 1561 and his body was thrown into the Musengezi river.

NB: Some of the documents are about the disastrous military expeditions. Sebastian, a young ambitious ruler who came to the throne of Portugal in 1568 to avenge the murder of Silveira, secure gold mines, and spread the Christian faith. In 1569, a military expedition kept Lisbon under the command of Francisco Barreto.

Although the expedition was a failure, Barreto had already appointed Migueld Bernandes, a local

Portuguese trader, as his envoy to the Monomotapa and sent him to the court to present his demands for a monopoly of trade for the Portuguese. Bernandes reached the Monomotapa's Zimbabwe and had some discussions on this but was drowned on his return journey. However, the Monomotapa sent his own envoys to talk with Barreto. They

arrived in Sena while Barreto was away but brought the news that the Monomotapa accepted Barreto's request that Muslim traders should be expelled from the Kingdom and that some gold mines should be placed under The Portuguese. The Portuguese however, could not take advantage of these concessions. Barreto himself died of fever on his return to Sena from the coast and the expedition, considerably reduced in numbers withdrew to the coast without visiting the mines.

Comments on sources:

The first two chapters have taken the story up to about 1650, at least in the north and centre of

the Zimbabwe Plateau, but the account has been limited in two ways.

Archaeology is almost all that we have to rely on before 1450

The traditions concerning the north and centre from about 1450 to about 1650 have their limitations.

The archaeology gives us a good idea of the economy of the plateau even if it gives no genuine names to attach to the people of each site; the traditions, because they were so closely linked to questions of land and inheritance, give us a great number of names of people and places but very little else.

According to D.N Beach, we are fortunate because for nearly two centuries the northern and central Shona were under the direct observation of Portuguese traders and priests and official who either committed their impressions to paper or passed on to others. And, while the north and centre of the Plateau were in effect banned to Portuguese observers by the threat of Rozvi power after 1693, the eastern Shona and those of the Zambezi Valley remained under observations right up to modern times.

Moreover, because a certain number of Shona from the Plateau were accustomed to the coast on to the Zambezi, Portuguese outside the Plateau were able to pick up information from Shona informants at first hand.

NB: It is true that the Portuguese documents have their own faults and anyone who recoils from traditions because of their limitations will be disappointed if he seeks absolute accuracy in the documents. Many Portuguese writers never got closer to the Plateau than Sofala or Mozambique's, that their accounts are hearsay, and many other who went up to the Zambezi never crossed the linguistic boundary from over Zambezi, Tonga to Shona territory, while some of those did neglect to indicate which society they were referring to.

Again many Portuguese writers did not know Shona- though quite a number probably did because "they slept with Shona girls" (Beach) and even those who did had some strange mediaeval and more familiar colonial prejudices. Those who did write had a rich

assortment of biases in their accounts, depending upon what they hoped to achieve by their writing. Finally, many seem to have plagiarized the work of others, so that what looks at first sight like an independent confirmation of an earlier statement could well be a copy. As with traditions there is no easy way out of these problems; each case depends upon specific

NB: For details refer to D.N. Beach, The Shona and Zimbabwe 900-1850pp87-111.

Sources of Historical Evidence

Before any scholar can write history, there is need to know the tools or ways of collecting information to use in writing that history. Thus it is imperative that any student of history be familiar with the different ways of collecting historical evidence. Historians use a variety of sources to answer questions about the past. They use both primary and secondary sources.

Primary Sources:

These include actual records that have survived from the past, those relics and traces left by the past, such as eye -witness accounts, personal letters, official reports, artefacts, photographs, pictures and paintings.

Secondary Sources:

Include accounts of the past created by historians' writing about events well after they happened such as text books, encyclopaedia stories, drama, magazines, commentaries, journals, newspapers etc. Inside a secondary source may be found primary sources e.g textbook or news paper may also have pictures, direct quotes and personal accounts. This highlights the relationship between primary and secondary sources.

Historians have a tendency to trust primary sources as more reliable than secondary sources, but every source can be biased in some way, therefore, before using a source especially written, the historian must ask the following questions.”

Who recorded the source and why?

Was the recorder neutral or an interested party?

The historian need to question where and when the writer could have obtained the information.

African History and Historical Sources:

African history can be obtained through three main sources which are: Archaeology,

written evidence and Oral traditions. These are, however, backed by linguistics and anthropology as subjects on the art of languages and the study of living beings respectively.

Archaeology

Is the scientific study of human past antiquities usually discovered by excavations. Beach .D.N/ in 1984 asserted that archaeology relies upon studies of the environment and geography, including rainfall, vegetation maps, analysis of pottery types, samples of bones and seeds and imported goods recovered from excavation e.g claypots, clay shelters (huts) arrowheads, pots, glass beads and other relics of the past.

Advantages

It can be precise in dating as long as artefacts are found

It furnishes documents that cannot speak for themselves. Archaeology has been useful in unearthing the history of pre-colonial Zimbabwe e.g Great Zimbabwe, Mutapa, Torwa, Rozvi.

Social activities such as burial systems, pottery making, farming, religion are usually best explained using archaeology.

Disadvantages of Archaeology

The contribution of archaeology is weighed down by the fact that it neglects the political and other cultural aspects e.g it does not give information on the hierarchy of dynasties. These may, however, be obtained from oral traditions.

It does not give us names of rulers unless there are inscriptions on an artefact.

Written Evidence

This is documentary evidence. It is classified under secondary sources but inside a secondary source may be found primary sources.

Advantages

According to Tash (2000), written records are considered more reliable for they

combine in them information gathered through other sources.

They are created for a larger number of audiences and are widely distributed

Pre-colonial documents e.g Portuguese accounts of the Mutapa, Rozvi, Arab writings about Great Zimbabwe or accounts of traders and missionaries to Zimbabwe are important as the bedrock of African History but historians must be aware of the biases embedded in these documents. Portuguese accounts of central African states have played the foundation from which other sources built on.

Disadvantages of written sources

Written records, like the other discussed sources may be prone to abuse by the writer or the historian.

The writer may decide to distort information to advance one's agenda.

The writer may decide to write what he/she wants people to hear, living out what they are supposed to hear. They depend on one's objectivity and subjectivity.

The purpose for which information is written may influence the writer to be either objective or subjective

Due to these weaknesses, written records can be used together with other sources that will take care of these weaknesses.

Historical sources and the reconstruction of Zimbabwe's past

Much of the history of the pre-colonial communities that is known to us has been gathered through archaeology, oral traditions and written records. Through these sources, we are able to reconstruct the remarkably detailed political, economic and social history of Early Iron Age peoples of Zimbabwe.

Archaeology is more effective in determining the economic activities of a people. Artefacts like beads, China plates, jewellery and porcelain found at Great Zimbabwe area clear evidence of the existence of external trade while hoes, axes and spears reveal the agrarian economy of the people. Early Iron Age communities like the Ziwa, Gokomere, Mapungubwe, Musengezi Zhizo, Malipati up to Great Zimbabwe have been studied exclusively through archaeology because oral traditions could not stretch that far. The material culture of these communities e.g styles of pottery and styles of building, terracing e.g that which is evident at Ziwa reveal more about the economic activities of these people. Ziwa, is regarded as one of the earliest known Iron age sites in Zimbabwe which stretched from Nyanga mountains on the eastern frontier of Zimbabwe. A grave

has been carbon dated to about 300 AD. Ziwa pottery was already made in the 11th century. This supports that by about 300 AD the Ziwa people were already living at that area. Archaeological discoveries of bones, hill terracing pottery, is testimony to their agrarian economy. Most similar sites have been found dotted around the country. Similar to Ziwa is Gokomere, Mabveni and Zhizo communities whom archaeologists identify merely by the styles on their pottery and places they were excavated.

It is also revealed through carbon dating that Gokomere people were the first to live at Great Zimbabwe in about AD 320. Other Gokomere sites have been discovered at Mabveni near Great Zimbabwe which dated AD 180. Written records have been applauded for providing useful colonial history of African states. Pre-colonial documents most of which have been written by Portuguese traders, Swahili Arabs and early Missionaries are important as a bedrock of African History, but historians must be aware of the biases for these documents were written for various purposes,

-The Portuguese exaggerated the power of the Mutapa because they claimed the right to rule over lands that the Mutapa had given them to rule even if they knew that his state was not that big.

-The Missionaries, explorers and settlers supplemented Portuguese documentation, but were equally far from providing history as the people they write about saw, it but wrote to advance their colonial agendas.

The Interdisciplinary Approach of Historical sources.

There is no single discipline which can on its own give a complete meaningful account of the events in a country. No single explanatory system can by itself account for African societies. A variety of specialists have to be called upon to help each other in the construction of historical realities. A single source will always give a blurred image of historical reality. Do not rely on one source. Oral tradition can produce its best result if combined with other sources. Before any archaeologist starts digging, it is advisable that they first collect local tradition. Sometimes traditions differ even in the same village. Then oral tradition should precede archaeological evidence. The shortfall of oral tradition in dating and chronology can be taken care of by archaeology which uses scientific dating methods.

-The interdisciplinary approach of sources has been helpful in the reconstruction and tracing of the routes of the Bantu migrations. This was traced through by using Anthropology, linguistic, oral traditions and the written records of the Arabs.

-The combination of sources is more imperative when the problems of chronology are to be combated.

-The importance of combining sources can also be seen when one looks at the history of pre-colonial states in Zimbabwe. Written records on their own could not be relied upon especially on the construction of Great Zimbabwe. Early sources on this state were

marred by racial biases such that they needed archaeology and oral evidence to reconstruct the Zimbabwe's past. Oral traditions could also not be relied upon for they are subject to fallibility of memory because of time. Again it appeared as if before archaeological findings ascertained the builders of Great Zimbabwe, all early inhabitants of this area claimed association and descent from the magnificent structures.

-In the collection of current events like the war of liberation in Zimbabwe, It would be imperative to rely on the combination of sources because oral accounts may be faltered by exaggerations and lies especially on battles and victories. Therefore, if history is to be a correct reproduction of events, a variety of sources should be summoned together to complement each other.

Examination Type Questions

Discuss the interdisciplinary approach that is used in recovering the past.

Analyse the written sources which have been used to recover the history of Great Zimbabwe.

Assess the importance of archaeology in recovering the history of early Iron age communities.

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A Digestive Essay

Evaluate the interdisciplinary approach of Historical sources in the construction of the past.

Introduction

There is a vast expanse of human activity which has left no surviving record. The part of their past will remain irretrievably lost if historical sources like archaeology, written records and Oral traditions are used to uncover this hidden past. The utility of each historical source in uncovering the past depends on the complementary role that other sources render to address its shortcomings. This essay will focus on the interdisciplinary approach of historical sources needed in the retrieval of the hidden past.

There is no single discipline on its own which can give an account that can adequately give the intricate realities of the world. A single source always gives a blurred image of historical reality especially when one is studying a people who left no written records. Such a people's past, can only be accessed through the empirical method of archaeology. This is the study of numerous remains used by people who lived in the distant past. Styles of buildings and of pottery dug up from various levels of habitation can tell us something of the large scale movements of peoples. Items introduced from outside, such as beads and porcelain, tell us a little about trading and may also help us with dating. Artefacts like beads, china plates, jewellery and guns found at Great Zimbabwe are a clear evidence of the existence of external trade, while hoes, axes and spears reveal the agrarian economy of the people at Great Zimbabwe.

It is also through archaeology that the status of people who lived in the past can be revealed, especially those who held positions of leadership. Members of the royal family are easily identifiable by jewellery. Soldiers can also be seen buried with their arsenal and regalia. One major advantage of archaeology is that it can give dates that may assist in the organisation of events into chronological occurrence. It gives economic information on those communities that owned property. It needs written records and oral tradition's assistance on the political organisation of states. Neither does archaeology have the ability to reveal a language that people used. In this case it should be supported by other historical sources.

In each given case there is a key source which acts as a foundation to which other sources will come and probe. In the recovery of Iron age states of Africa, archaeology has been used as a foundation source to support or refute the written records by early European merchants like Joao de Barros whose writings have been used to describe the geographical location of Great Zimbabwe state.

Most written records on Shona states are recorded from Portuguese accounts of those who traded with the interior in the 15th century. They recorded their contacts and dealings with Shona chiefs but their accounts give an exclusively Portuguese point of view which may not be satisfactory rather to understanding of the past. Missionaries, explorers and traders supplemented Portuguese documentation, but were equally far from providing history as the people they write about saw it, but wrote to advance their colonial agendas. This explains that written records though they are more credited with accuracy, they may be influenced by the purpose for which information is written. The writer may decide to be objective or subjective. The writer may decide to write what he/she wants people to hear, living out to what they are supposed to hear. The writer may decide to distort

information to advance one's own agenda. In the light of these weaknesses, written records can be used together with archaeology and oral tradition to substantiate the written evidence.

Oral tradition is the third source of information which historians use to obtain the invaluable Shona, point of view. The source can assist in bringing chronological narrations of events, people's names and religious beliefs. It gives the historian information about how events took place, names of leaders, narrations of wars and migrations. However, the kind of information oral tradition can yield should be cautiously treated and may never be regarded as history in the absence of other sources. It has a number of features which makes it unreliable for the elucidation of factual history.

Oral traditions are normally recounted for a specific purpose and survive only as long as people continue to maintain an interest in the subject. Informants tend to recite only those aspects of their oral tradition which serve their own purpose. People select and recount those events which suit their particular interest and even twist and distort them. Oral tradition tends to telescope history especially when it comes to genealogies, some unimportant people and their generations tend to get left out, as well as people who are not important to the narrator. People have also a tendency to exaggerate information especially on victories and heroic events. They tend to tell lies to deify themselves or venerate their heroes at the expense of historical truth. The fact that it depends on memory implies that important facts can be lost on the way or distorted as it passes from one generation to the next.

In spite of all these limitations, oral tradition has proved to be a remarkable source when tracing the growth and fragmentation of various powerful states which had political and economic influence. This means that, oral tradition as a source cannot be out rightly discredited since it raises questions which other disciplines like archaeology and written sources can answer. The knowledge of societies and cities can only be substantiated when it is in written records and is supported by archaeology and oral tradition. These sources are equally important in filling each other's gap. Historians do not rely on a single source to gather historical reality for it will be regarded as incomplete and unauthentic. Historical sources should always play an interdisciplinary role as they complement each other.

THE MUTAPA STATE

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

After studying this chapter students should be able to

Account for the rise of the Mutapa state.

Discuss the political, economic and social organisation of the Mutapa state.

Evaluate the contribution of the Portuguese activities on the fall of Mutapa state.

The rise of Mutapa state

The precise story of how the Mutapa state was founded remains obscure; what archaeology managed to prove is that the culture associated with the Great Zimbabwe civilisation spread far beyond the vicinity of the ruins. Recorded oral traditions by Portuguese writers like Alcacova 1506 and Dos Santos 1609, and traditions by travellers such as Abraham Alpers suggest that the state of Mutapa came into existence around 1200 AD and that it was an offshoot of Great Zimbabwe submitted by Beach (1984). This leaves historians in controversy over the concept of time when this state came into existence. Mudenge (1984) asserted that towards the end of 15th century, Great Zimbabwe began to be abandoned. Power shifted southwards under the Mwenemutapa rulers. The first Mutapa was Nyatsimba Mutota whose son is credited with the expansion of the state, and transfer of the capital from the Great Zimbabwe to Chitako hills. The implication for this debate and variance on the foundation of Mutapa state may be that at one time Great Zimbabwe and the Mutapa state existed alongside each other as separate states. Proctor and Phimister (1991) substantiated this probability by stating that the decline of Great Zimbabwe coincided with the rise of Mutapa and Torwa states in the 15th century. These writers argue that the Torwa and Mutapa may have been tributary states at one time, but were fully independent by 1400. These writers continue to reveal that the Mutapa and the Torwa states copied much of the ruling class culture from Great Zimbabwe, engaged in foreign trade and were probably equal to their predecessor in both power and size. However, it is worth mentioning that of all these three states, the Mutapa state survived much longer into the early twentieth century. At its final demise, it is said to have been ruled by over 40 Mwene Mutapas.

After 1490, Portuguese sources have been used to reconstruct the Mutapa history. Before that, oral traditions have been used, but these also are not reliable and clear as different versions on the rise of Mutapa state have been presented. Oral tradition gives two different versions of the rise of the Mutapa. One is that of a conquering army from the Great Zimbabwe state under Prince Mutota swinging through Shangwe into Dande in search of salt. This salt tradition has been passed from one generation to the next, which try to explain why Nyatsimba Mutota moved from Great Zimbabwe to Dande.

Salt Theory:

It has been accounted by oral tradition that Nyakatonje who lived in Dande was a friend

of Prince Mutota. He visited his friend Mutota at Guruuswa taking with him some salt. When he arrived at Guruuswa Mutota killed an ox to welcome his friend. Nyakatonje added salt to his cooked portion of meat. He gave Mutota salted meat to taste, who later asked where the commodity was found. Oral tradition says that Mutota went with Nyakatonje to the land of salt. This theory therefore suggests that the scarcity of salt at Great Zimbabwe and its availability in Mbire caused Mutota and his followers to migrate to Dande. This theory however falls short when it fails to explain why Mutota never chose to settle in Gokwe, or why he ignored the richer and more plentiful salt depositions of the Save river valley. Raf-topoulos and Mlambo (2008) dismiss the salt theory as a paramount reason for the movement of Mutota to the north. Mashingaidze (1990) have come to a conclusion that the so called 'salt' may have indicated a general shortage in food supplies, pastures, fuel and other resources that disrupted people's way of life. The second version provided by oral tradition is more dramatic. This version talks of the rise and expansion of the Mutapa state as a much slower process of infiltration of the Dande-Chidima and Shangwe regions by a small Karanga group led by a military man called Mutota. This is recorded as the Infiltration theory and it asserts that Karanga hunters, refugees and adventurers from the South came to be interested in Moslem traders coming from the newly established sultanate of Angoche who used the Zambezi trade route into the interior of Zimbabwe instead of the traditional Sofala overland route. The theory goes on to explain that the Karanga strangers made friendship concessions with people in the valley for them to be accepted. It is this theory again which talks of Mutota, originally of Moyo totem as being believed to have changed his totem to Nzou Samanyanga after defeating the Tavara and the Korekore. This was meant to cement the relationship between the vanquished and their ruler.

Expansionist Theory

This theory is closely linked to the infiltration theory. It attributes the expansion and rise of Mutapa to statehood to Mutota's military genius. His insatiable ambition to create a bigger state for himself made him move to the north where he conquered and subjugated the Korekore. Nyatsimba Mutota seems to have consolidated his power by taking advantage of the decentralised nature of northern Tavara and Tonga groups. Mutota is believed to have placed many tribes under his authority. He forced their chiefs to submit to him and sometimes appointed his relatives to rule over the conquered area. This theory explains that after Mutota defeated the Tonga and the Tavara, they gave him a praise name 'Mwenemutapa' which later became a dynasty title for his successors. However, the Matope Mhondoro claim that the appellation, Munhumutapa, was first applied to Matope, but since these claims are made by oral traditions, some are factually incorrect.

Succession Theory

The rise of Mutapa state is attributed to civil wars caused by succession dispute at Great Zimbabwe. Those who subscribe to this theory substantiate it by claiming that a civil war erupted over succession to the rulership of the Great Zimbabwe state between Nyatsimba Mutota and Torwa. This succession theory goes on to assert that Nyatsimba Mutota was defeated and driven to the Zambezi valley where he established himself as a new regional

paramount. Torwa drifted to the west and established himself at Khami in present day Matabeleland. It is this theory which asserts that the Torwa and the Mutapa states are offshoots of Great Zimbabwe.

Cattle Theory

It is said that at Great Zimbabwe the population for humans and live stock had grown. In Dande there were rumours of abundant grazing pastures and fertile alluvial soils suitable land for agriculture. The Mutapa people being agrarian in nature needed fertile land for agriculture and grazing land for domestic animals. Cattle theorists asserted that Mutota and his people moved to Dande mainly for pastures as cattle had a significant economic and social position to the Shona people. This may explain why the Shona never considered the dangerous tsetse flies that infested the Zambezi valley. Cattle were valued as a symbol of wealth as well as ideal for ritual purposes, but cattle alone cannot have led to the movement of people to the north.

Trade Theory

The opening up of new trade routes in the north suffocated the Save river which was already silted. International trade in gold had shifted from Great Zimbabwe to the north where Portuguese brought in relatively cheaper goods as compared to their Arab rivals at Great Zimbabwe. Trade centres like Sofala, Sena, and Tete became important collecting centres on the Zambezi. It is suggested by subscribers of this theory that the availability of items of trade like gold which was mainly extracted from river banks of Ruya and Mazowe as well as salt and Ivory attracted the Karanga who originally lived at Great Zimbabwe to the Zambezi valley. Nyatsimba Mutota is said to have moved to Dande so that he would monopolise both internal and external trade. The extent to which the Mutapa monopolised trade shall be discussed later in this chapter.

Political Organisation of the Mutapa State

The ruler of Mutapa was known as “Mwenemutapa.” This became a dynasty title for the kings who came after Nyatsimba Mutota. All senior chiefs traced their descent from Mutota. A distinction was maintained between the ruling Karanga lineages and those of the common people. The King was very much respected and had absolute powers. A Mutapa ruler lived at a royal court often referred to as his ‘Dzimbabwe.’ The royal court contained many officials who helped in the organisation of the Kingdom and appropriate ceremonies. There were religious figures in charge of the organisation of rituals, and musicians, cooks, court chancellors, a military commander, court chamberlain to give advice to the King. The king’s mother and the senior wife played some important roles in the state affairs. There were other officials to supervise all foreign trade, to collect taxes, to gather information for the ruler from subschiefs and state officials. A spy network system was maintained. The King knew about everything that went on in the state and it was difficult for any chief to defy authority. Total allegiance to the King was always emphasised.

Social life of the Mutapa People.

The Shona people believed in a high god, the supreme being, Mwari, whom they approached through Vadzimu, spirits of the dead ancestors. They believed that God was too sacred and supreme to be approached directly. The people venerated the Mutapa because he had the closest access to the medium of Midzimu spirits of his ancestors.

The King respected the spirit mediums and sought advice on political and religious matters. He was linked to the spirit world through these mediums because it was believed that upon his death the King would become a Mhondoro. There are such Mhondoros in Dande like the Mhondoro of Mutota and Matope who in their lifetime were great Mutapa Kings. This shows that religion and politics were interlinked. Religion was used as a unifying force. If the king was rejected by the ancestral spirits, that meant ultimate rejection by the people. The Mutapa did not consult the spirits of ordinary people, but those of superior spirit mediums. This indicates that although the Kings of Mutapa commanded great respect from the people, they were not divine in terms of the Shona religion, the respect they yielded on ceremonies was basically political and not religious.

Like all rulers, the Mutapa rulers' power depended upon their ability to subdue their subjects and those who defied them. As a result they maintained a small force that was at hand at any given moment. This small force was headed by a military commander who reported directly to the king about military expeditions to be undertaken or that would have been undertaken.

The King also played a role in military affairs. As a security measure, military ranks were conferred to either members of the royal family or those related to the King through marriage. The main duty of the army was to collect tribute and control the tributary chiefdoms of the provinces of Barwe, Manyika, Madanda, Teve, Chikova, Chidima etc. In time of war, the welfare of the state army was catered for by the King from the levies raised from the rest of the land.

The Economic life of the Mutapa

The economic activities of the Mutapa state were anchored in the four branches of production namely, farming, animal husbandry, mining and trade. The Shona people grew small grain cereals like millet, sorghum and rapoko. Maize and beans were introduced later by the Portuguese. They also grew cow peas, pumpkins, water melons, and groundnuts. Cereals were used as items of exchange at local level. They traded with the Hungwe people for Iron tools and tobacco. Farmers commanded a high position in the state and were respected. Those farmers referred to as 'hurudza' could marry as many wives as they could afford, using their farm produce to pay lobola.

The ordinary people produced all the food and valuable trade goods for the royal family. Part of their crops and cattle were used for the payment of tribute to the king, each tributary ruler paid according to what the land produced. Cattle was valued in the state for it symbolised wealth and status. The more cattle one had, the richer the person was regarded. Cattle had numerous purposes some of which included payment of tribute as mentioned earlier on, used by the king to reward his officials for their loyalty, payment of lobola and could be used for ritual purposes. People who mined gold and Ivory hunters

for the King were rewarded with cattle. Hunting was done by men. They hunted big game for hides and ivory. Lions and leopards were hunted by brave men for their hides that were worn by chiefs. The regalia of the Mutapa changed into imported cloth as the influence of trade with the Muslims and Portuguese took root in the state.

Portuguese Activities in the Mutapa State:

From as early as 1505 the Mutapa state was exposed to merchant capitalism. Capitalism is an economic system whose main characteristic is private ownership of property for profit. It also entails private production of goods, but also for profit.

The Portuguese came into contact with the Mutapa after several attacks and conflicts with the Swahili traders. Vasco da Gama on his way to India attacked the Swahili settlements in 1498. In 1502 Almedia plundered the coastal settlement of the Swahili Arabs and made an attempt to take over the Swahili trade with the Africans. One thing that attracted the Portuguese who visited the interior was the amount of ivory and gold that the Swahili obtained from the Zambezi area. They worked out strategies to take control of this trade and the inevitable strategy was to expel the Swahili traders and replace them without upsetting their trade relations with the Shona. In order to satisfy the African demand the Portuguese brought in beads, fabrics, seashells, guns and other items that the Swahili sold to the Africans. This demonstrates that the initial aim of the Portuguese in the Mutapa was trade in gold and ivory. They had no intention of meddling in the politics of the region or of interfering with the land system in any way. The other aim of the Portuguese was to convert the local Africans to Christianity as a way of keeping them away from Muslim influence. Lastly they wanted to establish friendly relations with the Mutapa rulers and establish an alliance with him as an equal of the Portuguese King. This is why some Mutapas who got baptised were christened after Portuguese kings such as Sabastine. However, it was difficult for Portuguese to satisfy these aims as they met stiff resistance from the Swahili who could not be easily pushed out. This might be used to explain why Portuguese used force to push their way into the interior to take control of the areas that produced gold and silver.

Barreto Expedition:1569-73

When father Gonzalo da Silveira was assassinated, the Portuguese found an excuse to invade the Mutapa state. Barreto and his men attempted to invade the Mutapa from 1569-73. This group was decimated by malaria and the leader, Barreto himself, was one of its victims. As a result, the Portuguese venture was a failure. Reasons for this failure can be explained in terms of both internal and external factors. The Barreto expedition suffered from Malaria which by that time had no cure. Several soldiers died. Their horses died of nagana caused by tsetseflies. To make matters worse, the Portuguese did not know the area where they wanted to attack and were not used to mountainous terrain of the Mutapa state. The ambition to attack, the Mutapa state was too demanding on a poor country like Portugal, especially when one considers that Portugal wanted to exploit resources of India, develop Congo, exploit the resources of Mutapa and at the same time

controlling Brazil.

Although the invasion of Mutapa was not a success, its effects should never be underestimated. The invasion was purely imperialist. They pushed their way into the interior and established trading centres Sena, Tete and Zumbo which became major trade centres under the Portuguese control. Payment of *curva* to the Mwenemutapas was ignored. In turn, the Portuguese demanded tax from puppet Mwenemutapas as payment for ousting legitimate Mwene Mutapas. Such puppet leaders like Gatsi Rusere and Mavhura Mhande gave away land and mines to the Portuguese in exchange for military assistance in times of disputes. As a result of this influence the Portuguese became lawless, and interfered openly into the political affairs of the Mutapa state. The Mutapa Mavhura Philip became a vassal of the Portuguese. Portuguese merchants enslaved large numbers of Africans and exploiting them especially through the credit system which the Portuguese introduced. The Portuguese exploitation on Africans was best described by Pedro de Resende in 1635 when he reported that Africans walked very long distances carrying heavy trade items into the interior and barter for gold and ivory, returning with bartered items faithfully to the Portuguese merchants for no or little reward. A number of Portuguese traders settled permanently at some of these established market centres. Some bought large land concessions from the Mwenemutapa. Others who helped the ruler to put down rebellions were granted land as a reward. In this respect, many Portuguese settlers owned vast estates and owned many African slaves. Several of these Portuguese settlers became unscrupulous and caused trouble to other Portuguese traders and to the Mwenemutapa, resulting in episodes of violence.

It is however important to point out that the activities of the Portuguese in the interior were detrimental to the survival of the state. The Portuguese became lawless and removed from power, Mwenemutapas that threatened their existence in the state. Prazo owners established small armies that were used to destabilise the Mutapa state especially when it came to land grabbing. In the face of Portuguese political interference, the Mwenemutapa's power and authority was reduced. The Portuguese power finally eclipsed in 1698 by the reestablishment of Arab power by the Sultan of Oman, who secured control of the Persian gulf and the east coast towns. It was at this same time that the Mutapa state was invaded by the Rozvi under Changamire. He destroyed Portuguese forts in Mashonaland and drove the settlers as far as Sena and Tete. They extended far in land as Rozvi attacks continued. The greater part of the Mutapa state was put under the Rozvi control. By 1855, the state of Mutapa controlled only two provinces of Dande and Chidima.

The expansion of the activities of the Portuguese into the Mutapa politics directly shoves blame on these intruders for inevitably causing the state's decline. It is however imperative to point out that the Mutapa state which the Portuguese dealt with was no longer the original state that Mutota and Matope had founded. The Portuguese did not find a vast Mutapa state in existence. At the time of Portuguese arrival in the interior, the Mutapa state had been split. A greater part was ruled by the Rozvi Mambos. These had taken advantage of the fact that Nyahuma, Matope's son was too young and inexperienced in state politics. The Rozvi mambos took control of provinces of Guruuswa

and Mbire. In 1490, Changa and Togwa broke away from the Mutapa state. After Nyahuma was killed by Changa, his son Chikuyo Chisamarengu became the king in about 1494, but he did not recover full control of the whole empire. Most of Guruuswa and Mbire was claimed by Changa's son and successor. He later on took over Muteve and Madanda. The Mwenemutapa state which the Portuguese found had been greatly reduced in both size and power. The young and inexperienced Mwene Mutapas who came after Matope were not able to control a vast state that Matope had established. The Communication system in the state was not very efficient to the extent that it took a long time for the Mwenemutapas to punish vassal chiefs who did not pay tribute or who broke away (rebelled) from the Mwenemutapa state. In this respect, one is tempted to conclude that the Portuguese interference in the politics of the Mutapa state speeded the decline of the state which already had a cracking authority and a shaking political and economic base. This therefore means that the decline of Mutapa state can be explained in terms of both internal and external factors.

Overview of the Prazo system and its effects.

The Prazo system dated back to the last quarter of the 15th century, but it was this time (17th century) that it became firmly rooted, and it was in this time that many of the most famous figures of prazo-holder society of the 17th century arose. Other examples include Sisnando Dias Bayao and Antonio Lobo da Silva who held vast lands and made vast conquests in Shona society with their African armies.

The Portuguese government was making elaborate plans for the exploitation of the Mutapa state, but it was the prazo-holders who carried out the exploitation in practice. The prazeros spread out across the country pulling up fortified stockades as bases for their armies. It was at this time that the construction of feiras reached its greatest extent with these strongholds of trade and warfare being built well beyond the borders of the Mutapa state, on the Angwa and Umfuli rivers. They fought the Shona rulers, took their cattle and enslaved their people. They took as many mines as possible and although the mines were not suited for intensive working, they did succeed in boosting their output in the first half of the 17th century, an increase that probably accelerated what was, in any case, an inevitable exhaustion of the surface deposits.

Their methods were often deadly, that whole areas were said to have been de-populated, and rulers did their best to conceal the presence of gold for fear of the consequences if the Portuguese should learn of it. Moreover the Portuguese fought amongst themselves, causing further unrest, for example, the well known Rimuka conflict. They also encroached in the cloth trade that had previously been carried out by the rulers.

Some of these prazeros obtained their grants from the Mutapa himself, others seized them directly, but in both cases the effect was the creation of political units. Some of these, actually, attracted followers from old Shona dynasties, and this was a major cause of dissatisfaction with the Mutapa on the part of sub-rulers or chiefs.

One such new dynasty seems to have been the first: Nyachuru dynasty, which ruled the land around the feira of Dambarare towards the end of the 17th century. It is against this

background that we must see the political struggles of the Mutapa state. In 1631 the oppression of the Portuguese provoked a major revolt in the state led by the rightful Mutapa Kapararidze, and this spread to other areas affected by the Portuguese, Manyika and the lower Zambezi Valley. This revolt was suppressed quickly, but Kapararidze took refuge in the Marave territory across the river, and remained a constant threat to Mavura.

To some extent Mavura the new Mutapa followed the usual policies of the Mutapa rulers: e.g he was reluctant to allow further concessions to the Portuguese at Chikova and he did his best to get some sort of an equivalence to the *curva*, even if he had to buy it himself but he was a Portuguese puppet.

The Portuguese either ignored his complaints about the erosion of his authority, or did nothing effective. He frequently called for military aid from them, and it was in his reign that the old capital was burned and his court took up a mobile existence. It was during his time, too, that the land of Bedza in the Zambezi valley assumed a greater importance and some of the stone buildings there may date from his reign.

Mavura died in 1652, and was succeeded by his son, probably the man identified in traditions as Siti Kazurukamusapa. Like his father, he allied himself to the Dominicans and appears to have used the occasion of his baptisms as Domingos as a test of the loyalty of his supporters. He needed such a test, for in 1654 he faced a rebellion by his brother, which was put down only with Portuguese help. But by this time the Mutapa state had reached almost the lowest point of its frothiness. In 1663 the prazeros rose against the ruler and he was killed, either by his own followers or burned alive by the Portuguese. Supported by the Dominicans and the Captain of Dambarare, and backed by a force from Mozambique. Motuta Cupica, became Mutapa, known to the Portuguese as Alfonso and was roughly equivalent to the Mukombwe of the Mutapa tradition.

The “Mukombwe” Era: Revival of the Mutapa state, 1663-1704.

Background:

Historians are not in agreement on the really identity of the “Mukombwe” figure. According to Ian Phimister, Mukombwe, who became Mutapa in 1663 was Mavura’s son and ruled until 1692. He helped re-uniting the chiefs and people of Mutapa. With his new allies, he took control of the highveld and rebuilt the capital of the state there. He rejected Christianity, and in some Mutapa traditions he is remembered as being almost as important as Mutota and Matope.

According to D.N. Beach, “Mukombwe.” was a mythical figure just as Mutota and Matope could have been according to traditions. The Mukombwe figure is linked to a “Mutata Cupica, who became Mutapa through the assistance of Dominicans and the Captain of Dambarare, and backed by a force from Mozambique. As shown in chapter 9, he was known to the Portuguese as Alfonso. Beach claims that Mukombwe, historically, seems to have been the “Alfonso” the brother of Mavura who was ruling by 1663 and who ruled until at least the early 1680s, maybe as late as the early 1690s.

The damage done to the Mutapa state up to 1663 was too great for it to be restored to its old condition. Portuguese power in the Mutapa state caused great suffering to sub-rulers (chiefs) and ordinary people alike. During the period 1663-1704, (the years of the Mukombwe figure) and his elder sons, the state was re-built into the form in which it had to continue substantially unaltered for a further one and half centuries. The revival of the Mutapa state involved the gradual decline of Mukaranga, with its valuable, well-watered grazing and arable land, and what was left of its gold resources. The essentially low-land state of the post-Mukombwe period remarkably remained more or less intact in territory for so long, and also have survived uncessant civil wars between Mukombwe's descendants. The fact that Mukombwe's descendants monopolized all political positions within the dynasty from his reign onwards is also a measure of the importance of this period.

When Mukombwe rose to power, the state was in rapid decline as shown above. The murder of his predecessor taught him a lesson. He was originally backed by the Portuguese, but by 1667 he was showing that he was "crafty and cunning" and by 1683 he was recognized as "the most intelligent and capable Prince so far in that throne." He went some way towards reviving the state and gradually assumed an anti-Portuguese stance, but it must be noted that the Prazeros were mainly driven out by the man of the state itself.

By 1667 Marvel Barreto reported widespread de-population, partly due to plagues of locusts, and to the Mutapa and Portuguese civil wars, but mostly due to the conduct of the Portuguese themselves. The Shona people and their rulers were reluctant to supply gold for the benefit of the Portuguese and this resulted in depressing the entire mining economy, which required reasonably settled conditions in which to function. Plagues further reduced the population in the 1670s, and it seems that even though the influence of the Portuguese in the state was out of all proportion to their numbers, there was a definite decrease in the Portuguese presence in the 1670s and 1680s.

In 1678, the Portuguese population of the major centre of Dambarare had fallen to nothing. Three years later there were only 5 Portuguese in the centre of the state and another 26 at Tete and Chikova. It seems that the very destruction caused by the Portuguese had made it unprofitable for them to stay. The long-term plans of the Portuguese, as usual, involved conquest, but as often happened, the effect of these plans was dissipated by Portugal's overall weakness in the Indian Ocean. Still, at the end of the 1680s there was a slight revival of Portuguese penetration in and around the state, and more trading posts' (feiras) were reoccupied or opened up.

Mukombwe's response:

His response was determined by his initial weakness. Mukombwe could not do without some Portuguese contacts. His situation was different from the ruler of the Ngezi ruler of Rimuka, who after the civil wars between the Portuguese stopped exporting gold and excluded the traders completely. Apart from the commerce involved, he also relied on them for support against his rivals. Mutapa territory was much larger, and the system of

government was more elaborate. Thus it required, or depended on imported goods.

As a result, when in 1678, he was informed that there was an intention to settle much of his state to settlers from Europe, he or his interpreters, expressed content and sent gold as a present to Lisbon whilst he was actually working in another direction. By 1667 his influence had reached into Tonga country beyond the Ruenga. The Portuguese had ruled for nearly a century, and when the Tonga rose against their rulers they looked to Mukombwe as their superior. This Tonga resistance against the Portuguese was only put down with severity in 1672.

The real test of Mukombwe's attitudes towards the Portuguese, however, concerned the Mutapa state proper. In 1673 yet another rumour of silver deposits in the Chikova region aroused Portuguese interest. As it usually was in Zambezi politics, the situation was complicated, with various divisions between the Portuguese government and the Prazeros, and between the sub-rulers of Chikova and their Mutapa overlord. Jao de Sounga Freire the Captain General began to prepare for war in April, noting as he did so, that "in as much as the King deserves punishment, so do those of our people who are to blame for such great ruin."

Mukombwe responded immediately and in some way revolutionarily: thus, "infracted by the unruly behavior of the moradores" he killed six of them and declared war in his state, and at the same time he took the unprecedented step of appealing to another ruler for aid.

Whereas his predecessor in the 1570s had been content to see Homen's army move off towards Teve and Manyika, and whereas the 1631 rising appeared to have been uncoordinated, rebellions of the Mukaranga, Manyika and lower Zambezi rulers and their people, Mukombwe in 1673 deliberately appealed to the Chikanga ruler of Manyika for support. By July the captain of Manyika had reported that: "The Chikanga and other rulers in the area of that feira were getting people to help the Emperor (Mukombwe) a very unexpected resolution because they have not supported the Emperor for a long time, but the fact is that they all have reason to want us out of these Rivers and there is no doubt that our injustices have caused us to be in this predicament. Because of lack of government..."

The 1673 Mutapa-Manyika war against the Portuguese did not achieve a great deal, and by 1676 a force (Goa) had been sent to suppress the Shona, but it was important because it showed how far Mukombwe had progressed in only ten years. By 1675 he was being regarded with distrust and suspicion by the Portuguese, and not surprising, in 1678 he pointedly failed to acknowledge himself as a vassal of the King of Portugal. By 1682 the prazos were threatened with war by the Mutapa and it is possible that in the late 1660s, Mukombwe was encouraging the Tonga near Sena to rebel. Clearly, between the 1660s and 1680s the balance of power between the Mutapa and the Portuguese had altered although not reversed in favour of the Mutapa.

Politics in the Mukombwe era:

The Mukombwe appeared to have stabilised the state. Kapararidze who had been an undesirable shadow in the Mavura era was not heard of any more. In the 1660s the Capital was still in the Zambezi Valley where Gatsi Rusere and Mavura had taken refuge during their civil wars. Mukombwe was able to re-established himself in Mukaranga.

Break in the Mukombwe reign

One Portuguese document of 1679 showed that Mavura, also named Phelipe, supported by the great Prazero, Antonio Lobo da Silva, was ruling Mutapa. If the document is valid, it implies that Mukombwe was briefly ejected from his capital by yet another Portuguese-backed claimant, only to make a come-back to power in 1683-. The danger of civil war remained, however, and by the late 1680s the house of Gocha had become dangerously powerful. In 1687 the Gocha ruler went into rebellion, and by the 1690s he was excused from attendance at the annual “Mando” (Choto) ceremony “owing to his own greatness.

The Death of Mukombwe and the rise of Nyakunembire.

Although Mukombwe’s son Pedro Mhande had hoped to rule, the throne was taken by Nyakunembire. Pedro had been regarded as heir-apparent by the Portuguese during Mukombwe’s reign, but he lacked support among the people as a whole, and the Portuguese did not try to support him. This implies that Nyakunembire was not a usurper, and that there was no real difference of policy between him and his brother Mukombwe. He was a legitimate Mutapa.

Mukombwe’s main achievements:

1. Re-settlement of Mutapa ‘state’ set up a central area with new dynasties. This is shown by documents on the Mutapa state which portrays a picture of a partial de-population during his reign. Oral tradition also tells of groups which claimed origins in the area affected by the Portuguese and which moved to the south, for example, Chimoto or Mapungwana ‘Mbizi’ dynasty. It is said to have entered the southern-eastern highlands in the mid-seventeenth century from the Rimuka area that had been affected by the wars between Prazeros.

Another group that claimed to have passed through, or near Rimuka, was that of the Shiri dynasties of Tonga descent led by Chasura and Chirwa. These later on settled on the upper Devure and Nyazvidzi south and west of Buhera, by mid-eighteenth century etc. This shows the extent of de-population, but the Portuguese exaggerated the issue. Groups could have moved out of the area temporarily

2. **Land grants by Mukombwe to different dynasties:**

The lands which he was allocating on such a generous scale belonged to rival houses and their followers, so that in effect they were being deprived of the economic basis for a successful revolt against him. All those who received land from him were members of dynasties other than the Mutapa. These owed their

land to him, so they could not support any rival. Although these dynasties became independent later, this was a result of a gradual process of economic weakening of the state during 18th century. A view was submitted by Professor Beach that:

NB: Given the nature of the traditions about Mukombwe, these movements may very well have occurred in the reigns of Mukombwe's sons. In one of the cases, it was said that it was the Mhondoro spirit of Mukombwe, rather than the man, who allocated land to one group. Some land grants by Mukombwe may have been made to his relatives, but if that was the case, maybe they were forced to hide the fact. (D.N. Beach)

The land of Romba on the middle Ruya had been under the Nyamakaranga dynasty in the first half of the century, but Mukombwe gave it to the Magarenehwe Tembo line. May be as stated at the beginning of the topic :Mukombwe" of this tradition could have been one of a number of historical persons, and it is noticeable that Gupo, a son or grandson of Mukombwe was said to have allocated the dynasty's official head-dress and this line could have been a branch of the main Mutapa dynasty that changed the meaning of its totem rather than the totem itself.

West of Masapa and Mount Fura the land of Bvuma went to the "Soko/Murehwa Madziwa dynasty. Soko/Murehwa totems were fairly common in the north of the plateau and there is no suggestion that the Madziva dynasty came from outside the state, except as part of the original Karanga movement from "Guruswa."

The same was true of the Nembire "Soko/Vudzijena" house that was given the Gore or Mbire II area on the upper Ruya, not far from the Zvogombe Zimbabwe. The history of this group has been confused by the fact that it gave rise to much larger and more famous "Svosve Soko/Vudzijena-Mhondizvo dynasty Mbire III in the centre of the Southern Zambezi Plateau. It appears in fact to have been a part of the original "Guruuswa." Movement, possibly associated with "Soko Chingowo" dynasty of Guruuswa across the Umvukwe range, but which had a minor status until Mukombwe granted it land.

NB: Generally the traditions of Mukombwe as the "goveranyika" (land giver) agree with what is known of the situation in the late seventeenth century. If these land grants mentioned above probably involved dynasties which already belonged to the Mutapa state, and which simply gained greater autonomy, there is strong evidence that the Mukombwe figure made use of sizeable immigration of the following peoples from outside the state:

- a) Shumba dynasties from Budya,
- b) Shumba/Nechinanga Nematombo dynasty,
- c) Mbare Shumba/gurundoro.

Of the three Shumba dynasties that moved into the Mutapa state, (the Northern), was mostly the Shumba/Nechinanga group that was allocated the territory of Wedza by

Mukombwe, resulting in them gaining the title of Nowedza.

The revival of the Changamire dynasty in relation to the Mutapa dynasty had last been heard in the 1550s when it was defeated by a Shona-Portuguese alliance. This was after it tried to take over the state itself in 1490s.

Examination Type Questions

Trace the origin and expansion of the Mutapa state.

Discuss the political developments in the Mutapa state during the 16th and 17th centuries. Why did the state nearly collapse in the 17th Century?

Assess the impact of Portuguese activities in the Mutapa state from the middle of the 16th century to 1890.

Describe and explain the origins of the Mutapa state.

Account for the internal organisation of the Mutapa state.

What contributed more to the fall of the Mutapa state: internal or external factors?

“Agriculture was more important than foreign trade to the economy of the Mutapa state”. Do you agree?

Discuss the assertion that Zimbabwe’s pre-colonial past cannot be collected by reference to only one source.

- 6) “Portuguese records provide the basis of our understanding of the Mutapa Empire”. Discuss
the validity of his assertion
- 7) Why is it important to use different sources when studying Zimbabwe’s pre-colonial
history?

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THE TORWA STATE: BEFORE 1650

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES:

After studying this chapter students should be able to

- a) Describe various sources used to recollect the history of the Torwa.
- b) Account for the rise of the Torwa
- c) Examine the contribution of the Torwa on the rise of the Rozvi Empire.

Background

Although the Torwa state was successor to the Great Zimbabwe State, it equally poses some problems which require urgent attention. The geographical locations of the state is known, together with its economy architecture and its material culture. Its relations with the Mutapa are also known.

Problems

Nothing is known about the internal history of the Torwa. It is even not clear whether “Torwa” (alien, foreigners, stranger) was the real title of its ruling dynasty or not.

Only a few families can be positively identified as having been members of the ruling class of the Torwa State. The families identified failed to provide reliable traditions of the Torwa state period. Reasons for lack of information:

In the southern end of the plateau, five state systems have succeeded each other – i.e

1. The Zimbabwe culture – within the 14th and 15th centuries reached into the west to build a number of Zimbabwe.
2. The Torwa state based on Khami South Western successor of Zimbabwe Culture 15th and 17th centuries
3. The Changamire Rozvi which took over the Torwa state and culture in the late 17th century and survived well into the 19th century.
4. The forth state was that of the Ndebele, which took over the existing Rozvi but added a very considerable increase of population and consequently was able to impose a new language and culture.
5. The Rhodesians who not only destroyed the Ndebele state but forced major movements of the population, which incidentally did much to destroy traditions in that area of the pre-Ndebele past.

It is therefore clear why very little information is known about South West of the Plateau- and maybe about the Torwa.

Sources of information on the Torwa/Khami culture

Archaeology/Traditions/Documents

Earlier chapters clearly showed that at the peak of the Zimbabwe culture, communities of the Zimbabwe culture moved west to settle in the mountains marking the south of the plateau and of the south-west part of the plateau itself.

Outlying Zimbabwe such as Umtwate Chimnunga and Mtoli were built and this expansion of the Zimbabwe culture westwards was probably as important as the much better known expansion to the work of the plateau. However, the most significant cultural development in the west took place as Great Zimbabwe was declining.

When the Great Zimbabwe state ceased to be a major centre, the focal point of its culture shifted to the west. We do not have facts to prove that the rulers of the Great Zimbabwe led this movement, or whether some of the ruling group broke to establish a new centre leaving the old ruler to live in a rapidly diminishing state. It is also possible that a western provincial leader established his independence and became the focus of new development.

According to Archaeology Great Zimbabwe ceased to be a major centre by about 1500. No definite terminal date is known. Sterile deposits on the hill show that this part of the complex at least was abandoned completely, while at the same time the presence of two shreds of blue- and- white ash in unsatisfied deposit confirm that the site was at least visited later.

The culture that emerged in the west at the time of Zimbabwe's fall was in every way the time heir to Great Zimbabwe, much more so than that of the Karanga in the north, but it is not enough to reproduce the features of the old centre. The new culture that was founded at Khami developed the stone work styles of Great Zimbabwe in a new way.

The same principle of using naturally breaking granite was used but, it was applied to the construction of daga-covered stone platforms on hilltop sites. Huts were then built on the platforms. Added to the old technique of stone building was a new insistence on decoration and a search for new patterns. The specialized pottery of Great Zimbabwe was developed in both style and decoration.

A feature of some of the new buildings was covered passages that may have developed out of the succession of outer walls of the Valley buildings at Zimbabwe, which eventually produced cancelled passages, or exit out of the natural features of the ascent of the hill building above.

The most outstanding and earliest of the new culture's centres was Khami. This was built some time after a date of about 1410 and included old posts dated at about 1370 and 1430. It is not clear when it was built but, it is logical that such a large building so similar to Zimbabwe would have been built relatively soon after the establishment of the Khami's culture. It is suggested that Khami was not built until 1700 which leaves a strange two-century gap in major construction in the South and other evidence suggests

that Khami was most probably a 16th Century building.

Khami was not the only building of the Khami culture. There were many others, for example, in the river valley on the south of the plateau west of the Runde-Chamabveva, which had both stone work and pottery that was transitional between the Zimbabwe and Khami styles, and another building has been dated between 1530 and 1610.

Imported porcelain found in the latest occupation levels at Khami was of the Wan Li period, which ended in 1619 and it seems probable that Khami was abandoned as a major site by the end of the 17th century. This could have resulted from environmental and even political reasons.

Since traditions state that the Rozvi Mambo continued to rule at Khami either come from the dissident Mutinhima house of the Rozvi which lately lived in the Mukungwane hills or far from Khami more reliable set of traditions collected from Rozvi in the South-West in the 1950s makes it clear that the eighteenth century Khami was in the territory of the Kalanga ruler Ndumba, the main Rozvi capitals being east of the Bembesi.

The successor of Khami as a capital was probably Danangombe (Dhlodhlo). This was a large site and since the imported pottery found in its lower level was the same as that in Khami's upper level, it implies that it was later than Khami. The stone work also shows a development from the style at Khami.

The nearby Naletale building also shows this advance style, but it was very small with poor water supply and was probably no more than an outer of Danangombe. Manyanga now called Ntabazikamambo was possibly one of the Changamire's last Capitals in the 19th Century, during the Mfecane. However, it may also have been an old site that was briefly re-occupied during the last crisis of the Rozvi state. On the other hand the traditions that claim that it was a capital may be incorrect.

The most important aspect of the Khami culture that affects us here is its identification with the "Rozvi". This was established on the following basis:

The Rozvi Changamire dynasty was known to have lived at the Khami-culture centre up to the 19th Century. Also, the famous pottery claimed by the Rozvi Changamire as theirs was found at all levels in the Khami-culture buildings. This is despite the fact that the documentary and traditional evidence suggests that Torwa dynasty commenced the Khami culture and ruled the South-west until the late 17th century when the Rozvi Changamire came out of the central Moyo unclear area and took over the whole area and its culture.

Traditional and documentary evidence to clash with archaeological evidence for the change stated above is not shown in the archaeological record. The solution to this problem will come when there is a complete archaeological record for the whole country, but there is sufficient evidence to suggest one or two points that must be taken into consideration.

- 1) There is no doubt that the same pottery type was used from the beginning of the

Khami culture up to the fall of the Changamire dynasty in the 19th Century

- The “prestige” pottery of Great Zimbabwe developed into highly courned, tall necked band - and panel pottery that was found at most Khami sites and which a hall mark of the Khami culture
- A single shred at Rusvingo ra Kasekete in the Mutapa state could relate to the presence of a Changamire force there in the war of 1702
- Other such pottery found at Murahwa’s hill near Manyika in conjunction with an 18th century import can be explained by the presence of a Changamire army near Manyika in 1870.
- Khami-type shreds of a kind were found near Bedza hill in Buhera, one of the places held by the Chamgamire dynasty against the Ndebele in its retreat to the Save in the 1850s and 1860s
- Jiri’s section of the Changamire dynasty in Bikita identified Khami pottery as their own in the early 20th century, at a time when such pottery would be still remembered.

- 2) The most important area in which archaeological evidence of the changeover from the Torwa to the Changamire dynasty is not checked around Khami. It is sought of Bembesi at Danangombe, Naletale, and Manyanga. Here the traditions of the Changamire Rozvi, locate the Changamire capital.

Danangombe shows a change of some kind but it cannot yet be shown that this was due to the arrival of new dynasty. Caton -Thompson believed that there had been a major reconstruction of the older building, which was replaced by elaborate markings seen today on the lower terraces

N.B Two occupation levels existed on the terrace. On the lower level a wealthy woman was buried after her body had been reduced to a skeleton after death and then her bones were burnt. The wealthy woman was buried not only with her pots, large reddish-brown spherical pots of the Khami culture’s common ware but also with an imported Chinese bowl and a Dutch gin bottle. These two articles were dated to late 17th century or early 18th centuries. The date is accurate when used to establish that the Khami culture was relatively recent and not of exotic origin. However when the question of dynastic change is considered, it is not accurate at all and this calls for the re-examination of these articles in order to establish the earliest possible date.

- 3) The function of band-panel pottery in the Khami culture. Just as at Great Zimbabwe the prestige pottery of Khami that was found in the ruling class dwellings was used to keep liquids, possibly water but more probably beer. This does not mean that rulers of the Khami culture lived entirely upon beer, but rather that, since a Khami-culture centre like Great Zimbabwe was a specialized version of a large Shona village, the main cooking was not done in the living huts. In fact, band and panel pottery was not the only style used at Khami, the pots found in the Danangombe burial being of a more common kind.

The Changamire conquest of the Torwa state was not a major invasion involving wholesale killing or the destruction of the state. Traditions and documents suggest that it

was quick and easy.

The tradition of making band-and-panel pottery continued unbroken because pottery-making was the task of women and the intermarriages between the Changamire dynasty and Torwa state families of Tumbure and Chimunduru retained the Torwa culture. Also, the adoption of a Kalanga dialect by the Changanire dynasty confirms this. The Changamire dynasty, after all Shona like the Torwa dynasty, shared rather remote common origins in the Zimbabwe culture.

As a result the Changamire dynasty was in a position to take over and make use of an existing state and its special pottery and buildings than the foreign Ndebele were able to do in the same situation.

The rough stonework at Dangamombe Naletale and Zinjanya could represent the work of the Changamire dynasty or even its prisoner, according to a Portuguese document, Changamire's Portuguese prisoners from the wars of 1690's were.

‘Those who had only the obligation to look after the Palace is only called thus through being the residence of the King.....’ (D.N Beach) Changamire traditions also claim that the Rozvi added to the buildings, making out lying cattle enclosing rather than that they built the whole structures themselves. But there are other possible explanations for the poorer style of some of the stone work. There may have been a shortage of granite suitable for splitting on the sites concerned, forcing the builder to use less suitable stone. Moreover, even when Zimbabwe was at its height as a centre and both the hill and valley were occupied, its builders did not hesitate to use rough stone for a perimeter wall or enclosure. It is also possible that the changing economic conditions of the eighteenth century and the occasional civil wars may have made it more difficult for the Changamire rulers to finance the talents of the Old Torwa state in addition to the buildings.

In the end, the use for defence against the Nguni in the Mfecane led to the final abandonment of formal stonework and to the building of rough defensive walls.

Conclusion

The archaeological problem posed by the traditional and documentary evidence on the conquest of the Torwa State by the Changamire dynasty may not be as daunting as it first appears. However it seems that the archaeological evidence is not yet complete while on the other hand it may be found that the type of change implied by the evidence where one political and cultural institution is taken over by related people, does not show itself in archaeological record to the extent that was previously believed. This can be compared to other known changes of this kind of archaeological studies from other parts of the world.

The rise of the Torwa State 1450-1683 (Location Geography)

It was now common knowledge that the expanding Karanga dynasties of 15th and 16th centuries referred to the higher part of the plateau from where they came or had come

from as “Guruuswa” or land of tall grass. This was because the higher areas contained more open, grassy spaces than the wooded valleys that ran down the Zambezi.

According to the D.N Beach, the direction of “Guruuswa” naturally depended upon the direction of the high ground from the standpoint of the Karanga people involved. Other versions are “Guruuswa” “Gunuvuhwa” and “Gunuvutwa” depending on the Shone dialect.

“Butna” (“Abutna”)- “Guruswa” - /Torwa “Butua” is a Portuguese shortened version of the Tavara and Ngungwe-speaking people. The Portuguese used the term corresponded to the idea of “Guruuswa”

Butua was generally described as being to the south and west of the Portuguese trading posts in the north and east, and especially on the direction of the higher ground from the stand point of the Portuguese writer concerned.

1. Fernandes - It lay beyond the land of Mbire in the Mutapa State. He had approached this zone by using a curving route through the Zambezi valley, so that it was to the South.
2. Santos - placed it to the north west of Manyika, but also south -west of the Mutapa
3. Conceicao-placed it beyond Chitomborwizi after mentioning the feira on the Angwa and another nearby the former
4. Barros-described “Batua” as adjoining the “vast plains” of the Sabi-Limpopo involved with reference to the geography of the whole southern Zambezi region.

In each case the writer was more or less following the same environmental concept of Guruuswa

The Portuguese Interest

The Portuguese interest was not geographical – it was economic. Geographical knowledge only became handy to them in relation to the availability of minerals and other kinds of wealth. Ethnography (the scientific description of races and cultures of mankind) was also used for the same function that is by identifying rulers they were to deal with. In the same vein, the Portuguese used the name “Mukaranga” to mean the Mutapa state proper although they knew that the ruling dynasties of the north of the Plateau were called the Mutapa state as the focal point of all the economic and political power of the Karanga.

Similarly, the Portuguese tended to concentrate upon the most important of the dynasties in “Butua” although “Butua” was made up of many lands. Due to their mainly economic interest to the Portuguese the most important part of “Butua” or Guruuswa, was the richest – where there were rich gold deposits. The Portuguese were quite knowledgeable about the goldfields of the Mutapa state, Manyika and Rimuka in the sixteenth and seventh centuries. For them, the only major cattle-rich, gold-bearing area that corresponded to their “Butua” was the south western part of the plateau, and the area occupied during that period by the people of the Khami culture. It can therefore be

concluded that when the Portuguese wrote of a major state of “Butua” in the south by 1700, they were actually referring to the state centered on Khami. However, for the later centuries, ie after 1663, they were referring to the Changamire dynasty – which they also described as in “Butua”. There is also clear evidence from traditions that Changamire ruled later from the centuries of the Khami’s culture.

Political economy of the Torwa Dynasty:

The rulers of the state of Butua were called Toroa (Torwa) by name, according an unknown Portuguese in 1683, shortly before the fall of the state to the Changamire dynasty. The Torwa dynasty ruled the Khami culture area in the 16th and most of the 17th centuries.

At the capital site of Khami, the Torwa developed a new culture expressed in the prestige pottery and stone buildings that were descended from those at Great Zimbabwe. Like the Great Zimbabwe state, the Torwa state based on Khami was ultimately reliant upon the efforts of its people working in the fields and herding their cattle like Great Zimbabwe it made use of the available resources in the form of goldfields.

According to Portuguese documents, cattle herds were an important source of wealth of the state.

Relations with Great Zimbabwe, Mutapa and Changamire Rozvi:

1. One Rozvi Ruler Mbava (1925) lineage from that of the Changamire dynasty-thought closely associated with them claimed that Great Zimbabwe was the work of the Rozvi ruler named “Togwa”. “Togwa’s” achievements as given by Mbava generally agree with the tradition about the Rozvi as a group. This therefore implies that there was really a dynasty of this name (D.N Beach)

2. In 1958, the medium of the Mutota’s Mhondoro spirit spontaneously, claimed that Torwa and

Changamire were relatives of Mutota, the founder of the Nzou - Samanyanga Mutapa dynasty-but relationships are incorrect

Mutapa oriented dynasty tended to see everybody as subordinates and relatives of the Mutapa. In the case of the Torwa state this claim is even more unlikely when it is realized that whereas the Torwa dynasty came directly from Zimbabwe, the Mutapa dynasty probably developed the northern outline of the Zimbabwe state. The totem of the Torwa remains unclear, but vague traditions about a line of Soko Mambos could refer to them, even relationship with Changamire is not clear whether it was of blood or marital.

Mutapa-oriented traditions in the 16th and 17th centuries often claimed that the Torwa state was tributary to the Mutapa dynasty. This is contradicted not only by other similar sources at the same time, but also by the archaeology of the two states. It is clear that in terms of material culture the Khami culture was wealthier than the Mutapa state. Even if they had not been separated by great distances, it is unlikely that the latter could have

documented the former.

The Torwa state, in fact first comes to the notice of historians as the enemy of the Mutapa e.g in about 1494 when Mutapa Chisamarengu regained his father's throne from the first Changamire mentioned earlier, whom he killed. The son of the latter continued with war. The Torwa ruler, as kinsman of Changamire line, came to the aid of his northern relative, accusing the Mutapa of Changamire's death and threatening to kill him.

The war went on until after 1512, when Fernandos observed that the Mutapa state was as great as the ruler of "Brua", that is Torwa and they were always at war against each other. This was the last heard of the Mutapa-Torwa final defeat of the first to have ended with the final defeat of the first Changamire dynasty in about 1547- which removed its original cause.

The Fall of the Torwa State:

Nothing is known about the Torwa from the early 16th century up to 1640s. There was a civil war in the Torwa state. In the 1640s the Portuguese thought that it was caused by the discovery by the Torwa that the Muslims who supplied him with cloth had hidden from the existence of the Portuguese trading posts in the north and east. However, the trade between the Khami area and the coast was so long-established, thus nullifying the Portuguese claim.

The real reason for the civil war, in which the Torwa ruler killed many Muslims, was maybe the enmity between the ruler and his young brother, who was allied in marriage to a powerful Muslim.

The elderly ruler was driven out of the state and fled to Manyika where in 1644 he asked for assistance of one of the greatest prazeros, Sisnando Dias Bayao. His largely African army joined with the supporters of the exiled ruler and reinstated him on the throne. Bayao left an armed force in a fortified stockage and returned to the Zambezi Valley thus exposing the Torwa ruler to danger. According to the Portuguese, Bayao's achievement was nullified for his army was later poisoned by his rivals in the feira of Laurance on his way to Sena.

Like what the Portuguese did in the Mutapa state, the civil war encouraged them in their plans to exploit the whole region even further. For example, the Portuguese invaded Maungwe which began during the hostilities between the Changamire and the Portuguese, the civil war which weakened the Torwa state could have taught the

Changamire Rozvi rulers the danger of letting the Portuguese intervene in internal politics and the need to drive them off the plateau.

In the Torwa state itself the civil war, which left the Torwa ruler unsupported by the forces that had helped him back to power was, also probably a weakening factor that encouraged the Changamire in the 1680s to copy Bayao and seize the state for himself.

In 1683, the Torwa ruler was described as being friendly to the Portuguese, but this marks the end of the Torwa dynasty as an effective power. By 1635, the Changamire was being described as a “black man ruling in “Butua” by the Portuguese.

Conclusion

The people of the Torwa did not vanish from the scene when the Changamire dynasty came in from the north-east to conquer it. On the contrary after the brief conflict-both documents and traditions suggest that process of conquest was fairly easy. The new dynasty settled down among the former inhabitants. Intermarriage with the Torwa families of Chiwundura and Tumbare and with the Kalanga of Ndumba followed. Indeed the traditions stress the role of intermarriage in assisting the conquest, and one tradition claims that the second Changamire Rozvi ruler in the area relied upon Ndumba for support at his succession. It has been suggested that it was at this time that the Leopard’s kopje people actually began to use the name “Kalanga” for themselves, having acquired it from Changamire’s Rozvi who came from the main Karanga lands to the north-east. Certainly, the new dynasty acquired the local “Kalanga” dialect, and the cultural continuity of the area remained unbroken.

The Chiundura, Tumbare and Ndumba families continued to play a important part in the running of the Changamire State, and like the rest of the people of the Torwa state they adopted the name of “Rozvi”, which was originally used in the 17th Century to refer to the relatives and close associates of the Changamire in the North and east and which eventually became the name of the whole state and its people. Thus some people who called themselves Rozvi were infact descendants of the people of the Torwa State.

Examination type questions

- 1) Assess the role of archeological evidence in the reconstruction of Torwa History.
- 2) Account for the rise of the Torwa state.
- 3) Critically examine the view that the Torwa was nothing but a subservient chieftainship of the Matapa Empire
- 4) Assess the view that the Torwa state laid the foundation of the Rozvi Empire.
- 5) Explain the reasons for the survival and eventual collapse of the Torwa state.

THE ROZVI EMPIRE

1684 – 1834

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

After studying this chapter students should be able to

Describe the origins of the Rozvi Empire.

Analyse the internal organisation of the Rozvi state.

Illustrate and explain the career of Changamire Dombo 1 in the founding and organisation of the Rozvi Empire.

Describe and evaluate the importance of cattle and gold mining in the Rozvi Empire.

Evaluate the trade hypothesis and locate it in its historical context in the Rozvi Empire.

Explain why the Rozvi declined and fell in the 19th century.

Explain the relations of the Rozvi with its neighbours and the Portuguese.

HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

According to historian S.I. Mudenge, the rise of the Rozvi is most importantly associated with the military genius of Changamire Dombo. Dombo's first attack on the Portuguese began at the Battle for Maungwe which took place before June 1684. During the battle, which raged for the whole day, Dombo's army on four or five occasions nearly defeated the Portuguese. Apart from that, Dombo himself displayed a superb display of organisational and military prowess which was noted by his Portuguese opponents. In fact, Father Conceição conceded that in being so well obeyed by his men (Dombo) enjoyed a great advantage over us (Portuguese). Dombo won this particular battle, and later on even routed the Portuguese troops and established a formidable empire in the north-west of the country which lasted for 150 years.

Hence, the rise of the Rozvi state was not merely due to the "trade stimulus hypothesis" rather, it was a combination of factors, which clearly included political and military ones. The "trade stimulus hypothesis" may be boldly summarised thus: trade allowed for a high degree of concentration of wealth in the hands of one man, usually the chief; always monopolised all external trade among his people; and this highly concentrated wealth and allowed for the development and continued existence of more elaborate state systems than was previously possible. It must be noted that often this "trade stimulus hypothesis" has been applied with same justification, there is a growing tendency to apply the thesis without any real criticism or thorough-going analysis.

Half-backed researches have tended to distort the true picture of the Rozvi state. In their description of the basis of the power wielded by the Rozvi Mambos (emperors) previous writers have tended to over-emphasise the importance of external trade at the expense of the contribution of internal factors. We have, for instance, been presented with a picture of the "unwarlike Rozvi", (R. Summers, 1963, p96), presiding over such a loosely connected 'tribal confederacy' that the Rozvi emperors could not even exact tribute from their subjects except as a form of trade. (A.K.H Weinrich, 1969 – 70, pp394 -6). Such a picture of sole reliance on external trade has now been proven to be exaggerated. On the other hand, the roles of such internal factors as military, religious and administrative organisation are seen to have been more significant than hitherto been led to believe.

The Political and Administrative Organisation of the Rozvi Empire.

Rozvi Kingship

The Rozvi Empire was ruled by a hereditary ruler with the title of Mambo. Succession to the Rozvi throne was collateral, or perhaps more precisely patrilineal adelphie, i.e. the kingship developed from brother to brother, eventually reverting first to a son of the eldest brother and then to a son of the next brother and so on. But this was only the principle; in practice other factors played their part. Support at court or in the kingdom was equally important in determining who was to succeed.

In 1695 – 1696 and again in 1768 we have contemporary Portuguese written sources showing that sons could and did succeed their fathers. On the other hand, as is to be expected, most of the traditional sources emphasise how faithfully the patrilineal adelphie principle was adhered to. This form of succession could cause complex succession problems. Never the less, while succession disputes plagued the Munhumutapa Empire in the seventeenth as well as eighteenth centuries, the Rozvi Empire appears to have enjoyed greater stability. The only political significant succession dispute in the Rozvi Empire was known to have taken place in 1768.

It would appear that the Rozvi were able to minimize the dangers of succession wars to such an extent in part because of an institutional device they created to reduce the known harmful effects of succession rivalries. According to some Rozvi traditions, when a Mambo dies and no successor was immediately appointed, the head of one of the royal Rozvi clans with the dynastic name of Tumbare would take over as regent until a Mambo was elected. The house of Tumbare, as we shall see below, used to provide the highest general of all the Rozvi armies, who was also the Chief Collector of tribute, an office approximating that of Chancellor of the Exchequer. This post would appear to have been hereditary to the house of Tumbare and in effect made Tumbare the second most powerful personage in the empire after the Mambo himself. This constitutional mechanism allowed the princes to haggle, plot and manoeuvre for the succession without necessarily throwing the empire into a blood-bath. Above all, it meant that the claimant who could secure Tumbare's support had a very good chance of succeeding to the throne.

Although some scholars have suggested that the Rozvi rulers may have had attributes of divine kingship, Mudenge found very little evidence to support this claim – what must be noted is that constitutionally, the Rozvi Mambo embodied the executive and legislative, as well as the judiciary powers within the empire. In practice, he was assisted, at his court, by a Dare (Council of sagacious (wise) elders) of Magota (Councillors). Represented in the Dare were such branches of the Rozvi polity as the priesthood, the military elders and provincial governors. Leading members of the imperial houses also formed part of the Dare. Although the Mambo would no doubt have had the last say in most issues, he nonetheless had to try to carry his Dare with him. Some of the Magota, e.g. the priesthood, claim to have had the right and duty to advise, warn or reprimand a Mambo who did not rule well. This provided checks and

balances to the power and authority of the Mambo.

Moreover, many of the Magota were hereditary. This meant that their position did not depend solely on the whim of the Mambo. This safeguarded against corrupt practices.

The Rozvi Military power and Organisation

Previous writers have greatly underestimated the military capacity of the Rozvi. A study of contemporary sources suggests a very different picture altogether. According to one Portuguese document of 1785, "The Brozes (Rozvi) are feared even by the monhaes (vanyai), who after these, Rozvi are more daring than anybody else. . . because of their great prowess and daring they (Rozvi) fight fiercely and furiously in battles".

Another somewhat biased description of the Rozvi, coming from 1789 runs as follows:

"The immediate subjects of this chief (Changamire) are much devoted to him ... but they pass their whole lives in indolence of sensuality and the activities of spoliation, hold agriculture and commerce in contempt, and thinking themselves a race superior to the rest of mankind, they consider work a degradation six or seven of these desperadoes, will ... intimidate two or three hundred Africans of other tribes".

According to Abraham, the quotation ends thus: "Such are the freebooters with whose aid Changamire has succeeded in making all his conquests and compelled the entire population of several districts to quit their habitations and fly to the northern side of the Zambezi", quoted in S.I. Mudenge, 1974, p377.

Many more quotations could be given from the eighteenth-century Portuguese sources, all of which corroborate the image of the Rozvi as a fierce, powerful and warlike people. But before we can agree either with the Portuguese account of Rozvi fighting power or with the more recent notion of the "unwarlike" Rozvi, we should look briefly at what is known of the Rozvi military machine. From contemporary Portuguese sources we learn that the Rozvi armies were organised into centuries like those of the Romans.

A century or company of soldiers was known as a missoca (regiment). These missocas were under the command of cabos or field commanders. Above the cabos were the inhabezes (same rank as generals). The inhabezes were themselves below Tumbare, the highest general. At the top was the Mambo himself who was Commander-In-Chief. Although it seems to have been customary for the Mambos to lead their armies in person, we have oral and documentary evidence that this was not always done. The Rozvi army had an impressive variety of weapons: bows and arrows, daggers, assegais, shields, battle axes and cudgels. According to one Portuguese source, the Rozvi fighters used the cudgel "with such deadly accuracy that they can throw it from a long distance away and the blow is almost always fatal". They also possessed guns, and in the early nineteenth century there were four small cannons at the mambo's palace. Although by the later nineteenth

century the reputation of the Rozvi as a people possessing guns reached as far as the modern Transvaal, we have little evidence that guns were ever important weapons in the Rozvi armies.

On the battlefield, the Rozvi used a fighting formation which closely resembled that of Shaka, the Zulu king. According to a Portuguese source in 1758, the Rozvi used to deploy their men as follows: the main body of fighting men known as *viatte* would be in the middle, flanked by two horns called *mulomo acumba*. In the nineteenth century Shaka was to use this fighting formation with devastating effect. When the Rozvi squadrons were in battle they were said to have been arranged in such a way that, while one was engaging the enemy, another would be at its rear taking care of the wounded, replenishing and animating the vanguard, as well as making certain that none of those in front could retreat.

It is also said that the Rozvi favoured close combat, face to face in an open field. But it should not be thought that the Rozvi mode of fighting was inflexible: far from it. Elsewhere it has been shown that flexibility and resourcefulness were an integral part of Rozvi warfare. S.I. Mudenge, *“The Rozvi Empire and the Feira of Zumbo,”* unpublished Ph.D thesis, London, 1972, pp74 – 90. In 1684 it was Dombo’s unconventional tactics that enabled him to win the critical battle for Mahungwe. At any rate that is how Father Conceição saw it when he wrote of Dombo’s victory thus: “He was so witty and cunning that after being defeated by our arms, he vanquished us with his stratagems”.

The Rozvi seem to have had a formalized mode of mobilising their forces. It is said that when the Mambo wished to summon his men of war he would sound his gun and then Tumbare would beat his war drum known as Dittiwe. At the sound of Dittiwe, criers would go out shouting “Chisadza Mhomwe” (Muhomwe) (fill your bags with food). The mapfumo i.e. squadrons, would then assemble at the court. When it comes to the training of the Rozvi armies we know very little. The Portuguese sources are not very helpful on this subject. For although they tell us of “military drill” and/or “exercises” as well as “archery training”, they never really explain what these involved. All we are told is that the Rozvi military exercises were called ‘pemberaçoens’ and these are said to have entailed “many leapings and multi-articulated movements that they performed with their heads during battle or military exercises”. But ‘pemberaçoens’, which comes from the Shona – pembera or kupembera, (ululate) – entails singing, chanting, ululating and brandishing of spears, and is not used for military training but as a morale rouser to build self-confidence and intimidate the enemy. It may well be that fighting skills were acquired largely through hunting.

Before going into battle the Rozvi armies were always doctored. Traditions abound claiming that the Rozvi used supernatural powers against their enemies. We are told that the Rozvi could change the colour of cattle, summon bees to fight for them if need be, and send their enemies to sleep by magic. They could make their warriors brave by supposedly immunising them against bullets or spears. Even Portuguese sources remark on this reputation of the Rozvi. In 1698 the viceroy of India wrote that the Portuguese

soldiers in the Rivers of Sena believed that the then Rozvi Mambo had magic oil with which he could kill anyone simply by touching the person with it. The viceroy implored the Portuguese king to send a new lot of soldiers from metropolitan Portugal who would not believe in such superstition.

The Portuguese in the Rivers of Sena had reason to fear the Rozvi magic because in 1693 after the great Rozvi Mambo, Dombo 1, had slaughtered all the Portuguese at Dambarare, he had two Dominican priests flayed and their heads cut off and carried in front of his army. On that occasion, it is reported that Dombo also disinterred the bones of some of the Portuguese and had them crushed in order to prepare a powerful medicine for his soldiers. This association of the Rozvi with the supernatural clearly gave their armies a vast psychological advantage over their potential enemies.

Finally, we must consider the question of numbers. From Portuguese records we can deduce that the army was quite large by the standards of that time. After Dombo had lost a vast number of men in the 1684 battle for Mahungwe, he still had enough men to face an invasion from the emperor Mutapa Mukombwe. Although it is not possible to state an exact number the Rozvi army was large enough to defend their empire, indulge in extra-territorial interventionist policies, such as supporting the Portuguese allies, both north and south of the Zambezi. It was large enough to provide the mambo with important diplomatic and political leverage which he needed to stay above political and military reproach. In the words of one Governor-General of Mozambique it made the Rozvi Mambo “the most powerful (ruler) of those interiors”, or as one secretary to the government of Mozambique says, it made the Mambo “the terror of the hinterland. Therefore to assert that the military base of the Rozvi Mambo’s power was politically slender or was “unwarlike Rozvi” – is to run against the available evidence and to make these words lose all meaning.

RELIGION: Its Political Significance

Traditional religion played a vital role in the Rozvi Empire. In the first instance, the priesthood was represented on the Mambo’s council. This enabled the Mambo and his council to exploit the religious authorities’ more discreet sources of information about outlying provinces. Of course such information was utilised in conjunction with other advices of messengers who were appointed or planted throughout the empire and beyond.

Furthermore, the priesthood is said to have been involved in the coronation of some of the vassal rulers and in this way, provided or fostered unity in the empire. Hence, by being so closely associated with the Mambo, religion became one more integrative factor with the empire. Yet we would be in error if we were to conceive the Mwari cult as having been no more than a willing tool in the hands of the Rozvi rulers. Conflict between the religious officers and the Rozvi Mambos appears to have been a perennial feature of their relationship. This may have been so partly because the priesthood claimed to have the right to advise and admonish those Mambos who did not rule well. Thus the religious authorities may have been a constitutional watch-

dog on a Mambo's theoretically absolute power. In a negative way, the importance of the religious authorities as supporters of the Rozvi rulers is further revealed in the fact that virtually all the known Rozvi traditions account for the fall of being a consequence of a rupture between the religious and political leaders in the empire.

Provincial Administration

The Rozvi rulers accepted the principle of heredity in the administration of their provinces. This meant that many of the provincial chiefs were hereditary rulers of their provinces/ or regions. The only Rozvi Mambo who does not seem to have cared about the principle of heredity was Dombo 1, who was himself a usurper. But on the whole his successors respected it. The question that requires to be answered is therefore, how the Rozvi were able to control these hereditary local rulers.

The first way in which the Rozvi controlled these rulers was through the investiture ceremony known as kugadza ishe (to install and invest in a Chief). According to one source, "if the people chose a new Chief without consulting their overlord (the Rozvi Mambo) it was said in common parlance that they had no Chief, but the one selected or approved by the Warozvi was held to be the true Chief". This view is supported by many other sources, e.g. G. Fortune, "Rozvi Text".

The process of installing a new chief began at the local level where the practices of that particular chiefdom would be observed. Once a candidate had been locally chosen he either went in person to the Rozvi court to seek approval or sent a deputy to obtain the approval on his behalf. The Rozvi could and did at times withhold approval. They could even bypass a duly elected candidate and impose their own choice. But instances of this kind of practice seem to have been rare.

The investiture of a new chief took place in his own kingdom. It was performed by a representative of the Rozvi Mambo who handed the regalia. Such regalia included black and white calico as well as a sheepskin. Through the investiture ceremony the Rozvi Mambo conferred legitimacy and authority on the vassal chiefs. But, by being invested by the Rozvi, a vassal Chief proclaimed his subservience to the latter. There is virtually no evidence to show that before the 1790's any vassal chief successfully challenged the Rozvi right to invest subject rulers.

The other way in which the Rozvi Mambos controlled the loyalty of their subjects was by the imposition and collection of an annual tribute (Mupeta WaMambo). Tribute collection had important political and economic implications. Politically, the payment of tribute implied continued allegiance of a vassal ruler to the Rozvi Mambo and refusal was regarded as an indication of rebellion.

The chief tribute collector was none other than the Tumbare himself. That a man of Tumbare's standing – the highest general of the Rozvi armed forces and possible

regent to the Rozvi Empire – should have been made responsible for tribute collection is a sign of the importance attached to the function. According to one source, if Chikanga, the King of Manyika, ever dared to drop paying tribute to the Rozvi Mambo, he “without doubt would suffer severe retribution”, and the Rozvi Mambo would “bring Chikanga to his senses, because the said Changamire and his soldiers are of a temperament so vain that they cannot put up with defiance without seeking revenge and complete satisfaction. Oral sources too, confirmed that any vassal Chief who did not pay his tribute was visited by Rozvi soldiers. Tribute was paid in cloth, beads, hoes, axes, gold, ivory, skins, cattle, tobacco, foodstuffs and whatever else the various regions could produce. Through this tribute, the Rozvi Mambo acquired vast quantities of wealth from his empire.

Finally, another way in which the Rozvi used to control their empire was by the appointment of regional governors or representatives. This is of such significance that it is most unfortunate that at present we know so little about it. But we have enough evidence to establish the existence of such officers. What we lack is precise knowledge of their functions. Professor D. Beach found oral sources claiming that a Rozvi house by the dynastic name of Gwangwara used to settle quarrels among the Rozvi subject Chiefs in the present day Chivhu District. In Mahungwe at the court of Makoni the house of Tandi was permanently stationed as a representative of the Rozvi Mambo.

A similar role for the priestly house of Nerwande may be mentioned in the Mangwende kingdom. Dr Weinrich claims that her researches have shown that the Rozvi Empire “was divided into provinces, and each province was administered by a royal aguate whom the King appointed provincial governor. As quoted by S.I. Mudenge, 1974, p384. From such evidence, though incomplete, it is clear that these governors were an important link in the control of the Rozvi Empire.

EXTERNAL TRADE AND THE ECONOMIC BASIS OF THE ROZVI EMPIRE

As we have already seen, previous writers have emphasised the importance of external trade as the chief source of the economic power and political influence wielded by the Rozvi rulers. They have asserted that the Rozvi Mambos exercised a strict monopoly on all external trade. But on this point, too, the results of recent research have led to some modifications. While it is true that the Rozvi issued decrees which governed some aspects of external trade in their empire, they did not really monopolise the whole external trade to themselves. What the Rozvi Mambos did was to restrict the monopoly of the pure gold to themselves knowing fully well that such a decree would be impossible to implement.

Maybe what brings out a clearer picture of the problem is if we look briefly at the trade system between Zumbo and the Rozvi Empire. African traders known as “VaShambadzi” traded throughout the Rozvi Empire. They were itinerant traders who moved from place to place and chieftdom to chieftdom selling their goods. There were no special market days or market places where trade was conducted. There is certainly no evidence to

support the view that all external trading may have been held at the court of the Rozvi Mambo.

The nearest we come to this possibility was in 1803 when an attempt was made by the Portuguese of Zumbo to introduce a new method by which the trade of Butwa could have been controlled by the Rozvi Mambo's court. On this occasion, the Portuguese requested the then Mambo to send one of his grandees to Zumbo on the Zambezi escarpment and on the border with Mozambique that he could accompany the Zumbo vashambadzi to and from Zumbo. The chief function of the grandee (man of high rank) was to ensure that the vashambadzi did not trade in the bares of Butwa before they had presented themselves at the Mambo's court; "where the said Changamire, in his presence, ought to entrust the said Mussambazes (vashambadzi) with their panganaçoens to his respective bareiros, with the express command that as soon as the bartering was over a report about the fazendas and the Mussambazes should be made to him (Changamira) and together with the same grandee they (Mussambazes) should be sent back to this villa so that they could give the accounts of the panganaçoens in the presence of the said grandees".

The suggestion was never put into practice because in 1894, Zumbo (Mucariva) was destroyed. The above document has sometimes been used to argue that the Rozvi Mambo had a monopoly of trade. But from other Zumbo documents coming before 1803 it is clear that trading operations did not take place only at the Mambo's court but all over the "bares" of Butwa were found virtually all over what is now Zimbabwe, stretching from Bulawayo to Bindura and from the Sanyati to the Save river. Notably, the Zumbo vashambadzi traversed all that region, bartering for gold from village to village without necessarily ever visiting the Mambo's court.

Perhaps, one of the most revealing pieces of evidence against the view that the Mambo had a monopoly of all foreign trading operations, especially the gold trade, is provided by the fact that among the items in which vassal chiefs paid tribute were gold, ivory, beads and cloth. To pay one's tribute in gold and ivory implies possession of these items before payment. A total monopoly would have been difficult and expensive to enforce, and was probably an inefficient means of getting the gold. In a monopoly situation, the subject Chiefs would have had little incentive to dig for much gold. On the other hand, getting the gold through tribute was less difficult and served a dual purpose – economic and political.

The Mambo had a reasonably good system of enforcing payment of tribute by their vassals, but they would have needed a much bigger bureaucratic machine than the one available to enforce the monopoly of trade. But by allowing his subjects to engage in foreign trade, the Mambo avoided rousing undue resentment and he allowed the profits from foreign trade to filter through the Rozvi political machinery from the bottom to the top.

What Impact did foreign trade have on the Rozvi Empire? - An Assessment

There is no doubt that Rozvi rulers greatly valued their trading links with the Portuguese especially those at Zumbo. Evidence for this is that in 1743, 1772 and 1781 the Rozvi sent powerful armies to protect the Feira at Zumbo from its enemies. The Rozvi Mambos also protected the vashambadzi against robbery while trading in Butwa. This policy of the Rozvi prompted one Governor- General of Mozambique to write, “Changamira, the most powerful (Chief) of those interiors is a man without many defects, except for his colour and paganism; because [if he had many defects] it would both be easy to understand his trading policy and the reason why he is able to make others obey him and love the Portuguese”.

It is doubtful though whether the Changamire’s ‘saintliness’ was the sole reason for his conduct. Enlightened self-interest seems to have been a more important reason. From the Portuguese the Rozvi received luxury goods e.g. different varieties of beads, sombreiros (umbrellas), sea shells, rosaries of fake coral, handkerchiefs, chinaware, brass bells, scissors, candles, cloth of various colours and aguiadente (fire-water → some kind of wine). These foreign goods no doubt made life at court more colourful for their imperial majesties. But these were luxury goods which came in small quantities. At the time of the investiture of a new chief, the Rozvi Mambo used to send black and white calico as part of the regalia of the new chief. Clearly, therefore, imported cloth played an important part in the Rozvi political system. But it can hardly be said to have been vitally important for the survival of the Rozvi Empire. Besides the question of investiture, there is little else we have seen to warrant even the suggestion that the wealth of the Rozvi Kingdom was based on external trade.

It is also apparent that not all the luxury items consumed in the Rozvi Empire were obtained from trade with the Portuguese: some were internally produced. From the few items archaeologists have been able to recover since the destruction and theft of the stone ruins at Great Zimbabwe around the end of the nineteenth century, it has been deduced that the Karanga craftsman worked iron, copper, bronze and gold. They could draw wire, make bangles, manufacture knives, razors, rings, bracelets, chains, earrings and so on, using these metals.

In addition, the Karanga craftsmen carved various objects in ivory and soapstone and made beads from ostrich egg shells and other shells. Since well before the Portuguese ever came to eastern Africa, the Shona have worn a highly prized cotton cloth known as “Machira”. While it is true that the Rozvi economy was a largely agricultural one, it would be an error to assume that externally acquired luxury trade goods always had the same effect of all forms of subsistence agricultural economies, irrespective of the precise nature of the mode of economic production attained within the state in question. In the Rozvi Kingdom, some of the external luxury goods, like beads and cloth had equally valuable internal substitutes.

We may in fact conclude that agriculture and pastoralism, especially the latter, appear to have been the real economic basis of the Rozvi Empire. The Shona people, as one seventeenth century Portuguese writer observed

“will not constrain themselves to seek for gold unless they are constrained by

necessity for want of clothes or provisions which are not wanting in the land for it abounds with them, namely, millet, some rice, many vegetables, large and small cattle and many hens. The land abounds with rivers of good water, and the greater number of the Africans are inclined to agricultural and pastoral pursuits in which their riches consist.”

Comments on the economic importance as well as the number and size of the cattle found in the kingdom of Butwa are scattered in Portuguese documents from the sixteenth century to the nineteenth century. For example, in 1506 Diogo de Alcaçova wrote in about 1490 that a ruler of Butwa offered about 4000 hornless cows to the Munhumutapa, and in 1569 Fr Monclaro informs us that the cattle of Butwa were “as big as the large oxen of France”. But according to Fr Gomes, so big were these Butwa cattle in the mid-seventeenth century that one had to stand when milking them.

The importance of cattle to the economy of Butwa was underlined by Father Joao dos Santos who, writing at the end of the sixteenth century, claimed that the people of Butwa were less interested in digging for gold because they “were much occupied with the breeding of cattle of which there are great numbers in these lands”. A further indication of the numbers of Butwa cattle is provided by the case of one mid-eighteenth century Mushambadzi from Zumbo who collected as many as 800 head of cattle from his trading activities in Butwa (i.e. the central Rozvi Empire).

Even in the early nineteenth century Butwa cattle were still being sold at the Feira of Manyika to the Portuguese. The Rozvi used their cattle at that period both as baggage animals and for riding. This was in addition to the obvious uses as drought power, meat and milk as well as a form of storing wealth. Cattle were useful to pay the bride price (rovora). Above all, a man with many cattle could use them to enhance his social influence by a system of “kuronzera”, in which a man gives some of his cattle for safe-keeping to another man. The person to whom the cattle have been entrusted could use them in virtually any way he wished, except that he could not dispose of them without the owner’s consent. Because the owner of the cattle could, if he wished, take back his cattle, this naturally gave him greater influence over his “client”. Dombo 1 himself was a notable cattle baron who possibly rose to power and founded the Rozvi Empire on the strength of this cattle-keeping activities and his ability to redistribute the cattle through the kuronzera system.

Therefore a closer examination of the Rozvi empire reveals that most of the externally – acquired luxury good had equally valuable internal substitutes. And in any case, the socio-political significance of such wealth does not appear to have been nearly as great as that of the legendary Butwa cattle. These cattle were the true savings banks and insurance policies of the ordinary Rozvi, which the rulers used above all to distribute for safe-keeping to their subjects, who were then entitled to use them. In this way, cattle provided visible social, economic and political bonds between the Rozvi rulers and their subjects.

The Rozvi Empire was able to benefit from and enjoy the fruits of external trade as well as to ensure the safe flow of that trade largely because of its power, much of which was

internally generated. Thus the Rozvi example underlines the fact that any meaningful assessment on it must first of all look at the level of social, political and economic development it attained before coming to any conclusion.

THE FALL OF THE ROZVI KINGDOM

Whilst there is debate about the organisation and development of the Rozvi Empire, there is little such argument about the fall of the empire. Clearly, a combination of natural disasters and external invasions worked together to bring about the downfall of the Rozvi Empire.

There can be no doubt that the seasonal droughts of the late 18th century and the early 19th century weakened the empire's capacity to sustain itself. Whilst the natural disasters as the drought did not necessarily lead to the fall of the empire, they weakened it and made it more vulnerable to external threats. Moreover, due to droughts, population migrations in search of greener pastures tended to distort political and military structures within the empire. Moreover, goldfields got deeper and in some cases began to yield very little returns, all of which contributed to economic exhaustion of the Rozvi Empire.

However, more important events which led to the collapse of the Rozvi Empire were the relentless attacks which the empire faced during the 19th century Mfecane – related invasions. It is noteworthy that the Rozvi Empire had to stomach at least six invading groups, all coming from the south. Whilst the earlier groups were defeated, they deprived the Rozvi Empire of their capacity to resist any longer. The first of such groups was the Mpanga of the Ndlovu whom anthropologists believed to have been Sotho in composition. These were defeated by the Rozvi and completely repelled.

In about the same time, the Rozvi were attacked by the Ngwana of Maseko Ngoni who originated from Venda and were in search of a homeland north of the Limpopo. However, these were equally defeated but they obviously left a dent on the Rozvi military strength.

Successive raids on the Rozvi Empire continued unabated as Soshangana's Shangani followed by Zwangendaba's Ngoni inflicted irreparable damage on an already weakened Rozvi empire. Zwangendaba camped in the Rozvi Empire, at Satwa hill in Mazowe for two agricultural seasons. During this time, his warriors raided the neighbouring communities for young men and women and for cattle.

Nyamazana's Ngoni group arrived after Zwangendaba's departure. She attacked the king's residence at Danangombe killing the last Changamire Chirisamhuru. Nxaba's Ngoni passed through the Rozvi Empire in 1836, taking a share of Rozvi cattle and young

men. By the time Mzilikazi crossed the Limpopo and settled around the Matopos, it was not difficult for him to extend his political dominance over the once mighty Rozvi Empire. Although a few Changamires such as Tohwechipi and Chizema attempted to reunite the Rozvi Empire and launch counter-raids on the Ndebele, the empire could never be fully restored. The Ndebele fully exerted their rule once again on the Rozvi in 1857.

Examination Type Question

Evaluate the importance of the “trade hypothesis” in the economy of the Rozvi state.

Describe and explain the career of Changamire Dombo1 in the Rozvi Empire.

Discuss and illustrate the view that the Rozvi Empire was highly centralised and militarised in its organisation.

What was most important in the Rozvi economy: cattle, grain or foreign trade?

Why did the Rozvi Empire decline and fall during the mid-nineteenth century?

Analyse the political and military strength of the Rozvi in relation to their neighbours before the onset of the Nguni peoples.

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THE NDEBELE STATE UNDER MZILIKAZI

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

After studying this chapter students should be able to

Trace the origins of the Ndebele people.

Explain why Mzilikazi abandoned several settlements in Nguniland.

Discuss the political organisation of the Ndebele state and why Mzilikazi’s rule was a protracted one.

The rise and expansion of the Zulu nation under Tshaka’s leadership during the 19th century was followed by widespread wars and general disturbances in Nguniland (Natal). These times of great trouble are remembered in Nguni history as the Mfecane, which

literally means “the time for ‘crushing’ or ‘grinding.’ What is of interest to us in this chapter is not the Mfecane itself, but the emergence of states as a result of the Mfecane. Some of these chiefdoms were transformed into large kingdoms especially the Ndwandwe under Zwibe and the Mtetwa led by Dingiswayo. According to Phimister and Proctor (1991), by about 1819, these kingdoms had been destroyed and their populations were either scattered or incorporated into the Zulu under Tshaka. Several Nguni groups led by army generals like Mzilikazi, Zwangendaba, Sebetwane, Soshangana and Xaba fled from Nguniland heading north, importing the Zulu military tactics to central Africa, hence causing the Mfecane in areas they passed through. Of crucial concern to us in this chapter is Mzilikazi of the Khumalo clan.

Needham and Mashingaidze (1984) assert that Mzilikazi was born in 1795. He was son of Nompethu the daughter of Zwibe and Matshobane, a Khumalo chief. Mzilikazi grew up among the Ndwandwe. It was here that he got his military training. By then the Khumalo were living in the Ngotshe district sandwiched between the Ndwandwe on one hand and the Mtetwa of Dingiswayo on the other hand. The Khumalo were under Matshobane, but submitted first to Zwibe on Marital grounds. Matshobane was executed by Zwibe on allegations of betrayal and disloyalty as well as spying for Dingiswayo. Zwibe then installed Mzilikazi, Matshobane’s son as chief of the Khumalo. When Zwibe’s Ndwandwe were run over by Tshaka in about 1818, Mzilikazi transferred his allegiance to the Zulu king (Tshaka). Mzilikazi was allowed by Tshaka to rule his own territory and have his own regiments. According to Tindal, Mzilikazi and Tshaka coexisted peacefully until about 1820 when Mzilikazi led a successful raiding expedition against the Basuto. As was expected, Mzilikazi was expected to surrender the war booty to Tshaka who had sent him to drive away the Sotho. In return, Tshaka would generously reward Mzilikazi for a successful expedition. Unfortunately, Mzilikazi defied Tshaka’s orders by not handing over the captured cattle to the Zulu king. To make matters worse, Mzilikazi humiliated and ill-treated the Messengers sent by Tshaka to plead with him to surrender the captured cattle to the King. This was understood by Tshaka as an open rebellion to the King. In an informed, discourse, one C.K Mhuri observed that Mzilikazi was equally as dishonest and unreliable as his father Matshobane because his father was unreliable to his father- in law Zwibe, and Mzilikazi proved the, same to his King Tshaka. Therefore appropriate military action was necessary. A regiment was sent to punish Mzilikazi in 1821. The Khumalo were thoroughly beaten at the battle of Ntumbane hill in Zululand. Mzilikazi gathered his small band of survivors and very little livestock and began long heading north.

Mzilikazi’s northward March can be easily understood if illustrated diagrammatically.

Mzilikazi Journey- 1822-1837

Year	Place	People who clashed with Mzilikazi	Reasons for Abandoning the place
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1822/1823	Ekuphumuleni (Resting Place)	Sotho, Pedi	-It was only a resting place. Mzilikazi never intended to make it a permanent place. -Too close to Zululand and Tshaka who was determined to punish the Ndebele. -The Pedi consistently raided the Ndebele for cattle. -Grazing land was not enough for Ndebele cattle.
1826	Mhlahlandlela	Kora, Tswana-Griqua, Khoisan, Boers and Rolong	-Too close to Zululand, now under Dingane, and was as determined as Tshaka to punish Mzilikazi. -The Ndebele were surrounded by hostile groups of kora, Khoisan and Griquas who were a threat -Mhlahlandlela was attacked by combined forces of Griquas and the Rolong.
1832	Mosega	Hurutshe Tlokwa, kora, Rolong Griquas, Tswana, Boers	-Griqua-Tswana army attacked Mzilikazi's capital -In 1834 the Kora and the Griqua attacked the Ndebele at Marico. -Boers from Portgaters settlement also fought the Ndebele. -Zulu army sent by Dingane, attacked Mosega in 1832.

Mzilikazi's first treaty with the British

In 1829, Mzilikazi signed his first treaty with the British government at the Cape. The British were represented by Robert Moffat who later became the King's personal friend. Phimister (1991) suggests that by signing this friendship treaty with the British, Mzilikazi hoped to gain support of the whites against his enemies. Little did Mzilikazi know that his friend Moffat regarded the Ndebele as 'savages' and thought that it would be a blessing if the Ndebele were broken.

Despite having signed a friendship treaty with the British, the Ndebele continued to live under threat of Boers, Griqua and Tswana. The 1837 attack under the Boer commander left Mzilikazi's army weakened.

The problems outlined above compelled Mzilikazi and his Ndebele to migrate further north in about 1837. They moved in two groups and followed different routes. The first group comprising women, children and old people, as well as the royal family members was led by Gundwane Ndiweni, Mzilikazi's senior Induna. This group settled at

Gibixhegu near the Rozvi's military settlement of Nhava yaTumbare.

The second group led by Mzilikazi himself took a westward direction through the Ngwati territory to raid the Kololo in Bulози. Mzilikazi rushed to Gibixhegu enraged upon hearing the news that the first group had made Nkulumane King in his place when they had lost hope of linking up with the other group. Ndiweni and other chiefs who had installed Nkulumane to power, were executed for treason at Thaba Zinduna northeast of Bulawayo. It is not clear what happened to Nkulumane, but oral tradition recorded by Jullian Cobbing reveal that he was secretly executed, while others say he escaped by night to South Africa when he heard about the return of his father. Mzilikazi established his capital at Inyathi, not far away from Morden Bulawayo.

The area into which the Ndebele moved when they crossed the Limpopo had been dominated by the Karanga speaking people. It was easy for the Ndebele to subdue the Rozvi generals and absorb the remnant Rozvi into his confederacy because the state had been weakened by Nguni invaders such as Soshangana, Zwangendaba, Ngwane, Maseko and Nyamazana. After the final defeat of Chirisamhunu by Nyamazana, the Rozvi state had been experiencing in house fighting between the Mutinhima, Jiri Tumbare and many other houses that had claims to the Rozvi leadership.

Mzilikazi gave a final blow to the Changamire state. However, it is important that Mzilikazi did not completely eliminate the Rozvi state for this continued to exist alongside the Ndebele and at isolated incidences carried out attacks on the Ndebele until 1855 when the self imposed Changamire Chibhamu bhamu was finally captured.

Beach (1994) refutes the fact that the Rozvi state was absorbed by the Ndebele. He puts forward the argument that those Rozvi-Karanga who lived closer to Matabeleland were assimilated into the Ndebele state. The claim that the Ndebele replaced or succeeded the Rozvi was, according to Beach, advanced by the British colonialists who wanted to have claims in Mashonaland and Matabeleland after they obtained the Rudd concession. It is therefore incorrect to say the Ndebele controlled the whole of Mashonaland. The Shona living in areas beyond Gweru were hardly affected by the Ndebele raids.

“Assimilation” means that some form of a compromise was reached between the Ndebele king and the Rozvi-Karanga people who lived closer to the Matabeleland.

The Shona- Ndebele Relations

Early years of Ndebele settlement into Matabeleland were characterised by hostile relations between the Shona and the Ndebele. The Shona (Rozvi) resisted Ndebele rule and could not peacefully submit without military resistance. The Ndebele raided them in order to re-build their depleted army. Shona boys who got captured were enlisted into the Ndebele army. On the other hand, the Rozvi also carried out counter raids to replenish their herd which had been reduced during the Nguni invasions.

The Ndebele raids focused on those Shona who lived outside the tributary circles but within the Ndebele reach. The Shona who were absorbed and incorporated into the Ndebele as Amahole were no longer raided. These received cattle on loan conditions to

herd with limited milk and slaughter rights. Those Shona people who lived as far as Marondera, Mazoe Muzarabani, Budja (Mutoko) and Manyika did not experience Ndebele raids and control

D

The circle above attempts to explain the extent to which the Shona were raided, subdued and controlled.

Part A: The Shona who lived in an area that was made Ndebele settlement got absorbed into the Ndebele state and, spoke Ndebele. Some adopted Ndebele names and culture. As long as they submitted themselves to the Ndebele they were not raided. They became part of the state labourers, herd boys and soldiers. These areas include Gwanda, Shangani, Dorset, and Matebeleland South.

Part B: Constantly Raided especially in times of drought. These were regarded as amahole. Payment of tribute to the king was a way to ward off Ndebele raids. The areas include Zvishavane, Mberengwa, some parts of Masvingo, Chivi and Shurugwi.

Part C: These were raided at limited intervals because of their geographical distance from Matebeleland. However they were expected to pay tribute to

the Ndebele king. Ndebele language and Culture could not penetrate these areas which include- Hartley, Nemakonde (Mash west), Marondera, and some parts of Harare and Chitungwiza.

Part D: These were outside Ndebele influence and did not experience any raids such areas include Chipinge, Manyika, Barwe (Murehwa) Budja, (Mutoko), Dande, Chidima (Muzarabani). These had not felt the impact of the Ndebele. As a result, views of Father Hartman that the Shona were on the verge of extinction in the face of Ndebele raids are far from truth. Pikirai (2000) argued that the presentation of the Shona as near extinct tribes was advanced by missionaries in a bid to justify the British occupation of both Mashonaland and Matabeleland. In most cases, Ndebele raids on the Shona were met with stiff resistance as the Shona retreated to caves with their cattle.

Social Organisation of the Ndebele:

The Ndebele society was divided into three distinct classes. The first was the Zanzi. This group comprised the original Khumalo and Nguni who migrated with Mzilikazi from Zululand. These included people of totems like Khumalo, Magutshwa, Dlodlo, Mguni, Mkwanzani and Ndiweni. This group formed the Ndebele aristocracy. They were respected by all other members and intermarriages with groups in lower caste were forbidden.

The Enhla were the second in importance from the Zanzi. This class was made up of elements that had been incorporated into the Ndebele nation either voluntarily or forcibly in the course of the migration from Zululand to Zimbabwe. This class included the Sotho, Tswana, Kora and Griqua with whom the Ndebele fought and from whom many young men and women were captured.

The last group in the Ndebele caste system was the Hole. This group was looked down upon and comprised of the people of the Shona and Kalanga origin who were absorbed into the Ndebele state. It is again imperative to point out that not all Shonas were Hole. Only those who lived closer to the Ndebele state and adopted Ndebele culture were referred to as 'amahole! The Shona who lived outside Ndebele periphery were never subjected to Ndebele rule and culture. Therefore they did not fit in the caste system. The Enhla and the Hole willingly adopted the Ndebele culture and language. Some Shona went as far as adopting Ndebele totems or changing their Shona totems to Ndebele for example Shumba to Sibanda, Shiri or Hungwe to Nyoni, Dziva to Siziba, Shoko to Ncube etc. The explanation for this adoption has been given by Mukanya when he said the incorporated Hole consequently took pride in being associated with the Ndebele. This explains that relations between the Zanzi and hole were not of slave and master as Euro-centric historians would want to suggest. Many young Hole boys were conscripted into the Ndebele army and could also be rewarded after battle for their participation and loyalty. Groups that had been assimilated into the Ndebele were often required to speak Ndebele language and imitate or follow the Ndebele culture. Many Enhla and hole took pride in their new

Ndebele Identity. There was a remarkable degree of unity between these classes because everybody spoke Ndebele and was officially regarded as Ndebele. The policy regarding marriage which restricted marriage within one's social group was often violated by individual families who allowed their children to marry across the classes, thus creating lasting relationships between such families.

Religion

Like the Shona in the Mutapa or Rozvi, the Ndebele believed in a supreme being whom they called 'Unkulunkulu- Somandla. This great god was known by the Sotho as Mlimo' and by the Shona as 'Mwari.' The Ndebele also believed in the power of ancestral spirits 'amadlozi' which they looked up to for guidance and for bringing rain. Senior members of the Khumalo clan were also seen as rain makers. This shows that the spirit hierarchy reflected the political hierarchy. Important religious ceremonies were conducted every year, one of which was the Inxwala ceremony which was presided by the king himself as a religious leader. This was a thanksgiving ceremony for good crops to amadlozi especially the royal amadlozi. Only after the King, "Inkosi" himself had ceremonially eaten the 'first fruits' of the harvest, could the nation harvest and eat their own crops. The King was identified with the nation's fertility and well being. All Indunas and tributary chiefs were expected to attend Inxwala ceremony, failure of which was regarded as rebelling against the King and was a punishable offence. Those who lived a distance from the King's court held their own Inxwala ceremonies presided over by Izindunankulu.

When the Ndebele arrived in Zimbabwe, they discovered a powerful religious functionary in the name of Mhondoro medium of Chaminuka. Mzilikazi quickly adopted the Shona ritual of rain making ceremonies and recognised the power of shone spirit medium. He often sent tributes to Njelele, Mabweadziva and Chaminuka. Religion cemented the Shona and the Ndebele relations. Religion was used to save the interests of the state.

In 1859, Mzilikazi allowed missionaries to settle in his new country. He gave the London Missionary Society a piece of land to build a mission station at Inyathi, but did not encourage his people to accept the new religion. By 1868 when Mzilikazi died, the missionaries had not made any single convert.

Political Structure of the Ndebele state:

The Ndebele were led by a King whose title was "Inkosi". He was an absolute king with absolute and supreme power. The Inkosi's authority was different from that of the Rozvi Mambo or the Mwenemutapas. His authority depended upon control of cattle and captured booty and control of land. The strength of the Ndebele political structure was determined by the strength of its military power. Land, cattle and people belonged to the King. The Ndebele King held the following positions.

King

Army Commander

Chief Judge

Religious leader

He was the highest military authority in the state, and he himself raised the army. The army was organised along Nguni military structure of age regiments. Regimental barracks surrounded the capital.

Royal amajaha or bodyguards were permanently based at the capital. Their duty was to guard the palace and could also be called in time of peace to work in the King's fields. The amajaha defended the land and cattle. The King could distribute all the cattle and captives and this gave him power to reward loyal services from the Izinduna or other figures. He allocated land for farming, settlement and for pastures.

Though the king had power to allocate land, it was not a private property of rulers. As a religious leader, the King presided (officiated) over important religious ceremonies like Inxwala. The royal ancestors were the most superior national spirits guarding the welfare of the nation.

The state's judiciary system was under the King's control. He alone could make major decisions. He had the power over life and death. The King ruled with the assistance of two advisory councils though in most cases he would override their decisions.

A three structure political set up

Umphakati

King

Izikhulu

Those who sat in Izinkulu had no hereditary or ritual claims to the office. Anyone could be appointed to be an Induna as long as his loyalty and military prowess was unquestionable. The King's wives were planted as spies in different provincial towns. These could report on Indunas whose loyalty they suspected to be questionable. Because of this, Indunas respected the King's wives.

Father Hartman, cited in Phimister (1991) had this to say in 1893 about the King's Power. Both in theory and in practice the Ndebele King was the fount of all authority." Due to this centralisation of power, the Ndebele state was able to stay

intact for a long time.

The Ndebele Economy

The Ndebele economy depended partly upon a mixture of cattle keeping and cultivation of crops. Both men and women were involved in agricultural activities. In each province (isigaba) there was a special field set aside as the king's field. This was similar to the Shona's zunde ramambo. The King's field was the first to be planted, and harvests were given to the King as tribute.

Cattle herding was the most important economic activity in the society. The whole state was organised into fields for cattle grazing. Transhumance was practiced where herders seasonally moved their cattle to better grazing areas. As they moved amabutho protected the cattle from potential raiders. This explains that the Ndebele economy was enched in cattle production than raiding. In the past, Euro-centric missionaries exaggerated the impact of Ndebele raids and concluded falsely that the Ndebele economy was a raiding economy. In the early years of Ndebele settlement, raiding was meant to conquer and establish authority in the new land. The Ndebele raided the Sotho, Kora, Griqua, Tswana, Shona etc to increase their population which was depleted by the Zulu wars. This is why captives were assimilated into the Ndebele state and expected to speak Ndebele. It was a way of uniting people of different origins that had been conquered and accommodated in the state. It is not true to conclude that the Ndebele economy was a raiding economy because at times the Ndebele were victims of raids themselves, especially during their migration. After their settlement in Matabeleland the Ndebele conducted raids as a way of imposing their authority on the stubborn Changamire state. There after, raids were directed on those chiefs who resisted payment of tribute.

Cattle were a symbol of status. Chiefs and successful subjects could acquire large herds of cattle. This enabled them to marry as many wives as they could afford. The King had his own national herd which he controlled. He distributed these to chiefs as rewards for service and as well used for payment of lobola, for feeding regiments and gave some to his wives and sons for use and for inheritance. To show that cattle were an important aspect of Ndebele economy Mudhenge asserted that much of the violence between the Ndebele and people in the Highveld was associated with cattle.

Like any other pre-colonial state, the Ndebele grew crops such as millet, rapoko and Sorghum. The Ndebele warriors went on leave during planting seasons to farm. This indicates that the Ndebele valued farming like any other Nguni states. Tribute was often paid in grain. The Ndebele stopped at ekuPhumuleni to farm, not to raid. For those two seasons at ekuPhumuleni the Ndebele farmed, they did not rely on raiding. This dismisses the notion that the Ndebele depended more on raiding.

Trade was also practiced, both internal and external trade. Inter-regional trade existed where they obtained old fashioned guns, cloths, beads, salt, iron and gun powder. The king sent his young men to work in mines south of the Limpopo. He obtained Iron and gold. He also sent some people to trade on his behalf. He was the richest and

most important person in the state.

The King controlled all trade with outsiders in cattle, game and ivory. The Ndebele preferred the southern trade routes through Botswana and the Boer republics. They traded regionally with the Ngwato and Lozi. Internally they traded with the Shona especially in times when Matebeleland was affected by drought. They obtained grain from the Shona through trade, while the Shona received cattle in return.

During the 1860s a number of European traders and hunters were allowed entrance into the state. They hunted elephants in the southern parts of Matebeleland. On one of these hunting trips evidence of gold bearing rocks at Tati and north of Gweru River were discovered. This was followed by many prospectors into Matebeleland in 1868. By this time, Mzilikazi's health was deteriorating and in September that same year he died. The Ndebele state was run by a council of three who in 1870, amid resistance from the Zanzi, conferred Lobengula as the Ndebele King.

Examination Type Questions

Trace and explain the origins of the Ndebele under Mzilikazi.

How effective did the Ndebele state deal with its internal problems during and after Mzilikazi's reign?

Account for the social, political and economic organisation of the Ndebele state.

How accurate is the view that the Ndebele relied more on its military system than its political organisation for survival?

Why did the Ndebele state survive for so long?

Evaluate the assertion that the Ndebele economy depended entirely on raiding.

Despite having so many enemies, the Ndebele state remained intact for a long time. Discuss.

Assess the problems faced by the Ndebele before they crossed the Limpopo.

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Christian Missionary Activities and their effects in Pre-Colonial Zimbabwe:

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

After studying this chapter students should be able to

- a) Assess impact of Christian missionaries in Central Africa
- b) Examine African response to Christian Missions
- c) Evaluate contributions of Christian missions to the colonization of Africa.

Introduction

In other parts of central Africa Christian missionaries helped to prepare African societies for the impact of European rule in various ways. Sometimes they acted as advisers to chiefs- and gave them sensible and disinterested advice. Sometimes they provided education and skills which gave the people among whom they worked a favourable position in the early stages of colonial rule; sometimes they became so committed to “their” people that they acted as effective spokesmen for them and defended their interests against the new colonial administrations, and very often they prepared African for the impact of other Europeans by beginning the process of introducing new ideas and new demands.

The missionaries in Barotseland, the missionaries among the Tonga and Northern Ngoni in Nyasaland; the missionary advisers of Khama in Bechuanaland; all these played an important part in lessening the shock of the confrontation of the blacks and whites in central Africa.

The activities of the missionaries had a serious bearing on the direction of African history in the 19th and 20th Centuries. Initially they usually invited their home countries to come and conquer Africa and the patterns of Partition were greatly affected by earlier settlement of the missionaries. Missionaries claimed to know the African better than other

Europeans. Many policies pursued by the colonizers were inspired by the reports of the missionaries (as well as explorers or adventures). The missionary activity in Africa is viewed as the arm of imperialism.

The late 18th century had witnessed a religious revival in Europe which emphasized the duty of the individual Christian to convert his fellows. This revived interest in conversion brought about a resurgence of European Christian activity in non-Christian lands and especially in Africa.

According to M. Tidy, the “Dark” continent was erroneously considered to be lacking in religion and as a land where Christianity could be written on a blank slate. The missionaries genuinely believed that they had a spiritual duty to convert the Africans.

Their sincerity and courage cannot be doubted for some gave their lives in order to spread their faith. All accepted the equation of the advance of Christianity with the progress of Western Capitalism. They believed that the introduction of capitalism to Africa would end African poverty. They viewed European commerce as a weapon against both the slave trade and traditional African society, both of which would need to be destroyed if missionary work were to have a hope of real success. They felt that if African traditional societies were subjected to alien influence in at least one form of legitimate trade, then it would absorb an alien religion like Christianity. The missionaries also hoped to spread European culture throughout much of Africa as they assumed the superiority of European culture to Africans and believed that the spread of European culture and Christianity would inevitably go hand-in-glove- in a “civilizing mission.”

Reactions of Africans to Christian Missionaries:

There were basically two types of responses:

- (1) Certain rulers allowed and invited missionaries to work and gave them positive encouragement and helped convert many people to Christianity.
- (2) Certain rulers welcomed missionaries but for non- religious reasons, and placed heavy barriers to the work of evangelization.

In the territory which became Southern Rhodesia missionaries did not play any of these roles. This was because they could not achieve a position of influence within Ndebele society even though they were established in Matabeleland and because they failed to establish themselves in Mashonaland at all.

Missionary Activity among the Ndebele:

The Ndebele first made contact with missionaries as early as 1829. From 1859 missionaries of the London Missionary Society (LMS) were permanently established in Matabeleland. These missionaries were made use of by the Ndebele in various ways. They were used to mend guns, to inoculate cattle and give medical treatment to men; to

write letters and to interpret language. One missionary was even used to transport the keepers of the royal charms to court and back to their homes. But the Ndebele had no intention of allowing the missionaries to achieve influence. Mzilikazi and Lobengula saw clearly that their teaching would undermine the basis of the Ndebele state which depended upon raiding and the caste system; the two kings did not feel the need for literacy since the administration of the concentrated Ndebele state was efficient without it; and they did not feel any desire to become involved with the economic system of southern Africa out of which the missionaries came.

In these ways they were different from Lewanika of the Lozi who wanted literacy to improve his elaborate bureaucracy and who wanted to develop trade. Lobengula did not admire the teaching of the missionaries which advocated “putting everything on Christ that he would bear our sins for us.” Such a doctrine, he thought, was suitable only for white men since he had noticed that “whenever they did anything wrong they always wanted to throw the blame on the others.” So missionaries were kept in a sort of quarantine for thirty years. They made friends with converts and anyone who showed signs of becoming friendly to them was removed to another area.

Relations between Mzilikazi and Robert Moffat of the London Missionary society (LMS) dated back from 1829 when they met at Umhlahlandlela in South Africa and became friends. In 1859 Robert Moffat visited the Matabeleland (Ndebele). He was allowed to open a mission school at Inyathi while his son J.S. Moffat was later allowed to open another at Hope Fountain. However, both Ndebele Kings did not welcome concession to Christianity because it would be an alternative religion, thus threatening the Kingship (for the king was in charge of traditional religion it would alter the religion).

Mzilikazi accepted the “Abafundisi” as trading agents with South Africa and as a source of technical skills e.g. repairing guns. Ordinary Ndebele saw no need to accept the new religion and abandoning their old ones especially as this was said to anger Amadlozi. Few who showed interest were put to death by the killing Maqeba-Mzilikazi’s trusted induna and a member of the Umphakathi in May 1862. Christianity would also (as already mentioned) interfere with Ndebele system of raiding their neighbours.

Lobengula accepted the opening of Hope Fountain with the hope that the missionary would persuade the Transvaal not to invade his state and to prevent the missionaries from supporting the Zwangendaba group. The result was that as late as 1890 no Ndebele had been converted although a few hundreds regularly attended mass in order to get some payment that is six pence for attendance.

It was only when Morgen Thomas opened the independent station at Shiloeh Fountain in 1876 that 6 Ndebele were converted up to 1893. This was because he offered them material rewards. The failure of the missionaries made them frustrated and angered such that men like J.S. Moffat and C.D Helm concluded that the Ndebele political system had to be overthrown for Christianity to progress. This explains why both assisted the B.S.A.CO in its colonization of the country.

Christian Missionaries among the Shona:

As for the Shona, missionaries found it difficult to reach them at all. Lobengula refused permission for mission stations to be set up in Mashonaland and approaches to Mashonaland. Stations other than those controlled by the Ndebele king were blocked by the hostility of the Boers and the Portuguese.

In 1877 Coillard, who later exercised such an influence over Lewanika, tried to set up a station in western Mashonaland at the Kraal of chief Mashayamombe. He was removed by a force of Ndebele Amabutho and taken before Lobengula who warned him not to repeat the attempt. Later on, when it was more possible for missionaries to enter the Shona area, few thought it worth trying to do so.

Father Denlin tells us:

“During the years around 1880, when missionaries, traders and political agents waited with varying purposes at Lobengula’s Kraal, only an occasional hunter had found his way on to the vast healthy plateau of Mashonaland. The London Missionary Society under J.S Moffat... had arrived in 1859 but they remained always in Matabeleland. The Jesuits came in 1879, but they too shared the general illusion that the Mashona were the object “dogs” of Lobengula and that the only people worth converting were the invaders from the south. Consequently, when Fr Law... with one other priest and two very able brothers, set out from Bulawayo, their only aim was to reach the Kraal of Mzila, Lobengula’s only counterpart... Selous, the famous hunter, accompanied them as far as the gap in the great watershed; there he turned north to his favourite hunts on the high plateau, but he urged them to come with him and evangelise the Mashona. Instead; they turned South through the tsetse ridden valley to Mzila’s kraal, where the two priests died heroically, but with nothing accomplished. The only missionary to come specifically for the Mashona was the Anglican Bishop Knight-Bruce on an exploratory tour in 1888; but the gallant bishop was in such a hurry and knew so little of the language that his report is not very enlightening.”

Conclusion

The results of this were quite important. Missionaries certainly did little to modify the shock of the confrontation for either the Ndebele or the Shona. Moffat wrote;

“The Bechwana tribes in the protectorate will bow to our advance and adapt themselves to the inevitable without much difficulty, but not so with Matabeleland... it seems hard to understand which of these thirty years missionary efforts should have been rejected by the Matabeleland so utterly. Had they accepted it there might now have been sufficient enlightenment to enable them to meet the white man half-way and to mitigate the severity of the inevitable shock “. (O Ranger). Moreover because they were excluded from the Ndebele system the missionaries became hostile to it. They did not give Lobengula disinterested advice; indeed there is reason to suppose that the missionary Helm was a knowing party to deceptions of Lobengula in the interests of Rhodes. Generally the

missionaries believed that no progress could be made until the Ndebele system was broken down and they believed that this could only be done by force. Thus they welcomed the arrival of the British South Africa Company forces in Mashonaland in 1890. Wrote one of them in that year;

“The hateful Matabeleland rule is doomed. We as missionaries, with our thirty years history behind us, have little to bind our sympathies to the Ndebele people, neither can we pity the fall of their power.” (T.O. Ranger).

The Same Missionary Wrote:

“The wrath of God; was now descending on the Ndebele for their constant and persistent refusal of the Gospel for a whole generation. God, he rejoiced, was about to “speak in a very different manner”, to the Ndebele than that which his missionaries had been forced to adopt.”

Missionary support was a major source of strength to Rhodes in his advance into central Africa. And the results of the absence of missionaries in Mashonaland before the arrival of the whites were also important. Elsewhere in central Africa missionaries had success with the old Agricultural peoples who now found themselves sandwiched in between aggressive and strong intruding societies. Some people thought that the Shona interest and skill in craftsmanship their comparatively pacific and settled mode of life, favoured missionary penetration.

Even though Shona devotion to their own religion would probably have made difficult any real alliance with the missionaries, it is interesting to speculate on the reaction of Shona chiefs to the prospects of an alliance with a strong missionary presence. It is interesting to speculate also whether, if such alliances had been established, the missionaries themselves would have been so convinced that the Shona interest lay in the occupation of their country by white settlers.

These are speculations, however, because in the event the missionaries entered Mashonaland with the settlers and as their allies. Let us take the example of the Catholic Church. The Jesuits had made many attempts to penetrate central Africa. In the late 1870's they opened stations in Matabeleland but the Bulawayo station was abandoned in 1887 and the Emphandeni: station in 1889. The Jesuit Fathers swore not to re-enter Matabeleland until the Ndebele Kingdom had been overthrown. Instead they entered Mashonaland in the wake of the B.S.A.Co. A Jesuit Father accompanied the Pioneer Column as Chaplain; Dominican sisters were recruited to set up hospitals and mobile ambulances. The missionaries turned to the Shona only after they had established themselves as preachers and nurses and teachers to the white community; to the Shona they were completely identified with the other whites.

There was no chance under these circumstances of a real alliance with Shona chiefs. An attempt to set up a mission station beyond the effective boundaries of company administration in Mtoko where it would have been independent on the land grant and

protection of the powerful chief was abandoned and the Catholic stations were set up on land granted by the company without reference to the local Shona authorities. Africans were attracted to these stations as refugees from the authority of the chiefs and headmen. Wrote the founder of Chishawasha mission;

“Among the numerous kraals of the country, there will be some who will avail themselves” of the opportunity “to escape the tyranny of the indunas who are bullies.”

Moreover the Catholic fathers and sisters were emotionally committed to the company administration. Any criticisms which might be leveled against its treatment of the Shona were balanced by missionary support of the company against the Ndebele.

In 1893 Father Prestige cabled to Rhodes in support of Jameson’s decision to make war on Lobengula after the Fort Victoria incident.

“Dr Jameson had asked my opinion as to the justice of punishing the Amandebeles at once. Without prompt punishment there is very little probability of the same atrocities recurring.”

The Dominican sisters, awaiting the call to set up a hospital in the newly conquered Bulawayo, put it more simply:

“Of course our men have taken the country and we shall follow them.” Few converts were made in either Mashonaland or Matabeleland before 1896 and when the Ndebele and the Shona rose in that year mission stations, alien Christian Africans and indigenous Africans loyal to the missions were made a particular object of attack.

The Impact of Christian Missionary Activities on African Societies:

From the earliest attempt by Portuguese missionaries to introduce Christianity into various parts of Africa in the 16th century (e.g. father Goncalo da Silverira) Christian missionaries have over the years had a profound impact on African society.

- (a) The Christian missionaries were generally closely linked with capitalist and imperialist forces and played a major role in imposing alien- political, social and economic values on African society. As Paul Thatcher notes: “The activities of Europeans missionaries involved European governments more and more in African affairs and many ways paved the way for the establishment of colonial rule.

Missionaries helped prepare public opinion for large-scale European involvement in Africa. These missionaries thought commerce and Christianity had to go hand in hand as commercial development would undermine the slave trade.

Infact, blatant exploitation of Africans usually followed closely in the wake of European commerce, but as Michael Tidy notes, it is not fair to blame the missionaries entirely for the exploitation of Africans. But notes Tidy it is fair to criticize the missionaries for subscribing to the prevailing European belief in the

absolute- moral superiority of African peoples.

As we have seen earlier, during the colonial period in Southern Rhodesia, most missionaries were hostile to Shona and Ndebele. D.E Needham and others note:

“J.S Moffat, first head of Inyathi Mission turned strongly against the Ndebele. Charles Helm, Lobengula’s trusted “Umfundisi,” (Teacher) helped the imperialist, Cecil John Rhodes, to obtain a mining concession from Lobengula by deceitful means, and did not protest when the whites killed Africans with the Maxim gun. The catholic Father Prestige also supported the crushing of the Ndebele in 1893.

- (b) The Christian missionaries generally showed very little respect for African culture and generally undermined traditional African society.

As Michael Tidy notes, European Christian missionaries “erroneously considered Africa to be lacking in religion, and therefore, a land where Christianity could be written on a blank slate.” Because of the very nature of Christianity, it had the effect of revolutionising African society.

Michael Tidy explains:

“To Africans, Christianity was far more than a religion: it presented itself as a new and revolutionary social ethic. Christianity, as it was brought to Africa in the late 19th century, was steeped in individualism. The individual African who became a Christian now saw the person for his existence in his relationship to God rather than his family, clan or ethnic group.”

- (c) The Christian missionaries helped eliminate some evil practices in Africa, especially the killing of twins in Zimbabwe.
- (d) Many Christian missionaries actively promoted health-care advancement; built hospitals etc.
- (e) The Christian Missionaries also actively promoted educational advancement, albeit with a heavy European bias.

P.E.N. Tindall noted that they build schools and that through these schools, missionaries did an immense amount of work on the structure of African language, reducing them to written form with the alphabet. They produced grammar books, translated religious and educational books into vernacular and published such works at mission printing presses.

Activities Of Hunters, Traders, Explorers and Missionaries in Zimbabwe Between 1800 – 1890

The General Overview

The nineteenth century witnessed a growing interest in the Central African interior, first, among the Portuguese in Mozambique and in Angola. The course of southern and central African history might not have changed very much, had it not been for this increasing interest from outsiders, especially Europeans. It was the activities, reports and writings of the European traders, hunters and missionaries which helped to focus Europe's interest in the African interior in the nineteenth century after years of association with Africa. The result of this growing interest in the African interior was the ultimate colonization of the continent by various European powers.

Hunters and Traders in Matabeleland

From the mid 1850s, central Africa attracted white hunters, traders and travellers from South Africa. The first ivory trader to enter Matabeleland was Sam Edwards and he entered Matabeleland in the company of Robert Moffat. Moffat was a missionary and a friend to Mzilikazi. Another white man to visit the Ndebele capital was Edward Chapman who entered the Ndebele state in the 1860s. Chapman frequently brought mail and supplies to the London Missionary Society Station at Inyathi. Henry Hartley also hunted in Zimbabwe regularly and is said to have killed about 1 200 elephants in one year.

According to Mashingaidze and Needham (1985), most of these hunters' activities were in Matabeleland, probably because Mzilikazi did not want them to hunt in Mashonaland to avoid the Shona from obtaining guns. However, in 1865 Piet Jacobs and Hartley were allowed to hunt in Mashonaland. It was during his hunting expeditions that Hartley found old gold mines that had been abandoned. His exaggerated reports, and that of Karl Mauch, (another hunter) caused a great deal of excitement about the possibilities of rich gold deposits in Mashonaland. The 'second rand' suspicion was brewed from these reports.

Thomas Baines, another fortune seeker, visited Matabeleland in 1868, and in 1871, he was granted a concession by Lobengula. The concession allowed him to prospect for gold between Gweru River and Hunyani River in Mashonaland. Hartley joined Fredrick Courteney Selous who was also a hunter in Mashonaland and knew the Zimbabwean Plateau very well. This knowledge of Zimbabwe made him to be appointed by Rhodes as the one to direct the Pioneer column. He led the pioneer column to Mashonaland because his knowledge of the Zimbabwe plateau was excellent. It was on Selous' advice that a road between Bulawayo and Chegutu was cut and cleared to facilitate easy transportation of ivory and hides.

Traders, Hunters and Explorers were followed by the more dangerous concession seekers sponsored by imperialists such as Rhodes. The first Christian missionaries to enter into central Africa were the Portuguese who came to the Kongo Kingdom in the 15th Century. In Zimbabwe, father Gonzalo da Silveira, a Portuguese Jesuit managed to convert Mutapa Negomo Mapunzagutu and the queen mother, Chiuyu. He also left a handful of royal converts before his assassination in the 1560s.

Father Gonzalo da Silveira left an impact in the Mutapa state. The missionaries who

came after him from Portugal did not have problems converting the royal members of the Mutapa state. Mwenemutapas, who got baptized, had their traditional names dropped in preference to Portuguese names such as Sabastine, Pedro, Phillip etc. The sons of Mutapa who accepted Christianity were sent to Portugal for education and civilization. None of the two that were sent, ever returned. All in all, the earliest missionary efforts at spreading Christianity, commerce and civilization did not achieve much, due to hostilities between the missionaries themselves and resistance from Africans who viewed the new religion with a lot of suspicion.

The London Missionary Society entered the Zimbabwe Plateau after the Portuguese. It was led by Dr Robert Moffat who headed a mission at Kuruman. This is the same Moffat who established friendship with Lobengula's father, Mzilikazi, in 1829 in Transvaal. Because of this longstanding friendship, Mzilikazi allowed John Smith Moffat, a son to Dr Robert Moffat, to establish a mission at Inyathi in 1859. In 1870, Lobengula allowed the establishment of a second mission by the L.M.S at Hope Fountain. The missionaries spent their time preaching, teaching, repairing guns and inoculating cattle. The Ndebele king also used missionaries to treat the sick and write the kings letters. The king himself was treated of gout. The missionaries were in turn allowed to preach to the Ndebele people. Ironically, the Ndebele king forbade his people from accepting and following the new Whiteman's religion. New Ndebele converts were scorned and punished.

Christian teachings emphasized individual accountability to God alone, thus undermining African ideologies of divine leadership. According to Ndlovu-Gatsheni in Raftopoulos (2008) the missionaries promoted the idea of equality which the caste system of the Ndebele denounced. They dismissed African ways of worshipping God as nothing but paganism, and regarded vadzimu (ancestral spirits) as demons and evil spirits. The LMS efforts to convert the Ndebele were fruitless. Missionaries working in Matabeleland for LMS included Charles Helm, David Carnegie, Sykes and Thomson and their families.

It was well after the failure of the LMS at missionary work, that missionaries thought that the success at 'Christianization' itself lay in the colonization of the Ndebele and Shona consciousness, especially the Ndebele who had resisted conversion throughout the 1880s and 1890s before the destruction of the Ndebele state. Some missionaries began to work with the imperial agents. They connived with them with the aim to remove the African ruling classes that were a stumbling block in their Christian mission. The London Missionary Society's representative in Transvaal was sent after careful consideration by Rhodes to sign (negotiate) a treaty with Lobengula. Several missionaries lost African trust by working with colonial agents. John Smith Moffat was trusted by Lobengula as a man of God, but he (Moffat) regarded the Ndebele as 'an army of war mongers....., a nation of murderers whose hand is against every man'. Moffat also believed, as cited in Mashingaidze, 1985, that ".....it would be a blessing to the world if the Ndebele were broken up." These utterances by Moffat were meant to justify colonization of the Ndebele state.

Unaware that Moffat was no longer a good friend, Lobengula granted him a concession on behalf of the imperialist Rhodes who had carefully chosen Moffat, knowing well that Lobengula trusted him. Therefore he would not deny him a concession. The Moffat

treaty was signed on 11 February 1888 under which Lobengula promised not to give any further concessions or to enter into any treaties without the permission from the British. The Moffat treaty overshadowed the Grobler treaty which Lobengula had signed with the Transvaal representative, Piet Grobler, in 1887.

A few months after the signing of the Moffat Treaty, the Rudd Concession, which justified British colonization of Zimbabwe, was signed. Again, the trusted missionaries John Smith Moffat and Charles Helm, whom Lobengula affectionately called 'Umfundisi', influenced Lobengula to sign the Rudd Concession by giving him the impression that he was going to get British protection against colonialism, and that no more than ten men would come to mine in Matabeleland. This was a verbal assurance that was never included in the actual document. What had started as genuine missionary work, was taking on a violent colonial dimension, with Christian missionaries playing a deceitful front role.

Examination Type Questions

Why were missionary activities more successful in Mashonaland than Matabeleland?

Were missionaries always vanguards of European imperialism in Zimbabwe?

How far did Christian missionary activities help Africans to adapt to the changes brought by the introduction of colonial rule?

“The work of Christian missionaries and European colonialists were mutually supportive”. How far do you agree?

- 5) “The flag followed the cross” discuss the validity of this view with reference to the work of missionaries in Pre-colonial Zimbabwe
- 6) To what extent did the Christian missionaries change the socio-economic and political landscape of Africa politics before between 1850-1893.?
- 7) How valid is the view that missionary activity ought to prepare the African mind for full colonial occupation?
- 8) Critically examine the various ways by which Africa re-acted to missionary work and colonial occupation between 1880 - 1893.
- (9) ‘The missionary activities in Zimbabwe before 1860 were more constructive than destructive’ Discuss.
- (10) Why did the missionaries find it difficult to penetrate Ndebele society?
- (11) Assess’s the roles played by missionaries, hunter’s trades and concession scekers

in the colonization of Zimbabwe.

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THE COLONISATION OF ZIMBABWE

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

After studying this chapter students should be able to

To outline the events leading to the occupation of Zimbabwe.

Examine the role played by Rhodes in the colonisation of Zimbabwe.

Assess the extent to which Lobengula was deceived.

In our previous chapter, we noted that as early as 1868, European traders, adventurers and hunters flocked into Matabeleland in large numbers. Rumours of gold bearing rocks at Tati and Gwelo River had been grossly exaggerated that by late 1884, Lobengula the King of the Matabele state was the most important ruler south of the Zambezi. When gold was discovered in South Africa in 1886, speculation became rife that there were other Rands north of Limpopo. Hunters, prospectors and explorers such as Hartely, Selous and Baines all confirmed evidence of gold workings in Zimbabwe. This triggered the scramble for the occupation of Zimbabwe between the Transvaal Boers, the British and the Portuguese. In other words, it can be said Zimbabwe was colonised for her anticipated mineral wealth.

Transvaal Boers had an interest in the colonisation of Zimbabwe. They wanted an independent port outside British control. The targeted port was Beira, but to have access to it they had to control Zimbabwe. The desire by the Boers to occupy Zimbabwe created rivalry between Britain and Transvaal. By 1884 the Cape Colony was under the British. Mozambique had fallen into the Portuguese hands, while Namibia was occupied by the Germans. Transvaal was colonised by the Boers, and in 1885 Britain declared Botswana, their protectorate blocking the Germans and the Boers from advancing into the interior. Transvaal as mentioned earlier in this chapter wished to expand northwards to have access to the port of Beira. In this regard, the occupation of Zimbabwe by Boers would give them a geographical advantage to Mozambique. On the other hand, the British at the Cape wished to encircle Transvaal with British colonies in an effort to force her to accept British control.

Rhodes' imperialist motive also rendered the colonisation of Zimbabwe inevitable. He was determined to seize for the British as much of Africa as possible for the prestige of that country. Rhodes' Cape to Cairo dream meant a continuous British territory from the Cape to Egypt. This was pure imperialism for its own sake. Due to this reason, Mukanya (1999) asserts that, minerals or no minerals, Transvaal encirclement or no encirclement, Zimbabwe would have been occupied all the same and very likely by the BSAC. (British South Africa Company)

In 1887, Transvaal Boers sent two representatives, Pieter and Frederick Grobler to negotiate a friendship treaty between Transvaal and Matabeleland. The Grobler treaty was signed in July 1887. By this treaty Transvaal was going to have representatives in Bulawayo. From Lobengula's point of view, the signing of this treaty was a renewal of his father's friendship with the Transvaal of 1853. Later, Lobengula denied ever having signed such a treaty. Fortunately for the British, there were no independent witnesses to the treaty and of those who signed, only the Groblers could read. The British government disregarded the Grobler treaty, but the Transvaal went on to appoint Pieter Grobler as Consul of the republic in Matabeleland, a post he accepted, but never worked as Consul because he died on his way to Transvaal. The death of Pieter Grobler gave the British a leeway to disregard the Grobler treaty. However, the important feature of this process was to culminate in the colonisation of Zimbabwe.

The Moffat Treaty 1888

The activities of Transvaal Boers spurred Rhodes to action. He had no wish to see Matabeleland slip into Transvaal hands. He persuaded J. S Moffat, the son of Robert Moffat, and former missionary at Inyathi to negotiate an understanding between Lobengula and the British government. Tindall (1984) had hinted that Moffat left missionary work to take up administration for the British government. He was at that time stationed at Papapye in Botswana. Moffat was a good candidate for this mission because he knew Lobengula well since his days in Matabeleland as head of Inyathi mission. Lobengula trusted Moffat as an old good friend.

Moffat succeeded in persuading the King to cancel the Grobler treaty and to enter into a new agreement with the British. Lobengula signed the Moffat treaty on the pretext that Moffat represented the 'Great white queen' In February 1888 the King signed the Moffat treaty under which the king agreed to be a friend of the British queen and promised not to enter into any agreement with any other country without the consent of the British High Commissioner in South Africa. An analysis of the terms of the Moffat treaty reveals that by this treaty Lobengula had placed his territory within the British sphere of influence. Transvaal protested against the treaty. By the international law accepted in Europe at that time, Moffat's and Groblers agreements had more or less equal validity, but the British government stood behind the Moffat treaty. The white population swelled in Matabeleland. This included concession seekers, adventurers, Ivory hunters, explorers and traders. They pretended to be friends to Lobengula in their effort to obtain concessions from the king. The king was in a dilemma as to which group of white people to trust. According to Mashingayidze and Needham (1971), the British hunters and explorers advised the King that the British would be better to deal with than the Boers or Portuguese. Lobengula was persuaded that the best way to prevent either the Boers or Portuguese from taking his country was to grant British groups mining and trading rights, who would in return help to defend his country. The King's position was further complicated by the growing impatience of his amabutho who were eager to drive the whites away. The young Ndebele soldiers were inspired by the defeat of the British at the Battle of Isandhwana by the Zulu. They thought that they could also defeat the British. Lobengula restrained his regiments from provoking the whites for he feared their superior Maxim guns against his inferior assegais. On the other hand the king diplomatically tried to prevent the inevitable destruction of his kingdom.

The Moffat treaty placed the British at a better position as far as the imperial race to the north was concerned. To make the position more secure, Rhodes despatched his own mission to Lobengula to negotiate a mineral concession. The mission consisted of three carefully chosen men. These were Charles Rudd, a member of Rhodes' De Beers Consolidated Company, Frank Thompson, a fluent Nguni speaker and Rochfort Maguire, a lawyer who knew Rhodes from Oxford days.

These men reached Bulawayo in September 1888 and negotiations for a treaty began after five weeks, for it was difficult to arrange an audience with the King. They only got his audience with the support of the local missionary, Father Charles Helm, whom Lobengula trusted as the man of God. Lobengula was bewildered by the assertions of the rival concession seekers and could not decide which, was the best group to work with. Sir

Sydney Shippard, the then British high commissioner, in Botswana helped to dispel the doubts which Lobengula had about the British when he referred to the relationship between the Ndebele and the British as defined by the Moffat treaty. He assured Lobengula that the three men represented powerful business interests which could not be said of all the concession seekers. The king fell into a net of deception. Shippard according to Davidson (1984) was known in Botswana as the father of lies! A few days after Shippard's departure, Lobengula agreed to meet Rhodes' men.

Negotiated terms of the Rudd Concession During Negotiations.

Rudd emphasised that:

Rhodes would 'protect' Matabeleland from European colonisation

Rhodes would put notices in the newspapers notifying white people that they should keep out of Matabeleland.

He lied that not more than ten men would come to mine in Matabeleland and that these men would abide by Ndebele laws.

On the strength of the above lies and assurances, Lobengula put his signature on the Rudd document on 30 October 1888. Lobengula did not know that a mine cannot be worked by ten men. He did not have any mining experience. The negotiated promises were not in the proper concession. Father Helm did not see anything wrong (reprehensible) in this dishonesty.

Documented (Actual) terms of the Rudd Concession

In the words of the concession, according to Tindall (1984), Lobengula gave complete and exclusive charge over all metals and minerals situated and contained in his Kingdoms, principalities and dominions together with full permission to do all things that they may deem necessary to win and procure the same! Lobengula had agreed to grant no concessions to any other whites without the permission of Rhodes.

In return, Lobengula would receive a monthly payment of £100, a thousand rifles, and a gunboat on the Zambezi or £500 instead. Commenting on the terms of the Rudd concession Mukanya (1999) sympathised with Lobengula and concluded that the King was a victim of calculated deception. What was discussed and negotiated upon was not what the actual document contained. Upon persuasion from his trusted 'umfundisi' Father Helm, and Lobengula's Indunas, Lotshe and Sikombo, Lobengula put an X on a document that had different terms altogether. Mukanya also indicated that the gunboat was not meant for Lobengula's comfort but it was for the patrol of the Zambezi and to check on the Portuguese expansion but was never delivered to the King.

Armed with the Rudd concession which gave him the semblance of legality, Rhodes rushed to London to get the Queen's permission to form a company that would colonise

and administer Zimbabwe on behalf of Britain. The charter which Rhodes needed had to outline rules which the company would abide by. Rhodes wanted to obtain a charter for his company to implement the Rudd concession before other European nations could convince Lobengula to disregard the Rudd concession. In 1889 the BSAC was formed. It was an amalgamation of some of the richest companies such as the De Beers and Consolidated Gold fields.

In Matabeleland, Lobengula was later informed by Maund about the actual contents of the Rudd document. Maund hoped to win the King's favours for a trade concession for his own group. He also suggested to Lobengula that he should send some Indunas to England to stop Rhodes from obtaining the charter. Maund himself volunteered to accompany the King's emissaries to the Queen. In February 1889, Lobengula sent his two ambassadors, Babiyane and Mthane to London. Rhodes got the news of Lobengula's delegation. He sent his friend Dr Jameson to reassure Lobengula because he feared the King might repudiate the concession.

Why Rhodes managed to get the Charter.

The British government was attracted to the policy of acquiring colonies run by commercial companies without direct responsibility of the government. Lord Salisbury the conservative Prime minister shared the same ideas with Rhodes, he believed in British imperialism but was aware that the British population would not consent to another tax burden for the sake of administering overseas territories.

To industrialists, merchants and financiers, Rhodes was both a guiding star and someone on whom they pinned their hopes. The Indunas that had been sent to complain to the queen were delayed in London upon Rhodes' advice, until he obtained a charter. Maund, who had advised Lobengula that he had been cheated, later supported Rhodes. Davidson had confirmed that Rhodes had written to Maund in London and instructed Maund to stop assisting Lobengula's mission in its efforts to prevent the British government from granting the charter to the BSAC. Thus Maund kept the two Indunas in London until such time as Rhodes had won support for the charter. Rhodes owned millions of pounds of the DeBeers money. Mashingaidze believes that Rhodes used his money to buy or bribe rivals and opponents in both Southern Africa and Britain. Some, for example, W.A Elliot who at the first time were opposed to a company being granted colonial powers for fear of exploiting the natives, were bribed into silence by Rhodes. Elliot received 100 shares in the chartered company from Rhodes. British government granted Rhodes the charter because they were equally reluctant to let the country pass into Transvaal or Portuguese hands.

In 1889 Rhodes was granted the Royal Charter. It recognised Rhodes' claim over the Rudd concession of 1888. Rhodes was allowed by the Charter to form a company to colonise the whole of Central Africa and to form a police force the British South Africa Police to maintain law and order in the region.

In Bulawayo, the atmosphere was highly charged. Lobengula was annoyed by these developments and ordered for the execution of Lotshe for having persuaded him to sign

the Rudd concession.

The Pioneer Column, and the Occupation of Mashonaland.

After obtaining the Charter Rhodes went on to recruit the Pioneer group that was to occupy Zimbabwe. The pioneers included English, and Africans. Two hundred men were needed and most of them were under 30 years. They were of different trades' e.g black smiths, carpenters, builders, printers, bakers, miners, farmers, tailors and traders. Each of these was promised 3000 acres of land and 15 gold claims. The pioneers were to be accompanied by a police, military force, not only to keep order among the white population but also crush any resistance by the people of Zimbabwe. Khama of Botswana provided 200 auxiliaries. Fredrick C. Selous a hunter, whose knowledge of the land was excellent, guided the column.

When the pioneers assembled at Macloutsie river in large numbers, Davidson asserts that the King sent his messengers protesting thus, 'Has the King killed any white man that an Impi was collecting on his border, or have the white men lost anything they are looking for?' (Davidson 1984:89). Jameson replied that the soldiers were not directed against Lobengula but were merely an escort for protection on the way to Mashonaland, by the road the King had approved.

The Ndebele regiments wanted to fight, but Lobengula restrained them. Finally on 12 September, the pioneers made their settlement at a place which the leaders called fort Salisbury, in honour of the imperialist British Prime Minister. The company's flag was first raised there on 12 September 1890. Thereafter, the day was celebrated as the day of Rhodesia's foundation. Colquhoun was to act as the company's administrator.

The Anglo-Ndebele War: 1893-4. Long term causes of the war

Dr Jameson was appointed Resident Commissioner of Mashonaland after Colquhoun resigned in 1891. Jameson must shoulder a fair responsibility for causing the 1893-4 war with the Ndebele. The Ndebele-White relationships rapidly deteriorated soon after he came to office. In order to stir up a war hysteria Jameson informed the public at large about the preparations for war being made by the Ndebele, about the approach of their troops to company forts, and about their assaults on the Shona and on the Europeans. Every aspect of these reports by Dr Jameson was pure fiction. These lies enabled the government to make it appear that it was forced, contrary to its own peacefulness, to attack the Ndebele. The British government gave the company permission to increase its own armed forces.

After the settler occupation of Mashonaland, friction between the settlers and the Ndebele was inevitable for they pursued different interests. The Ndebele regarded the eastern parts as their raiding grounds, while the Company and settler farmers saw it as a source of cheap labour.

Jameson thought that to delay the clash, a boundary was to be established between the area under Company control and Matabeleland. The boundary was to be respected by

both parties. Lobengula was told not to let his warriors cross into Mashonaland, and prospectors, hunters and company personnel were likewise informed not to stray beyond the boundary demarcated by Jameson. The Ndebele king could not accept the border issue since no boundary existed before the coming of the whites. Moreover the boundary was never static, it subsequently shifted encroaching into the Ndebele area. The boundary issue helped to heighten hostilities.

Some Shona leaders thought that the white settler occupation meant the end of Ndebele raids. Some of them even stopped the payment of tribute to the Ndebele king. In 1891 chiefs such as NemaKonde, and Chivi were killed by Lobengula for not paying their annual tribute to him. These acts were not tolerable to the white settlers and farmers who thought that Lobengula was molesting and frightening their labour force. The response of the white settlers and Jameson to the behaviour of the Ndebele culminated in what historians remember as the Victoria incident.

Victoria Incident: Immediate causes of the Anglo Ndebele war.

Following the killing of Chiefs Chivi and NemaKonde in 1891 Jameson pleaded with Lobengula to keep his army under strict control. Lobengula assured Jameson that whites had nothing to fear. From 1892 a number of raids against the Shona in Masvingo took place. In May 1893 some men under headman Gomara, cut and carried away 5-yards of telegraph wire possibly to make snares. Gomara was ordered either to hand over the culprits or to pay a fine in the form of cattle. He paid in cattle, which Lobengula later claimed to be his. Lobengula demanded their immediate return. Jameson returned the cattle to Lobengula. During this same time, news reached Lobengula that some men under the headman, Bere had taken cattle belonging to Lobengula. The already charged Lobengula decided that the Shona in Victoria district had to be taught a lesson. A raiding army was dispatched under the command of Manyao and Mgandani with instructions from the king not to harm the whites. On 9 July the Ndebele army was seen killing men, driving away cattle and women in areas of Zimuto and Bere. Within few days, white farms and mines in Masvingo district had been deserted by their Shona labourers. Jameson was informed of developments in Victoria. He sent instructions to captain Lendy that he should demand the return of all cattle from the Ndebele and that the raiders should withdraw beyond the border and was authorised to drive them by force if they proved to be uncooperative.

Jameson held a meeting with the leaders of the raiding party. He told Manyao and Mgandani that no refugees would be returned to them and ordered them to drive their army away across the border immediately or else he would drive them by force. Mgandani indicated that it would be difficult to drive such a large army within the stipulated time of two hours. Lendy followed them after 2 hours on horse back and caught up with half of the Ndebele army. Tindall explains that this group was destroying a nearby village. Lendy gave the order to attack and a dozen Matabele, including Mgandani were killed. Lobengula was greatly angered by this incident that he refused to take his monthly subsidy of £100 and started preparing for a full scale war with the whites. Jameson wanted to see the Ndebele state destroyed, for it was an obstacle to their

intended complete colonisation of Zimbabwe. They hoped to find gold in Matabeleland after their efforts in Mashonaland had been frustrated. Jameson gave up hope of incorporating Matabeleland peacefully under company rule and decided that the conquest of this Kingdom was essential.

The course of the war:

The company's forces were divided into three groups: One stationed at Salisbury, under command of Forbes, another at Fort Victoria led by Captain Allan Willson and a third stationed at fort Tuli under captain Pennefather. The three columns converged at Bulawayo with the aim to crush the Ndebele and capturing the King.

The Shangani river battle:

This was the first encounter between the company recruits and the Ndebele. The Ndebele soldiers attacked under cover of the night but were repulsed. At dawn another attack was launched by the Ndebele, but the company held firm. The whites suffered few casualties while 500 out of 6 000 Ndebele warriors were killed.

The Mbembesi Battle

The Company columns advanced towards Bulawayo. On 1 November the Ndebele regiments, Ingubo , Imbizo, and Insukamini attacked. Ndebele losses were high due to the 7 pounder guns used by the whites. The settler volunteers lost 4 men and 7 were seriously wounded. On 4 November the Company forces reached Bulawayo and found the city on fire because Lobengula had set it on before escaping. The union Jack was hoisted in Matabeleland and this marked the complete conquest of Zimbabwe. A column under Major Forbes was dispatched to pursue and capture, Lobengula. Lobengula was vital for negotiations of peace and formal surrender if the Ndebele amabutho were to accept defeat. The column gave up hope of ever finding the king after the Allan Wilson patrol group was wiped out by the Ndebele who ambushed them at the battle of Pupa in Shangani.

Results of Anlgo-Ndebele war.

One important result of this war was the complete colonisation of Zimbabwe after Matabeleland had been besieged.

In 1895 Matabeleland and Mashonaland became known as Rhodesia

The Ndebele lost their independence, and land. They were driven to infertile areas of Gwai and Shangani.

Under colonial administration the Ndebele were forced to pay a series of taxes.

The Ndebele were not allowed to elect another Ndebele king after the disappearance of

Lobengula. Ndebele amabutho were disarmed. They were forced to surrender their assegais to the Company administrators. Finally they were given maize to plant in the semi arid areas of Gwai where according to Davidson only stones could grow.

Examination Type Questions

Evaluate steps followed by Cecil John Rhodes to colonise Zimbabwe.

Discuss the assertion that ‘the Ndebele -Shona relations in the 19th century were far from cordial.’

Analyse efforts made by Lobengula to prevent the colonisation and final destruction of the Ndebele state.

Assess the view that Lobengula was a victim of deception.

Assess the reasons for the Anglo-Ndebele War of 1893.

What external pressures did Lobengula face prior to the colonisation of Matabeleland?

Consider the view that even though the Ndebele were defeated in the 1893 war, the Ndebele state still remained as strong as before.

How justified is the view that Rhodes was determined to destroy the Ndebele state despite Lobengula’s cautious response?

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Demonstration Essay

“Lobengula was a victim of calculated deception.” How valid is this assertion when applied to the colonisation of Zimbabwean from 1870- 1890.

P.E.N Tindall (1984) noted that as early as 1868, European traders, adventurers and hunters flocked into Matabeleland in large numbers. This was because of the speculation that there was another Rand north of Limpopo similar to the Rand that was discovered in Sothern Africa in 1886. The Period 1870- 1890 clearly indicates that Lobengula was a victim of deception due to his illiteracy in the imperialist struggle of Zimbabwe.

The first point to note is that, all treaties that were signed by Lobengula with the whites were made by unscrupulous literate whites seeking to exploit the gold and other asserts in the northern African lands. Lobengula was dealing with treacherous lawyers who had graduated from Europe’s renowned Universities. Missionaries like Charles Helm and Moffat deceived Lobengula by pretending to be men of God when in actual fact they were men of Rhodes. Tindall hinted that Moffat had left missionary work and taken up administration for the British government. This was not known to Lobengula who continued to respect Moffat as a man of God whom he could trust. When Lobengula was persuaded to cancel the Grobler treaty by Moffat, the King, basing upon the respect he had on Moffat quickly disregarded the Grobler treaty and nailed himself to the British through the Moffat treaty of 1888, which placed the King’s territory within the British sphere of influence. All the whites who flocked into Matabeleland pretended to be friends to Lobengula in their efforts to obtain concessions from the king. The King was in a dilemma as to which group of white people to trust. The British explorers and hunters, like Selous, advised the king that the British were better to deal with. Lobengula was cheated that in order to prevent either the Boers or the Portuguese from taking his country he was to grant British groups mining and hunting rights who would in turn help in defending his country. Lobengula was a victim of deception who at the stretch of a pen and a signature which came in the form of a ‘cross’ put on the Rudd concession unconsciously ‘sacrificed’ Zimbabwe on the altar of British colonialism.

He put an X on a document in 1888 that had different terms altogether. He fell into the net of deception. Father Helm did not see anything wrong in deceiving Lobengula. It is clear that Lobengula fell prey to the deceptive treaties of 1887 and 1888 and even how the Charter was clandestinely awarded to Rhodes despite Lobengula’s protests.

Rhodes acquired both the Rudd concession and the charter through conspiracy and deception of Lobengula. He bribed Lotshe by giving him 300 souvenirs so that as a senior Induna he would persuade Lobengula to sign the Rudd concession, which in fact was presented conspiratorially in two forms. Lobengula set forth conditions which were regarded as part of the agreement though they were verbal. He agreed that the grantees would bring no more than ten white men at a time to perform mining work in his territories and their firearms would be surrendered to Lobengula. Mukanya (1999) concluded that the King was a victim of calculated deception because what was promised Lobengula was not in the concession document. The document only stated that Lobengula conceded to Rhodes and his companions “compete and exclusive charge over all things

that they may deem necessary to win and procure the same.” (Davison 1984). There was no mention in the document that not more than ten men would come to Matabeleland and that they would abide by the Ndebele laws. Nevertheless at the end of the text Father Helm’s shamelessly declared, according to Davidson that “ I hereby certify that the accompanying document has been fully interpreted and explained by me to the chief Lobengula and his full council of Indunas and that all the constitutional usages of the Matabele nation had been complied with prior to his executing the same.”

The Ndebele were keen to publicize the story of this fraud as widely as possible hoping to frustrate the activities of their enemies. Unfortunately when Rhodes discovered that Lobengula was assisted by Maund, he bribed Maund so that he would drop his habit of assisting Lobengula.

COLONIAL ADMINISTRATION IN SOUTHERN RHODESIA 1898-1963

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

After studying this chapter students should be able to

Describe the nature of company administration in Southern Rhodesia up to 1951.

Assess African living conditions under colonial administration.

General Overview

After the suppression of the Shona- Ndebele uprising of 1896-7, the British South Africa Company (BSAC) was strongly criticised by those who wished to see the Charter revoked. They wanted the government to take over the responsibility for Rhodesia as a protectorate but this would have involved the government in expenses. However, the British government could not afford to dispense with Rhodes and the Company and felt committed to maintaining the charter. In 1898, Southern Rhodesia was given a Resident Commissioner to act as a ‘watchdog’ of the British government, whose duties included supervision of the police.

Orders-In-Council 1898

The Rhodesian Orders- in-Council combined Matabeleland and Mashonaland under one

administration with headquarters at Salisbury (Harare). Rhodesia was given a new constitution to ensure a sound basis for this administration. The new constitution provided for an Executive council and a Legislative council. In both councils, the company administrator was the presiding administrator. The first Southern Rhodesian constitution was written by Lord Milner, who at that time was a South African High Commissioner. A Legislative council consisting of five members, appointed by the company, and four elected members, was established to make laws that would be approved by the South African High Commissioner. Voting initially was made the preserve of literate male British subjects above 21 years and who possessed property valued at £75. This means that Africans had no rights to vote since they had no property worth the voting value. Pole and dagga huts were and are still regarded as valueless. In 1912 voting property value was amended to £150. In 1919 women were granted voting rights and this increased the numbers of people on the voters roll.

Milton H.W. was company administrator from 1898 to 1914 and he set up a number of government departments. He modelled his administration in the fashion of that of the Cape Colony.

Land

As early as 1894, Africans began to lose their land. After the first Chimurenga, the whites began to alienate African land, but had no legal rights to do so, except on the basis that they had conquered the blacks. Reserves were created for the black settlement, which were poor, tsetse infested and prone to drought. Upon creation of these reserves from as early as 1894, the Company administrators hoped to make the reserves temporarily on the belief that these Africans would be absorbed in the money market. Between 1908 and 1915 the Company took 1, 5 million acres of the best farm land away from the reserves. Boundaries for all reserves were redrawn to exclude any areas that had rich soils, good climate conditions and that received adequate rainfall. Many people were pushed into newly created reserves, and by 1912 those blacks who still lived on land outside the reserves were slapped with extra taxes, for example, grazing fees' for their livestock. This drove many blacks to reserves most of which were far from railway transport and road networks. Phimister and Proctor (1991) confirm that by the early 1920s, nearly 65% of the black population in Southern Rhodesia lived in the reserves.

The Peasantisation of the African 1892-1920:

A peasant is a rural cultivator who works the land as his own, but sends his surplus to the market. The beginning of colonialism in 1890 ushered in the rise of African peasantry. At first, Africans wanted to go on living in their traditional ways although much of their land had been alienated to white settlers. Africans were not used to a money economy, but as time passed by, the introduction of several taxes compelled them to produce surplus on their small farms for sale to find money for taxes. As long as taxes were paid, peasants were forced to sell everything they produced. African peasants preferred to earn money

through selling their crops for rents and taxes rather than leave their homes to work for whites.

According to Ranger T.O (1970), a few black farmers became wealthy and were able to buy land in African Purchase areas. Some of these became successful farmers and began to support the government. The government, according to Ranger, depended entirely on food grown by Africans. Most blacks in various districts did not have land therefore, they had to pay rent to white farmers who did not utilise their farms very much but relied on rent collected from the 'squatter' peasants living on the land. The mines also provided a ready market for the black farmers produce. However, the peasants' fortune changed from 1903 when many farmers' (whites) ventured into agriculture due to frustrations on failure to find the second Rand. This increased the demand for land by whites, and laws were passed by the government to get rid of the African peasant. High rents were demanded by white farmers who rented their pieces of land to 'squatter' peasants.

Morris Carter Commission

This commission altered native reserves and recommended that people were supposed to continue living in reserves as they were slowly assimilated into the labour market. The Morris Carter Commission recommended segregation of all land according to race ownership on permanent basis. The controversy of this Commission is on whether it was to protect the interests of the Africans or satisfy the Europeans. The Commission, according to Collin Leys (1977) states that, 'In the best interests of the two races, the commission hold that the members of the two races cannot live together side by side, probably for generations to come ... and it is better that the points of contact in this respect between the two races should be reduced' As a result of this Commission, Africans were no longer allowed to purchase land on the same basis as the Europeans and were to be restricted to the native reserves and some to small native purchase areas where they could buy land.

White farmers who had best land close to markets and railway lines could rapidly increase their agricultural production and size of their cattle herds.

White farmers received financial aid from the government in the form of loans and scientific advice about the best ways to grow cash crops. Contrary to this, Africans only received advice on how to grow the same crops on a smaller plot. This was meant to reduce competition between white farmers and African peasants so that more people could be forced off white owned land and made to live in the reserves which by 1925 were becoming overcrowded and overstocked.

In 1929, the Morris Charter was accepted and enacted as the land Apportionment Act of 1930, and came into effect on 1 April 1931, the all fools day.

The land Apportionment Act of 1931

This Act set aside half the country's best land for settler farmers. Between 1930 and 1950

most peasants were, forced off the land set aside for whites and even if the white owners were not using the land. Land was set aside for unborn white children and for future use by the government. The Land Apportionment Act was a well orchestrated move meant to reduce the African farmers' entry into the cash crops and also to frustrate African peasants' efforts to buy land from the government close to and in competition with Europeans. The, entire country was divided into white or black with some land left for game reserves. The land apportionment act created two separate societies, black and white. There was a two pyramid policy which rested on the territorial separation of the two races. The Act also decreed that all Africans living on European land had to be removed. The conditions under which the African could occupy land in the European area were tightened. Instead of solving the problems of overcrowding in the reserves, the act put more pressure on the already overcrowded reserves leading to land deterioration due to overgrazing, destructive methods of cultivation and overcrowding. By 1938, about 4 million areas of land in reserves were reported to be damaged. The acreage for damaged land increased to 8 million by 1949. Gullies and dongas developed especially along the roads leading to the dip tanks. This resulted in river siltation which also resulted in running out of water.

The Native land Husbandry Act of 1951.

The Dansiger Commission of 1949 had recommended that Africans had to have a permanent home in the reserves. The Commission also recommended that African livestock be cut down through destocking. The Native land Husbandry Act was formed as the basis of the Dansiger Commission. It was meant to put right things that had gone wrong with the Land Apportionment Act of 1931.

By the Land Husbandry Act, chiefs lost their power to allocate land. Land was now allocated by the Native Commissioners. The chiefs reacted against the Land Husbandry Act. The act dictated that households were to be registered. Those who were not present at the time of registration lost their land rights automatically.

Conservation methods had to be closely monitored by the agricultural demonstrators who used coercive methods. The attempts to stop soil erosion failed as pressure on land continued. Individual land holdings were too small for sound agricultural programmes. About 111 000 families could not get land, so the Land Husbandry Act did much to generate racial tension and political agitation during the 1950-60s. These land policies were segregatory, equal to apartheid that was practiced in South Africa.

Racial segregation was perpetrated down to, crops and animals. The introduction of new oppressive legislations like the Maize Control Act of 1921, helped to squeeze extra money from the peasants in order to help white farmers. By the Maize Control Act, African maize was bought by the Maize Marketing Board at a cheaper price determined by the board. On all sales, a levy was taken on the price paid to the farmer. In most cases, the Maize was not graded, it was all put in grade D which fetched very little for the peasant farmer. The same was also felt by African cattle farmers.

The Cattle Levy Act of 1931.

African cattle were sold through the Cold Storage Commission, which also pegged cattle pricing on racial grounds. The idea was to drive Africans to town for manual jobs and to stop them from competing with white farmers. As agriculture ceased to pay, many Africans flocked to towns. In towns, people were expected to produce passes. They also needed money to pay a horde of taxes that had been introduced to finance the government.

Land and Nationalism

Nationalism in Southern Rhodesia can be divided into two phases. The first phase is from 1930s to 1960s, and the other one is from 1960s to the armed struggle.

The earliest resistance to colonial administration in Southern Rhodesia appeared during the First World War with the formation of the Railway Workers Union in 1916. This was later followed by the Mines and General workers Association, the Rhodesian Bantu Voters Association and the Industrial Commercial Workers Union. These early movements had been led by urbanised foreigners, especially from South Africa. In the 1930s, indigenous Rhodesians began to lead, the likes of Reverend Douglas T. Samkange and Aaron Jacha. These two were amongst the leaders of the Southern Rhodesian African Congress formed in 1934. The party appealed to all people as opposed to the Rhodesian Bantu Voters Association which only appealed to the elite. The formation of the ANC by Masotsha Ndlovu in 1957 spearheaded African nationalism.

Independent churches like the White Bird (Shirichena) led by Mathew Zvimba opposed the land Apportionment Act. The 1930s show a simmering of Shona discontent provoked by dipping fees and destocking. By about 1945-1965 people began to organise political parties intended at removing settler government. African leaders promised the reallocation of land as a matter of top priority. The Land Husbandry act saw the expulsion of the Africans from the European lands. Urban lands were also affected by the land policies. Africans lived in temporary make shift houses. They resided in locations and compounds which were closely associated to the reserves. Africans had to move to towns because of the deplorable conditions in the reserves. Due to these problems the first African political party was formed in 1957 led by Masotsha Ndlovu. The African National Congress talked of the people's closeness to the soil. They called themselves 'Vana Vevhu,' and talked of their right to their land. They did not want to work in mines and towns. Europeans crafted the idea of depriving Africans so that they would work in the mines. Africans were agriculturists and they saw no reason why they had to go to work in the mines and ultimately labour shortage resulted.

The Native Rhodesia labour Bureau

Its main task was to resolve the contradiction which arose in labour supply during the years when industries were cutting down wages. Industries aimed at output maximisation and cost minimisation. To maximise production there was need to expand cheap labour force. The Native Labour Bureau had to recruit labour force from within and outside Rhodesia. The NLB secured involuntary labour because it was competing with South Africa, Witwatersrand.

The Bureau got the labour by rounding up Africans and forcibly taking them to the mines. This drove the flow of voluntary labour from rural areas. The Bureau also waited for economic forces like drought to push the peasants out of rural areas. Unfortunately, Africans began to shun the labour from the Bureau because the Chibharo workers were exploited ruthlessly than any other African labourers. They were deployed to worst mines where they were accommodated in compounds that were overcrowded.

The Compound System

The system was brought about by the need to control and discipline labour force as well as to eliminate diamond theft and illicit buying and selling of diamonds and gold. The system was rigorously applied especially in the years of labour shortage by Europeans. Sjamboks and guns were used liberally to stop strikes. Spies and informers were planted in the compounds to report if workers were planning to strike. From 1908 several mine strikes occurred, such as at Aryshire mine, 1908, Wankie mine, 1913 and the most celebrated Shamva mine strike in 1927. Reasons for the strikes were the poor working conditions, low wages that were perpetuated by the rise in cost of living. Workers were expected to buy from their mine bosses shops which were expensive and kept them indebted. A compound was like a prison because married workers lived far away from their wives. Letters from and to workers were read by management. Workers were frequently beaten for failing to work hard or for any resistance which the management saw. Sometimes black workers were assaulted by white settlers at work to the extent of death, but these were treated as minor offenses. Black mine workers lived under very repressive situations where it was very risky to organise or express discontent openly. As a result workers had to develop hidden forms of struggle without being caught. Examples are:

- They deliberately worked very slowly and so reduced mine owners profits.
- They quietly destroyed machinery and other mine property which would be expensive to repair or replace.
- Desertion was also common especially from mines whose management were notorious for ruthlessness. Many flocked to better paying South African mines. Many migrant labourers from Zambia and Malawi only worked for some few months in Zimbabwe and deserted to the south after they saved some money for their journey. Mine workers from Southern Rhodesia also joined in the movement to the South 'Wenela.' Many workers also illegally altered their passes sometimes. They would forge their employers'

signatures to show that they had finished their contract when in fact they had deserted. Some also altered the wages written on the pass in order to receive higher pay.

Farm workers were not spared from white cruelty. Their wages were even lower than mine workers. Although they were not controlled by compound rules farm labourers were constantly harassed and beaten like mine workers, farm workers resorted to non co-operation as forms of resistance. Shonas and Ndebeles shunned working as farm labourers and the vast farm labour force was drawn from Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) and Nyasaland (Malawi).

Examination Type Questions

Describe and explain the measures adopted by the colonial regime to systematically alienate African land between 1903 – 1931.

Assess the impact of the Land Apportionment Act upon African farmers in Zimbabwe.

“The Land Husbandry Act was better than the Land Apportionment Act in the way it affected African” how valid is this assessment.

Analyse the methods which were used by colonial officials to compel Africans to work for the settlers.

In what ways, and how effectively, did Africans react to the abuses of colonialism during this period (1898 – 1963)?

Evaluate methods used by the settler government to protect white farmers from native competition in Agriculture.

Assess the living and working conditions of early mine and farm workers. How did these workers express their discontent?

Analyse the assertion that early African opposition to colonialism was triggered more by land policies than taxes.

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THE SHONA NDEBELE UPRAISING 1896-7

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

After studying this chapter students should be able to

Examine the causes of the Shona Ndebele- Uprisings.

Assess the role of spirit mediums in the uprisings.

Discuss the course and results of the uprisings

BACKGROUND

There is no debate among historians concerning the causes of the Ndebele-Shona risings of 1896 – 1897. In fact, it is commonly agreed that colonial policies which were geared towards the exploitation, marginalisation and plunder of the Africans were directly behind the historical uprisings in both Matabeleland and Mashonaland.

Nevertheless, the organisation of the risings in Matabeleland differed from that of Mashonaland and it is in this area where considerable controversy among historians has been registered. Different theoretical frameworks have been advanced by historians with T.O. Ranger's pioneering work, Revolt in Southern Rhodesia, 1896 – 1897 forming the most important background to the debate. Ranger argued that the risings in both Mashonaland and Matabeleland were inspired and instigated by the Mwari Cult, and that traditional priests such as Mkwati, Nehanda and Kagubi were instrumental in the timing and organisation of the risings. He also argued that the risings were both pre-planned and in many ways simultaneous.

However, it is important to note that Ranger's thesis has been challenged and successfully overturned by historians J.D. Cobbing and D.N. Beach. Cobbing's research mainly focussed on Matabeleland whilst Beach concentrated on some key areas of Mashonaland. They both argued that the revolts in both Matabeleland and Mashonaland were really caused by settler abuses and that the traditional priests played often insignificant roles, and in many cases their influences were never supra-regional, but limited to the areas where they operated. It is interesting to note that Cobbing and Beach also pointed out quite a few errors and false assumptions in Ranger's thesis, hence watering it down altogether.

Although this chapter may not fully exhaust all the areas of historical debate on this central topic, it discusses the causes of the risings, highlight the key features of the debate of the role of the Mwari cult and the "priesthood" in general, in the risings, and give a brief summary of the results in both Matabeleland and Mashonaland.

MATABELELAND: The causes of the 1896 – 1897 risings **The Loss of Independence**

This was one of the bitterest grievances of the Ndebele in that it equated them with all other groups and communities which they had conquered. Their over-lordship position was now lost and they hated the idea of working side by side with the Kalanga and Shona on white-owned mines or farms. More importantly, the Shona police carried out frequent and often cruel patrols among the Ndebele. This included maintaining general law and order, collecting the hated tax in cash or pursuing run-away prisoners. In the process, the Shona police usually ill-treated the Ndebele through assaulting them or abusing their

wives and daughters. This was a tactic used by the BSA Company to divide and rule the Africans by sowing hatred between the two groups.

The loss of independence also meant that the Ndebele could no longer carry out their annual raiding expeditions either among the Shona or among the Tswana in Botswana – Neither could they carry their counter – raids against the Shona in order to recover their stolen cattle. There was therefore need to restore their lost privileged status.

One important factor which inspired the Ndebele to attempt to reassert their independence was the fact that the Ndebele were still intact as a state although they had been defeated in 1893. Their age regiments had remained intact and so had their line of kingship, the Indunas and Mphakathi still wielded a lot of authority among their people. Although Lobengula had died or disappeared in 1894, historian J. Cobbing writes that he would not have been replaced before a waiting period of two years during which “umbuyiso” ceremonies would have been held. In this vein, Nyamanda, Lobengula’s son born in 1873 by Mbida Mkhwananzi, one of Lobengula’s most senior wives was perfectly suitable as heir to the Ndebele throne. All these factors invigorated the Ndebele to reassert their independence by 1896, now that Nyamanda had also come of age by that time. He had also gained a lot of favour with Mlotshwana and Manyeu of Nyamandlovu who were regarded as the instigators of the northern rising. This was because Nyamanda had displayed immense military abilities, lots of leadership skills and was strongly anti-white.

Loss of Ndebele Cattle and Land

It was known that just before the outbreak of the 1893 – 1894 war Lobengula owned 250 000 cattle but after that war the Ndebele herd of cattle stood at 40 930. The number depreciated as settlers grabbed more and more of the Ndebele cattle. The economic and social value of cattle among the Ndebele was far more than what the settlers could imagine and the level of deprivation which they caused among the Ndebele by taking away their prime source of sustenance was too hard to contemplate.

The Ndebele rightly viewed the theft of their cattle as a deliberate ploy to impoverish them and thereby force them into labour migrance. Clearly, there was an inseparable relationship between the loss of land and theft of Ndebele cattle: Once the Land Commission of 1894 had created the reserves, the Ndebele had two options – either migrate to the dry and unhealthy Gwaai and Shangani reserves or alternatively, remain on their former land as squatters compelled to provide “cheap, semi-slave labour in exchange for permission to remain on white property” Bhebe N et al – From Iron Age to Independence: A History of Central Africa). Hence, both the expropriation of cattle and land were intended to force the Ndebele into labour migrance on white farms or mines. This phenomenon was duplicated among the Shona and was characteristic of the worst forms of colonial economic exploitation.

Some Common Causes

There is no doubt that the occurrence of natural disasters in 1895 – 1896 in both Matabeleland and Mashonaland was in one way or another attributed to the presence of the settlers in the two regions. In 1895 – 1896 a severe draught killed most of the crops in both Matabeleland and Mashonaland and those that seemed to survive were then devoured by swarms of locusts. The result was widespread famine in the districts.

Worse still, the rinderpest epidemic killed hundreds of cattle and the settler government officials in their efforts to eradicate the disease ordered that all cattle showing signs of rinderpest should be killed, and people were not allowed to eat the meat of the dead cattle. While this might have been a wise veterinary measure it came at the background of forced labour, taxation, land alienation and a cruel and arrogant settler regime. Natural disasters immediately assumed political significance as the entire presence of the white colonialists was interpreted as a curse among the Africans. Bhebe, Needham and Mashingaidze in From Iron Age to Independence wrote that the natural disasters meant that God or Mwari was angry. They add that it was confirmed by traditional religious authorities all over the country who blamed the white people for angering Mwari. These are said to have warned that unless the people drive out the whites from the country, the Africans would continue to suffer. In this way, religious leaders played a fundamental role in the war of resistance in Eastern and Southern Zimbabwe.

However, such argument as the above had been thoroughly revised and the above authors admit that “the uprising was inevitable because colonial occupation had seriously undermined the Shona and (Ndebele) way of life”.

It is important to further note that the role played by the traditional authorities in interpreting the gravity of the causes has been vastly debated by J. Cobbing and D.N. Beach. We will explore the debate later on, but at this point we will just highlight part of Cobbing’s criticism of T.O. Ranger’s argument in Revolt in Southern Rhodesia. He writes in his article, “Absent Priesthood. Another look at the Rhodesian Risings of 1896 – 1897”, (1977) in The Journal of African History, Vol 18, No. 1 that the African grievances such as forced labour, cattle seizures, hut tax, land encroachments, an inefficient and bullying administration and the cumulative disasters of drought, locusts and rinderpest were bad enough to cause an uprising or uprisings. He asks the question: “Is it necessary to postulate this “co-ordinating factor”, or to rummage for a “secret history” for the wars when in most respects the nature of the risings and the manner in which Africans fought reflected very closely the structures of participating political units?” Indeed the gravity of the causes themselves was mutually self-reinforcing, especially taking into account the fact that the policies of colonial rule were not static, but progressively got worse by the day as more severe demands were imposed on the

Africans.

Causes of the 1896 – 1897 Risings among the Shona

According to D.N. Beach in his book War and Politics in Zimbabwe, 1840-1900, the capitalist system among the Shona made itself felt in four interconnected fields. These were mining, farming, trading and the government. In the southern Shona country all of these were present, and in general they became much more effective from 1894 onwards. Essentially, it was the Native Department that had the greatest effect, but the other fields were of considerable importance as well.

Mining activities took up few of the physical resources of the country as far as the people were concerned. Operations were concentrated on a small area around each mine, and only timber resources were affected. But the mines required labour and wages which were not high enough to attract more than a few volunteers. The Southern Shona had preferred to go south to the Kimberley and Rand mines from the 1870s and 1880s and this continued up to 1896. Those who preferred to work on local mines generally preferred surface work rather than the relatively higher paid but dangerous underground work. The mine-owners would recruit forced labour themselves as they did at Tebekwe before 1896, or rely upon the government to supply such labour although until the Native Department was formed in 1894. It lacked the personnel to do so on a large scale.

Besides that, it is important to remember that the impact of forced labour upon the Shona was partly cushioned by the foreign voluntary labour sector, especially before 1894. However, after 1894, mining activity increased sharply. European farming settlements increased in some areas and the Native Department coerced labour and collected tax. Consisting of one or two European officers and a body of African “police” in each district, it rendered the Shona liable to forced labour.

Worse still, labour coercion often took place during the agricultural work-season, and tax exactions involved the removal of valuable livestock accumulated and protected as an insurance against crop failure. This became a bitter inter-connected grievance.

Settler farming came as an area of exploitation and deprivation among the Africans – whether the Shona or Ndebele. It has been noted that reserves were created in Matabeleland and the Ndebele were systematically forced to move into them. In Mashonaland the picture was similar. Very large tracts of land along the Highveld was granted to white farmers by 1896, especially after 1893, and those white settlers who started farming operations also required labour and paid even lower wages than the miners. Hence, land alienation dealt a double blow on the Shona (and the Ndebele). Africans lost their best land and were forced to work for the new masters.

Be that as it may, it is important to place land alienation into a more accurate historical perspective. D.N. Beach argues that some of the very large estates granted to land companies remained almost undeveloped before 1896 and had very little effect upon the people whose lands had been pegged out. Moreover, Beach also argues that while the Afrikaners were the ones who did the most to work on “their” farms, this did not automatically lead the Shona living nearby to take part in the Chimurenga. Thus, the Afrikaners to the North West and east of Enkeldoorn were attacked in June 1896 but those in the south and in the Chikwanda area northeast of Victoria were not. This pattern was true across the whole country. In Melsetter, vast land alienation had taken place by 1896, yet that district stayed out of the Chimurenga, whereas the Hartley and eastern Matabeleland districts with very few farmers were deeply involved in the risings.

Historians are quiet as to why the above pattern was noticed during the first Chimurenga. It is an area which requires further research. It is of course reasonable at this stage to argue that colonial rule affected people of different districts in different ways and in many cases the behaviour of local white settlers made a major difference. In this vein, an interesting pattern developed during the risings: the Shona who lived on the edges of the southern eastern lowveld and across the southern Shona lands of Matibi, Chivi, Chirimuhanzu, Gutu, Zimuto dynasties actually fought on the side of the British South Africa company, as they had done in 1893, basically because they feared a Ndebele victory in spite of the fact that they had suffered severely from company misrule. Hence, it is important to realise that while the causes of the risings were in many ways common, the pattern of the risings themselves were complex.

Nevertheless, it was clearly the government and particularly the Native Department that affected the people the most. The impact of the Native Department has been partly been referred to above, but let us look at it in more detail. The government’s magistrates and police were primarily concerned with the defence of the interest of the white community, although they did occasionally intervene in the affairs of the Africans. Firstly, it was to help collect the cattle formerly raided by the Shona from the Ndebele and this was done from 1894 onwards. When combined with the fact that the hut tax was also collectable in cattle, this was bitterly resented by some Shona communities which had fought on the side of the whites against the Ndebele in 1893.

Secondly, the Native Department was tasked with the collection of hut tax in Mashonaland province. Closely related to this fact is that the department would supply labour to the farms and to the mines and would also intervene in African politics and disputes, paralleling the work of African chiefs and headmen. In order to perform such tasks, the department appointed Native Commissioners who were each backed by a force of irregular armed African “police” or “detectives” into as many districts as possible. These stayed in one area through out the year and their conduct as they carried out colonial duties, such as the collection of tax and labour, was usually worse than the

Ndebele and Gaza raiders. This indeed annoyed the Africans.

The collection of tax, for instance, was supposed to be done in cash, the idea being that this would force men to work for long periods at low wages. But it was also collected in the form of livestock and grain. Prices of these were deliberately knocked down to coerce families to send members to farms and mines, and thus, for example, 80 cattle and 44 goats fetched only 146 pounds in 1895 in Charter. This reveals a grim and hated picture of exploitation as enforced by the Native Department.

WHY DID THE SHONA RISE IN 1896 AND NOT BEFORE THAT DATE?

One of the main reasons why the Shona rose in 1896, and not earlier, is the fact that they believed that the European presence was temporary, like that of the Portuguese between 1629 and 1693. They believed that even though the company was parcelling out their land and in many ways abusing them through the various forms of exploitation, their stay was limited and could be tolerated. Their entry into Mashonaland had never been requested or formalised through treaties, requests or any such procedures. However, it was not uncommon in Shona culture to have visitors come in on an impromptu basis, but it was common knowledge that they would later leave. The Shona communities must have been obviously shocked to discover that their new masters meant to completely dispossess them for good.

Moreover, many Shona rulers had found the Europeans useful in local politics. D.N. Beach noted that many of the clashes between the Europeans and the Shona in 1890-4 were in fact engineered by other Shona groups to their own advantage. From 1894 onwards resistance to company rule became more noticeable, but it took the form of isolated and unconnected incidents. What this indicates is the fact that the Shona had come to view the presence of the whites as an important factor in the local equation of power. Local rebellions, raids and counter-raids among the Shona as well as against the Ndebele were in many ways assisted by the whites. The whites too, gave a hand to the Shona groups as a means of gaining a foothold on Shona political structures.

It must be noted too that the widespread presence of the BSA Company police worked hard to support the local Native Department staff. However, from October 1895, most of the police force was transferred to Bulawayo where their presence was more necessary. Even in that situation, the Shona could not rise in 1895 October for two main reasons: October marked the serious beginning of the planting season and all communities were busy ensuring that their lands were ready for the agricultural season. Secondly, the outbreak of locusts earlier in the year had served to produce bad harvests after May/June 1895. It was therefore necessary to avoid a repeat of poor harvests in the following year.

It must be noted that when the risings eventually occurred in 1896 and the Shona joined the risings in June of that year, it made a lot of sense from the agricultural point of view.

The month of June marked the end of the harvest season in Mashonaland. News of Ndebele victories in that month obviously served as a timely coincidence for most of the Shona groups to join in and shake off the yoke of colonial bondage.

Not only that, it must be remembered that before 1894 the colonial economic policies had not become too exploitative. The Shona could still continue with their lives and in some cases where districts were vast, the Shona experienced little interference from the white settlers. As indicated above, the presence of voluntary migrant labour from Malawi and Mozambique to work on settler farms and mines, and the fact that the mines and farms were still fewer and of smaller scale, served to cushion the Shona from the demands of forced labour. However, the rising number and size of mines and farms, as well as the formation of the Native Department in 1894 changed with the responsibility of labour recruitment, tax and livestock collection among the Shona, naturally worsened the anger and bitterness against the colonial invaders.

The Course of the 1896 – 1897 Risings in Matabeleland and Mashonaland

The course of the Ndebele-Shona uprisings in 1896 – 1897 has sparked a lot of controversy, and it is not the intention of part of this chapter to exhaust the debate but to highlight the major lines of controversy to enable the young students of history to enquire deeper into the subject. Professor T.O. Ranger's books, Revolt in Southern Rhodesia 1896 – 1897: A Study in African Resistance, (1979) postulated some pioneering arguments which were, subsequently, severely criticised and almost entirely demolished by Professor J.D. Cobbing, whose research mainly concentrated in Matabeleland and D.N. Beach, whose research focused on some part of Mashonaland. T.O. Ranger's compelling book has been described as a "magnificent mosaic" by historian Richard Werbner while both Beach and Cobbing concur that it forms a vital foundation to the study of African resistance to early forms of colonial rule in this period.

In short, Ranger, writing on both Matabeleland and Mashonaland, vigorously asserts that the risings in both regions were coordinated by the traditional priests, Mkwati, Nehanda, Kaguvi etc. Moreover, Mkwati is argued to have played a more pivotal role in influencing the timing of the risings in Mashonaland, thus making the risings regional in character. In addition, Ranger also argues that the risings were pre-planned and simultaneous.

However, the Rangerian model of a closely-knit Ndebele-Shona religious high command organising a pre-planned, simultaneous rising has been academically blown apart by J.D. Cobbing and D.N. Beach. Both argue that the risings were neither co-ordinated nor organised. They prove that the risings were not pre-planned and the influence of millenarian priests was either limited to the much smaller communities where they belonged as in the case of Mashonaland or totally non-existent as Cobbing's thesis has

proved for the case of Matabeleland.

The Course of the 1896 Risings in Matabeleland

One of Ranger's false assumptions was that the Ndebele state and its political and military structures had been either severely weakened or destroyed during the 1893 war. Ranger assumed that the defeat of the Ndebele in 1893 led to the collapse of the military command structures, whilst the death or disappearance of Lobengula in 1894 put the Ndebele state into political uncertainty. This yearning gap naturally had to be filled in by Mkwati and other millennial priests in co-ordinating the Ndebele state as well as inspiring them to fight on once the revolt had broken in March 1896.

However, Julian R.D. Cobbing in his article "The Absent Priesthood: Another look at the Rhodesian Risings of 1896 – 1897", Journal of African History, Vol. XVIII, No. 1, 1977 has more than overturned T.O. Ranger's landmark publication on the risings. Cobbing shows that the structure of the Ndebele kingdom was far stronger in 1896 than Ranger had believed, and that Nyamanda was in fact installed as King during the rising. Whereas Ranger saw the secular leadership as essentially subordinate to the religious leaders, Cobbing has shown how the origin of this idea lay in the prejudices of the colonial officials whose words constitute a quotation of about 44 percent of the three chapters on the Ndebele state.

It is important to note that the Ndebele royal family together with the lesser chiefs, the Indunas, were the ones central in instigating the first murders, arranged for the distribution of ammunition, organised the supply routes and sent the women and children into the hills at the time of the outbreak of war. For instance, Cobbing illustrates that under Nyamanda, the royal family held decisive influence from the beginning at almost every corner of the Ndebele state. Lobengula's uncle, Manondwana Tshabalala, led levies of the old Insuga 'Ibutho' around Gwelo, while north of Gwanda "Umsolo", who was Lieutenant of the Royal Kraal in Lobengula's time, was the first to openly rebel. Nyamanda's uncles, Nyanda of Mzinyathi and Fezela of Dukada, were leaders in the upper UMzingwani valley and Eastern Matopos, as were Lobengula's "cousins" Umlugulu of Eyengo and Sikombo Mguni of Intemba, who had married a sister of Lobengula.

Moreover, the Induna of Ujinga (Inyati region) Nkomo, Ndiweni's sister, Fawe, was a widow of Lobengula; the upper Maleme valley leader, Role Masuku, was husband of Lobengula's famous daughter, Famona. The initial Godlwayo outbreak had been led by Maduna Mafu, a nephew of Lobengula. In support of Maduna were others of the old King's nephews such as Ntembuzane Matshazi of Ndinana in the Insiza valley and Manyagavula Masuku of Matshetshe on the upper Umzingwane. By 1896 there were few, if any, great families in the Ndebele state not related to the royal family in one way

or another.

Moreover, in Central Matabeleland itself, Nyamanda enjoyed considerable backing on the Bembezi from Lobengula's formidable widow, Lozigeyi, who had distributed ammunition at the beginning of the rising, together with about a dozen other of Lobengula's queens, his full brother, Tshakalisa, the only other son of Lobengula of fighting age in 1896. Nyamanda was also supported by Karl Khumalo or Mvelani, Lobengula's one-time "secretary", and by former loyal chiefs of Lobengula and the star fighting leaders of the rising, such as the brothers, Manyeu and Mpotshwana Ndiweni of Nyamandlovu and Madliwa of Mahlokohloko. This was the headquarters of the Ndebele rising if there was one.

Indeed none of the afore-cited chiefs, or even Nyamanda himself, were connected to the Mwari cult or any other secret influences, as Ranger argued. More importantly, Ranger claimed that Umlugulu, Khumalo was a kind of "high priest" who worked hand in glove with Mwabani, priest at the Matojeni (Wirirani) shrine. Cobbing contends that there is actually nothing to support this. Cobbing argues that Ranger's main error concerns Mwabani who was not priest at Wirirani in 1896. The man with whom Umlugulu was linked, Mnthwani, was not Mwabani. He was Mnthwani Dlodlo of Ngama, brother of Lozigeyi and genuinely one of the rising leaders. In addition, Umlugulu was only a "priest" within the context of purely Ndebele religious practices being one of the collectors of the sacred amasi (milk) used in the inxwala ceremony, a function performed only by royal Khumalos. Ndebele religion centred on the Nguni high God, UNkulunkulu, the worship of ancestral spirits (amadlozi), the inxwala and the person of the King rather than the cult caves.

What role was played by Mkwati in the Matabeleland uprising? Ranger claims that shortly after 1893 Mkwati turned Ntabazikamambo into the dominant Mwari shrine. This was, according to Ranger of great significance because of its association with the old Rozvi capital of Manyanga. Mkwati is then said to have initiated the Inyati rising by issuing orders to the local Ndebele chiefs of Inqobo and Ujinga, Mthini and Nkomo respectively and bringing into the war the Rozvi followers of such chiefs as Uwini and Gwaybana. According to Ranger, Ntabazikamambo became the strategic headquarters of the whole northern rising, Mkwati, despite his Shona outlook, was working hand in hand with the Nyamanda group. Eventually, however, the contradiction was resolved as Mkwati fell out with the Ndebele. For a time he sent round armed gangs under his own subordinates such as Makumbi, to prevent the Ndebele from surrendering. But he now increasingly turned his attention to the Shona proper, whom, as the Ndebele rising flagged, he had brought into the war in June 1896, so Ranger argues.

Cobbing, nevertheless, argues that the picture portrayed about Mkwati is too exaggerated, to the point of guesswork. For instance, research has proven that Mkwati actually went into the Mambo Hills not in 1893 – 1894 but after the 1896 rising had broken out. It was

also not due to Rozvi enthusiasm, but because the hills were the nearest refuge to his home of Ujinga. The hills had never previously and have not subsequently been numbered among the Mwari shrines and it is unlikely that they were so regarded between March and July 1896. According to Cobbing, "In all probability Mkwati was never a priest at all, but an important local "Iwosana" (cult messenger) whose advice fitted in with the policy of the Ndebele chiefs". Apart from the coincidence involving Ntabazikamambo with a defunct Rozvi capital and his personal relationship with Uwini (apparently father of his wife) there is nothing to link Mkwati with the Rozvi. It is also likely that Mkwati also participated as a citizen of the Ndebele kingdom. Moreover, there is no clarity whether it was not Mthini and Nkomo manipulating Mkwati, rather than the other way round.

Moreover, it cannot be a valid argument to say Mkwati sent armed gangs to prevent the Ndebele from surrendering. The armed gangs of the Inyathi region which were formed to prevent surrenders were common all over the kingdom. Mpotshwana, Madliwa and Mvelani, all close to Nyamanda, sent out patrols in the Mahlokohloko – Nyamandlovu area for the same purpose. As a matter of fact, Cobbing corrects that Makumbi was a Ndebele "Umlisa" subordinated to Mthini rather than to Mkwati.

Nor is there much evidence that Ntabazikamambo was the command centre of the northern rising. It was essentially a refugee hide-away as the six hundred women and children and a thousand cattle were captured there after the fight of 5 July make clear.

Not only that, it is important to remember that the Ndebele on the Umguza were generally led by the chiefs, and in so far as there was a combined strategy, and there was not much of one, it came from the Bembezi group around Nyamanda. The picture of Ndebele armies waiting upon the orders of Mkwati, of Ndebele warriors rushing to the attack in the belief that the white man's bullets would turn to water, of chiefs neglecting to defend positions in the assumption that magical powers would prevent the whites from crossing, simply does not fit in with Ndebele military and gun expertise going back three generations.

What cannot be doubted, as D.N. Beach has proved is the fact that Mkwati, together with other priests at Ntabazikamambo distributed locust medicine to Mashayamombe, since the outbreak of locusts was a serious cause for concern during this period. His connection with the actual rising remains illusory. Both Cobbing and Beach have in fact proved that the Mwari cult had limited relevance to the Ndebele. The priests who were mostly among the Ndebele were the ones of Venda origin whose function had very little to do with the risings since the Ndebele state was militarily and politically strong. They of course had their own share of disunity, for instance, Gampu Sithole who actually fought on the side of the whites proved to be a thorn in the flesh, mainly because his

family had traditionally faced persecution from Lobengula.

The Course of the Risings among the Shona

Professor Ranger's thesis on the 1896 – 1897 revolt centrally includes Mashonaland, and any discussion on this subject has to refer to the scholarship that has been published. One of Ranger's assumptions was that the risings broke out in Mashonaland because they were coordinated by Mkwati whose agents linked up with the local Shona Mhondoros of Kaguvi and Nehanda. The Kaguvi medium was based in the Chivero-Nyamweda and eastern Salisbury as well as Lomagundi. The Nehanda medium was based in the upper Mazoe valley. There can be no doubt that these figures had some prominence in the areas in which they operated, but Ranger is criticised for exaggerating their roles in Mashonaland.

But first, why did the Shona rise only in June 1896, and not in March? It has been demonstrated earlier on in the chapter, the economic reasons for the Shona's delay in joining the risings. Nevertheless, when the Shona eventually rose in arms in June, it was because it appeared that the British had been sufficiently weakened such that an assertion of independence would be profitable.

Moreover, at the end of April, Mashonaland had been denuded of white police and soldiers as Colonel Beal's column went to the relief of Bulawayo. Bulawayo was still encircled by the Ndebele towards the end of May and Beal's force had been embarrassed first by the Rozvi and Ndebele around Gwelo, and later at the battle of Nxa on 22 May 1896. These key incidents, according to both Cobbing and Ranger might have been viewed as victories by the Shona. The Matabeleland Relief Force had yet to arrive from Mafeking in decisive numbers. Hence, at the beginning of June the Ndebele were continuing to tie down the white forces. Although the tide of war was slowly turning against the Ndebele in that they did not win a decisive victory against the whites, the Shona saw early June as the obvious moment to strike, if they were ever to do so.

Did an outward, rippling co-ordination of the Shona rising hinge on the Mwari cult-connected to the epicentre of Mashayamombe's chieftaincy in the Umfuli valley? Probably not, (historians Cobbing and Beach, can argue). As with Umlugulu in Matabeleland, there is nothing to show that Mashayamombe was acting under cultic order. Although the first murders of whites by the Shona took place in Mashayamombe's areas on 14 June 1896, the discussions for a rising had been going on at Mahom's far to the east, nearly a week earlier. It is simply not yet known in which way the news, advice or orders spread in Mashona country that June, nor who was the major instigator, if ever there was. There can be no doubt that the Shona grievances which emanated from the abuses of colonial rule lay at the root of the risings, and that reports of early Ndebele victories had served to partially instigate the Shona to rise. It is however, not possible to

do away with the religious factor altogether although its impact has been exaggerated.

In the first place, the Mwari cult influence did not extend into Central and North-eastern Mashonaland – in the rebel areas; whatever influence the mhondoro mediums had, it was not as local servants of the cult. Secondly, Ranger overestimated the contribution of Mhondoro such as Kaguvi in the same way as he exaggerated Mkwati's power in Matabeleland. Certainly, the Kaguvi medium in 1896 – 1897, Gumboreshumba, had a powerful impact upon the rising in the Hartely and Salisbury areas, but these were, as Beach again has shown, his home territory. More importantly, white references to Kaguvi and the Mazoe valley mhondoro, Nehanda, as "Mlimos" should not be seen as anything but a symbol of white confusion about African cults in Rhodesia.

It is important too, to understand that there was a close relationship between the religious and political elements in the Shona society. The mediums of the Mhondoro spirits were frequently close relatives of the ruling clans. Their job, in so far as they had a political function, was to reflect the claims of the incumbent chief line and the opinion of the "average man" within the chieftaincy. The Mhondoro often sanctioned the decision of the political clans, and not vice versa. The Mhondoro gave ancestral backing to the chiefs. Be that as it may, it is important to quickly state that the Mhondoros or priests had more influence in Mashonaland than they had in Matabeleland.

Before proceeding to point out other areas of Shona involvement in the rising, it is important to bring out some key areas of weakness with respect to Professor Ranger's treatment of evidence. Professor Robert I. Rotberg of Harvard University, who has written a lot of articles and books on Southern Africa, in his review of Ranger's *Revolt in Southern Rhodesia*, criticises Ranger for arguing that the risings of 1896 – 1897 were millenarian. He writes that "the assertion that these were millenarian movements, presumably in the sense of being both messianic and apocalyptic, remains unproved and, on the evidence presented, rather dubious".

Beach tended to provide an even more shattering blow in his review of the same book. He points out that one of Ranger's weaknesses in his handling of the evidence was that he "omits important qualifying statements, cuts and splices (joins different phrases) sentences of the original African evidence or simply mis-regards whole documents". Beach goes on to provide the clearest cases where Ranger mutilates evidence. Quoting Marowa from archival documents, Ranger thus quotes "I remember the people assembling at Mashayambombe's kraal to get medicine for the locusts" but omits the following sentence: "This had nothing to do with the rebellion" (page 220). This makes a huge difference because when people assembled at Mashayamombe's homesteads they had indeed come for anti-locust medicine and not to get intelligence related to the outbreak of the risings in Mashonganyika's areas.

Furthermore, Beach illustrates Ranger's selective use or quotation of evidence when he cites evidence from Zhanta thus, "Kagubi sent two messengers to Mashonganyika's. They went on to Gonda's and told the people they were to come to Kagubi's at once. I went with them. I thought he would give us something to kill the locusts. When I got there... left our.... the following..... I found he had a lot of Whiteman's loot. He continued with the quote: He ordered me to kill the white men. He said he had orders from the gods. He again skipped the following: Some Matabele who were there said watch for all the police wives" (p221). In both instances, the selective use of evidence by Ranger drives home his chosen theme that the risings were instigated and co-ordinated by the Mwari cult leaders. Inclusion of the omitted statements would have neutralised or weakened Ranger's line of thought. In the first instance, the influence of Mhondoros is clearly watered down, and the fact that the risings were coordinated by Mkwati is totally dispelled. In the second instance, the reference to Whiteman's loot, as Beach argues, makes it clear that this meeting took place after the outbreak, and not before.

LACK OF PLANNING / ORGANISATION

From Beach's research we learn that the risings indeed began in Mashayamombe's place and that they were not at all planned. First, concerning the killing of Hepworth on the Umsweswe (Svosve), Dekwende, who was the medium of the local Chochata Mhondoro of Mashayamombe declared, "The day they were going to murder the white men my eldest brother, Mashayamombe, sent for me and told me we must kill the white men. I only sent out the Impi to murder the men I did not go myself". Mashayamombe's brothers themselves did not know of the rising until the night before it broke out and that although the mood of the people was quite ready for a hondo, nevertheless even Kanono's raiders did not know their real mission until very late.

Beach further illustrates that another indication of general unpreparedness and lack of planning was when Moony was killed. Rusere had just come from Kaguvi the medium's village when he found Moony being pursued, but was so unready that he had to borrow a gun from his uncle before he could join in. This would suggest that at this early stage the medium himself had not known of the rising – it is noticeable that none of Mashayamombe's people claimed that they had had any leadership from him in carrying out the killings, and it was the Mashayamombe medium of the Choshata Mhondoro, Dekwende, who gave the religious sanction there. Mashayamombe's forces went east to kill the Europeans at the Beatrice Mine on 15 June, West to the Umsweswe, and on the evening of 18 June they began the siege of Hartley. By then, however, the rising had spread far and wide.

According to Beach, the "ripple-effect" covered a very wide area in those crucial 12 days of June. The evidence of Zhanta's neighbour Zawara, son of Garamombe, only confirms that the Kaguvi medium told Chikwaha's people to visit him, and does not suggest that this was any earlier than June 14. The evidence from the Zvimba ruler, his brother Musonti and the people of Lomagundi district is only that a message reached the Zvimba

ruler from the Kaguvi medium and was then passed on, not that anyone from Lomagundi went to Kaguvi's before hand. The evidence of the presence of Panashe, the son of Nyandoro, Muchemwa, the son of Mangwende and the sons of Makoni at the medium's village either before or after the rising has been proven to be fictitious.

Notably, apart from the references to the Mushava, Zvimba and Nematikonde areas of Lomagundi where Kaguvi sent a messenger, Ranger exaggerated his impact by assuming that Kaguvi's role extended to Mazoe and Gutu, and thus "virtually the whole areas of the Shona rebellion". In fact the Kaguvi medium was mainly influential in the Chivero-Nyamwenda area of Hartley where the previous medium of Kaguvi Gumboreshumba's grandfather Kawodza had been active in the 1880s and early 1890s. Hence, though there is no doubt that the Kaguvi medium played a powerful role in these areas, there is nothing surprising about it.

A Note on the Collaborators

What showed the complexity of the 1896 – 1897 risings was a complete absence of a pattern, which they followed. It was not always a case of the Ndebele and Shona rising against the white settlers, but sometimes the Africans fought on the side of the settlers, especially if they thought that the whites were a safer bet than the Ndebele, in this case. The case of Gampu Sithole has already been cited above, but the Shona who lived in the traditional Ndebele raiding and tributary zones either remained neutral. Those who aided the whites included the Shona of Gutu, Chirumanzu, Chivi and Matibi – forming a huge belt between the middle Sabi and the Nuanetsi Valley. These had been as much subjected to colonial abuses as those of and around Salisbury. Nevertheless, Ndebele raids were more hated even before 1896. For instance, Chief Chivi Madhlangove, having experienced relentless raids from the Ndebele had, in 1893 co-operated with Jameson during the invasion of Matabeleland. In 1896, Chivi chose again to ally with the whites.

Matibi, the chief of the Pfumbi people south of Chivi, helped the Europeans for similar reasons. He had originally paid tribute to Lobengula, but had looked to the whites as allies, and in 1896 joined the Europeans to plunder the Lemba and Rozvi tributaries of the Ndebele around Belingwe. This was one of several local African wars that occurred as struggles within the main struggles.

In Chirumanzu, relations with the Ndebele had been more friendly and here the decision to collaborate was the consequence of an internal dispute. Chirumanzu Chinyama, having illegally seized the paramouncy in 1891 (with Lobengula's help) stood on the fence in 1896 until the moment that his rival, Shaka, began to fight alongside the pro-Ndebele neighbours of Banka. This precipitated Chinyama into rising on the side of the whites. Moreover, in Gutu, further east, Chief Makuvaza fought for the whites who had

recognised him vis-a-vis a troublesome opponent namely Chingombe.

It must be emphasised that such clearly-drawn-out divisions within the ranks of the Africans made their defeat at the face of the white invaders more predictable. The whites, shrewd and unsympathetic, were able to divide and conquer the African and the poor collaborators had colonial rule equally extended on them even though they realised some piecemeal gains such as recognition of their chieftaincy.

Examination Type Questions

Describe and explain the measures adopted by the colonial regime to systematically alienate African land between 1903 – 1931.

Assess the impact of the Land Apportionment Act upon African farmers in Zimbabwe.

“The Land Husbandry Act was better than the Land Apportionment Act in the way it affected African” how valid is this assessment.

Analyse the methods which were used by colonial officials to compel Africans to work for the settlers.

In what ways, and how effectively, did Africans react to the abuses of colonialism during this period (1898 – 1963).

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AFRICAN RESPONSES AND RESISTANCE: 1898- 1923- T.O RANGER

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

At the end of the study of this chapter, candidates should be able to:

- a) Assess different ways in which Africans resisted colonial rule after 1897.

- b) Assess the impact of early nationalist movements between 1897-1930.
- c) Evaluate ways in which colonial authorities dealt with nationalist movements during the period

Introduction. The Shona:

In the period before settler rule, that is immediately after the Shona- Ndebele arising (1896-7), the Africans responded in various ways. The Shona in the rebel areas were left in a bewildered state after 1897. Their total commitment to the rising had failed and many of their leaders were dead. Some turned to the missionaries for a new solution. Others took to the woods and the hills as followers of the die hard rebels who would not surrender. Most lapsed into a dull acceptance of defeat.

It was difficult for new forms of political protest or action to grow up amongst them. There had been virtually no Shona converts to Christianity before the risings and so there were now very few literate Shona in touch with the new world. The educational breakthrough was a slow process, Shona leaders were not really produced by it for twenty or thirty years after the risings.

As a result, politics in the ex-rebel areas of Mashonaland reverted to tribal politics, embittered in many cases by hostility between those who supported the new “loyal” Chief and those who remained faithful to the dead or deposed “rebel” paramount.

There were some signs of a desire to keep alive the ideal of a wider Shona unity expressed in the risings. Thus chief Kunzwi-Nyandoro, a prominent rebel chief who survived into the later period, was accepted as a leader by many Shona who lived outside his paramounting and was consulted by them on the most effective way to demonstrate opposition to hut tax increase. Yet a man like Kunzwi Nyandoro was unable, for all his shrewdness and courage, to offer effective leadership in the new age; he embodied a tradition of resistance and that was important but open armed resistance was out of question in most Mashonaland after 1897. So he spent the rest of his life, closely watched by the suspicious administration, planning or half-planning resistance on the old lines, in alliance with spirit mediums and hoping to take advantage of Rhodesian involvement in the Boer or the World War.

It is very easy to understand why the old tradition of resistance took hold on Shona imagination. During this period Shona- speaking people were still standing out against the white man in arms. There were a series of risings after 1897 in the Shona-Speaking areas of Portuguese East Africa, reaching a climax in the great Makombe rising in 1917. These were not usually treated as part of Rhodesian history. But they were part of Shona history. The peoples involved had shared the same political experiences as the central and eastern Shona right into the 1890's. Men from the Shona paramounties had gone to help Makombe of Barwe against Gouveia then and they could not be indifferent to later battles in Barwe against the Portuguese. One of these later resistances directly affected Rhodesia

and in some ways can be regarded as a continuation or an extension of the 1896-7 revolt. This was the so-called Maondera rising of 1900 to 1903. A brief account of it is necessary.

Maondera had lived in south Mazoe by 1890; his people were involved in 1896 rising. Maondera himself was not because he had moved out of the Company's sphere of influence before the rising. Maondera was a pound man, a famous leader who had defeated even Ndebele. He was one of those who had declared in Selous' concession that he was independent of both Lobengula and the Portuguese. He would not tolerate interference from the white settlers who moved into his area and went away to Makombe's country to fight the Portuguese until they had moved on and Mazoe was once more left to the Shona. Instead there came the rising in which his relatives were killed and his cattle seized by the whites. In 1900 Maondera returned to take his revenge. He raided into South Mazoe but found into the old Mutapa heartland. There he found many people resentful of the white administration which was affecting them for the first time, demanding tax, threatening disarmament, and disturbing trade patterns.

Maondera allied himself to the last Mutapa, Chioco Dambamutupe, who lived with a well-equipped army following just inside Portuguese East Africa. At the head of a force drawn from the whole area of the Mutapa's surviving influence Maondera invaded Rhodesia and marched on administrative centre of Mount Darwin. His attack was beaten off and Maondera returned to Portuguese territory to help his allies to fight the Portuguese who entered his capital; Makombe in Barwe was defeated and his country occupied. The old Shona world was vanishing. Maondera returned to Rhodesia in 1903 and surrendered himself to the authorities; jailed for seven years and died in prison while on hunger strike.

Maondera's adventures were not the last episode in Shona armed resistance. In 1917 a great revolt broke out among the Shona-Speaking peoples of Portuguese East Africa in protest against maladministration, particularly conscription for service as carriers in the war against the Germans. Portuguese authority was swept away once more in the Zambezi valley and in Barwe and the revolt was suppressed only after many months of hard fighting. This Shona rising of 1917 reminds us once again of the remarkable capacity of the Shona people for more or less co-ordinated resistance.

By 1917, of course, conditions in most of Mashonaland were already very different from those in the Shona-speaking areas of Portuguese East Africa. The Shona of Rhodesia were being drawn more and more into a modern economy, and they were being influenced more and more by missionary teaching and education, already in some areas, some Shona were moving towards Christian independence as a vehicle of opposition. But as yet the leaders of political organizations had not supplanted the spirit mediums or the memories of the rebel chiefs in the imagination of the Shona masses.

The Ndebele-1898- 1923:

It was easier to move into more modern styles of political activity among the Ndebele-

due to the following reasons:

- (1) In Matabeleland some of the most respected leaders of the rising had become recognized induces and were able to give their people some leadership inside a new system.
- (2) Ndebele politics was bound to centre upon the desire to restore the Kingship. This gave the Ndebele a target which could be aimed at in a variety of ways- petitions, collections of money the organization of associations etc.
- (3) Many Ndebele recognized the leadership of the young sons of Lobengula who had been sent to school in South Africa and were now by far the best educated

Africans from Southern Rhodesia. These young men, who completed secondary education and one of whom began university, were able to attract support the old inducas but also from the younger men, from educated Ndebele and even from Africans from South Africa.

- (4) The Kingship issue was also a good issue on which to appeal for help from outside. At this period many Africans politicians in South Africa were lawyers and they took a legal approach to politics, it seemed possible that something might be gained by appealing to Britain or the world on the basis of the legal rights of the Lobengula family and on the grounds that the company had defrauded them. In this way, the Ndebele kingship movement attracted the support of South African Congress leaders.
- (5) African politics in Matabeleland was also different from those in Mashonaland in that the Ndebele had a more concrete and pressing grievance- i.e. land. Most Shona had hardly begun to feel the threat of land alienation or the dangers of land fragmentation by the early 1920s' though some areas in Mashonaland already had serious land problems. But the Ndebele lost virtually all their land in 1894 and did not recover it in 1896. As white farmer began to take up land so Ndebele settlements were evicted. Among them were important Ndebele dignitaries, senior induces, members of the royal family. These men Rhodes had tried to conciliate in 1896; some of them were quite wealth by Ndebele standards and owned large herds of cattle. But they found themselves and their herds and their people turned off land and they refused to accept land in the reserves.

Land issue and the Kingship movement:

The land issue gave the Ndebele Kingship movement its wide base of support. The leader of the movement in its significant period was Lobengula's eldest son, Nyamanda. He became a claimant to the Kingship after the death of one of his younger brothers and the mental breakdown of the other. He was not an educated man as they had been. But he in 1896, had contacts with some of the new men and was sending his sons to an independent church school in South Africa. He was able to maintain the alliance with the educated and with the Congress movement in South Africa- and was able to speak to the memories of

the Ndebele.

Nyamanda's movement became important in the years before and immediately after World War I. Various factors helped to make this a period of activity in Ndebele politics. This was because;

- (i) Land grievances were mounting
- (ii) Returning Ndebele service men joined the movement
- (iii) Their services in the war seemed to the Ndebele generally a good reason to expect concessions from the whites.
- (iv) At this time the whole legal question was very much in people's minds- A legal action was being heard in the Privy Council in London to decide the ownership of land in Southern Rhodesia; in 1919 the Privy Council decided that the British South Africa Company did not own the land and that it had no claim to it through Lobengula's concessions. It was time that the Privy Council went on to say that the British crown now owned the land through conquest, but the whole decision seemed to reopen the question of the rights of Lobengula's heirs.
- (v) At this time, also, whites in Rhodesia were campaigning for self government and an end to Company rule and it was obviously important that an African view be heard.

Call for Lobengula's ideal of Ndebele Homeland Rule:

- (i) Nyamanda dreamed of a restoration of the Ndebele Kingship and of the Ndebele home-land, his father's ideal.
- (ii) He wanted protectorate status under the direct supervision of the British Crown. NB: According to T.O Ranger (editor) Aspects of Central African History (1973) pp 218-222: it was not a programme that today we should call nationalist and it ignored altogether interests of the Shona. Like Lobengula, Nyamanda was content to let the whites take Mashonaland and a considerable bit of Matabeleland in peace. His movement was expression of Ndebele nationalism. But at the same time it was not exclusively a tribal conservative movement. Nyamanda enjoys the support of many of the educated Ndebele, the preachers, teachers and others.

Nyamanda also gained the support of the South African Congress because his movement offered a way of attacking Company claims to the ownership of land and of trying to obstruct settler progress to self- government. He was also supported and advised by groups of would-be modernizing Africans inside southern Rhodesia. Most of these were migrants from South Africa who had originally been brought in as a reliable civilized work force whose presence would act as a restraint on the Ndebele. These men were now frustrated by the limitations placed on their ability to buy and farm land. Thus they had it in

common with Nyamanda that both they and those wished to purchase and they in terms of communal purchase and they in terms of individual. It was members of this frustrated modernizing group who put Nyamanda in touch with the South African Congress. Finally, Nyamanda's movement enjoyed the support of bodies overseas, like Aborigines Protection society in Britain, who welcomed it as an assertion of African rights.

Nyamanda's movement collected money from the Ndebele and tried to prove that it was representative of Ndebele opinion; it joined with Congress lawyers and Ethiopian churches in South Africa to petition the King and the High Commissioners; Nyamanda hoped to travel to England to make a personal appeal to King George. T.O Ranger provides quotations from two very different documents of the movement which will give some idea of its complicated character; first, extracts from Nyamanda's letters to the Ndebele indunas:

(A) **Letter to Indunas:**

"I write this paper of mine to you , all chiefs of the Regiments. I say to you, all nations that have been conquered by the English the government gave them Chiefs to whom they pay their tax. Look at Khama. He has his country, and Lewanika; he has his plot. His country is settled well and Mosheshe he has his land. Also the son of Dinizula has his country. All natives have their bit of ground where they pay tax their taxes. They pay taxes they know and not like you who pay for what you know not. You do not know what is done with your money. It is like money that is lost because you pay so greatly and do not know what your money does. At the same time you undergo tribulation... I want to hear your word. We remain in a scattered state all the time. Even if people have been conquered may they not abide in one place? For myself I ask of you, ye owners of the territory, in as much as you are the nation. I do not say it is war, my compatriots, I only inquire. You also know that all black tribes in great numbers were overcome by white people, but they have their piece of land to stay on happily. We forsooth, pay only for staying on white men's arms and for what reasons? "(T. O. Ranger)

(B) **Nyamanda's petition to King George V of March 1919 speaks a different Language.**

"referring to native laws and treatment, your petitioners have experienced with great regret that High Commissioners and Governor General, who are the true representatives of your majesty, have merely acted as disinterested spectators whilst Government parties of various names and associations are interpreting the Laws in Class Legislation to Suit their purpose. Your Petitioners pray that in case Rhodesia is granted any form of Government the Imperial Government take over the Administration of Native Affairs in that country... Your Petitioners are further aware that the Judicial Committee of Majesty's Privy. Council has found that the so-called unalienated land belongs to the crown by reason of an alleged right of conquest and the de-thronment of the late King Lobengula. The right or

justification of that alleged conquest your Petitioners do not seek to discuss here; but in the interest of might and justice and in pursuance of the fact that the might of conquest.... Is now repudiated by the civilized world. Your Petitioners pray that your Majesty be pleased to hand back the so called unalienated land to the family of late King Lobengula in trust for the tribe according to Bantu Custom, and the right of chieftainship therein to be restored and acknowledge.” (T.O. Ranger)

Nyamanda’s movement did not achieve any of its objectives. But it was the only African voice to make itself heard at a key moment in Rhodesia politics- the achievement by the white settlers of political control.

NB: we cannot consider the movement as forerunners, of territorial nationalism but just as a pioneer of new political techniques.

African Responses, Resistance and The Rise of nationalism and Trade Unionism (1923- 1954)

The Nyamanda movement got none of the things it asked for. ie.

- (i) Control of Matabeleland as the rest of Rhodesia went to a white settler government in 1923
- (ii) Control of land.

The attack of the idea of white settler government, by Nyamanda and his allies was an attack of something which had been decided long ago. There had been white settler representatives in Southern Rhodesia Legislative assembly since 1898; Rhodes had promised that the territory would proceed to settler self-government; the British Government had committed itself to the idea before the First World War. When the Company decided to give up the administration the only real decision left was whether the whites would to join the Union of South Africa or to run Southern Rhodesia on its own under what was called Responsible Government.

For these reasons some Africans began to challenge the basic idea of the Nyamanda movement. They said quite rightly that it was bound to fail and appeals to Britian would be useless. One of these men, a South African resident in Rhodesia called Abraham Twala, put it very clearly in a letter to the press. He wrote:

“Experience has taught us that our salvation does not lie in Downing street. I strongly by advise out native fledglings in Southern Rhodesia, indulging in politics, to find out and make their friends in Southern Rhodesia. When this has been done we shall see what the harvest shall be.”

Twala was profoundly influenced by South African examples, particularly the

example of Jabavu's leadership in the Cape. In the Cape there were sufficient numbers of African voters registered on the common roll for them to have a considerable influence in elections; under Jabavu's leadership this influence was used to bargain with the white parties for concessions. In Rhodesia also the franchise was in theory colour-blind, a very small number of Africans were already registered as voters on the common roll. Twala and his allies, among them one or two educated Ndebele and Shona, decided to try to organize the African voters of Rhodesia in the same way as Jabavu had done in the Cape.

Twala decided to offer the support of African voters to the responsible government partly in exchange for promises of justice to Africans after they came to power. On 20 January 1925 the Rhodesian Bantu Voters Association was formed in Gwelo; two white candidates of the Responsible Government faction were present and the meeting decided to "co-operate such as necessary with the present M.L.Cs who carried out Responsible Government propaganda" and at the same time asked them for a promise that, after responsible Government, Africans would be allowed to purchase land freely, that higher education would be provided, that African voters should be exempt from certain restrictions, and so on.

The founders of RBVA hoped a great deal from their organization. In June 1923 its Ndebele secretary, Ernest Dube, wrote to Jabavu's paper that;

In Rhodesia the year 1923 will be year of events beyond past years, for on January 20th 1923 the brown voter of Rhodesia formed a union..... to aim and strive for the betterment of the Brown Race in school and Government... The brown people of this country are very backward, we still await a little, a lot, a movement forward, but we hope with the help we will get from brothers in south of Africa things will might themselves."

The RBVA was not able to exercise the influence it had hoped. The numbers of African voters were too small and there was no readiness on the white side to accept educated Africans as allies. An RBVA general meeting minute in 1929: An impression is abroad that,

"... Educated and progressive natives are not in favour in some quarters."

The new settler government was determined not to encourage the African elite to claim rights as spokesmen for the mass of the people. So the RBVA won few concessions. And in any case it is tempting to dismiss it as very much an elites and selfish organization trying to use its special status to win concessions which were of interest only to the emerging middle class. To that extent, Nyamanda's movement was much more genuinely a mass movement directly in the line of ancestry of modern nationalism.

This was not as simple as that, however. The RBVA was important as the first association to focus on politics at the centre and to concern itself with the territorial parliament

instead of thinking about a Ndebele national Home or dreaming of a new Shona rising. And some of its leaders did see themselves as speaking for the masses and made real efforts to reach a mass audience. Here the outstanding figure was Martha Ngano, who had come to Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) in 1897. Well, educated, an outstanding speaker and organizer Martha Ngano was the life and soul of the RBVA in the 1920s. She took its claim seriously. In meetings in the rural areas she attacked the leadership of drunken and illiterate chiefs calling upon Africans “to combine in an attempt to become as clever as the white man.”

As the hopes of a fruitful alliance with white politicians foundered Ngano became more radical in her approach. She realized that the only way in which the RBVA could become powerful was by registering many more voters. She therefore attacked the way in which the franchise qualifications were interpreted; in 1924 she pointed out that literacy in English was a qualification but that English was not taught in African schools and that communal property should be allowed instead of demand for a high money wage. “why can't we vote for live-stock?”

In Matabeleland she did succeed in setting up a number of rural branches and establishing a legal defense fund for farmers. In appealing to this new audience, she became concerned with mass issues; her speeches came to centre around destocking and dipping and land shortage as well as around the need for higher education. Martha Ngano deserves to be better remembered as a pioneer of the sort of contact between educated modernizers and the masses which developed in later nationalism.

African Response to the Land Apportionment Act:

With all its limitations the political future seemed to lie in the 1920's with the RBVA and the other associations rather than with the Nyamanda movement or with Shona dreams of revolt. Many of the Ndebele remained devoted to the ideal of national home and a restored monarchy and the cause was taken up by the Matabele Home Society. However, after 1923 it became more and more obviously a tribal cause and commitment of the Ndebele aristocracy to it prevented them from moving on into new forms of nationalist protest. As for the Shona, a report on attitudes in the Belingwe (Mberengwa) area in 1923 stressed that their response to white pressures had become one of fatalistic and despairing acceptance; the facility of old forms of resistance was understood.

The RBVA, the Gwelo Native Welfare Association, the Rhodesia Native Association and the others that came into existence at this time were especially open to the charge of being unrepresentative. Unlike the native Associations of the same period in Malawi they were mainly led by foreigners- Fingos, Sothos, and Nyasas. This was because African education in Rhodesia lagged far behind African education in Malawi in the early period of contact. Large numbers of Nyasas were already literate before the first Shona went to school, and some sort of higher- education was available in Malawi decades before it was available in Rhodesia. It is inevitable that educated Africans from South Africa and Malawi should take a leading role in these early associations. Exactly the same thing happened, for example, in the early political associations of Zambia and Tanganyika. But it was also inevitable that this should make it difficult for them to establish contact with

the Shona and Ndebele masses; not everyone was a Martha Ngano.

The Rhodesian administration thought that it could safely disregard such unrepresentative associations. Prime Minister Moffat thought that their pretensions were more “pathetic” than they were dangerous. In any case, even if these associations had spoken with an indigenous voice, the Rhodesian Government was much less likely to listen to them than the colonial Government in Malawi.

Also to be noted is that, all these associations depended upon being listened to, they had no other effective means of applying pressure. The Motto of the RBVA expressed the faith of them all: “Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, said the Lord of Hosts.” Southern Rhodes showed little signs of the working of the spirit in the 1920s and 1930s.

The land issue came as a test case for all these associations. Land was the one issue upon which they might hope to rally wide support and the new settler government had promised British philanthropic organizations that it would reopen the land question and seek for a final and just settlement. One of the aims of the RBVA was to ensure African opinions were heard when the land issue was reopened. And the other associations were equally concerned with land. They asked for the right to purchase and freehold and they all asked for more land to be added to the reserves to be held under community. The whites also wanted the land issue discussed because they hoped to achieve a system of segregation.

Up until the appointment of Carter Commission in 1925 all parties were equally delighted with the prospect of a land inquiry. The RBVA boasted that its representations had been responsible for the appointment of a Commission and the hearings of the Commission were the most important political event for Rhodesian Africans since the risings. Hundreds of African witnesses testified to the commission; African views were sounded in a way that had never happened before. Chiefs and elders and church ministers and independent church leaders and school teachers and members of Ndebele royal family and the leaders of the new associations all gave evidence. Their evidence varied a good deal but certain things came out of it; Africans wanted more land and to get it they were prepared to accept the idea of segregation. The land left to the whites was to be for whites only. Rhodesian Africans were falling once again for the old Home Rule thick that Rhodes had played on Lobengula.

Some African voices warned against the idea of Segregations, pointing out that it would mean that all the towns fell in the white area. But the real disillusionment came with the publication of the commission’s report. Segregation was indeed recommended; so also was addition to African land. But this addition was a small one. The reserves were not significantly increased, and the new African area, the so-called native Purchase area, was to be reserved for Africans who could afford freehold plots.

Those who had wanted to buy land were no better placed. The new Native Purchase Areas were remote and often waterless and unsurveyed. They suspected a swindle, and their suspicions were fully justified since the greater part of the land remained undistributed for decades. Only 893 farmers had been settled in the Native Purchase

Areas by 1939, “many of the successful applicants were retired B.S.A policemen, evangelists and teachers from missions of them were old and many had their origins in Nyasaland, Mozambique or South Africa.” As Roger Woods tells us “the evidence is that progressive natives (i.e. those with capital) met nothing but frustration in trying to acquire land.” In short, the whites had got segregation and neither the tribal Africans nor the progressive leaders of the associations had got their share of the bargain.

As a result, in July 1929 various African associations of Southern Rhodesia held a combined meeting in a mood of bitterness and disillusionment. On issue after issue they voted against the “Home Rule trick,” those policies of parallel development which did not offer a fair share to the African, which gave him no real power in his own areas, and which debarred him from education and opportunity.

The “Congress” of associations unanimously voted to reject the land Apportionment Bill. A Shona Speaker drove the rejection home:

“Let us tell the Government that this bill is wrong our cattle die for want of water... Let us tell the Government that the bill is no good. It is all for the white man. Rhodesia is big. Let them cut the land in half and let us live on the one side and white man on the other. If they cannot do this they should at least give us a place for reserves where there is water.”

The “Congress” went on to reject the proposed Local Councils Bill which purported to give a measure of local self-government. Delegates objected above all to the provision that the Native Commissioner was to be Chairman of the local council:

“He is a European, how can he understand the domestic affairs of natives? Only a native can do that.”

And the “Congress” also attacked an educational policy which provided Government schools for white children but not black.

“Do we not pay taxes to Government? Then we want a proper Government School, we want to see something for our money, we want proper schooling for our children.”

Their disillusioning experience had driven the polite associations into a much radical position. But even then they could only reiterate: “If we talk sensibly as we have done today Government will take notice of us.”

Early Trade Unionism:

At the end of the 1920s the first attempts to organize the African workers of Bulawayo, Salisbury and other urban centres were made. They were also inspired by the example of Union of South Africa. There, the remarkable Nyasa leader, Clemens Kadalie, had created the most spectacular mass movement ever known in South African Politics: The Industrial and Commercial Workers Union. The ICU seemed to offer a solution to the essential dilemma- how to produce a modern movement with effective mass support and

with a weapon in its hands. The unity of the worker could replace the division of the tribesman. In 1927 Kadalie Sent another Nyasa, Robert Sambo, to start ICU activity in Rhodesia.

Sambo was an extremely interesting and unusual man. In addition to his interest in the organization of urban workers he was concerned with the condition of the agricultural labourers who worked on white farms in Rhodesia. This question had not hitherto interested African organizations in Rhodesia mainly because a large proportion of this Agricultural labour force were migrants from Nyasaland and Portuguese East Africa. Sambo, however, compiled facts and figures about the poor conditions of work and the low wages customary on Rhodesian farms as well as attempting to stimulate the urban trade unionism. This combination alarmed the Rhodesia authorities who deported Sambo and did what they could to destroy the infant ICU organization which he had created.

Sambo and Kadalie were confident that the seed had been well sown. Kadalie wrote to the Rhodesian Prime Minister:

“In spite of your ban, we shall find means, as we have done in the past, to get our message to our fellow workers, and shall find men and women in your colony to raise and uphold the banner of freedom from all forms of oppression.”

And a handful of men and women did, indeed, continue to raise the banner of the ICU, branches were formed in Bulawayo and Salisbury and efforts were made to carry the message of the movement into the mining compounds and townships of Rhodesia.

The ICU brought something new into Rhodesian African policies. It worked through the public meeting; every Saturday and Sunday in both Bulawayo and Salisbury such meetings were held. It struck a new note of radicalism, appealing to working-class solidarity, attacking the missions as well as the government, and demanding basic rights. The following extracts from CID reports of the early meetings of the ICU in 1929 and 1930 helps to illustrate that:

- (1) “If the White people did not believe in uplifting the native, they should have left us in darkness. We are workers suffering. You must all understand that. Your perspiration is coming out for nothing. Everything is worked by natives. You are digging gold out of the earth and are making holes in mines....AU roads are made by natives but if you walk there you are arrested.”
- (2) “You cannot conquer the white people because they are united. If you fight one white man the whole group will come upon you. Do not say, “I am a Blantyre or isiNdebele.” Then we shall obtain our country.”
- (3) “Why are you black people asleep? Wake up and come to see your true God. The white man has brought another God. The white man has brought another God. That God is money. Everyone is praying to money. If money is our God. Let us get money. I do not want to go to Europe for it, it is in the ground.”
- (4) “I am not separating you young men into tribes. Our prophets were killed for

speaking truth. Today it is ICU.”

- (5) “All the workers of the world are united and we must also unite our forces together and so achieve something and have freedom in Africa... if they do not want us to join the communist party and other parties not friendly to Government, they must treat us better.”

This was certainly a new voice. It seemed to offer a good chance of modernizing mass Ndebele and Shona discontent with ICU playing the role that “our prophets” had played in the risings of 1896-7. The ICU would succeed because it had the secret of proletarian unity which Lobengula did not possess. But the ICU was weak in practice. In Rhodesia it never became a strong mass organization as it did in South Africa; it attracted crowds to its meetings but collected little in membership dues. Moreover it disavowed any intention of using the strike weapon effectively in South Africa.

The Rhodesian ICU mocked at the polite associations.

“You must not think that Angels will come to the Europeans and tell them to give you more wages. No, we must agitate.”

But it did not offer any convincing alternative. If the associations believed that an articulate statement of grievances would be heard the ICU believed that the voice of an organized working class movement would be listened to. In any case, the fact that African workers in Rhodesia were not ready for strike action; too few of them had roots in the towns; too many were from outside Rhodes altogether. So the ICU was unable to build up an effective mass support; when the Rhodesian Government moved against its leaders in the early 1930’s and imprisoned some of them for subversion the movement dwindled away.

Nevertheless the ICU was important in many ways. It really was not so much a trade union as the forerunner of the urban mass, party; it expressed itself through public meetings rather than workers’ committees. It did offer the most outspoken challenge yet to white policies. And it did take seriously the task of overcoming tribal divisions. Thus it used a Shona organizer, Masoja Ndlovu, in Bulawayo, and a Ndebele organizer, Charles Mzingeli; in Salisbury. Moreover the people who entered politics through the ICU stayed in radical politics for decades afterwards. Mzingeli as leader of the Reformed ICU dominated Salisbury politics after 1945; Masoja Ndlovu was one of those arrested when Congress was banned in 1959 and in 1967 is in restriction as a ZANU supporter.

Trade Unionism in the 1930’s’

By the 1930’s, the patterns of African political activity in Rhodesia had already been set.

- (1) Ndebele nationalism had been expressed and had not succeeded.

- (2) Exploitation of the vote had been tried and had not succeeded.
- (3) Organization of the workers had been tried and had not succeeded
- (4) Polite lobbying had been tried and had not succeeded.

So there was nothing much else to do but patiently to try them out again- as shown in 1930's

Two important things also happened in this period:

- (1) In the 1930's leadership in the various associations began to be taken over more and more by Ndebele and Shona educated men. E.g (a) Rev. Douglas Thompson Samkange, a Shona minister of the Methodist Church who spent much time in Matabeleland. Samkange became the leading light in the two most important elite organization's of the 1930's
- (b) The African section of the Southern Rhodesian Missionary Conference and the Southern Rhodesia African national Congress, founded by Aaron Jacha in 1934, became the main exponent of the idea of concentration on territorial constitutional politics.

It did not limit its appeal to voters or potential voters but tried to organize Africans more generally, especially in the urban areas. It was neither much bolder nor more successful than the RBVA. But it was the first Congress movement in Central Africa. And it did survive to run into modern nationalism in much the same way as did the Tanganyika African Association survived to run into TANA. When the young radicals sought in 1957 to create a radical movement of modern nationalism they did so in the name of Congress, sought out and brought into the new movement the surviving branches of the older organization, and accepted the leadership of Joshua Nkomo, an office holder in the old Congress.

Congress and the origins of modern nationalism in southern Rhodesia:

Congress may be regarded as the ancestor of modern nationalism in the country. It had a centralizing and directly role. However, modern nationalism is more than a development out of elite associations of the 1930's, it is also characterized by enthusiastic mass support.

The second important development of 1930's remotely foretold such mass support. What happened in the early 1930's was that the Shona masses in the rural areas showed that they could move out of their dreams of the past and break away from their old ideas of resistance, that they could accept other visions and other leaders.

This did not mean that men like Chief Kunzwi-Nyandoro were now replaced by men like Samkange and that the Shona masses began to support congress; there was still a long way to go before the coming together of the masses and elite modernizing leadership. What took place was a development among the Shona of various independent church

movements: e.g.

- (a) Matthew Zwimba's Church of the White Bird- he was entrusted by the chiefs and people of the Zwimba Reserve to act as their spokesman to the Carter commission on Land Apportionment.
- (b) Watch Tower: the Shona also got committed to movements which came from outside-like the Watch Tower Church. This was introduced in the Shona rural areas in the late 1920's and 1930's by domestic servants from Malawi and heroes like John Chilembwe and Kenan Kamwana; its hymns were sung in Nyasa languages- so it did not make an appeal back to the Shona past. It however promised a miraculous divine intervention which would overturn the Rhodesian situation and put white power and wealth into the hands of the African.

For a few years the movement swept through north-western Mashonaland, wearing congregations which repudiated the authority of the chiefs and departed from tribal customs. The Watch Tower influence faded again as its Nyasa leaders were deported. But the episode had shown that Shona were responsive to radical promises of a transformation of the Rhodesian situation and that they would follow leaders other than chiefs and elders.

In the late 1930's there was simmering Shona discontent in the rural areas provoked especially by such things as destocking and cattle dipping. Every now and then this discontent was expressed openly, as when chief Nyandoro of Chiota reserve publicly opposed destocking in the 1930's and was deposed for doing so. But as yet, the Shona grievances had found no effective outlet; neither had they been harnessed to any centrally directed political movement.

The Situation After 1945

During the Second World War politics in Rhodesia as in other parts of east and central Africa appeared to mark time. When the war ended the pattern of African political activity in Rhodesia seemed much the same as it had been in the years before the war. In fact the same movements and the tactical choices which they stood for persisted; though as shall be seen, the situation in which they operated was being transformed.

The Matabeleland Home society still existed in Bulawayo and the Ndebele countryside. Few of its members can any longer have expected the Kingship would be restored. The society had become in effect the defender of Ndebele values and as such war supported especially the Ndebele aristocracy. In Bulawayo it also acted as an urban welfare association and for this reason attracted the membership of younger and potentially non-radical men who later left it to join the nationalist parties.

Congress was revived in 1945 and continued with its policy of presentation of grievances to government. It could now draw upon an increasing number of educated Rhodesian Africans. The ICU tradition continued in the person of Charles Mzingeli. There were some developments in his thinking also. The old idea of the solidarity of all African

workers had been extended to include the idea of the solidarity of all workers of whatever race; Mzingeli was increasingly working with a small group of radical whites who tried to lead European labour in Rhodesia into an alliance with African labour.

Finally Shona resentment expressed itself in the form of sporadic and scattered opposition to destocking and dipping. And the growth of the independent church movement among the Shona accelerated greatly. In the twenty years after the war Mashonaland became one of the major centres of independence in Africa, until today they were probably more African members of Independent churches in Mashonaland than members of mission churches.

The independent churches varied greatly; some were modernizing churches which copied mission organization and forms of service; others were prophetic, faith healing, millenarian, bringing in ideas of symbols of older Shona religion. Both types of churches had political significance. The first type offered opportunity for African leadership and modernizing enterprise; it was often seen as an African response to the white challenge, as proof that the African also could run a modern institution.

Ndabaningi Sithole; who was also leader of the Zimbabwe African National Union worked for some time as a preacher in one of these modernizing African churches. He tells us about its founder, Rev E. T.J Nemapare.

“He was seriously accused of breaking the body of Christ, and in his defense he stated,” No Protestant has any right to accuse me of breaking the body of Christ. It is my Protestant right to protest, and I do not see what is wrong with exercising my birth-right.”

He remained unmoved and went ahead with his indigenous church. Sithole explained how the teaching and hymns of churches of this type emphasized Africa’s unity and the need to plan for Africa’s future. In his own work for Nemapare’s church he came into contact with rural masses as a leader he said;

“For the first time in my life I saw the rural areas away from mission stations. Great crowds came if they heard that I was going to preach to them.”

There was still a long way to go before Sithole was to preach the political gospel of nationalism to equally hungry crowds but there is a sense in which his political career began in Nemapare’s church.

The million Churches, on the other hand, offered the same sort of hope to the Shona that the spirit mediums had held out in 1896-7 and the Watch Tower leaders in the 1930’s. the most important of these churches, the Guta Ra Jehova of the prophets Mai Chaza, turned, boldly to the Shona past at its holy village the “Shiri Chena”, white birds of Mwari pecked the grain, Mai Chaza was supposed to have summoned the spirits of the dead founders of “Rhodesia.” (Zimbabwe) such as Lobengula, Chaminuka and Rhodes to Zimbabwe and there to have reconciled them and released them from Purgatory her followers adopted uniform and looked forward to the aid of spirit soldiers. It was no wonder that timid observers compared her to the female religious leaders who had been

important in 1896.

But these various movements seemed as far ever from being able to offer an effective challenge to the whites and still further from being able to write in one inclusive movement.

Examination Type Questions

For what motives and with what success did Africans oppose colonial rule between 1898 – 1923?

Why and with what results were Independent African Churches established in Zimbabwe between 1898 and 1923?

Why did early African trade union movements achieve little during this period?

How far did African resistance to colonial rule rely on foreign influence during the period before 1945?

- 5) How valid is the claim that after 1897, Africans offered little resistance to colonial rule.
- 6) Examine Shona Resistance to colonial rule between 1897- 1923.
- 7) Ndebele grievance after 1897 were more pronounced than the Shona grievances. Do you agree?
- 8) Critically examine the impact of the Land Apportionment Act of 1930 on the African society of Southern Rhodesia.
- 9) How effective were early African churches in offering passive resistance to colonial administration?

COLONIAL ADMINISTRATION IN SOUTHERN RHODESIA

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

After studying this chapter, candidates should be able to:

- a) Describe the nature of colonial administration in southern Rhodesia up to 1923
- b) Critically examine African living conditions under colonial administration

Background

The suppression of the Shona-Ndebele uprising of 1896-7 had profound effects upon the

future of Southern Rhodesia;

However, although the rebels were defeated or forced to a settlement which involved submission to colonial rule, their rebellion compelled whites to take Africans seriously in a variety of ways they had not done before 1896.

T.O.Ranger notes that "It brought about significant changes in the character of white colonial rule itself. Many of these changes though not all were to the benefit of the African population in Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe). Thus their rebellion was not a futile gesture nor merely an accident in Southern Rhodesia History.

However, whether their background officials sought to maintain their rule cheaply, while stimulating their sought to achieve both purpose of African Labour. According to A J. Wills Southern Rhodesia obtained a measure of representative government in 1896. In that year there were already 5000 Europeans in the colony. The Rhodesia Order in Council combined Matabeleland and Mashonaland under one administration with headquarters at Salisbury (Harare).

A Legislative Council was established over which the administrator was to preside consisting of 5 members appointed by the company and 4 being elected. The first years of occupation were hard ones for Rhodesia-That is for European settlers and Africans. The Africans were undergoing the initial stages of a revolution that had been thrust upon them.

The whites columnst faced their own problems and A.J.Wills Says:

"At this time a serious obstacle facing miners and farmers, railway builders and those in need of carriers for transport and treating their economic shortage of labour".

As a result, a clause in the 1897 native legislation for Rhodesia had made it compulsory for chiefs to provide labour for public works if required to do so. In 1899, Labour Bureau were established by the Southern Rhodesian Chamber of mines to carry out recruiting. However, they did not obtain the desired results and according to Wills;

"A proud and hitherto unconquered Matabele cannot be turned in a year into a useful servant by kicks and a by cursing him for not understanding an order given in English or by being too kind to him. The blackmen is inclined much more than the white to do nothing at all".

As a result, the chamber of mines passed a resolution in 1900 calling for the importation of Asiatic labour. The other means included an attempt in 1901 to double a recently inaugurated poll tax to 2 pounds per head. The tax served the double purpose of encouraging man to work or contributing to the government revenue.

Taxes could be paid on money, ivory, gold, copper and salt the value of each being assessed. The general imposition of tax followed the extension of the British authority of tax throughout the protectorate after 1897. While settlers set to extend their influence over the Central government, African wage earners in Southern Rhodesia were involved

in a desperate struggle for survival. Most were immigrant workers employed as miners or on European farms and these were paid as single man on the assumption that their families could sustain themselves through subsistence cultivation in their villages.

Wages tended to decrease during the period of reconstruction in the mining industry from 1903- 1912 and living conditions also deteriorated. As a number of miners increased overcrowding became a basic feature of compound life. Hospital provision was virtually non-existent on both smaller and large miners. In 1906 the death rate among African miners averaged 76 per 1000 and in the next years, 1907, 153 black miners out of every 1000 in Gwanda district died.

In A.D Roberts' words;

“When ever African wage earners were employed in large numbers on the railways or in public works departments in mines, compounds were formed to facilitate labour control”.

The central problem facing employers was how to coerce workers into meeting the demands of the industry while at the same time preventing them from using collective muscle to press for improvement in living standards hence the solution arrived in the compound system from South Africa. Therefore one can say that though a formal structure of racial discrimination did not exist in Southern Rhodesia until the 1930s, many elements existed in early years of practice in the century.

Europeans provided with privileged access to land were supported by discriminatory taxation aimed at forcing Africans into European employment. As noted by A.D. Roberts in the Cambridge History of Africa:

" White farmers and mine owners were one in requiring regular supplies of cheap unskilled labour, and to this end they agitated for measures that would reduce the capacity of Africans to function as independent agricultural producers and that would force them into taking employment with whites”.

There was an informal colour bar existed throughout industry devised not only to protect European workers from African competition but also to limit the social cost that employers were limited to bear.

The white farmers from African competition, but also to limit the social cost that employers were limited to bear; The white farmers divided their attention to the needs of the European population in the mines and towns. According to R. Hollet;

"These needs might well have been supplied at least in part by African peasant producers for the Shona had developed a highly remarkable variety of crops”

However, Hullet goes on to say;

"By ensuring that most of the land within easy reach of minerals went to Europeans, the locals administration gave white farmers a significant advantage-

an advantage consolidated by the subsidies and farmers with their great political influences found it easier to secure"

Thus most African farmers in Southern Rhodesia were locked in the strait - jacket of a subsistence economy, discouraged from producing cash crops created by the influx of Europeans

For many villages in these marginal areas regarded as labour reserves by the colonial authorities, small scale protests against labour recruitment and tax collection constituted the main political response to colonial rule eg in North-eastern Rhodesia , malcontents attempted to escape the authority of headmen, chief and white officials by sitting next to gardens deep in the woodland.

Labour recruitment was sometimes attacked. The B.S.A. Co. rewarded the first pioneers with grants of 3000 acre farms. Then the company set about demanding reserves for Africans. By 1915 native reserves covered an area of 24 million acres while Europeans owned 21 million acres leaving some 15 million acres still unallotted.

Ten years later, the settler government appointed a commission to make recommendations about the future of these undemarcated tracts of land recommendations which were largely embodied in the result Africans tended to be left with the land Apportionment in the left with the land of poor soil, remote from the railways and they were specifically proven from acquiring property in the expanding towns all of which were regarded as European areas.

The land policy followed by the new administration in British Central Africa had then a profound long term effect in the African rationalism.

Company rule to 1923: Direct rule.

Why did the British uphold company rule or the Charter despite heavy criticism by the British citizens and their call to revoke it?

- (1) The alternative to Company rule in Rhodesia would have been for the British to take over direct responsibility for the Rhodesians as a Protectorate. This would have involved the government in the great expense. The British citizens were not keen to take on additional burdens- i.e. as tax payers, especially after their experience in Nyasaland.
- (2) Although the government never publicly admitted it, Joseph Chamberlain, the powerful colonial secretary, had himself known something of Rhodes' plan to invade the Transvaal and had supported it.

For both financial and moral reasons, therefore, the British governments could not afford to dispense with Rhodes and the Company and felt itself company's control of colonial affairs was, however restricted in 1898 and a resident Commissioner was appointed to Southern Rhodesia to act as the " watch dog" of the British government. His duties at first included control of the police, but shortly

afterwards another British representative was appointed to supervise the police force which was reorganized to carry out duties more efficiently.

The Orders in Council-1898:

Rhodesia was given a new constitution to ensure a sound basis for its administration.

Provisions:

(i) An Executive Council consisting of the Resident Commissioner and four members nominated by the Company, and a Legislation Council which would have four elected members in addition to five nominated ones.

(ii) The Company Administrator presided over both councils

(iii) The Legislation council could make laws subject to the approval of the South Africa High Commissioner, who might also legislate by proclamation.

The South Africa High Commissioner: Lord Milner:

Lord Milner was the author of this constitution. He aimed; just like Rhodes to prepare Southern Rhodesia for future union with the four self-governing South Africa countries possibly in a federation. This would help for South Rhodesia would tip the balance in favour of British interests over Afrikaaner nationalist ones. For this reason, Milner set Southern Rhodesia on the road to self government by providing for the settlers to elect some of the members of the Legislative Council.

(iv) The increase of the settlers or European population automatically resulted in an increase in the members of the Legislative council. In 1903 there were equal members of elected and official members and by 1907 there was a majority of elected members. This also meant an increase in the number of voters.

(v) Initially the vote was given to male British subjects over twenty- one who were literate and possessed an income of £50 a year or property valued at £75.

(vi) In 1912 this was amended to either an income of £100 or properly valued at £150 and in 1919 women were granted the franchise, which roughly doubled the numbers on the voters' roll.

An efficient administrative system was essential if the country were to develop smoothly.

(vii) W. H. Milton-Administrator from 1898 to 1914 recognized the civil service, hitherto a somewhat rough and ready body-modeling it along that of the Cape Colony, setting up a number of Government Departments and recruit capable and experienced staff.

Now that the Administrative department was a set up, the company was in a

passion to focus its main energies on economic expansion.

The Rise and Fall of the African Peasantry: Rhodesia” 1898- 1930

The Rise of the African Peasantry:

The Rise of the African peasantry in “Southern Rhodesia,” like elsewhere in Southern Africa can be traced from the very beginning of colonial occupation; As already shown in chapters 13 and 14, colonial occupation and rule resulted in Africans being forced to work for whites to earn money. Two labour markets emerged, that is the mining and agricultural industry.

African agriculture was also seriously affected by the rapid growth of the African population during the 20th century, caused by the ending of local wars and raids and the introduction of scientific health services. The African peasantry emerged from the fact that the B.S.A.Co and other white companies were mainly concentrating on mining.

In the first 30 years of colonial rule in Southern Rhodesia, many Africans became prosperous peasant farmers growing crops for consumption and for sale. They chose to be peasants and refused to become migrant labourers. They developed strong peasant class-consciousness. The African peasants wanted to have freedom to practice agriculture, growing their own crops and keeping cattle on their own land. They wanted to be free to sell their crops at the highest prices obtainable.

From 1898 to 1993, there was very little competition from white settlers who still hoped to find the “Second Rand.” The mines therefore became a ready market for peasantry produce. As in South Africa, many peasants were quite successful in the early years.

Although the settlers had appropriated huge tracts of land, most of them were more interested in mining than in farming. Settlers made no attempt themselves. This resulted in peasants on white owned land using it but giving some of their crops or cattle to the white landowners as rent. Some peasants were forced to surrender half of what they produced. This left them with the other half for their own use, that is to use it or sell it for money.

Peasants in the reserves had to pay taxes- and as long as the taxes were paid, they were free to use or sell everything they produced. “Southern Rhodesia therefore depended almost entirely on food grown by Africans. The African peasants earned money for rents and taxes by selling crops they grew themselves and this was preferable rather than leave their homes to work for whites.

The successful peasants were the very people who had controlled trade, for example, chiefs or rulers in the pre-colonial period. These naturally became the most progressive peasant farmers when peasant farming developed. This was because they had already had wealth in cattle, and many wives who provided labour for farming. It therefore follows that many ordinary people often were not so successful in peasant farming. The poorer

peasants and those further away from the markets were still forced to go and work for short periods in the mines to raise money for taxes.

Fluctuation of Peasantry Production:

Most peasants in various districts of the colony did not have land as already noted above as a result of the land theft by white settlers and the company government. The African peasants had to pay rent to white farmers, who did not farm very much. The white landowners owned land for speculative purposes and collected rent from the “squatter” peasant living on the land.

In 1898, peasantry production was boosted by the fact that, a few people from the colony’s districts went to work in the mines. Most of the peasants stayed on the land to grow crops to sell to the mine owners for the up-keep of the mine workers. Most of these peasant farmers sold their crops to shop-keepers found in different areas, who in turn sold the produce to the mines. In the same year, it was noted that peasant farmers had prospered and were proving to be very clever businessmen, and that they knew how to sell their produce at a great profit. The same also applied to the sale of their livestock.

However, it was not long before the mine owners started to complain about labour shortages. The mine owners noted that there was a huge black population in the districts only a smaller number of men worked in the mines. As already shown in chapters 13 and 14, the natives were reluctant to work in the mines, where conditions were deplorable and mine owners described those who went to the mines as weak, cowardly and lazy men who did not want to work.

The mine-owners tried to get government to force peasants to work but the government reminded them that they (mine-owners) needed the peasant’s crops. If the peasants were forced off the land to go and work in the mines, there would be no food for the miners in the districts.

In 1903, the peasants’ luck changed. In that year the government finished building a railway line from Harare (Salisbury) to Shurugwi (Selukwe). The trains on this line carried food from the capital to the mines along the way. This ensured cheaper food than the peasants’ crop that the shop keepers sold to the mines. This development seriously affected the plight of the African peasant in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia”). The shop-keeper started to panic, for they could not sell the crops that they had purchased from the peasants. The only answer to the middlemen- (shop-keepers) was to sell to the mines at a cheaper price, which also meant that they had to buy from the peasant at a cheaper price.

In 1905 the shop-keepers were able to pay only half of what they had paid in 1898 to the peasants. so the amount of money the peasants got had dropped by 50 percent. The peasants did not have to stop farming completely, for they still could sell cattle. It was difficult to bring cattle by train from Harare (Salisbury), so the peasants cattle were still the cheapest.

In 1908 a colonial officer noted:

“... Because these farmers get so much money for their cattle they refuse to work. Most of the peasants are not keen to leave their homes they prefer selling cattle”

On the other hand, many settlers started to produce maize and cattle in many districts and wanted to evict the peasants from the land. The government, the white farmers and mine-owners teamed-up together to get rid of the peasants. Laws were passed by the government e.g. the pass law, white farmers started to demand high rents that peasants could not afford.

The other laws pushed Africans into reserves. By 1913, 40 percent of the black population were living in reserves which were described as “rocky and not good for farming.” The peasants had lost the struggle- for they could not farm successfully in the reserves. The peasantry could not compete with the farmers, who were getting all the necessary support through loans from the company government. The peasants were proletarianised. To survive they had to work in the mine and later white settler- farms.

Table of grain production in “Southern Rhodesia”- ie Zimbabwe (in Kilograms)

1904	1914	1918	1921
Europeans 20 884	337 322	366 378	454 454
Africans 976 554	981 094	1 132 730	1 194 020

(Adopted from Ian Phimister and Andre Proctor)

The Fall And Destruction of The Peasantry:

The proletarianisation of the peasantry mainly affected the males. Therefore, even if in the short run, production did not suffer significantly from their absence, the long-term effect was to be an overall. Decrease in productivity. This trend was presumably reinforced by the fact that, given the absence of males, innovation slowed down at a moment when the transition from shifting to continuous cultivation made a change in techniques all the more necessary.

This long-term decrease in productivity of the peasantry is confirmed by what scanty evidence is available such as that collected by M. Yudelman:

“Utilizing the available data and adjusting the figures on the basis of the demographic sample of 1954; one can say that the de facto farm population of African areas rose from 514, 000 in 1901 to 1; 224,000 in 1950-an increase of something like 140 percent at a time when output rose by 140 to 150 percent and cultivated average was extended by 260

to 270 percent.”

Thus the per capita subsistence consumption of the peasantry could be maintained only by considerable increases in average cultivated per family. Once this process of deterioration of African Agriculture had started, it became cumulative since the lowered and continuously decreasing opportunity cost of the peasantry in the traditional sector was bound to force an ever-growing number of men into wage employment.

The foregoing discussion shows that, in the long run, to the growing of the wage-workers there would necessarily correspond, not an increase, but rather a decrease in the productive capacity of the rural areas. Therefore when the limits of land available had been, the attempts on the part of wage labourers to realize their “savings” were to be frustrated, their security would be lost and a proletariat arisen. This is the reason why the institutional framework established in the 1930s would not prevent the proletarianisation of part of the peasantry.

We may thus draw the conclusion that the economic implication of the institutional framework was (a) economic stagnation and (b) formation of a proletariat (working class).

Africans lost a lot of land in the 1890s when the first African reserves were created and whites took the best land. After 1908, the B.S.A.Co decided to try to make money by developing white farming. They took away from African peasants even more of the good farming land. In 1914, a commission set up by the B.S.A.Co took away another half a million hectares of the best land near towns and main transport routes.

The government sold this land to white settlers. During the 1920s, both the miners and farmers began to call on the government to take more land away from African peasants. The mine owners hoped this would force peasants to work on the mines.

The Capitalist farmers wanted to end competition from peasants. They also wanted more land and more people to work for wages. The government passed laws taking more land away from peasants and giving it commercial white farmers. In 1930, government passed the Land Apportionment Act, which became effective from 1931. This law set aside half the country- most of the best land- for settler farmers. Between 1930 and 1950, most peasants were forced off this land into even more crowded reserves. Peasants were expelled from land that the white owners were not using themselves. The government wanted this land for future settlers. A few peasants were later allowed to buy land in what were called “African Purchase Areas.” Some of them became fairly successful farmers and businesspeople. A few even began to support the government.

African peasants in the reserves had many difficulties. The land in the reserves was often poor. It became even less fertile as more and more people were crowded in from white-owned land. Overstocking and overgrazing caused land degradation. Land that was too intensively farmed by traditional methods became infertile. Most of the reserves were far away from towns and markets. It was difficult for peasants to transport crops to markets. Their cattle had to walk long distances to the markets. When they arrived they were so

thin that they could only be sold for low prices. Peasants were no longer able to earn enough money from farming- so many were forced to become wage earners- the proletariat.

The Rise of Settler Capitalist Agriculture: 1910- 1953:

Introduction:

After 1910, it was clear that there were no gold-fields as rich as the Rand in South Africa. The B.S.A.Co encouraged many settlers to turn to commercial farming instead of mining. They were encouraged to grow crops such as tobacco and maize and to breed cattle to supply the mines and for export to South Africa and Britain. But the settler farmers faced difficulties. The main one was that peasants produced crops more cheaply and efficiently than the settlers could.

The colonial government began to spend a lot of money helping white commercial farmers. Much of this money was taken from taxes paid by peasants. The government set up a special bank to lend money to commercial farmers. It was called the Land Bank. The government also provided services, such as advisers, cattle- dipping, marketing and transport facilities.

According to Andre Proctor, settlers with farms made Africans living there pay higher rents and new dipping fees. They confiscated cattle, which strayed on their land. Africans living on settler farms were stopped from farming for themselves and forced to work for the settlers' farms for low wages.

According to V.C. Machingaidze, Capitalist agriculture received a tremendous boost as the company began to focus its attention on agricultural development and the realization of "its" land asset.'

Before examining the development of capitalist agriculture during the era of company rule, Machingaidze noted two points. Capitalism developed in Rhodesian agriculture in two ways.

(1) First, by internal accumulation of surplus value. White farmers (and also black farmers) sought to build up resources of capital from profits. White farmers, as already noted, had an advantage, in that there were a large number of resources at their disposal (taxes, compulsory labour, pass laws, private locations etc) by which they could extract surplus value from Africans, who increasingly were being turned into a local rural proletariat. (The contribution of such compulsory measures to capitalist agricultural development in Southern Rhodesia has been insufficiently recognized in the published literature). At the same time a large corpus of legislation and practice grew up to ensure that African producer did not become capitalist

farmers competing with settler farmers.

The Chief Native Commissioner, Herbert Taylor, was reflecting government policy when he stated in 1918:

“The native should be trained not so much to be a competitor with the white man in the business of life, but as a useful auxiliary to help in the progress of the country.” It must be pointed out that the estates and ranches set up by the B.S.A.Co’s Commercial Branch from about 1910 onwards also benefited from the above repressive measures. The white farmers have had in this struggle the inestimable advantage of political power; both during and after company rule. Through settler agitation, the number of elected members in the Legislative council rose from 4 (against 7 company representatives) to 7 (out of 15 in 1903 and stood at 7 (out of 13) between 1908 and 1913. In 1914 elected members held 12 of the 20 seats in the Council. But the influence of settler representatives on government policy, especially with regard to labour policies and the yearly estimates, is not to be looked at merely in terms of the number of elected members vis-à-vis nominated members, since it was in the political interest of the company to carry as much settler support with it as possible.

(2) Secondly, the penetration of international capital is a major factor in the development of capitalist agriculture in Southern Rhodesia. International capital was present in Southern Rhodesia in terms of speculative financial investment might from the 1890’s in the form of big land grants. The B.S.A.Co Manager noted in 1912 that the fifteen principal land-owning companies in Southern Rhodesia held over 8 million acres between them, with Amalgamated properties of Rhodesia and Willoughby’s Consolidated Co. Ltd owning 1, 544,000 acres and 1, 339 000 acres, respectively. The fact that over 6 million acres of the above land lay within 25 miles of railways lines gave this land added importance and value. It is important to note, of course, that the B.S.A.Co, as the largest land owner in the country, had a direct role here through its Commercial Branch, which run large estates and ranches. Throughout most of the period of company rule these big land companies, many of which were owned by mining capital, held their land largely for speculative purposes.

And when they did go in for farming they tended to limit themselves to the country’s three major agricultural commodities, viz, maize tobacco and above all, cattle ranching (which required minimal infrastructure on the farm and had an assured market at the local mines and, from February 1916, on the Rand). There was hostility between settler farmers and the land speculators right from the 1890’s the former accusing the latter of “Locking up” valuable agricultural land and African labour and thereby hindering white immigration. This hostility was manifested particularly in the tussles over the Private Locations Ordinance (1908).

One result of the promulgation of the above ordinance was that from about 1910 the state could take action against purely speculative interest in land and international capital was forced to become productive (to a limited extent). It was partly this move by the state for the benefit of settler farmers and the gradual eradication of East Coast fever and other cattle diseases, that gave a spur to large-

scale ranching the period prior to the 1921-22 cattle market crisis.

Capitalist Agriculture boosted:

Between 1906 and 1912 six major factors together boosted capitalist agriculture, so much so that by the close of second decade of the 20th century settler agriculture had reached a level of self-sufficiency especially in three of the country's major agricultural commodities, viz, maize, tobacco and cattle and after coercing the domestic market for itself, especially food supplies to the mines hitherto dominated by African producers, had begun to penetrate external markets in the sub-continent, and even overseas in the case of maize, tobacco and citrus fruits. The six factors are:

- (1) The Wise report of 1906
- (2) The 1906 visit to Southern Rhodesia by a committee of the B.S.A.Co Board of Directors headed by H. Birchenough.
- (3) The reorganization of the Agricultural Department under the directorship of Dr. Eric Nobbs in 1908.
- (4) The promulgation of Private Locations Ordinance (PLO) in 1908.
- (5) The company's embarkation on a policy of developing its own estates and launches "on strictly commercial lines for profit."
- (6) The establishment of the land Bank in 1912.

V.C Machingaidze discussed each of the above factors in turn.

C.D. Wise, an experienced British agriculturalist and the company's land settlement expert, left the UK for Southern Rhodesia in October 1905, with instructions from the Board to report generally upon the current and future prospects of the agricultural industry, the opportunities for new settlers, and the methods by which cultivating owners could be best established upon the soil. In the same year, at the instructions of the Board, the administration in Southern Rhodesia passed a Loans Ordinance providing for the constitution of a public debt of 250, 000 "to be expended upon agricultural holdings." Although rejected by the colonial office, the ordinance nevertheless, indicates the company's new aggressive agricultural policy.

The Directors were impressed by Wise's report and asked him to return to Southern Rhodesia to start operations and prepare a central farm on one of the areas selected for settlement, for the purpose of receiving and training settlers." In general, in accordance with methods submitted in his report, the Directors expounded a bold settlement policy to their shareholders:

"It will be Company's aim to assist settlers to take up farms already prepared for their occupation, by the support and facilities offered them, rather than by giving

them raw land at prairie value.”--- Although the Company would not suspend the sale of unimproved land outside the settled areas for settlement.

Each district taken up for settlement was to have an experimental farm financed by a special grant for the Administration to assist experimental work, such as trials and selection of seeds and trials of insecticides, under the auspices of the Agricultural department. The Development would disseminate the experimental results on the Rhodesia agricultural Journal, and invite farmers to inspect the trial growing. As Wise himself had noted.

“A great advantage in carrying out such trials on the central Farm is that the farms will be in different parts of the country, and experiments will therefore be valuable, being carried out under local conditions of that particular district.”

The earliest central Farms/Experimental Farms were established on the Salisbury Commonage, at the Company’s Mazoe and Premier estates and Marondellas (Marondera) farm.

Assistance to new settlers would include interalia assisted sea passage and free rail passage to Southern Rhodesia, temporary accommodation and opportunities for practical experience, and a proportion of land to be cultivated before the arrival of the settler and assistance in providing stock. The Directors also took up Wise’s recommendation to urge co-operation among settler farmers for the purchase and sale of agricultural materials and produce, and the construction of better roads to connect farming districts such as Melsetter, Enkeldon and Victoria to railway lines,” to enable them to go ahead Recommendations adopted by the Company was that the Company should “dispose of their land to the first settlers at a low but fair rate, according to the market value of the land in the country today, reserving however, alternate blocks (to be sold later when prices had risen) then should assist these men as far as possible in reason, without spoonfeeding, and make them successful, as their success will mean the success of land settlement and the development of the country.”

In the next few years, the Company resorted to the simple expedient of reducing the minimum price of land to 1/6 a morgen. But commercial companies are not renowned for their benevolence and the lowering of land prices was simply a practical move by the Board to attract settlers and was not designed to last for very long. As the Director enthusiastically reported to share holders in 1913.

“The average price at which land was sold by the Company in Southern Rhodesia during the six months ended 31st September last (1912) represent an advance of 26% on the average of the preceding year, and 53% on the corresponding figure for the year ended 31st March 1910.”

The declaration of policy issued to settlers at Bulawayo in October 1907 by the visiting Commission of Director further confirmed the company’s adoption of Wise’s recommendations. The Commission stated that the Company intended to

pursue an active and forward commercial policy, and to stimulate in every possible way the opening up and steady development of the mineral and Agricultural resources of the country. As the Directors told shareholders, the time had arrived for the adoption of a vigorous policy of development upon broad lines and the Company could incur expenditure in all the above directions:

“The return for expenditure so incurred is to be looked for not only in direct

Profits, but also in the natural development resulting from an increase of population;

That will bring about the occupation and settlement of vast areas now lying idle, increase in the productive power of Rhodesia, improvement in railway traffics and enhancement of the value of the company’s land (emphasis mine).”

In order to encourage further land settlements, the visiting commission proposed, as noted above

- a) To reduce the price of land
- b) To accept cash payments for land where there was a reasonable guarantee of genuine occupation and
- c) Submitted proposals to the Chamber of Mines and Farmers’ Associations aimed at amending the Mines and Minerals Ordinance to restrict and define the privileges of prospectors and miners on occupied farms.

Point (c) had regard to:

- (i) Access to grazing rights after mining operations had begun
- (ii) Cutting timber and
- (iii) The use of water

Further, the Company undertook to pay rebates on the purchase price of farms where improvements had been carried out, in the form of fencing, planting and general cultivation. In order to carry out the Company’s new policy, the Directors proposed the immediate issuing of 3 million new shares.

The reorganization of the Agricultural Department in 1908 by Dr. Eric Nobbs, an Agricultural scientist from the Cape, who served as Director of Agriculture between 1908 and 1923; revolutionized the function of the Department, thus giving a boost to capitalist agriculture. The reorganization was planned to increase the Department’s administrative efficiency as well as its scientific activities. From this period on, the Department consistently increased its number of agriculturalists, tobacco and cotton experts, veterinary officers, agricultural scientists etc. In addition to conducting experiments and disseminating the results to farmers, these experts went out to farms regularly to give on-the-spot advice to settler farmers. Dr Nobbs regarded such visits as the most effective

method of getting progressive ideas across to farmers in a new country “with a population so largely composed of newcomers, many of them without any agricultural experience ...” Such free state provision of Scientific and technical services to settler farmers must be regarded as an important form of capital made available to capitalist agriculture.

The Private Locations Ordinance (PLO), which was modeled on the Cape Legislation, had its origins in the demand of the Matabeleland branch of the Rhodesia landowner’s and Farmers’ Association to the visiting B.S.A.Co Directors in 1907 that Legislation be enacted on the lines recommended by the South African Native Affairs Commission (1903-5), to restrict African occupation of white-owned land. The Ordinance limited the number of African adult males on a 1,500 Morgan farm to 40, and stipulated the number of months’ work the tenant had to work for his landlord at current rates of wages. Thus the distribution of African farm labour was not left to the operation of “market forces”, but was actually legislated for by the state to benefit white agriculture as the Rhodesia Herald reported, Attorney General Tredgold’s speech in the Legislative Council declared:

“There were two ideas which must be prominent in all such legislation one was that the occupier of land, farm owner or any other person whom it may be, should not be deprived of a reasonable quantity of labour for the carrying out of such work as he was doing. The other extreme was that the owner should not congregate upon his land so many natives that the land could not support and they thereby become a great nuisance to neighbours, by living and praying on the surrounding country.”

It hardly needs to be said that Tredgold’s second reason for the Ordinance was largely an ideological justification for the first. As Tredgold himself stated, he was in total agreement with the conclusion of the South African Native Affairs Commission that the system of allowing large numbers of Africans on white- owned land and “Kaffir farming.”- “restricts the supply of labour that it fills up with natives much land which would others be better utilized and developed and it leads to the absence of due control over them.”

The PLO attacked “Kaffir farmers”, ie those rentier landlords and share- cropping interests who were extracting capital from Africans living on their land in the form of money rents and agricultural produce by charging 15 and 55 annually per contract for bona fide farmers actually occupying the land and absentee landlords, respectively. The above section of the P.L.O was bitterly opposed (without success) by land- owning interest in the Chamber of Mines, who argued that if it was a question of revenue, as it appeared to them.

“It would be better to raise such revenue by direct taxation of the natives rather than by throwing on the large landowners the odium of increased taxation and disturbances of might’s.”

Settler demands for PLO and the opposition to it by rentier and share- cropping interests must be viewed in the light of the penetration of finance capital into land. Such penetration led to the accumulation of large estates for speculative purposes, and hence also to the rise of rent-tenancy and share- cropping and the hostility of the more

commercialized settler farmers to both casual labour tenancy agreements and to rentier landlords for “locking up” land and African labour. In some areas the PLO merely legalized a practice that had been gaining ground for some time. As the CNC, Matabeleland, reported in 1907.

“Agreements between owners of farms and natives occupying them are becoming more general, but, in many instances, natives prefer moving to the reserves to binding themselves to any definite contract.”

It must be pointed out, however that the less capitalized farmers neither initiated nor accepted the PLO voluntarily, and in fact, those in areas such as Melsetter fought a rear-guard battle against the PLO well after the promulgation of the Ordinance. Even among the more successful capitalist farmers, the effect of the PLO was merely to regulate labour tenancy, not to destroy it. The supreme advantage of the labour tenant system was that during this early development of the cash nexus, when the “effort price” of African participation in settler agriculture was too high, it offered capitalist agriculture the necessary coercive apparatus to regulate labour supply. By 1916, the CNC could report that the Ordinance had, had a “good effect” on labour supply, as a whole, in that, 1,100 locations had been established under Section 3 of the Ordinance.

Although the Company Government started giving out funds to Settler farmers in the form of fencing loans as early as 1904, there was no proper institution for the first 22 years of Company rule to enable farmers to borrow money on easy terms, to employ a wide range of agricultural activities. By 1907 settler representatives in the legislative council were demanding that the Government establish a Land Bank, “to assist farmers with loans for purchasing stock, agricultural machinery, seeds and generally with a view to stimulating and encouraging the farming industry. Partly as a result of settler pressure and partly of the desire to attract new settlers and to diversify the country’s agricultural production and thereby indirectly profit from higher land prices and increased railway freight, the Company set up a land Bank in 1912, with a share capital of 250 000. Approved applicants could get up to a maximum of 2, 000 of first mortgage over ended property or an deposit of other approved security.

Repayment of Capital was spread over a period of 10 years and the annual interest rate of 6% was below what commercial banks were charging. The Land Bank’s policy, like that of the much larger Land and Agriculture Bank, created by the new all-settler government of 1924, was to make credit facilities “available for persons of European descent only.”

Direct B.S.A.Co involvement in agricultural production started with the setting up of the Central Farms under the management of C.D. Wise at the end of 1906, at Marandellas, (Marondera) and later at Sinoia (Chinhoyi), Mazoe and Premier Estates. By early 1912 the Company was also operating Rhodesdale Estate (in the Harley District- i.e. Chegutu), which consisted of 95, 305 acres, forming part of 118, 000 acres taken over in satisfaction of debt of £4, 698 owed by the French South African Development Company Ltd, and had acquired other farms which were being formed on a half-share agreement with the Company. The latter farms included the Mazoe Citrus farm (owned by the Mazoe Syndicate), in which the Company had bought a one- third share interest in 1909

and which the Company soon virtually owned.

Despite the financial, administrative and technical weakness of the early history of the Central farms, in 1910. Marandellas and Premier Estate produced tobacco worth £2,000 and £800, respectively, and in 1991 P.S. Inskipp, the Commercial Representative, could state that the three farms at Sinoia, Maronderallas and Premier Estate were self-supporting. Additional tobacco plantations were being established on all three estates as the Company set out to promote tobacco culture in the country. Early in 1910, for example, the Tobacco Company of Rhodesia South Africa Ltd, itself a subsidiary of the B.S.A.Co, was formed to take over the operations of the B.S.A.Co in connection with the purchase and sale of Rhodesia tobacco, including the leases of the tobacco warehouses which the chartered Company had build for the “scientific” handling of the country’s tobacco output. The new company also acquired “the right to select a total of 30,000 acres of land suitable for tobacco cultivation.

Land-the Company’s Principal asset and Diversification of Agricultural Production;

In 1910 the B.S.A.Co became the first landowner in the country to develop citrus culture on a commercial scale, first at the Mazoe Estate and not long afterwards at Premier and Sinoia Estates, and to a lesser extent at the Marandellas farm. In January 1912, the six farms being worked wholly by the Company totaled 76,150 acres at Sinoia and 73,941 acres at Rhodesdale were being used for grazing. The Rhodesdale Estate, which was enlarged to over 1 million acres, developed into one of the Company’s important ranches during the second decade of the 20th century, and had on it 40,000 head of cattle by 1923.

From about 1910 the company’s policy towards the Central Farms began to change from regarding them as mere training centres for settlers. As the Directors reported to the shareholders, “The primary object in the work of these estates is the earning of profits, but their use for secondary objects, such as the training of settlers, is not lost sight of.” While increased settler immigration would result in increased land purchases and, therefore increased profit for the company, by improving the underdeveloped land and showing that good profits could be made the Company could send up the price which it could later ask for the remaining so-called unalienated land, (i.e, land which had been expropriated but not yet granted to individuals or companies by the B.S.A Co).

The above view was reinforced by a 1912 memorandum by H. Wilson Fox, the company’s manager and financial expert. In a 1904 report commissioned by the company, Lt-Col Owen Thomas stated that (at that time) the case for agriculture as a leading national industry of Southern Rhodesia could not be demonstrated to the serious agriculturalist. He noted;

“ Frankly admit my failure to solve the problem of success in agriculture in Rhodesia, except as a minor adjunct of stock-farming; but I... recognize the immense suitability of that country for the pastoral branch of husbandry.”

Another expert employed by the Company, Professor Wallace of Edinburgh university, a specialist on rural economics, reported in 1908 that.

“As a supplementary branch of rural industry on livestock farms there is much scope for agricultural extension, but as a primary means by which the country as a whole may be developed, agriculture pure and simple is quite out of the question.”

The Director of Agriculture added weight to the above conclusions when he reported at the end of 1911 that Rhodesia was “essentially.” The condition of the country point strongly to meet the principal ultimate product to be elaborated off our veld... arable farming must rank before stock farming in importance, profitability and usefulness.”

Fox concluded from the above reports and others that, if land in Southern Rhodesia was to be valued according to the return which could, on average be derived from it when employed for the purpose it was best adapted “that value must primarily be determined with the reference to its value as a stock-raising country” Fox argued, and the board argued, that land must be regarded as the Company’s principal asset, taking priority over the company’s two other major assets, minerals and railways, and to be developed “with the object of making the maximum profit for its owners.” He argued that even at a low figure as 5 per acre the company’s land assets, north and south of the Zambezi, amounted to over £20 million, “a sum higher than I can assign to the company’s mining and railway interests combined on the best assumptions that on present knowledge I feel justified in making.”

Another Director, Lord Winchester, reinforced the above view when he stated in a memorandum the following year that the Chartered Company’s Mines and Development Company had already spent £20, 000 without any definite results.

“If this £20, 000 had been expended in the improvement of, say 10 farms, I think it would have a better return, taking into consideration the value which each settler is to both the Customs and Railway receipts.”

Fox reminded his fellow Directors, that, “speaking politically” time was running out for the Company and that it was a case of now or never. The Company could not prove or realize the true value of its estate by establishing a few highly developed estates, small in area, which no- one would accept as samples of the country at large, or by selling land on a large scale at low prices. The Company had already alienated 16 million acres in the most accessible districts.” For practically nothing so far as cash return is concerned and this land remains in comparatively few hands, and the greater proportion of it is undeveloped.”

In May 1911, on 2,140 whites were engaged in agricultural pursuits, and Fox gave a liberal estimate of

5 000 whites upon the land, out of a population of 23, 606. Between January 1908 and July 1912 the Company itself had settled 2,849 persons on 5,210, 549 acres. Clearly the Company’s policy of closer settlement, designed to limit farm sizes and to raise the land prices was not producing the anticipated results and had in fact met with popular disfavor among settlers. Fox argued for a more comprehensive policy by which the value of the

Company's vast land holdings of prairie land could be conclusively demonstrated. How was this to be done? "My answer," Fox stated, is by utilizing itself large areas of average land for the purpose of which it is best suited viz stock raising," which would have the secondary effect of farming land, especially outside the 25-mile railway zone, and therefore of raising its value when later taken up by new settlers. Fox recommended that £ 1 million be earmarked for expenditure of five ranches of 500, 000 acres each, of which four were to be in Southern Rhodesia and one in the Benchnnaland Protectorate." The Central Farm at Rhodesdale was to be up-graded into a ranch and the four ranches in Southern Rhodesia were to be developed in such a way as to be fully stocked by the end of 1920.

In the memorandum of June 1913, Fox repeated his call for the vigorous prosecution of the Company's ranching policy and listed four areas of policy. These were that the Company should:

- (i) Develop estates e.g. citrus estates
- (ii) Develop irrigable land "on business lines, the object in each being case to make a profit on the sale of improved land."
- (iii) that the above estates should provide young European settlers with opportunity of working for wages, before launching out on their own account as tenants or proprietors- a system that had already been tried in tobacco growing by Major Frank Johnson at the Inyoka Estate in present- day Gokwe district but there would be "no room for trade union wages in such cases" and
- (iv) Fox urged, and the company agreed, to breed dairy and other cattle for sale to settlers.

Although not all Fox's recommendations were fully implemented by the time the Privy Dry Council gave its ruling on land ownership in 1918, by the close of Company rule, apart from owning extensive ranches, the Company had planted 62, 000 citrus trees at its Mazoe Estate, 11,000 at Premier and 8, 000 at Sinoia, had built irrigation works at all three estates and had started to sell small irrigable holdings on these estates to settler farmers for citrus culture.

On returning from one of his many visits to Rhodesia, Birchenough reported to fellow Directors and to the shareholders I 1912 of the great progress being made in settler Agriculture. Unashamedly Birchenough succinctly stated the economic considerations that lay behind the company's aggressive white agriculture policy"

"When we started land settlement for the most part) we were selling prairies land to prairie farmers who applied to it prairie methods, and the land was in fact only, worth prairie prices to those who bought it. Now that people know the land can be made to yield a greater variety of crops and in larger quantities than they thought, and that settlers can be put at once in the way of raising such crops partly the successful example of their neighbours and partly with the advice and assistance of a first rate Agricultural Department, they are ready and willing to pay higher prices for land, for the simple reason that it is worth more to them... The sunrest way in my opinion to increase the value of our great asset the land of both

Southern and Northern Rhodesia- is to encourage and stimulate good farming. If we do that the price of land will rise automatically and settlers will more and more seek us instead of our seeking them.”

It is largely in the light of the above policies that the company’s involvement in agricultural production and in the promotion of settler agriculture in Southern Rhodesia can be properly understood according to Victor Machingaidze, an economic Historian. However, it is important to remember that the above policies were given added impetus by increasing settler demands for a vigorous settlement policy.

As Fox, Birchenough and other Company officials reported, settlers were constantly complaining that industry was languishing and that the cost of living was excessive “and rightly attributed these evils to the scanty number of the European population.

The Company’s decision in 1907 to separate its administrative and commercial function as from 1908 gave added impetus to the controversy over land ownership, a controversy that was to influence company-settler relations until the rulling of the Privy Council in 1918, that the unalienated land neither belonged to the Company, the Settlers nor to the African people, but the crown.

Settler representatives complained bitterly that monies from land sales and certain revenues (e.g rents charged on Africans living on malienated land and fines and rents from white land owners and tax on the mines) raised under the taxes and tariffs of the country were going to the company’s coffers instead of the development of the country. Thus in 1908 the 7 elected members forced a resolution through the Legislative Council, demanding that the Imperial Government adjudicate between the settlers/and the Company.

- (i) With regard to the claim of B.S.A.Co to be the private owners of all unalienated land in Southern Rhodesia.
- (ii) As to what imports or charges levied under the authority of ordinance or other laws, constitute administrative revenue, and what expenditure should be charged against such revenues.

As, in the circumstances, the resolution stated it was impossible for the Council to deal properly with the budgets submitted by the Administration. It was in part in reaction to such settler agitation that Fox and Birchenough stressed the importance of time in the company’s realization of its land asset, lest the Imperial Government rule against the company’s claim, hence the recommendations that the Company itself go in for extensive agricultural production and promotion of settler agriculture.

State Aid and Settler Extraction of Surplus Value form Africans:

The B.S.A.Co’s policy towards land settlement was that settlers should be of the “right stamp,” ie. With Capital. C.D. Wise had recommended in 1906 that the average settler should have at least £700. This amount included passage out, erection of temporary

accommodation, furniture, implements, harness, stock, seed, wages, poultry, rent, food and £70 for extras. The Directors reported in 1908 that an increasing number of well-to-do persons were leaving the UK to settle in Southern Rhodesia. Statistics seemed to validate the Company's optimism. In 1908 the Company's estates Department placed 949 persons on the land, with an average Capital per family of £800. By 1913 the average Capital per family had risen to £1, 240.

A very important source of agricultural capital inflow was the ranching companies which invested substantially in the cattle industry between 1910 and 1914. As the Director of agriculture reported in 1912, ranches "varying as a rule from 10,000 acres to 50, 000 or thereabouts." were being developed all over the country, using African cattle as the foundation stock, supplemented in some cases by grade stock from South Africa as well as pedigree stock from overseas. A B.S.A.Co shareholder who visited the country in 1910 reported that,

"There are a number of men who have made money at mining and putting it into ranching."

Some companies such as Willoughby's had been involved in ranching almost from the time of Occupation, but in 1912. Dr Nobbs was commenting on the "new feature...that several companies have been formed during the year, and these and others are embarking upon operation on a large scale."

The eight companies listed by Nobbs included Liebigs and the B.S.A.Co itself. All eight companies possessed at least several hundred thousand acres, while Liebigs, the Amalgamated Properties of Rhodesia and Willoughby held well over a million acres each. By 1912 the B.S.A.Co's Rhodesdale Ranch had been extended to over 1 million acres, and in 1914 carried over 19, 000 head of cattle. The 100, 000 acre Tokwe Ranch was being used principally as a collecting depot and carried 4, 914 head, while the company's 3. 590, 000 acre Nuanetsi Runch carried 4,524 head, while the company intended to develop it "as rapidly as possible." By 1920 Rhodesdale and Naunetsi ranches, which by now covered 1, 017, 216 acres and 2,258,165 acres, respectively carried a total of 88, 487 head of cattle.

But the inflow of settler and finance capital was not enough. Most settlers on the land did not come from the monies classes in the UK. They came from South Africa, as was probably time of Kenya during the immediate post- Anglo/Boer war period. The White population rose rapidly between 1904 (12,596) and 1991 (25,606), and especially during the period 1907-1991, and stood at 33,620 by 1921. Between 1904 and 1911 agricultural production more than doubled, involving 879 white males in the earlier year and 2,067 in the latter one. Furthermore, the Agricultural proportion of the total white population increased at a higher rate than any other occupational class among whites. By 1911 on 8% of the farming population of Southern Rhodesia had come directly from the UK, and in 1913 nearly 95% of white farmers and come from South Africa. The company sought to stabilize the Agricultural population by encouraging female settlers and improving conditions of settler existence on the land through the provision of better communications

with centres by road, telegraphs and telephones.

The Company's policy of keeping impecunious settlers out, especially "low butch," was never pursued with vigour, as continued growth of the Afrikaner "Republic of Enkeldoorn," clearly demonstrates. There were thus a large number of settler farmers throughout the period of Company rule with insufficient capital to farm on a large scale under Rhodesian conditions. Thus both settler farmers and the land companies were involved in Marx's "so-called primitive accumulation," of capital through rents under what Arrighi has termed semi-fendal relations of production. However, since settler agriculture in Southern Rhodesia hardly has what can be called "a peasant history," it seems more correct to see primitive accumulation not as a point of departure for the capitalist mode of production, as Karl Marx correctly observed in the case of Europe, but as occurring (almost) simultaneously with capitalist agricultural development. This becomes apparent when the crucial role of the state in the development of settler capitalist agriculture in Southern Rhodesia is examined.

Primitive capital accumulation in Southern Rhodesia went on throughout the period of Company rule in varying degrees. The period was characterized by the violent struggle of the growing capitalism against African subsistence and incipient peasant producers.

Repressive legislation ranging from Pass Laws, the PLO, to the native labour contracts were enacted to facilitate settler exploitation of African labour.

Roder has observed that:

"The moment a man pegged his farm, he regarded the African villagers on it as his serfs, who would have to work for him. The chief means of mobilizing this pool of labour in the first years was the sjambok or hippo-hide whip, and after 1908 labour agreements which committed tenants to work several months, usually three for the privilege of remaining on their ancestral land."

Not only did the state make agreements with other colonial states in the sub-continent to facilitate recruitment of labour, but in period of severe labour shortage, settler farmers were able to flex their political muscles and force the company government to institute measures designed to procure labour more quickly than Rhodesia native Labour Bureau could.

Thus, in September 1911, settler farmers held a mass demonstration in Salisbury and passed, *inter alia*, a resolution demanding the Government "to supply at once a minimum number of boys, sufficient to relieve temporarily an unprecedented crisis which otherwise will prove the main of the whole of the farming community."

The Government responded positively by instructing Native Commissioners "to place the position before the chiefs, which meant using chiefs to force "their subjects into contract

labour on settler farms.”

Apart from exploiting African labour and land settler farmers, land companies and the B.S.A.Co itself benefited from unfair terms of exchange in the cattle trade. In January 1908, for example, the Company’s Marandellas farm bought cattle from Africans in the Umtali (Mutare) district for between £ 1.10s and £6,5s per head- thus disadvantaging the Africans.

Comments:

It is crystal clear from the foregoing chapters on agricultural development that capitalist agriculture in Southern Rhodesia could only take off with state aid and settler exploitation of cheap African labour. Africans were forced to subsidise capital (white settler) agriculture for they lost their cattle, land, provided cheap labour and above all represie legislation was pt in place to support the minority white settlers. What the company regime had put place became the foundation from which the settler regime (1923- 1953) was to base its policies.

The land Apportionment 1930 (see chapter 29) favoured whites. The Land Husbandry Act (1951)- In brief:

By 1950 the reserves had become so poor that they were no longer able to support the families of workers. As commercial, (capitalist) agriculture grew, 85 000 more peasants were removed from white” farmland. The seller government tried to improve peasant agriculture in the reserves.

This was attempted through the Land Husbandry Act which was passed in 1951. This law gave each peasant household 4-8 hectares of land. The family then had to register this land as their own. Common grazing lead was divided into private plots to make room in the already overcrowded reserves for the thousands evicted from white commercial farms. All peasant households were forced to reduce their cattle herds. They were allowed no more than six animals each.

Although the total amount of food produced in the reserves increased, peasants were actually poorer than before. Many were unable to get any land at all. The poor and the landless had no choice but to work for white employers. No matter how little they were paid. As already shown earlier, those who had land in the African Purchase Areas were better off. However, none of them became really wealthy like the white commercial farmers. The plots sold to African Purchase farmers were small, between 150 and 200 hectares each whilst the average size of the white commercial farms was between 1 500 and 2 500 hectares.

Examination Type Questions

Describe and explain the urban living and working conditions for African in the 1930s and 1940s.

How effective were the measures imposed by the colonial regime to bar competition between the black and white farmers?

“Colonial agriculture was such a great success not so much because the white farmers were experts, but because they received a lot of incentives from the settler regime”. Illustrate and explain the validity of this statement.

Assess the view that colonial administration and rule “brought absolutely nothing positive for the African in the social political and economic spheres”

- 5) Why was Britain reluctant to take over control of Southern Rhodesia from company rule?
- 6) Colonial administration ushered in an African working class that eclipsed the traditional peasant.
- 7) Critically examine the effects of the colonial administration on the socio-economic livelihood of African communities.
- 8) Why did the colonial administration embark on capitalist agriculture?
- 9) To what extent was the settler government able to deal with the labour problems in Southern Rhodesia before mid 1940s?
- 10) What measures were taken by the settlers to frustrate African economic activities between 1894 and 1951?
- 11) “The impact of colonization on local Zimbabwean culture has been totally negative “Disuccs”?”

PRE-COLONIAL MINING

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

After studying this chapter, candidates should be able to:

- a) Describe the nature of early mining in southern Rhodesia
- b) Examine the living and working condition of African miners
- c) Critically examine attempts by the colonial government to address the living conditions of the Africans during this period

Background

For at least six centuries, reef mining has been practised in the area between the Limpopo and Zambesi rivers – (ie the Zimbabwe Plateau). It is probable that by as early as 1000 AD Muslims on the coast of Africa were trading gold with the inhabitants of the region. Certainly by the time the Portuguese established themselves on the east coast at Sofala in 1505, tribesmen, some of them the forefathers of the modern Shona – speaking peoples, were mining gold over an extensive area of what was to become "Rhodesia" and Mozambique territories. And it was this gold that contributed to the development of some of central Africa's most influential pre-colonial states, amongst them the kingdom centred on the famed site of Great Zimbabwe until it was abandoned in the sixteenth century – (for details revisit the pre-colonial states of the Zimbabwe plateau)

Nineteenth Century Expansion and Development in South – Central Africa: In South - Central Africa:

In Large measure, the myth can be attributed to the reports of hunters such as Henry Hartley who travelled widely through the area in the 19th century, and especially to the accounts of Germany explorer Karl Mauch who visited the region in 1867. Mauch's exaggerated reports of the mineral wealth to be found North of the Limpopo river attracted the attention of the British and South African investing public at precisely the time that they were becoming aware of the prospects and profits of the newly discovered Gmqualand diamond field and this resulted in the formation and flotation of the London and Limpopo mining Company and the South African Gold Fields Exploration company on the London market in 1868.

Capital did not really begin to flow northwards until after gold was discovered on the Witwatersrand in 1886. Men who had made their fortunes in kKimberky, amongst them Cecil Rhodes, now turned their attention to gold mining, and after a period of complex financial maneuvering, a group of large companies, including Rhode's Consolidated Gold fields of South Africa Ltd, came to control the deep substantial profits.

In the late 1880s the financial ambitions of Capitalists combined with cross-corments of

imperial expansion to produce a stream of concession Hunters who descended upon the ruler of the most powerful ethnic group in the trans-Limpopo area – Lobengula of the Ndebele.

For several years Lobengula had succeeded in keeping financial opportunists at bay. In the late 1880s, however, the King had to contend not only with the pressure of concession – hunters but also with serious political problems which made him move vulnerable than in previous years. Among the most powerful of the negotiators that besieged the royal "Kraal" was Charles Ruud (see earlier Chapters)

The Era Speculative Capitalism: 1890- 1903

The first ten years of the new colony's existence were punctuated by a series of political and military disasters. In particular, the hoped – for "Second Rand" failed to materialize and the history of the mining industry between 1890 and 1903 is a story of the fluctuating fortunes of speculative capital.

When they entered "Rhodesia" in 1890 the settlers took to establish themselves in Masholand, an area relatively isolated from the powerful Ndebele and inhabited by the less militaristic Shona-speaking peoples. Mashonaland, however, was not well endowed with mineral resources, the bulk of the gold deposits being located in the south in Matebeleland, this meant land speculation, prospecting and mining relatively, small reefs. Mine-owners also found an additional problem in obtaining and stabilizing a Shona work.

Ndebele raiding parties sent to extract tribute from Shona communities terrified local Africans and severely disrupted both farm and mine labour supplies. The permanent solution to this impasse had to wait until the military power of the Ndebele was produced substantial advantages for the B.S.A Co and the mine –owner gold resources of Matebeleland but it facilitated control over Ndebele raids.

The mining industry now seemed set for substantial uninterrupted progress. It received a boost in 1893 when the first two large mines, the Cotopaxi and the Dickens and Leander Starr Jameson, Administer for the B.S.A. Co in the colony, with at least one eye on the stock markets telephoned London;

"Everywhere new finds are occurring daily, crushing everywhere successfully, wonderful developments in every district. Reefs certainly improve as depth increase.

Bolstered with such "evidence" the period between 1893 and 1895 so the flotation of a number of new companies - a trend encouraged by the B.S.A. Co. which held a 50% share in all mining ventures. Land and mineral-claim speculation accelerated rapidly. In 1895, the B.S.A.Co's shares changed hands at £8 175 bnb on the newly opened Bulawayo stock exchange.

The increases in share prices of London-based companies, however, had a very different significance for the Shona and Ndebele communities. The appropriation of African land and stock, the suppression of the alluvial gold trade, the tax demands of the B.S.A.co and

the labour requirements that had already reached danger point when natural disaster-on outbreak of cattle disease- precipitated a second African revolt in 1896-97. This time resistance from both Shona and Ndebele prolonged. In particular Africans showed their detestation of the mining industry by throwing the bodies of white miners; prospects and their foreign black labourers down mine shafts.

The protracted revolt in any case caused the suspension of all activity in the colony and cost of suppressing it contributed to a marked change in the fortunes of the mining companies. By 1898 Shonas, such as those of the Rhodesian Exploration and Development Co., which at the height of the 1895 boom were selling at G18, could be bought at £4 and those of B.S. A. Co. had dropped from £81756d to £2 15s od.

The high price of shares had indeed largely reflected the hope of a "second Rand" rather than the results of gold production, and some companies aware of this, took steps immediately after the revolt to bring mines such as the Dunraven, Geeling and Selukwe to the crushing stages as rapidly as possible. On balance, however, the company remained the presence of speculative capital and the mining companies produced promises rather than gold. In 1898 the Rhodesia Herald pointedly suggested in its additional that:

"The capitalist should be encouraged; but only as a mining and industrial factor not as a speculator pure and simple"

During the first ten years of the industry's existence the lack of a stabilized labour force, shortages of skilled manpower and machinery, inadequate fuel supplies and the absence of a cheap rail linkage with the more developed South could all partly account for the South African war of 1899 and the subsequent disruption of rail transport, of machinery and mining supplies, was really the last major excuse that could be used to justify to the shareholders the slow growth in production and the absence of profits.

Mining Companies denied income throughout this period from a variety of subsidiary activities, the most important of which were mmm –collecting Leather from African tenant farmers or from settlers occupying urban premises, land speculation or trading, this income could not hide the basic unprofitability of companies supposedly engaged in mining. It became increasingly apparent to capitalists that the Rhodesian gold fields were not nearly as profitable as the resuscitated Witwaterand mines. This coupled with the problem of obtaining adequate supply of cheap labour, made investors increasingly cautious about Rhodesian Companies during 1900-1902.

Indirectly, the B.S.A.Co acknowledged that many of the mining companies were over-capitalized and that there were serious problems in the industry when, in 1902, it reduced its claims of a 50% share in all companies to 30%. This was the next decade designed to restructure the basic over – evaluation of the country's resources "and the concession of 1902 could not prevent the onset of a major

financial crisis. By April 1903, the London market for Rhodesian mining stock, had collapsed and until March 1904 the industry was in a state of depression. Thus, industry by a period of reconstruction from 1903 – 1911 and consolidation and development of the mining industry – 1912 -1933 – the details of which, are more relevant to Economic Historians.

Conditions in the Mine Compounds:

Though African wages presented the most important and obvious target for mine owners in their attempts to minimize costs and secure the profitability of the industry, alone were not sufficient in themselves to ensure adequate profits. Within both the state and the mining industry it was approach proceed beyond direct expenditure on African Labour to embrace indirect expenditure on, among other things, food, accommodation, hospitals. and compensation for injury. Cost minimization war in short not only to reflect itself in the compounds, but to govern, the living condition of black miners.

Compound Accommodation:

From the very earliest years of the industry, the mine owners' desire to control expenditure on African labour produced grossly, inadequate accommodation in the Rhodesia compounds. In the years of the speculative era before the turn of the century, mine owners in many cases did not provide accommodation at all for black workers such housing as there was, more often than not provided by employees themselves: newly – armed black workers would use their "Leisure time" to construct rough grass shelter or temporary huts which provided little or no protection from wind or rain. At an Indaba held in 1899, the Chief Native Commissioner, who must have been aware of this and its effects on the labour supply, assured Africans that he had extracted promises from mine manager to build compounds. But in 1900 Africans from Nyanga district were reported to be leaving the country to seek employment in South Africa, and it was recognized that they undertook the journey not simply because there were sometimes higher wages to be earned in the South (at the time many Rhodesian wages were competitive) but because of the inadequate food and housing provided within still living in "rough grass and pole shanties". In mid -1901 the Administrator conceded "that it was quite time the natives were frequently not well treated, fed or housed – resulting in the following:

- (1) From the late 1890s onwards, larger companies started to invest in the construction of sizeable, square wood and then compound, -the buildings which were to constitute. The core of African housing on the mines – cost relatively acceptable.
- (2) Between 1903 and 1908, mine compounds mangers experienced their great difficulty in getting black workers to occupy the barracks – like

accommodation. It was not simply the tighter discipline which operated in these inner compounds which workers objected to, but a variety of other disagreeable features as well. The total absence of privacy proved most unacceptable and in later years workers consistently attempted to seal off rags or old blankets. In other cases; workers drawn from different cultural backgrounds refused to share mass accommodation. More important still were the physical discomforts.

The iron roofs transmitted seasonal fluctuations in temperature. In summer, day time temperatures inside the buildings were as high as 109⁰F. During the cold winter nights, however, workers sleeping on damp earthen floors were forced to huddle so close to their fires that many of them were observed to have burns on the abdomen and chest. So it was that workers would occupy the central wood and iron compounds only as a last resort: and at the Globe and Phoenix mine, for instance, a building designed to accommodate 800 workers had a mere 100 occupants in 1905.

- (4) Black miners devoted some time and effort to providing themselves and the families with basic accommodation.
- (5) Further effort or expenditure was necessary to maintain a decent thatch roof, make additional improvements or acquire such basic items of furniture as a bed.
- (6) In 1905-6, some of larger companies did briefly experiment with a form of hut accommodation which did involve a cash outlay – e.g. prefabricated huts with iron sides – “kator hats” were erected in some compounds but since the huts cost 60-70 per cent more than the wattle and damp structures, and the iron made them unpopular for the same reason as the old central compounds, they were not extensively introduced.

In 1912, with the climate of greater confidence in the industry, some of the wealthier companies re-introduced the kator huts on a larger scale.

- (8) African housing on the Rhodesian mines thus followed a general pattern through the period between 1900 and 1933. The core of the housing complex on large mines was the central square compound – in the earliest years built of wood and iron or stone, but later more usually of rough – cast local material moulded in dynamite boxes and called “Kimberly brick.”

In addition, since it was always possible for new producers to enter the Rhodesian, industry during period of rapid expansion (and leave the sector almost as quickly once the gold had returned to its fixed price), there were considerable fluctuations in the numbers of Africans employed in mining- feature which did not simplify the provision of accommodation or facilitate long-term planning. Between 1906 and 1911 the number of African workers employed rose from 17, 000 to 37,000, by 1911 it had dropped to 30, 000 but was up to 41, 000 again in 1924, it dropped once more and in 1931 was down to 35, 000 only to rise again to 90,000 in 1937. The accommodation for Africans on the mines, inadequate in “normal” years, was thus periodically subjected to even greater

pressure and overcrowding was a basic feature of compound life.

The overcrowding was particularly marked during the year of restriction between 1903 and 1911. During the earlier years of this period the improper wood and iron compounds were conspicuously under-utilized, but were crowded after 1908. The 1990s regulations governing over-crowding were a dead letter, and the medical Director was quite handed in pointing out that he was “unaware of any mine where conditions of housing of natives even approached the standard laid down.” Even if these central compounds had been fully utilized throughout, it is unlikely that they would have been able to cope with an African work force that expanded by five times in some years. The enormous pressure on accommodation showed itself most clearly in the worker- constructed housing. Huts with a twelve- foot diameter, which in traditional areas housed 2 or at most three people, consistently housed five to six adult workers. It was only after the Spanish flu epidemic of 1918 had killed over 3000 workers that pressure on accommodation eased slightly. Even on the largest mines, however, there was only a relative improvement after 1918 and much of the accommodation remained basically over crowded.

Compound inhabitants with higher incomes such as “boss boys” or prostitutes could command better than average housing and presumably felt the pressure; but in many huts there were still five or six occupants and it was by no means exceptional for two or three males to share a single bed and blanket.

Hospitals and Change Houses:

The unwillingness to invest money in buildings for use of black workers affected hospitals. In August 1901 a compound inspector note:

“The mine managers and others responsible are very loath to spend money on hospitals or infact to do anything which is really required for the sick natives.”

The inspector gave an example of the large Globe and Phoenix mine, where he noted that it took a full year’s pressure from the administration to bring the “hospital” to the point where it could be described as a “corrugated iron barn”, since this “hospital” also functioned as a mortuary. However, patients at the mine frequently had to share the facilities with corpses for periods of twelve hours or more.

At the smaller mines, what expenditure there was on “hospitals” until 1933 was always negligible- usually it was restricted to the provision of a very modestly equipped hut. As the mines became more profitable the situation improved slightly. Together with compounds and hospitals, “change houses” constituted a third and important facility which mine owners could build to provide for the welfare of their workers.

Food Supplies: Agriculture

In a colony which was expected to yield the wealth of a “Second Rand” through its mining industry, there was little reason for commercial agriculture to constitute a

development priority either for settlers or the B.S.A.CO. Financial gains were to be made more readily elsewhere during the speculative years, so settlers had little incentive to become farmers, and those also often expected exorbitant prices for their produce. Similarly the B.S.A.Co, with its roots deeply embedded in the fortunes of London- based mining companies, saw little reason to encourage agriculture before 1903. When the London market for Rhodesian mining stock collapsed in the year, the Secretary for Agriculture pointedly suggested to a direction of the Chartered Company that:

“... had the Agricultural Industry received half the support, moral and financial, which the mining industry had received in the past, the deplorable commercial stagnation obtaining today would not be so accentuated, if it existed at all.”

In an important sense, it was the very existence of the mining industry which accounted for the underdevelopment state of European commercial agriculture. The poorly developed agricultural industry meant that for the better part of the years between 1890 and 1910 while Rhodesia was forced to import much of her food requirements, fruits and vegetables were brought from the more developed South African industry, and in the wake of a series of cattle diseases which devastated Rhodesian herds between 1896 and 1902, meat was sometimes imported from as far afield as Australia.

Moreover, food imported from the more developed South was subject to the same high rail tariffs which hampered the development of the mining industry, so that the price of meat and vegetables in the urban centres soared.

As in the case of the mining industry, commercial agriculture had to develop within the context of a regional economic system. Farmers in the southern province of Matabeleland found that they had to compete with the South African Industry whose prices were lower than theirs-despite the high rail tariffs and import costs. This meant that the province with the largest number of big miners was poorly served by commercial agriculture. In Northern Province of Mashonaland 25 percent of white population were engaged in farming and a mere 10% in mining, but in Matabeleland where 50% of the Europeans were engaged in mining, only 6% worked in agriculture. The Matabeleland mining industry thus had the mixed blessing of relatively “Cheap” imported produce during the early years of the country but it also suffered from the long-term results of having undeveloped provincial agriculture.

Commercial Agriculture was also inhibited by the fact that the Rhodesian mines were spread throughout the country, and that they did not constitute a concentrated market such as that in the Witwatersrand. In some cases, distance alone made provision of fresh produce to miners impossible, while in others transport costs placed prices well beyond the reach of mine managers operating within clear profitability constraints. These factors were at their most powerful during reconstruction, when both white farmers and mine owners operated at the margins of profitability and the requirements of neither part could easily be met. In 1910 an official enquiry complained of “a lack of appreciation by the farmers of Rhodesia of the requirement of and the demand by the mines for farm produce.”

The desire of the mining industry to keep expenditure of African food to a minimum was generally respected by the administration. Before the introduction of 1908 regulations, the Medical Director Fleming, had noted the relatively generous ration scales on Witwatersrand gold mines, but came to the conclusion that these would “be impossible to introduce in his country (Rhodesia) on account of expense.” He accordingly scaled down the requirements to what he considered to be appropriate to the resources of the Rhodesia industry but even this recommendation was subjected to a further cut by the administration, and when the regulations did come into force in 1908, the Administrator personally assured influential members of the industry that the requirements would not be rigorously enforced “at the cut-set” and that there would be some flexibility.

The original 1908 recommendations for rationing was a meat ration of two pounds per week, and came into effect only in 1911 when the profitability of the industry had been more adequately demonstrated. And even then the increase in meat rations from one to two pounds per week was accepted by the industry only in return for reduction in the mealie ration from two pounds per day to a half a pound per day. Black workers successfully resisted further cuts in mealie meal ration which if they persisted would have brought the 1911 allowance to half of that which had existed in 1901.

How Mine Rations were supplemented:

The most convenient, although not necessarily the cheapest way of supplementing mine rations, was to patronize an “eating house”, which provided simple meals on a cash or credit basis. Many of Rhodesian mining villages, such as, Kwekwe or Bindura were owned by Asians, and formed popular meeting places for African workers. On some of the very largest mines such as Hwange

However, the “eating house” was run on a sub contractual basis within the compound. And in other cases it was owned by the mining company itself. During the reconstruction period when mining companies were seldom making profits, the temptation to recoup African wages through the eating-house must have been considerable, so that in at least one case the Medical Director was of the opinion that the eating-house was “little more than a force, the native being charged for a meal that was not worth 3d or 4d at the outside.”

Almost every mine had in addition a mine store at which workers could purchase food supplies for cash or on credit. Most of these stores were owned either by the company or by the mine owner himself. In the case of smaller mines, an adjacent stores-keeper often held a share in the mining enterprise as well. Mine stores provided workers with a variety of items ranging from simple requirements like tea, salt, sugar, mealie meal or bread through to the more expansive commodities like tinned meat or fish- because of the modest meat issue at the mines, the latter were particularly popular with black workers. Particularly in short supply, workers would also share the expense of purchasing a sheep, goat or pig in order to get meat.

Mortality and Disease:

Mining has always been a hazardous occupation and the Rhodesian Industry has been no exception: e.g

- (i) Disasters- especially between 1899 and 1903 caused by careless use of gelignite e.g at the Boso mine resulting in a series of explosions claiming 19 Black lives (a single accident) at the Valley Mine in 1906 where a burst dam claims as many as 73 African lives.
- (ii) Accidents attributed to personal carelessness or the dangerous nature of the work- the bulk caused by the anxiety induced by the piece-work system especially those workers who manned the drills underground.
- (iii) Diseases – plathisis, syphilis, dysentery and diarrhea, scurvy, pneumonia etc

Medical Care and Attention:

As in the case of all indirect expenditure which was not seen directly to affect the productive process, the ruling concern of the industry in regard to the health and care of black workers centred on economy. As long as the Rhodesian Native Labour Bureau (R.N.L.B) could guarantee supplies of cheap labour to the mines, or the industry could depend on the large number of central African migrants working their way south the higher seen for large-scale expenditure on medical care. Humanitarian motivations for improvement could be relegated to a secondary position and at least one senior Nyasaland administrator "... left Rhodesia (in 1901) with the impression that, there is lack of sympathy in some quarters towards natives, and it is time that they should be treated and considered more as human beings rather than money- making machines."

Appeals from the administration about the health and hospitalization of workers had to be couched in terms of efficiency rather than sentiment. During the depression of 1931 in fact, when black labour supply exceeded demand and ceased to be profitable for the industry to "waste" money on any hospital expenses, the Inspector of Compounds explained candidly to the Medical Director.

..."the position has changed and today it is economically sounder to discharge a sick native than to incur the expense of restoring him to health, as so much labour is offering."

The mine owners drive for economy was at its most pronounced point during the reconstruction period, and the programme of hospital construction suffered accordingly. A retarded building programme meant that mines rarely had sufficient hospital accommodation for black workers. In theory they were supposed to provide hospital beds for two percent of their black labour force. In practice even this minimum was seldom achieved and there was great pressure on any hospital facilities that existed. Even a large mines with an extremely poor health record, such as Wankie (Hwange) colliery, had only

25 beds for its 1, 500 employees in 1910. An enquiry in 1913 found the hospital to be inadequate in this respect, and in 1918 yet another enquiry had to draw attention to the same deficiency.

The quality of the service provided to black patients was also deficient, during reconstruction there were few doctors in Rhodesia, and medical attention was sufficiently expensive to ensure that few black miners ever profited from their skills. In 1906 the entire Gwanda division, with thousands of black employees and probably the worst curvy problem in the industry, was served by a single doctor. Moreover, it was the black miners who suffered first from the growing shortage of doctors during the First World War. Most medical officers could only manage a single weekly trip to the mines, and even then there were only 56 doctors employed by 308 operating mines in 1918. In times of emergency, as during the influenza epidemic of 1918, black mines were well down on the list of patient priorities.

Expensive medical treatment and a shortage of doctors made the mining companies find cheaper ways of providing attention for their black employees. Occasionally, the larger mines that could afford it- such as the Globe and Phoenix- would employ white nurses to take care of black patients, or, as in the case of the Panhalonga mine, a white man would be put in charge of the hospital. A cheaper solution still was to place an educated African orderly in charge of the sick or dying. But cheapest of all was the practice of simply making existing mine personnel responsible for “medical” attention- a procedure which obviated the need for any extra salaries and wages.

Compensations:

The economics of death suited the Rhodesian mining industry because it relied not on the capacity of a fully developed proletariat to reproduce itself but on a flow of migrant labour created within a regional economic system. As long as the flow of cheap labour continued there was little stimulus to pay compensation, and as long as there was no compensation there was little incentive for any coordinated attempt to reduce disease in the compounds or accidents underground. Between 1900 and 1912, when the African death rate on the mines was highest, the industry offered no compensation whatsoever to workers not engaged on R.N.L.B contracts.

- (i) From 1980 to 1904- mining industry was not even legally required to register the death of black workers- though the mere act of registration would probably not in itself have hoped to reduce a death rate that was probably as high as 10% per annum.
- (2) After the Valley mine disaster of 1906, the administration had greatest difficulty in getting the company to make an ex-gratia payment to the relatives of the 73 black miners. A reluctant management eventually paid relatives compensation of £150 when it seemed that the administration might sue for payment. In the wake of this disaster, the administration unsuccessfully urged the Chamber of Mines to

introduce a scale of compensatory payments.

- (3) The 1910-11 Native Affairs Committee recognized that to introduce compensation to overcome African resistance to employment on the Rhodesian mines, compensation was to be introduced.

Before 1912 R.N.L.B contract workers were in a slightly better position than other miners as far as compensation was concerned. They received £3 for partial disablement and £5 for total disablement, and relatives of a deceased worker were entitled to £5- the equivalent of maybe two months wages.

- (4) The administration accepted the recommendations of the committee and in 1912 an ordinance was passed extending to all workers the same scale of compensation which applied to R.N.L.B workers.
- (5) The Maximum compensation rates of £5 remained in force until 1922

State Intervention coordination in the Compounds: If, as has been shown, conditions in the Rhodesian mine compounds and the health of the black workers reflected the profitability constraints of low-grade ore mining- fundamental constraints which remained constant- the relative improvements in housing, diet and death rates cannot be attributed solely to the dynamic of the mining companies themselves. Indeed, judging from their consistent opposition to the majority of reforms, it is unlikely that the mining companies would of their own volition have improved the living conditions of the black workers in any substantial way for the causes of these gradual improvements one has therefore to look beyond the confines of the industry itself, though the nature, pace and extent of the improvements were governed by forces derived from within the industry.

- (i) Mine owners in “Rhodesia never had entirely free access to their labour supplies. Many of their workers came from adjacent British colonies in Central Africa. This together with the fact that “Rhodesia” itself was a British protectorate before 1923 meant that the mining industry operated within a colonial context and it was subject to a variety of pressures from the Colonial Office in London, Even after 1923 the mining industry had to operate within a regional economic system where the Colonial office exercised considerable power and influence.
- (ii) During reconstruction, the B.S.A.Co as the company government of Rhodesia had particularly good reason for attempting to shake off the hold of the colonial office, since it urgently required an expanding supply of cheap labour without the burden of heavy indirect expenditure in African workers.
- (iii) The colonial official was not entirely unsympathetic to these needs but it could not allow the company to operate at the expense of a more important priority- the reconstruction of the more profitable Witwatersrand mines under the Milner regime. The Colonial Office was anxious to ensure that such supplies of cheap labour as there were within the regional economic system would go to South

Africa.

- (iv) In an attempt to counteract this, the B.S.A.Co, sought to develop an independent labour policy; but “In such independent diplomacy they inevitably came off worse. Their efforts to pursue a distinctive policy fitted all with the colonial office view of Southern Rhodesia in particular as an integral part of a greater South Africa”
- (V) The Colonial office was thus in a strong bargaining position and could use the cover of large-scale access to labour supplies to extract improvement in the conditions of compounds from the Rhodesian mining industry.
- (vi) As a result, the B.S.A.Co found itself acting as mediator between the demands of the Colonial Office and the needs of the Rhodesian mining industry. As a mediator, however, it hardly constituted a disinterested third party, and in its position as company- government it was ideally placed to ensure that the demands of the colonial office did not seriously jeopardize the profits of the industry in which it had a substantial share.
- (vii) The particular way in which the chartered Company balanced these differing demands can be seen by tracing the passage of labour legislation in Rhodesia, and examining the role of the compound inspectors and courts:
 - (a) The Immigration Ordinance of 1901- to provide the safeguard demanded by foreign governments before they could allow identified Africans to be recruited for “Rhodesian” mines- but Rhodesia never did gain access to large numbers of Asian indentured labourers.
 - (b) The legislation did very little to improve the conditions of black workers-since they were inadequately enforced.
 - (c) The Mines and Minerals Ordinances of 1907 and 1908.
 - The gradual enforcement of the 1908 legislation did produce an overall reduction in the death rate in the compounds, but death from scurvy and pneumonia remained high (Legislation was on feeding and accommodation) Meanwhile, competition for labour within the regional economic system also remained at a high level.
 - (d) In October 1909 Nyasaland planters held the biggest-ever settler meeting in the colony and demanded that all recruiting for Southern Rhodesia be stopped resulting in their administration passing the Employment of Natives Ordinance which tuned to stop the southwards flow of labour to the mines.
 - (e) By 1912- 13 the settler farming population of Northern Rhodesia was exercising similar pressure to protect its labour supplies from ravenous demands of the south.
 - (f) Legislation on food and housing remained unamended throughout the rest of the period under review, and compensation rates received minor adjustments in 1922

and 1930- others:

Native labour regulations ordinance of 1911- empowering inspectors. Native Labour Regulations Amendments Ordinance of 1915-black workers allowed to sue for the wages due to them, but in practice there is no evidence whatsoever to indicate that black workers benefited from the possibility on a meaningful scale.

Labour Mobilisation: Chibaro/Isibalo/Cibalo-forced Labour: 1900- 1912

The Rhodesia mining industry was confronted with serious problems in attempting to meet its most basic requirement- a large supply of cheap labour. In the most general terms possible these problems derived from the functioning of the industry itself, from economic conditions within Rhodesia, and the situation of the colony's premier industry within a regional economic system that embraced Southern Africa.

It is already clear that the limitations of the industry produced features which, prima facie, were incapable of attracting labour. The curtailment of indirect expenditure made for miserable conditions in the compounds and Africans were aware of these, and took steps to avoid them if possible. In addition, cash wages declined steadily after the reconstruction in 1903, and this could have made no contribution to attracting African labour.

Similarly, there were impediments to the mobilization of cheap labour which flowed from economic circumstances within the colony.

- (1) The most obvious of these was the inability to get a supply of local labour as long as the indigenous peasantry sold large quantities of produce to the mine compounds, and this had a relatively independent source of cash income and period between 1900 and 1912 was marked by the greatest need for cheap labour.
- (2) The industry was confronted with the fact that it was forced to operate within a regional economic system dominated by a large more profitable and more powerful industry i.e. competition from mines in the Transvaal- the Witwatersrand gold mines. The Witwatersrand gold mines held out relatively more attractive labour conditions. They also offered higher cash wages.
- (3) The "Rhodesian" industry was therefore faced with the task of procuring workers at lower wages and then of retaining the services of men who were constantly tempted to move south.

Solution To The Problems: The Speculative Era 1898-1903:

As already shown in Chapter 14, this was the period after the African revolt of 1896- and before the collapse of the London market for Rhodesia mining stock in April 1903. It represented a particularly complex half- decade in the history of the industry. From the heady speculative boom of 1895 the fortunes of the industry and the B.S.A.Co had slumped to a state of depression by 1898.

What the industry (mining) required to demonstrate above all in the years immediately

following was solid development work in the mines themselves, rather than partially satisfactory returns from rent-trading on property speculation.

Tangible progress in mining, however, required the services of an increasing number of semi- skilled and unskilled black workers. This requirement was particularly difficult to meet at a time when the local peasantry was benefiting from increased cash earnings derived from the sale of an agricultural produce to the new markets in the colony. The resultant shortage of labour in the face of the need for rapid development produced consistent upward pressure on African wages between 1898 and 1903. The cash to pay for this increasing wage bill had to be raised on the London market through the largely speculative mining companies.

The “Rhodesian” land and Mine owners’ association was wary of the trend in African wages and its cause:

“In fact the constant insufficiency of black workers) at the mines has caused a natural, but, from some points of view regrettable, competition for their services. If one mine invents some special inducement, others on learning it are found to follow. Rates of wages have thus gradually increased...”

Although the industry was dominated by speculative capital, the five year period also saw the gradual realization that Rhodesia did not constitute the “Second Rand.” From 1901 onwards in particular, mine managers came to perceive the need for a more realistic cost saving structure aligned with yields from low grade are not mining. Central to this objective was the need to merely hold to African wages, but to reduce them. As a result, between 1899 and 1902, sections of the industry and the B.S.A.Co made progressively more determined bids to control “market forces,” although because of the need to demonstrate development to the London market and the shortage of labour, these efforts were largely unsuccessful.

The limited profitability of the Rhodesian mines, the lack of success in effecting wage reductions and the continued shortage of local cheap labour, resulted in more radical attempts to meet the labour requirements of the industry.

These were directed at the importation of cheaper immigrant labour either from abroad, or from the perimeters of the regional economic system when the peasantry did not have a growing cash income. Such cheap immigrant labour would achieve the dual objective of reducing costs through under-cutting the relatively expensive local labour, and bargaining the labour needs of the industry during a period when it lacked an indigenous proletariat. This resulted in the emergence of two schools of thought for the mobilization of cheap labour (1989-1903).

- (1) Proletarian School
- (2) Migrant School

(1) **Proletarian School/”Scheme”**

There were those in the mining industry who favoured the establishment of a stabilized African labour force resident on the mines with their wives and children.

(2) **Migrant School/ “Scheme”**

Those who wanted single men to be employed on a contract basis, while still attached to families in the rural areas.

The Rhodes Plan:

Rhodes had been responsible for the introduction of the Mfengu community of South Africa into the colony after the revolt. He had modeled his agreement with them on the Glen-Grey Act of the Cape hoping that this would increase the supply of labour for mines- but his hope was largely disappointed. Rhodes had hoped that the Mfengu would either work in the mines themselves or that they could “take the place of natives (Local Africans) who would be free to work on the mines.

The “migrant school” pressed for the introduction of a Glen-Grey-type act in “Rhodesia,” and between 1900 and 1901, prominent mining men of the day such as colonial Heyman and Major Heany, pressed for legislation, supplemented with increased taxation, to supply more local migrant labour.

Other mining men elsewhere in the colony were pressing for a more stabilized labour force. In November 1900 the Salisbury Chamber of Mines by a unanimous resolution considered the possibility of “not only introducing natives themselves for the purposes of working on the mines but their wives and children, so as to induce them to settle in the country permanently- thus supporting the “proletarian school.”

While the two schools of thought continued to debate without resolutions, the mining industry continued to function, albeit in a spasmodic fashion. In practice, the labour needs of the mines were being met in a variety of ways, some at least of which drew on elements of the plans of both the “proletarian” and “migrant” schools of thought. While these practical activities were not consciously derived from the long- term plans of either school-indeed many of them were pragmatic responses to a crisis- they contained within them features of labor mobilization which were to become permanent characteristic of the mining industry in later years.

Sources of Cheap Labour:

(1) **Labour Board of Southern Rhodesia:**

There were two branches- one in Bulawayo and the other one in Salisbury (now Harare). The Labour Board helped supply the needs of the mines at a particularly difficult time for example, the Bulawayo branch of the Board supplied Matabeleland mines over 6,000 workers in the last 6 months of 1899- thus did assist in keeping mines with the most acute shortages in production

Problems:

- a) The supplies were fluctuating seasonally. The supplies were also unreliable in the quality of workers they provided.
- (b) Workers' desertions
- (c) Large numbers of the Board's workers remained unemployed because managers were reluctant to employ potential deserters.
- (d) Provincial rivalry resulting from the fact that each branch looked for labour further a field and also because the northern province of Mashonaland with its generally less well capitalized, smaller companies, had access to the numerically preponderant Shona communities, the larger Matabeleland companies had to make do with the smaller Ndebele communities. In practice this meant that there were relatively higher wages in Matabeleland and this ensured a general southward movement of African labour.

However, under normal circumstances the Mashonaland mining industry actually benefited from this southward flow of labour in the regional economic system. In 1899 the Mashonaland industry pointed out to the Administrator of Matabeleland that:

“As regards outside supplies Mashonaland is also better situated, the whole of the Tans-Zambezi supplies in coming south to Matabeleland having to pass through Mashonaland. In the same way Natives coming from Portuguese territory would have to pass through Mashonaland on the route to the South West Province.”

- 2) Forced Labour:- supplied either through the native commissioners or the labour board.

Problem(s)

Solution: The Pass Law- 1902

- 3) 1900- the labour board engaged the services of a labour recruiter whom they sent to the Red Sea area.

1901- a party of labourers comprising.

Abyssinians, Somalis, Arabs, Shamis and Indians were illegally shipped from Djibouti to Beira in Mozambique.

- 4) The Shangani workers from Mozambique- who favoured the Selukwe (Shurugwi) and Southern Matabeleland district- e.g. the Gwanda region.

Problems:

- (a) 1903- Shangaans started an exodus from Rhodesia to the Rand after the collapse of the Rhodesian Industry.
- (b) W.N. L. A Agents: were particularly active in the region to the south of Gwanda, that is in the area that had previously boasted Rhodesia's best semi-skilled workers. A month after the Rhodesian Industry collapsed semi-skilled workers were becoming so scarce in Gwanda that Shangaans were having to teach surface workers how to use drills.
- (c) Portuguese authorities encouraged their people to go to the Rand.

Why Chibaro/Forced Labour succeeded: 1903- 1912- reconstruction period:

The two fundamental objectives of the industry in this period came to be output maximization and cost minimization. This affected the way African labour was to be mobilized:

- (1) Restricting further African access to land during a period when the peasantry was expanding its production by the sale of agricultural produce
- (2) Increasing taxation (resulting in the peasants need for additional cash earnings. This was quite logical although being unfair to the Africans.

Serious contradictions: (resulting from the need to reduce cost tended towards an opposite logic) reduction in African wages made the mines a less attractive labour market, so the peasantry, faced with increased cash demands, tried to expand the area it had under cultivation and increase the sale of crops- thus reducing local labour supply.

Acting alone, these two contradictory forces- (the need for cheap labour and reduction in wages) would have brought annual fluctuations in the labour supply- particularly between 1903 and 1908, when wages were constantly being adjusted downwards.

However, the fluctuations were made even more erratic by an additional seasonal element, and that was the fact that Ndebele and more particularly Shona tribesmen would consider work only in the agricultural off-season.

Such fluctuations, both seasonal and annual, could not however be reconciled with the requirements of an industry that desperately needed to demonstrate its profitability as the Rhodesian land and mine owners. Association explained:

“As soon as stamp battery or other extraction plant commences to run on a mine,

the number of unskilled labourers is more than three times as great as the maximum that could be employed on preliminary development. Unless the full number required can be constantly maintained the rate of extraction will invariably exceed the rate of advanced development and sooner or later production must cease.”

If then the Rhodesian industry was to regain any stability in its African Labour force after 1903 it needed first to replace the semi- skilled Shangaan workers which it had lost to the south; and second, more importantly, it needed to recruit a constant supply of cheap unskilled underground labour which could augment the fluctuating local supplies.

These contradictions, by now essential to the Rhodesian mining industry’s structure and policy, were in fact to be resolved by the R.N.L.B, which set out to provide the constant pool of unskilled labour to enable uninterrupted production of gold. So while all African labour-local and foreign- was called upon to pay a price for the reconstruction of the Rhodesian industry after 1903, none paid a greater price than the R.N.L.B.

The plight of the Shona and Ndebele:

- 1) In the years before 1903, and to a lesser but still significant extent in the years following, Shona and Ndebele workers constituted the poorest paid and most despised group of African miners. In part this dislike was the legacy of the two wars fought against the during the 1890s, but it derived also from the fact that the Ndebele and Shona remained relatively from the unpopular industry which had transformed their country and would consider only short periods of service on the mines during the agricultural off-season .
- 2) Mine managers disliked these short-term workers and the impunity with which they deserted to their adjacent farms and Kinsmen when the work or the conditions were not to their liking. For these and other reasons, it was considered that “the Mashonaland Matabeleland are poor workers, far inferior to both colonials, Zulus and Shangaans.
- 3) The numerically respondent Shona were particularly disliked by mine managers who found them to be “awkward and useless.” Workers and 1900 the chief native commissioner was of the opinion that:

“...it will be some time before the Mashona natives can be of much use on the mines as they are the laziest, most ignorant, and unpromising material we have to deal with.”
- 4) Settler stereotypes were combined with more objective considerations, such as the length of service offered by the worker to produce a hierarchy of wage differentials on the mines. The hierarchy also reflected the employment preferences of managers, and before 1903 in particular, Shona and Ndebele workers were invariably the last to be hired and the first to be fired.

The Rhodesia Native Labour Bureau:

In a period of particularly rapid expansion of its labour requirements the mining industry could turn to the especially created labour recruitment agency. Although the function of that agency, the R.N.L.B, remained consistent through-out the reconstruction, the organization actually existed in three slightly different forms between 1903 and 1912.

The Rhodesia Native Labour Bureau was first formed within three months of the collapse of the Industry in 1903 and this first R.N.L.B remained in operation by 1903 and 1906. A shortage of funds and too few labour agents contributed to its collapse in 1906.

Then a reconstituted R.N.L.B. came into operation in 1906 and operated under the name until early 1911 it benefited not only from tax imposed on the industry but also from capital supplied to it by the B.S.A. Co. It too, eventually ran into financial problems and in 1912 was replaced by the New Rhodesia Native labour Bureau. This third R.N.L.B lasted from 1912 until 1933 when it became redundant.

The Function of the R.N.L.B

The task of the R.N.L.B through these changes however, remained essentially the same. As an R.N.L.B chairman at an Annual general meeting of the organization put it in 1915:

“A nucleus of natives contracted to work for twelve months at a definite minimum wage has great advantages. They form the guarantee that certain work can be carried on. They tide employers over the wet season, when independent labour is there and they make employers to a large extent independent of the vacancies of the casual labourers.”

1. In essence the task of the R.N.L. B was to resolve the contradiction which arose from trying to expand the labour supply during the years when the industry was also cutting black wages.
2. The second function of the R.N.L.B was to secure for the Rhodesian mining industry its share of African labour within the regional economic system. It had to try to ensure that Labour from the northern territories made its way to the Rhodesian mines rather than to other labour markets, and Africans did not proceed to the Witwatersrand after a short period of work.
3. The Third primary function of the R.N.L.B developed as an outgrowth of the other two. It was to channel a supply of African labour to mines within Rhodesia, which because of poor conditions or exploitative practices could not normally secure “voluntary” or as it was sometimes called, ”independent labour”. Again the problem was well defined by the manager of the Bureau who told a commission

of enquiry that “if it was left to the natives they would work at unpopular mines.”

It was in fact the task of the R.N.L.B to supply the mining industry with a supply of cheap coerced labour between 1903 and 1912. Given this role, it can readily be appreciated why it was that the Bureau was conversely feared and hated by black workers. Throughout most of Central Africa work secured through the R.N.L.B because known as Chibaro “slavery” or forced labour.

So to secure Chibaro –labour was neither a pleasant nor a simple task for some members of the Bureau.

How was Chibaro Labour secured?

1. Peasants were simply rounded up by the Native Commissioner’s Africans messengers and sent to the Board where there were handed over to the agents of the R.N.L.B and their black assistants and then marched to the southern Rhodesian mines. Those peasants who refused were in some case whipped by the Native Commissioner or his black assistant or in others had their grain-stores burnt down (e.g North Western Rhodesia between 1904 and 1910).
2. From at least 1915 onwards, some supplies of forced labour were also from within Mozambique- despite the fact that, officially the R.N.L.B was entitled to recruit only in Tete Province after 1914.
3. The Salisbury municipality relied on workers from Northern Rhodesia districts of “Pemba, Maoy and Monzi” to operate the city’s sanitary works.
4. Chibaro-labour from rural areas was also linked to the other mechanisms which were used to induce and channel the flow of black labour and settler economies- tax and passes – more especially, during the earliest years of reconstruction, the B.S.A.Co put severe pressure on the Northern Rhodesian peasantry to pay tax. In North Western Rhodesia during 1904 the police raided the villages of “tax defaulters” burning homes, crops, grain stores of those Africans who did not have the necessary cash.

These harsh actions were designed to proletarianise the peasants rapidly and to force them to earn cash at the largest labour market chose by- the Rhodesian mines.

Examination type questions

How important was mining to the colonial economy as a whole?

How justified is the view that the existence of colonial mines worsened the discrimination and exploitation of Africans by colonial officials?

“Colonial mining policies underdeveloped the indigenous African”. How valid is this assertion?

What was “chibaro” as practised by the Rhodesian settlers? How notorious was this policy among the Africans?

THE FEDERATION OF RHODESIA AND NYASALAND

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

After studying this chapter students should be able to

Explain why federation was preferred to amalgamation.

Discuss reasons put forward for the establishment of the federation.

Assess why Africans were opposed to the federation.

Origins of the Federation

The possibility of a union had always been there between the two Rhodesians, namely Northern and Southern Rhodesia. This idea had been discussed as early as 1911. The union was preferred for the two Rhodesians because there were features which favoured a union such as the geographical location of the two states. The two states were ruled by the same company the British South Africa Company (BSAC) and there was one resident commissioner for the two territories.

Nyasaland (Malawi), not a company territory, was at first not considered for the union. Malawi was only discussed as a potential candidate for this union when settlers in the two Rhodesias had weighed the advantages of her inclusion against its disadvantages.

The major debate was on the form of a union between either amalgamation or federation

ARGUMENTS FOR FEDERATION

The most frequently stated reason in favour of federation was that the three countries – Northern Rhodesia, Southern Rhodesia and Nyasaland – were economically interdependent. The more important examples of this complementary position were given as : the supply of Southern Rhodesian coal from Hwange to the great Copperbelt of Northern Rhodesia; the migration of

labour from Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia to the mines, farms and industries of Southern Rhodesia, the supply of cotton from Nyasaland to Southern Rhodesia and the subsequent sale of cloth and clothing to Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia and, finally, the dependence of Northern Rhodesia on the rail line through Southern Rhodesia and this line's complementary need for the mineral traffic from its sister country.

Another telling point in favour of federation was that the area would tend to develop as a unit whereas, lacking cohesion, each country would tend to go its own way, often with unnecessarily competing activities. This was so in the area of transportation where there was need for planning on a broader base, and the multi-purpose development of the Zambezi River, the boundary between the two Rhodesians etc where unified action would be required.

Furthermore, federation was argued to be necessary because of the fact that the greater size of the unified area would make it more attractive to foreign investors, particularly to Americans. It was also pointed out that long-term savings would result from the unification of a number of governmental functions. Moreover, most of the economic and physical problems of the area were common to all three countries, this would enable centralised research while administration of such activities as forestry, geological surveying and fisheries development would well be more co-ordinated.

In addition to that, it was logically argued that through federation there would be unity in diversity. The greater the economic diversity the less vulnerable the economies would be to economic depression. For example, Southern Rhodesia with its comparatively large European population, was developing a diversified economy based not only varied mineral and farming activities but also on a rapidly expanding manufacturing industry. Northern Rhodesia with her copper deposits was developing big towns on the copper belt but had a less diversified economy and large and backward rural areas. Nyasaland, lacking in minerals, relied on agriculture and fisheries. She sent her big surplus population to work as migrant labourers in neighbouring wealthier countries. During the federal period alone, the number of Malawian migrant workers in Southern Rhodesia was known to be around 100 000 or more. Federation would thus benefit all economies in their diverse backgrounds.

Moreover, federation was construed as a compromise solution to a variety of problems and viewpoints. Many of the Europeans in the Rhodesians had

originally favoured amalgamation which would mean the total joining of the two countries and the removal of borders. However, the British government had preferred a federation in which each country would retain their separate individual governments whilst at the same time subscribing to a central federal government which would also include Nyasaland (Malawi) as well. This is because Nyasaland was a small country lacking in resources and her inclusion in the federation would benefit from her rich neighbours. This British viewpoint was eventually accepted by Roy Welensky of Zambia and Godfrey Huggins of Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe).

ARGUMENTS AGAINST FEDERATION

Many articulate Africans in the three territories bitterly opposed federation because they were totally opposed to the idea of partnership. They viewed this as a permanent means in which colonial rule would continue to be imposed upon them. For many years they had interpreted their Protectorate Status as a temporary period under colonial government until such a time as they were ready to assume majority rule. The placing of African affairs under the control of the predominantly European Federal Assembly could not foreseeably make changes in matters and demands for African future majority rule.

Many Africans feared that federation would mean the adoption of common racial policies as were practised in Southern Rhodesia. A policy of racial discrimination was practised in land allocation, labour practices, health, education and political administration. Southern Rhodesia had, of the three territories, the worst form of colour bar and Africans in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland did not want an extension of such policies to their own territories.

Africans in particular bitterly opposed federation because they were not adequately consulted. They felt that of around nine million they constituted nearly seven million, whilst the whites who were in the driving seat constituted a mere 200 000, and yet the Africans were predominantly left out of the decision making process. Their interests for the development and inclusion into prime political decision for their countries were continuously ignored and under federation African interests were set to suffer a worse fate.

AFRICAN POLITICAL SITUATION UNDER FEDERATION

Southern Rhodesia continued to apply its traditional policy of parallel development towards Africans, with a few exceptions. Garfield Todd's ministry (1953 – 1958) was

probably the only one which initiated some positive changes for Africans during the federal period. A five-year education plan was introduced, but this continued to leave out the majority of Africans in a bottleneck system of advancement of Africans.

Again, Todd initiated a home ownership scheme for African in the urban areas and the Land Apportionment Act was amended to accommodate the ever-increasing demands for Africans. These changes were however, modest in light of the fact that the majority of Todd's government were die-hards who believed in the perpetual subjection of the Africans. When Todd attempted to widen the franchise for Africans, for example, his Cabinet resigned in December 1957, effectively blocking the pro-African reforms. Edgar Whitehead took his place as the Prime Minister in 1958 and African individual liberties suffered a severe drawback.

What is stunning to note more than anything is the 1961 constitution which completely sidelined African voting rights. For instance, there was to be an A roll with high voting qualifications and a B roll with low voting qualifications. The A roll would be for whites whereas the B roll would be for Africans. Coloureds and Indians were an insignificant statistic. Hence there would be fifty A roll constituencies, plus 15 new B roll constituencies.

In the A roll constituencies the system was racially designed in such a way that both kinds of electors would vote together but the B roll votes would be limited in value to only 25 per cent of the A roll. It clearly meant that out of 50 seats which formed the main constituencies, Africans could only hope to achieve a maximum of 12, no matter how many of their numbers would have turned out to vote. The situation was indeed terrible when one takes into consideration the fact that the whites were just around 150 000 whereas the African population was well over two million.

In the 15 B roll constituencies, there would be the converse arrangement in which both A and B electors would vote together but the A roll votes would be devalued to ensure that their vote would not count no more than 25 per cent of the B roll constituencies and 38 seats in the A roll constituencies, which came to 42 seats out of the total of 65 seats. Clearly, they were in the minority and yet they were legally entrenched, cocoon protected to make their own decisions and change the constitution as they saw it fit. No doubt Joshua Nkomo and Ndabaningi Sithole disowned the constitution on behalf of the Africans because it represented some kind of severe form of apartheid.

AFRICAN EDUCATION UNDER FEDERATION

Under a Minister of Native Education, a Director and Assistant Director divide school administration between a Chief Education Officer and a Chief Inspector. Five divisions covered the country, each with a Divisional Inspector and three or more circuit inspectors. All were whites.

Below the above level were missionary superintendents, mainly white, school headmasters, increasingly African, and the teaching force, 96 per cent African.

Policy was formed by an education Advisory Board with representatives from the Native Education Department, missions and the African Teacher's Association, and influenced by the Missionary Conference made up of 18 denominations in the country.

Of the 7 to 15 age groups, 80 per cent were in school during the federal decade, which is a high percentage for Africans during this period. This is attributed to the missions which under government subsidy and supervision managed 98 per cent of all African schools. The 1960 statistics are impressive: 505 266 African children were enrolled in 2 859 schools and taught by 13 248 teachers at a cost of \$11 023 600.

Sadly, however, the above figures hide the ugly facts that 90 per cent of African children had to drop out below the eighth grade, which meant that real qualitative, higher education was a preserve for the very few blacks, where as all whites, without much effort would proceed to higher education.

Worse still, teacher training, a vital ingredient in the whole education system lagged far behind the African demand for education. There was only one government teachers' training institute and 34 mission-based training centres. Hence, the trained teachers were much less than the number needed. Untrained teachers, thus formed 47.6 per cent of all primary school teachers. These lean heavily on government prepared lesson plans and must be continuously aided by inspectors and supervisors. This meant that the quality of education in African schools was always compromised, there were high drop-out rates and a bottleneck entry to higher grades and forms was the main order of the day. One out of 10 000 African pupils went through to form 6 and one out of 100 000 entered a university! (F. Parker, 1961, p 293).

URBAN CONDITIONS IN SOUTHERN RHODESIA DURING FEDERATION

The government struggled with the problem of severe overcrowding in the African townships. Many Africans were flocking into the urban areas to work in the growing industries, but housing had not kept up with the demand. Africans were not allowed to own freehold properties and they squeezed in council-owned houses or shacks in the high-density suburbs. Therefore partly to meet the urgent need for more houses and partly to meet the growing demand, Todd's government introduced a home ownership scheme for Africans. Some 6 000 houses, built at a cost of £300 each were made available to permanently employed Africans at a 20 year mortgage scheme. The scheme was begun in the government township of New Highfield and was quickly followed by a similar one in Luveve in Bulawayo. Smaller ones were later begun in towns. There was also some provision for Africans who wished to build more expensive houses on large plots, provided that certain minimal conditions were observed.

Following the recommendations of the Plewman Commission appointed in 1954 to look into the accommodation needs of urban workers, the report issued in February 1958, the commission recommended that more married accommodation should be made available, some of it on freehold basis.

Be that as it may, accommodation for Africans remained severely and critically short. Overcrowding continued as the numbers who flocked into towns swelled every month and every year. This was partly due to the fact that the Land Apportionment Act, still in force, and the Land Husbandry Act (1951) had served to reduce the carrying capacity of the reserves and Africans together with their livestock found it nearly impossible to subsist more comfortably.

More importantly, the colonial system of education which in many ways served to fulfil the tenets of the “Masters and Servants’ Act” worsened urban African numbers. The bottleneck entry to higher levels of education and the high drop-out rates at both primary and secondary levels created a vast number of the untrained, and unemployed cheap potential labourers. Hence it is not true that the African urban plight improved during the federal period. If it did, the numbers were both infinitesimal and negligible.

Examination Type Questions:

How far did Federation benefit the Zimbabweans?

Discuss the reasons for and against the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland.

Why was there growing African opposition to the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland?

“The Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland collapsed mainly because the white settlers were opposed to it”. Do you agree?

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THE RHODESIAN FRONT AND THE UNILATERAL DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES.

After studying this chapter students should be able to

Explain the various reasons for Ian Smith's adoption of UDI in November 1965.

Describe the provisions of UDI.

Explain the reasons why UDI survived the regional and international opposition.

Explain why Britain could not contain Rhodesian Front rebellion in UDI.

Evaluate the effectiveness of sanctions imposed on the UDI regime.

Describe the role played by South Africa and Portugal in the survival of Smith's regime between 1965 and 1974.

Describe the impact of UDI upon African life and politics.

Describe and explain the provisions of the internal settlement.

Explain the African nationalists' attitudes towards the internal settlement.

Analyse the reasons why Ian Smith's government eventually agreed to negotiations for majority rule in Zimbabwe.

The Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) was declared on November 11, 1965 by the white minority regime of Ian Smith, whose Rhodesian Front Party opposed moves to black majority rule in the then British colony.

Historical Background

Initially, it must be remembered that European settlers in Rhodesia attained their unique political and economic position through the status granted to Rhodesia as a self-governing colony in 1923. Constitutionally, the British government retained authority to regulate the colony's external affairs and to intervene in internal affairs if there was any discrimination against the Africans. However, this authority was allowed to rust by sheer disuse. Wholesale discrimination and systematic dispossession of Africans of their land, property and security was done through acts that were passed by the Rhodesian regime during the 1930s and onwards. The British government did nothing to regulate or prevent these abusive pieces of legislation. For instance, by the Land Apportionment Act of 1931, land was so divided that an African farmer received an average of only a few acres whilst the European got some hundreds or, even thousands, of acres.

The aim of this Act was threefold, as subsequent developments in Rhodesia showed;

To ensure an expanding supply of African labour for European farms and industries

To divide the economy into non-competing racial groups as the basic source of

European prosperity and;

To suppress the rise of an African bourgeoisie. The fear of Africans taking over semi-skilled and even skilled jobs was at the heart of European politics. Hence, various discriminatory laws, trade licences, the pass system etc, were introduced to reduce Africans into a state of total dependence and servitude. It was therefore the political machinery which helped the white settlers to consolidate their economic position and raise their standard of living so high that it was second only to that of the United States. The laws perfected the methods of organised racial repression which was achieved by the whites.

Furthermore, in the early sixties when the Central African Federation began to crack the Europeans became acutely aware of the fact that any change in their political status would inevitably affect their economic position. Hence, they pressed for complete political independence. In fact, the polarisation of white agrarian capitalists, workers, and petty bourgeoisie led to the formation of the Rhodesian Front Party which obtained power in the elections of December 1962 by defeating the “liberal” United Front Party (UFP). The British government had attempted to bring about a negotiated compromise to head- off confrontation between contending black and white interests, the first of many unsuccessful attempts. The result had been a constitution of 1961 containing a Bill of Rights extending to all races. It served as an unofficial outline of the conditions necessary before the British would grant independence. The Rhodesian Front blamed the British for the break-up of the Federation. In the elections of 1962, thus, the Rhodesian Front had openly campaigned on a platform of independent white rule.

Later, when Smith replaced Winston Field as Prime Minister, the Rhodesian Front Party demanded negotiations for independence with the British government. As historian Barber noted, “Under Winston Field the search for independence had been the predominant issue of Southern Rhodesian politics. Under Ian Smith it became an obsession”. Hence the advent of the Rhodesian Front Party halted the reforms of the Federal period and all advances toward majority rule. Under the leadership of Ian Smith the Rhodesian Front, in fact, undertook to undermine all of the principles set forth by the British Prime Minister, Sir Alec Douglas Home in 1964. These were as follows:

Unimpeded progress to majority rule.

Guarantees against retrogressive amendment to the constitution of 1961.

Progress towards improving the political status of Africans.

Progress towards ending racial discrimination.

Guarantees against oppression of one section of the population by another.

British satisfaction that the total population supported any basis for independence.

It was quite obvious that the Smith regime was totally against all the above political expectations, and would therefore press forward with their own self-serving agenda for a Unilateral Declaration of Independence.

Why was it Practical for the Rhodesian Front to declare the UDI?

According to historian Anirudha Gupta, in the article “The Rhodesian Crisis! An Analysis” published in the journal, Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. 4, No. 6, 1969, page 322, the internal developments in Rhodesia, which led to UDI in November 1965 have to be considered against the background of developments in Southern Africa as a whole. For instance, if Rhodesia had been situated somewhere nearer to Britain, British paratroopers might perhaps have invaded the colony; and if Rhodesia had been isolated, and not so much backed by the Republic of South Africa and the Portuguese colonies, it would not have survived the economic reprisals as well as it did.

In fact, the geographical and political inter-connections between the minority Rhodesian Front regime and other colonialist regimes of Southern Africa must be analysed in order to understand the real character of the UDI. It has to be kept in mind that the whole of southern Africa, with a total area of 200 000 square miles and with a population of 35 million largely remained under white minority regimes. True, the territories of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland which had just become independent were governed by Africans. They, however, constituted some small pockets and their dependence on the white-dominated South Africa reduced their effective independence.

Politically, all the minority regimes followed a policy of racial segregation which in South Africa was called apartheid. It is true that the degree of segregation differed from one territory to another. For instance, South Africa developed and pursued the administrative and political machinery of separate development to perfection; the Portuguese territories did not legally enforce racial segregation, but by exploiting African labour and sending Africans as labourers to other parts, Portugal earned 25% of its annual budget through exploiting African labour. Rhodesia too might not have legally denied Africans the right to political participation, but the Rhodesian Front regime was, from the early 1960's zealously moving in that direction.

What is important to note is that Rhodesia was surrounded by sympathetic regimes whose forte is racial discrimination. Hence, they did not find it strange or awkward that a fellow white supremacist regime was entrenching itself in the

neighbourhood through the Unilateral Declaration of Independence.

More importantly, with South Africa being a paradise for foreign investors, little was done by the major investing powers to apply pressure directly on South Africa so as to indirectly strangle the UDI. For instance, as at the end of 1965, the total value of foreign investment in South Africa amounted to US\$4 802 billion (which was a huge figure by the currency value of those years). Of this, over three fifths was held by the United Kingdom; the US with 12%, came second and the French and Swiss investors represented between four and six percent of the total. The earnings from such investments actually proved to be immensely profitable, as a UN survey in 1967 reports:

“The earnings of companies from direct investments provide a measure of the importance of South Africa to British firms as well as an indication of its importance to Britain’s balance of payments. Earnings from South African investments rose from \$81 million in 1960 to \$173 million in 1964 and the proportion of earnings in South Africa to total earnings in South Africa ranged from 11 to 16 per cent. This proportion is considerably higher than the ratio of investments in South Africa to the total of British private foreign investments – a fact which may suggest a relatively high profitability of the British investments in South Africa”.

Similarly, there was steady increase in the US earnings from South Africa. Moreover, London’s role as South Africa’s banker was also of some political significance. Well over 70 per cent of South Africa’s domestic bank deposits were held in British owned banks. The Standard Bank, controlled from London, possessed South African assets worth of 330 million pounds, and was also one of the three dominant interests in Rhodesian banking. The National, and Grindlays Banks had major interests in both Rhodesia and South Africa. Most leading British insurance companies and building societies had over a share in the Republic’s £400 million insurance and £260 million in building industries.

The above argument makes interesting speculation. It makes it obvious why Britain was not interested in extending the trade embargo on South Africa, because this would directly jeopardise her economic interests in that country. Hence, despite repeated African demands, Britain and her partners in the West (USA and France in particular), had resolutely rejected the idea of extending sanctions to South Africa and Portuguese territories which acted as loopholes through which Rhodesia sustained herself. These loopholes were wide enough to account for two thirds of Rhodesia’s exports in 1967. The supply of oil to Rhodesia was a well-known fact and it was also well-known that if such a vital supply was cut off, the UDI would not last another 24 hours! It is more important to stress that just between 1965, when the UDI was declared, and 1970, Rhodesia’s total trade with South Africa actually increased threefold. Hence, sanctions were not exhaustive enough to thwart the illegal UDI regime, as indeed the regime continued to grow in strength.

More interestingly, the ability of the Rhodesian economy to adapt to the reality of sanctions and to continue to operate without much of the needed foreign products and raw materials was one of the key factors which enabled the UDI to survive. According to statistics released by the Smith regime in 1968 – 1969, the gross domestic product, after a drop in 1966, rose in 1967 to a level of 4.9 per cent above the previous record of 1965. The corresponding increase in gross national product in 1967 over 1965 was 6.2 per cent, representing an increase in real terms as well as at current prices. Along with the decline in trade, therefore, this increased national industrialization production and directly reduced reliance on foreign trade and products. That is why even the comprehensive sanctions imposed by the UN could not bring about any decisive change to the political stand-off.

Another important reason why it was practical for the UDI to survive during a hostile international political climate was due to the fact that the white dominated regimes of Southern Africa offered military support and political patronage to the Rhodesian Front regime. South Africa then, with its regular armies, paratroopers, aircraft and jet fighters constituted a huge military fortress in the continent. It was estimated that South Africa could field about 120 000 white troops in less than two days. The country had just finished the construction of an extensive airfield in the Caprivi Strip, bordering with Zambia, which could be used to bomb any perceived enemies at short notice. The Rhodesians too had some 34 000 regular troops, 6000 all-white reservists for one special air-force squadron and 2 regular infantry battalions. In Angola and Mozambique, on the other hand, Portugal had stationed over 100 000 troops which could at any moment come to the aid of the Rhodesians. Compared to these, the combined military force/strength of all independent African states in the north (Zambia, Malawi, Tanzania) appeared insignificant when given the fact that the guerrilla movement itself was terribly divided in the 1960's.

The defiance to world opinion, the economic prosperity and the massive potential, military strength and regional co-operation of the southern states, gave the Rhodesian situation a sinister import. South Africa was anxious, on one side, not to go too far to the aid of Rhodesia, on the other, it knew all too well that if Smith's regime was toppled by African guerrillas, it would not only bring the war to the threshold of South Africa, but would also endanger the very structure of white supremacy. Hence military co-operation between the Republic of South Africa and Rhodesia actually increased within the two years after the promulgation of UDI. A network of military defence, police and informers was thus established to connect Pretoria with capitals of Rhodesia, Mozambique and Angola, and also with those of the neighbouring 'black' states of Botswana and Malawi. Thus, by providing economic and military help to the Rhodesians, South Africa was increasingly gaining a measure of control over the affairs of Salisbury.

However, the contours of the "Southern African Battle-line", across the Zambezi had now become clear. In one sense UDI represented a turning point in Africa's

nationalist movements. By extending the “white” frontiers from the Limpopo northward to the Zambezi, it had reversed, or rather, delayed the onward march of African independence. But if one takes into account the origins and growth of white military strength in Rhodesia and Southern Africa, then one can say that UDI had been a logical outcome of a long process of history. In that, lies the essential contradiction of the Rhodesian situation: It was both an outcome and a rejection of history; an outcome in the sense that the whites had been pushing for a self-serving and perpetually entrenched independent settlement. On the other hand, it was a rejection of history in that by its very nature, the UDI paid a deaf ear to the ripe calls for majority rule by African nationalists and the broader international community.

The Specific Nature of Sanctions under the UDI : Impact of Sanctions

Having looked at the general reasons why the Rhodesian Front regime survived and the context – politically and geographically – it is pertinent to focus more specifically on the nature of the sanctions themselves and how they failed to have any meaningful result.

First, it must be understood that the British government’s policy on UDI was based primarily on its negative reaction to the illegal seizure of power. However, Prime Minister Harold Wilson resisted strong African pressure to put down the UDI rebellion with force, and instead chose to utilise diplomatic and economic sanctions. The basic assumption was that there existed within Rhodesia a powerful group of liberal Rhodesians who would oppose the Smith regime out of loyalty to Her Majesty’s government and a concern for their businesses and farms. This, however, proved to be an over-estimate of the extent of opposition to Smith among the settlers. Nevertheless, the original step was taken and with many such fateful decisions in the affairs of state, the course had then to be pursued to its uncertain end.

Initially, Wilson hoped that the UK could defeat UDI within a few months by the application of sanctions that would threaten industry and agriculture in Rhodesia. This campaign was easily undercut by both South Africa and Portugal who facilitated the smuggling of oil through the British blockade. The blockade thus proved of little value.

The African states intensified their demands for the use of force but again Harold Wilson concluded that economic sanctions would provide a solution if they were widened under the auspices of the UN to include all nations. It must be argued that part of the reason Wilson seemed to have so much confidence in the diplomatic solution was sheer misunderstanding and misjudging of the situation on the ground.

Nevertheless, on 16 December 1966, the United Nations Security Council evoked mandatory sanctions under Chapter VII for the first time with France, Mali, Bulgaria and the USSR abstaining. Several African attempts to strengthen the resolution through the inclusion of a ban on coal were rejected, but the adopted

resolution placed a mandatory ban, in addition to oil, on asbestos, iron ore, chrome, pig iron, sugar, tobacco, copper, meat, hides and skins. The sale of all military equipment to Rhodesia was also banned. All member states were urged not to facilitate trade or financial support for “the illegal racist regime in the Southern Rhodesia”.

However, the widened programme of sanctions did not have the desired effect for several reasons. Most serious, from the standpoint of the British strategy, was the tendency among Rhodesian whites toward consolidation and support of the regime under attack. This appeared to be a combination of patriotic feelings aroused by the international pressures and a general belief that the sanctions could not be enforced.

Externally, a number of states even extended their trade with Rhodesia rather than comply with the UN ban. In addition to South Africa and Portugal who had an ideological stake in violating the UN request, France, Iran, Japan and West Germany all increased their trade in 1967 with Rhodesia. Few countries followed the example of the United States Government which evoked its United Nations Participation Act and announced that any nationals violating the Act would be prosecuted with a fine and imprisonment. However, US trade was in itself a minor fraction of total Rhodesian trade and a high proportion of the loss of British trade was made up by Western European smuggling countries.

There is considerable controversy on the real origins and extent of these sanctions' violations. However, second and third parties have been skilfully used; Rhodesian exports moved through South African and Portuguese ports under forged labels, with false certificates of origin. In this way, the products could almost be sent anywhere and British nationals were extensively implicated in sanctions violations.

One report from the Portuguese indicated that 58 out of 169 oil tankers which called at the port of Lourenco Marques (Maputo) between April 1966 and May 1967 were of British nationality and in the service of British companies. British authorities naturally denied the Portuguese figures, but it could not be denied that a number of British tankers were violating the ban. Other instances of individual British, French and European company violations were reported in the British press, indicating widespread connivance in London, Paris and Tokyo in forgery and black market operations under the cover of South Africa and Portugal. For instance, a prominent American firm, Union Carbide, was implicated in the London Sunday Times exposure of oil supplies. The Rhodesian semi-secret agency GETH shipped 110 000 gallons every 24 hours from South Africa, and Union Carbide, through its British subsidiary, Rhodesia Chrome Ltd, facilitated the Portuguese shipment of 140 000 gallons a day from the refineries in Lourenco Marques.

Most important were the practical measures of support of Rhodesia undertaken by South Africa. The Rhodesian pound was underwritten by South African banks,

South African tobacco companies purchased large quantities of Rhodesia's chief export crop – tobacco. On several occasions, South African police participated in counter-insurgency operations. The supply of oil by road from South Africa played a major part in helping Rhodesia to break the oil blockade.

It has been noted above, that without South Africa, even with the sympathy of Portugal and France, the Rhodesians could not have survived the economic pressure exerted by sanctions. Despite the failure of economic and diplomatic sanctions by the end of 1967 the UK continued to insist that this policy would eventually be effective. There were of course a few signs of strain such as the sharp cut-back in tobacco plantings in Rhodesia, but on the whole the Rhodesian pound continued to hold firm, and the country's balance of payments was not in a dangerous position.

The Wilson government drastically exaggerated the effect of sanctions on the Rhodesian economy and its policy was viewed as a failure by a wide spectrum of non-white African opinion, from Conservatives in England to the spokesmen of Communist states. Yet the UK stubbornly refused the increasingly stringent African requests to enforce sanctions against "violators". Part of the reasons were given above. Sanctions failed ignominiously.

IMPACT OF UDI ON THE POLITICS OF ZIMBABWE (1970 – 1979)

First, it must be remembered that the African nationalist movement during the 1960's was indeed weak and looked up to the newly independent states for help. ZAPU mostly dominated the political scene in the 1960's, but ZANU was formed in 1963. UDI enabled the Ian Smith regime to exercise what they could not before African political parties were banned, and from 1965 onwards they were detained, tortured and harassed on sight. The UDI therefore made the prospects for majority rule bleak in Zimbabwe.

The initial move by nationalist groups was to appeal to the OAU for assistance. African states failed to maintain a united front, leaving Lesotho, Swaziland and Malawi and Botswana. Other independent African states initially did little to help in the late 1960's. However, during the 1970's, neighbouring Zambia and Mozambique, played vital supportive roles in the liberation struggle, to attain independence in Zimbabwe.

It has been discussed elsewhere in the book why the struggle for independence took a more decisive route after 1971, but part of the key reason for that was that Ian Smith was proving to be slippery and a master of prevarication and ambiguity.

The Rhodesian Internal Settlement

What is important to note is that the British had never given up on the idea of a negotiated solution with the Smith regime in order to achieve a reasonable

political settlement in Rhodesia. One such famous attempt which occurred on 25 November 1971 resulted from the meeting between British Prime Minister Harold Wilson and Ian Smith, known as the Home-Smith Agreement, because it seemed to embrace part of the Douglas-Home principles laid down seven years ago. The Smith regime accepted the British proposals this time around because they seemed to represent a total capitulation or surrender to Rhodesian demands. There was really nothing that had happened whether internally or externally to pressure Ian Smith to accommodate the idea of majority rule. Hence, the 1971 Agreement in fact confirmed white minority rule indefinitely in that an African voting franchise would be dependent upon a government controlled criteria of income and education. It was the Rhodesian Front's regime to determine that, not the British government, hence, the Smith regime felt like given fresh impetus to govern as it wished.

However, the litmus test for acceptance by the African population of a Home-Smith Agreement was yet to come. In January 1972, a 24 member British government commission, known as the Pearce Commission was sent to Rhodesia to sample public opinion in a series of meetings held throughout the country. It was determined that while the agreement had been widely accepted by whites, and received limited endorsement of Asians and Coloureds, it was overwhelmingly opposed by the African population. Opposition to the agreement was organised in large measure by Bishop Abel Muzorewa of the African National Council on behalf of other detained nationalist leaders.

Hence, from 1972 onwards, having noted the stubbornness of the Smith regime towards a broader based settlement, the resistance to white minority rule entered the armed struggle.

However, it must be noted that the fall of the Portuguese empire in neighbouring Mozambique and Angola in 1974 and the installation of African governments hostile to the Smith regime, beginning in 1975, lent a sense of urgency to settlement in Rhodesia because this development politically isolated Rhodesia in the region. During that year Smith, a master of divide, conquer and rule, entered into a series of talks with, first, one nationalist leader and then another in an obvious attempt to further divide and weaken them. This tactic proved rather successful as the African leadership within the country increasingly came to see the benefits of an "internal" settlement while those conducting the guerrilla war from outside the country became convinced of the futility of negotiating with Smith, and thus viewed the nationalists inside the country as nothing but a bunch of sell-outs.

Nevertheless, the calculus of the Rhodesian conflict seemed drastically altered in April 1976 when US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger delivered a speech in Lusaka pledging American support for the principle of majority rule. He even publicly stated that the Ford Administration would work for the repeal of the Byrd Amendment under which the US had continued to break UN sanctions by importing Rhodesian chrome. It appeared that US policy might be shifted away

from the premise of support for white minority rule in Southern Africa, initiated at the beginning of the Nixon Administration and toward active support for black majority rule. Later that year, a conference was convened in Geneva under the auspices of the British government, with US support, intended to bring all the parties to the Rhodesian conflict together for a constitutional settlement. This achieved little.

The repeal of the Byrd Amendment by the Carter Administration in January 1977 together with the adoption of the so-called Anglo-American plan to move towards majority rule through elections in Zimbabwe might not have achieved much, but they added to piling pressure on the Smith regime.

How did Ian Smith then change his Tactics and begin to Accommodate the Nationalists?

We have seen how the British government attempted unsuccessfully both before and after the Unilateral Declaration of Independence in November 1965, to negotiate with the Rhodesian Front government for a constitutional settlement that would concede enough to the Africans to enable Britain to recognise the independence of Rhodesia, and later on the USA, equally putting pressure, but none of the constitutional arrangements or proposals were adopted.

One possible answer why, from September 1977 Smith appeared to agree to the principle of one man, one vote and a black government was to stop the guerrilla war. The increased efficiency of the ZANU guerrilla war machine after 1975, (after Mozambican independence) no doubt stretched the resources of the Rhodesian security forces and the white economy. The independence of Mozambique under a FRELIMO government from June 1975 had opened up the whole 764 miles frontier between Rhodesia and Mozambique to penetration by ZANU guerrillas. In 1976, ZANU, which had some 15 000 guerrillas and trainees in and around Rhodesia significantly, intensified the war. The Rhodesian security forces lost twice as many men in 1976 as in the previous three years' time.

Notably, in 1977 the number of guerrillas operating within the borders of Rhodesia continued to increase, until by the end of the year there were to be about 4 000. Of these, about 500 owed allegiance to Joshua Nkomo's ZAPU which operated from Zambia. While in 1975 ZAPU's guerrillas were few and insignificant in impact, two years later Nkomo had built up a well-equipped army of about 10 000 men, which if fully committed to action would greatly increase the Rhodesian army's difficulties in defending the country. This danger may have helped persuade Smith to move at the end of 1977 towards a formal commitment to black rule. The Smith government recognised therefore that while the army might continue to hold on its own for several years longer, especially if the divisions that existed among the guerrillas continued, the war could not be won. A political settlement would be the only way to end the growing military threat.

More importantly, the settler minority regime of Ian Smith was probably pushed towards political concessions more by the effects of the guerrillas on the economy than by the mere impossibility of defeating the guerrillas. Call-up to the army after 1976 and especially during 1977 and 1978 progressively reduced the white civilian workforce. Men in the 18 – 38 age group, after an initial period of 18 months service in the army, were by the middle of 1977 liable to be called up for seven months service in the army in each year; and those from 39 to 50 years old could be called to support the army up to three months in a year. The effects of such call-ups have been serious indeed. Some firms had to manage with half the size of their workforce. Hence, the national product in real terms fell by 3 percent in 1976 and a further 7 per cent in 1977. In February 1978 industrial production was at its lowest since 1971.

The deteriorating economic situation had been exacerbated by the general decline in world trade and the accumulating effects of economic sanctions imposed against Rhodesia, since the UDI which led to drastic shortages in foreign exchange. In 1977 Rhodesia suffered the worst terms of trade since 1965. The country was forced to devalue its currency twice; October 1977 and in April 1978. Defence spending in 1976, increased by 40 per cent, over the previous year, so that, it then formed 25 per cent of the total budget. In 1978, however, this proportion rose to 40 per cent of the total budget, which was clearly unsustainable. The war was costing at least £630 000 a day. The expense of the loans had been partly financed by external loans, but the business community warned that these could not be continued any longer.

Faced with a declining economy, an uncertain future and a heavy burden of military service, many white Rhodesians emigrated during 1976 and 1977, apparently fleeing from the deteriorating political and economic environment – Rhodesia had an excess of white immigrants over white emigrants until 1976 when the country suffered a net loss of 7 072 from a population of about 280 000. In 1977 even more whites left with the annual figure rising to 10 908. With these growing problems of a battered economy and a depleted population, white Rhodesians needed either an end to the guerrilla war or economic help from abroad, neither of which would come without the Rhodesian Front giving up power to a black government.

The Key Provisions of the Internal Settlement

Unlike the Anglo-American proposals, the internal settlement relied on no external agent to administer the transition to majority rule. An Executive Council (EXCO) consisted of four members who had veto power. The Parliament would continue to function and continue to block any new laws or constitutional amendments. Therefore, whites would continue to have the upper hand in parliamentary concessions.

Moreover, of the 18 Ministerial council members, half were Smith's appointees while the other half was split among the three African delegations. Already the dismissal of the African co-Minister of Justice, Law and Order, Byron Hove, over the question of changing the system of justice had shown strains in the coalition government. Hove struck out laws he called "a citadel of white privilege".

Under what was called the Declaration of Rights, the constitutional arrangements of the internal agreement preserved the privileged status of whites. Protection of property rights made it possible for the majority government, once installed, to undertake a policy of land reform – which was one of the chief grievances of going to war: the need for equitable land redistribution.

The civil service in Rhodesia was responsible for, and left to administer the country's racial policies. According to government statistics there were 8 000 white civil servants compared to fewer than 2 000 blacks. There were no plans for a crash programme to either induct or increase the number on the part of the Africans. Whites' jobs and pensions were guaranteed and remitted in British pound sterling. No such arrangement was in place or promised for blacks.

The system of justice would remain intact, as was in place since UDI in 1965. This will entail the retention of numerous judges appointed by Smith since UDI and had been instrumental in sustaining the illegal regime. They had been sentencing many guerrillas to death by handing under repressive security rules such as the Law and Order Act. Indeed, it was precisely over the question of repealing the act, proposed by Hove that the new transitional coalition government suffered its first crisis. Hove's dismissal then showed that the government was not yet ready to begin to dismantle the system of racial discrimination.

Although the internal settlement provided for universal adult suffrage for all above 18 years old, there were serious questions surrounding the

proposed elections. Whites, including Asians and Coloureds, would still control 25% of the seats in the new assembly, far out of proportion to their population. They would block the vote in such areas as private property defence, civil service and the courts. Moreover, the fact that the elections would be held without an international commission would make it unlikely that African voters would escape intimidation by the Rhodesian minority regime.

How did the Patriotic Front react to the Internal Settlements?

First, they rejected the amnesty call because they could see that it was a forged peace, meant to further strengthen Ian Smith's grip on power. Although Muzorewa and Ndabaningi Sithole took part in the elections, the Patriotic Front campaigned vigorously against it and hence, the elections remained a sham.

Some historians have argued that Mugabe and Nkomo had not taken any part in framing the constitution of the internal settlement and therefore felt it a betrayal to the ideals of the liberation struggle as well as the demands for majority rule. Nothing less than unimpeded majority rule was good enough.

Mugabe and Nkomo could choose to abstain because they had the comfort of the international backing on their side. Both Britain and the USA could not recognise any settlement which excluded ZANU and ZAPU. Such a settlement was an insult to justice and would never end the stand-off and bitter rivalry in the country. Even South Africa, the strongest ally of Rhodesia was not in support of the internal settlement, but a moderate settlement which would end the war, but at the same time create a framework for good neighbourliness between the two countries. South Africa Prime Minister John Vorster, nevertheless dreaded the possibility of a communist regime springing up in Zimbabwe, just like what had happened in Mozambique and Angola. That would make the South African security situation more difficult to contain.

Mugabe and Nkomo, no doubt, not having had a freer movement inside the country, were afraid that they would not be able to make good enough the preparations for elections. They feared to lose those elections, even if such a process remained flawed. Hence, *aluta, continua!* The struggle continued until real, all embracing talks, mediated by the British at Lancaster House in 1979 paved the generally accepted route towards majority rule through free and fair elections.

Clearly, UDI had been an experiment in white minority rule, and a rejection of the overdue call for majority rule. The talks at Lancaster House therefore paved the way for the general elections of 18 April 1980 during which ZANU won by a landslide majority.

Examinations Type Questions

How valid is the view that the Unilateral Declaration of Independence was “a blessing in disguise” for Zimbabwean economy?

Why was the unilateral Declaration of Independence followed by the rise of mass nationalism in Zimbabwe?

What were the advantages and disadvantages of economic sanctions upon Rhodesia during the period 1965 to 1979?

THE RISE OF EARLY MASS NATIONALISM IN RHODESIA: 1950 – 1965

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

By the end of the study of this chapter students should be able to:

Define the term ‘nationalism’ in the context of this period.

Explain the main activities of the trade unions during this period.

Account for the rise of African resistance movements in labour, land and politics during this period.

Account for the formation of the ANC, NDP, ZAPU and ZANU.

Illustrate the divisions in the African nationalist movement.

Assess the impact of African nationalist movements during this period up to 1965.

DEFINITION OF NATIONALISM

Michael Tidy in his book, A History of Africa, Vol II, has given one of the most generally accepted definitions of nationalism. He terms it the struggle for self-determination whether political, social or economic. When applied to the context of Southern Rhodesia (1950 – 1965) it would mean that even the labour-related disputes led by popular black trade unionists such as Charles Mzingeli, Reuben Jamela and Joshua Nkomo were indeed expressions of nationalism.

However, it is important to realise that labour-related protests as well as other forms of protest against, (for instance), land alienation pre-dated this period of our study in this chapter and were as old as colonialism itself. What must be pointed out is that the aims of such aforesaid protests were usually limited and targeted at the achievement of reforms in the way the settlers administered the Africans in Southern Rhodesia.

Since nationalist activities and demands certainly went beyond the realisation of reform to the colonial administration in Southern Rhodesia (1950 – 1965). The term nationalism must, in essence, assume a broader definition. The presence and aims of nationalist parties such as the National Democratic Party, formed in 1959, the little-known Zimbabwe National Party (ZNP), ZAPU and ZANU clearly brought a new dimension to the definition of nationalism. Regardless of their passive means of nationalist protest, these political parties were aimed at the attainment

of independence.

Hence, in the context of this period, nationalism must also be defined as the advocacy for political independence. This definition takes into account the aims and activities of the political parties which operated during this period. Historian John Day, for instance, quotes the vibrant and optimistic proclamation of Enos Nkala in August 1960 thus, “We must get freedom by June 1961 or never”. Leopold Takawira, though less radical in expression than Nkala, for example, also predicted that the NDP would either “be the Government or the Opposition by 1961”. What is important to note is that NDP clearly advocated for political independence although such a goal remained wild optimism during this period (1950 – 1965). It is important to remember that the thrust of these political parties was the attainment of political independence and not mere reform.

What must be noted too is the fact that the aim to attain political independence remained consistent even after 1965. In reality the methods of achieving such a goal were the ones that were completely changed. After 1965, especially during the 1970s and beyond, the nationalists confronted the colonial regime by full force of arms. This differed from the earlier methods of erratic demonstrations, appeals, debates and constitutional protests.

What must be acknowledged, therefore, is the fact that the term ‘nationalism’ during this period could be applied to two strands of protest which, though related, occurred somewhat concurrently during this period (1950 – 1965). In some cases, for individuals such as Joshua Nkomo, the term underwent some kind of evolution from passive involvement in labour related demands to more vigorous calls for independence.

WHAT ROLE WAS PLAYED BY THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENTS DURING THIS PERIOD? (1950 – 1965)

The two completely opposed opinions on the role of the trade union movement *vis-a-vis* the goal of the independence of Zimbabwe make interesting study. Reuben Jamela, the president of the Southern Rhodesian Trade Union Congress in the late 1950s and early 1960s was quoted by social historian Richard Saunders after independence thus;

“It was the trade unionists who really started the nationalist political parties in the 1950s – people like Joshua Nkomo, who was president of the party, and I was his vice. But soon the nationalists not only ignored the worker’s leaders, but actually opposed them. Although we union leaders had the same intentions as the nationalist politicians, they did not want us to go directly to deal with employers on behalf of workers, but they wanted us to go through their party. But that wouldn’t provide any benefits for our workers”.

May be an even clearer line of thought along the same opinion was expressed by Morgan Tsvangirai, who was then the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions Secretary General in 1997, when he said,

“It is the workers who gave birth to the nationalist struggle – and not the other way around. It is the workers who had the founding vision of national independence which would cater for all interests in civil society, which would be plural and democratic. And it is the workers who are still demanding this, now long after the achievement of independence.”

The two quotes summarise the generally held opinion about the role of trade union movements, especially before independence. Before making a full assessment of their role, it is important to first illustrate their activities during the 1950s and 1960s.

The period under study was characterised by the establishment of a larger number of organisations which, as before, aimed to represent the diverse needs, interest and inspirations of black people in civil society. The majority of these associations had their social and cultural roots in rural and migrant labour communities, including, for example, burial societies, savings groups and dance groups.

However, with greater industrialisation and urbanisation in the 1940s and 1950s, new groups like the township residents associations, emerged and aimed to challenge the white economic and political order, and organised African interests in various ways around these broad goals.

What added driving force to nationalistic activities was the passing of the Native Land Husbandry Act (NLHA) in 1951? Historian Ian Phimister has played down the overall impact of the NLHA, arguing that due to lack of European personnel on the ground, implementation of the Act was largely left to the traditional chiefs. His argument was re-echoed by J. Alexander whose detailed research concluded that;

“The extent to which the act achieved its ostensible goals was limited”.

Moreover, Phimister concludes that as the implementation of the NLHA was confined to approximately 42% of the reserves, “the actual impact of the act was rather less severe than previous writers have claimed. In addition, Phimister makes the point that since 30% of African producers in the reserves were working 63% of all cultivated land by the 1959/60 season, “a large number of better off peasants came through the NLHA, if not exactly unscathed, then, more or less intact”.

What the above historians therefore, managed to point out is the fact that the rise of African nationalism in Zimbabwe was not, and could not, be restricted to any single factor. A combination of factors were indeed, at work to bring about the rise of African nationalism.

Closely following the immediate impact of the Native Land Husbandry Act, a later researcher, Brian Raftopoulos (1995) observed that in terms of urban politics, the major effects of the NLHA were firstly to increase the flow of indigenous Africans into the cities like Salisbury, although the extent of migration from the rural areas differed. Raftopoulos agreed that the difference was due to the fact that the effects of the NLHA in each rural area differed.

Secondly, the NLHA greatly affected the changes in political leadership in both Salisbury and Bulawayo. Debates about territorial nationalism got broadened and issues such as the extended national identity got more attention than before.

THE REFORMED INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL WORKERS UNION (RICU): ITS ACTIVITIES

The Reformed Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union was by far the most well known labour entities whose activities covered almost all of the country's main city centers. During the 1930s and 1940s it was known simply as the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union and was under the leadership of icons such as Charles Mzingeli, Masotsha Ndlovu and Job Dumbutshena.

It popularized itself in both urban and rural mining centers.

It is important to note that the ICU, as it was known before the 1950s, was not, as often wrongly assumed, exclusively an urban labour movement speaking against poor housing, low wages and poor working conditions. Rather, it also delved into many non-labour-related and rural matters such as land shortage, racial discrimination, the violence of native commissioners and other issues. This duality may have responded to the needs of contemporary urban Africans, still steeped in both rural agrarian and urban industrial worlds.

Indeed as observed by Jamela and Tsvangirai in the above quotations, labour movements by their very existence and acts of protest against the colonial regime, helped to evoke nationalist feelings among the generality of the urban and rural poor during this period.

From the 1940s, however, trade unions became more prominent. The ICU revived itself under Mzingeli into a single Reformed Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union mainly based in Salisbury. It co-existed with two new organisations, the Federation of Bulawayo African Trade Unions under Jasper Savanhu and the British African Workers' Voice Association under Benjamin Burombo. Burombo's workers' union was instrumental in the organization of the 1948 strikes.

However, it must be noted that while the strike action of 1948 revealed the high level of worker frustration in the absence of a United African leadership, its goals were mainly limited to the demand for higher wages and fairer dispute resolution between employee and employer, and it did not reflect a high level of Union organization.

The Reformed ICU under Charles Mzingeli dominated African politics from 1946 to about the early 1950s, especially in and around Salisbury. Mzingeli was one of the most remarkable figures of African politics in Southern Rhodesia. With a limited formal education, Mzingeli developed a formidable presence in Harare politics, which earned him the affectionate nickname "the Mayor of Harare".

Mzingeli campaigned over several areas of interest including the development of trade unions, the problems of African businessmen and women, rights of women in the city, the restrictions on the sale of liquor to Africans, the housing crisis, participation in local government and the development of a unified national movement.

Mzingeli also developed regional and international links ranging from being a contributing editor to the South African communist organ, Nkululeko and a correspondent with The Guardian, a socialist paper mostly based in Cape Town, to an occasional contribution to the monthly journal of the Fabinn Society.

Such massive involvement by Charles Mzingeli helped in many ways to diversify the cause of African nationalist protest during the early 1950s. Thus Mzingeli's organizational involvements varied from working with unions to contesting for a seat in the limited local government structures provided for Africans, reaching for a broader alliance with the whites and 'coloureds' in the colony and with progressive organisations in South Africa, and on an international level.

Charles Mzingeli's demise followed the 1956 Bus Boycott organized by the African Youth League which had been formed to protest against Mzingeli's increasingly "complacent Mzingeli". Also known as the City Youth League, it was formed in August 1955 to challenge the dominance of the conservative Mzingeli on the Advisory Board. In this instance, while Mzingeli, Samkange and Savanhu became embroiled in their participation in Federal politics, a

new, young leadership of men: George Nyandoro and James Chikerema emerged in Salisbury.

The emergence of an elite group of nationalists during the 1950s and early 1960s overshadowed the overall contribution made by the trade union movements in the early rise of African nationalism. One could argue that African nationalism in Zimbabwe was as old as the imposition of colonial rule itself, but the methods used to confront it were different. The aims of nationalists over the years, no doubt, gradually evolved to become more focused.

Historian Innocent Msindo in his article "Electricity and Nationalism in Urban Colonial Zimbabwe: Bulawayo, 1950 – 1963", in the Journal of African History, Vol 48, No.2, 2007, pp 267 – 290, argues that the early labour movements such as the RICU of Mzingeli, BAWVA of Burombo, and the Federation of Bulawayo African Trade Unions under Jasper Savanhu really accomplished little during this period under our study, or any other period. This was due to ineptness, power-hungry leadership, diverse class interests and personality differences. There was also little logistical support from the Union of South Africa from which the idea of trade unionism had been imported.

On the other hand, Msindo also says the early trade unions made some positive inputs to nationalist development. Such organisations helped to promote broader ethnic identities in the country. Nationalist writer, Lawrence Vambe, credited these trade unions with breaking down ethnic loyalties: he argued that they "assailed, as no black person had done before, all forms of tribalism and those at the head of burial societies and other tribal groupings".

Notably, Vambe viewed these early trade unionists, such as Dumbutshena, Mzingeli and Masotsha Ndlovu as epitomizing nationalism. He further argued that they "stand out as key figures in laying the foundation of modern African nationalism in Zimbabwe", and he further stated about the ICU that it was "a militant organization embracing all the characteristics of a truly nationalistic Movement transcending tribal differences and supplanting them with the concept of a common African crusade against white economic, political and racial supremacy. This approach was new and unique"

Vambe's defense of fallen heroes must be appreciated, especially since his book was produced when nationalism faced a leadership crisis. In the mid 1970s, most African leaders were divided, ideologically confused and power-hungry. In this collective disillusionment, intellectuals such as Vambe feeling betrayed by contemporary nationalists, no doubt, overstated the contribution of the ICU. In fact, by the mid 1950s, the popularity of the Reformed ICU, under Charles Mzingeli had greatly declined.

Furthermore, Mzingeli was not able to link the grievances of urban workers with their family problems in the rural areas. As noted above, there rose in opposition to him the City Youth League in Salisbury which in 1957 combined with the old African National Congress to form the Southern Rhodesia ANC. Unlike their predecessors, the political organisations of the late 1950s were less concerned with wages and employment conditions than with the political project of constructing a nation. Some historians have in fact indicated that the formation of the ANC in 1957 in essence marked the genesis of mass politics in Zimbabwe.

Yes, the upsurge of Zimbabwean nationalism indeed benefitted from the contributions of some leaders of trade unions such as Joshua Nkomo (from the Railways African Workers' Union), Jason Moyo (from the Artisans Union) and Francis Nehwati (from Municipal Workers' Union) and at times the new ANC operated from the offices of the Southern Rhodesia Trade Union Congress (SRTUC) led by Joshua Nkomo. It must be noted, however, that the latter brand of

nationalism was not necessarily a brainchild of trade unionists, but a phenomenon which the elite or intelligentsia borrowed from trends in the diaspora, for example, “Africa for the Africans”, “Africans Unite”.

The above assessment was equally given credence by an earlier (1997) assessment made by Eddison Zvobgo, a veteran member of ZANU. He noted:

“The trade union movement served the people of Zimbabwe, and at that time served them well, but they never really tried to overthrow the regime which we did... whatever they were doing to challenge government, it couldn't have been very important. They were conspicuous by their silence ... the attacks on them (colonial regime) were peanuts to the actual torment which came to us with the advent of the Rhodesian Front”.

Far from working together as nationalistic groups, there was actually tension between labour groups and nationalist parties. The tensions sometimes broke out into clear conflict. In one instance, Reuben Jamela, the President of the Southern Rhodesia Trade Union congress was badly beaten up by the nationalist youth at the funeral of Dr Samuel Parirenyatwa, the nationalist politician.

Moreover, in the early 1960s disagreements over the “proper” political role split the labour movement and aligned the divided, weakened parties with different nationalist parties. Such a submergence of the labour movement within the politics of the nationalist movement led to a decline in the political and workplace power of the trade unions.

But the main hindrance to the activities of the unions and other black civic organisations before independence was the white Rhodesian state. The settler state used repression and many other forms of manipulation to control the growing momentum of protest and challenge. Many restrictive laws were introduced to this end. One of the most notorious laws was the Law and Order Maintenance Act (LOMA) passed in 1960 and made increasingly severe with amendments in subsequent years. It placed very tight restrictions on rights to association, free speech and communication. It also criminalized many forms of normal political activity, such as criticizing government policies.

In the face of such repressive laws, many civic organisations were either neutralized as effective public fora, or forced into the underground, which defeated their representative function. This scenario affected both the labour unions as well as the newly formed political parties.

WHICH POLITICAL PARTIES WERE FORMED DURING THIS PERIOD AND WHAT WERE THEIR ACTIVITIES?

As noted earlier, the ANC was the newly revived political party which was formed in 1957. This was under the leadership of Joshua Nkomo and George Nyandoro. They repeatedly drew attention to the difference between the rich and massive white-owned ranches and the crowded African farms. The ANC certainly talked about political independence as the solution to the country's problems of inequitable land distribution and racial discrimination. However, as soon as it began to make a recognizable impact, the settler administration of Edgar Whitehead banned it in the political clampdown of 1959.

However, the banning of the Southern Rhodesia African National Congress did not mean the end

of African political activity in the colony. As early as February 1959, another party, the National Democratic Party, (NDP) was formed. The NDP had a broader appeal than the ANC. It was supported by students, trade unionists, African traders and the landless.

The NDP leadership comprised of Joshua Nkomo, George Nyandoro and Samkange who were well-known for articulating African grievances. The NDP encouraged resistance to the Land Husbandry Act and it organized meetings and rallies as well as marches through cities of Salisbury and Bulawayo to popularize the impoverished plight of the Africans. In one such meeting, for example, the NDP organized the great march through Salisbury's townships in July 1960. Rallies swept across cities and encouraged massive support to the tune of twenty to thirty thousand people.

The NDP therefore mostly continued with the work of the ANC, but their call for one man one vote was more distinct. The NDP ranks included well known figures such as Enos Nkala and Leopold Takawira and these predicted that by 1961 the NDP would have achieved majority rule in the country, – a prophecy that did not come true.

However, Whiteheads government refused to recognize the NDP as a legitimate political party and showed no sign of making any fundamental concession on the constitution under which an overwhelmingly European electorate chose an entirely European legislature. NDP's optimism emanated from its startling popularity and success during the first year of its existence.

One move which heightened optimism among the NDP and African nationalists in general were the positive steps taken by the British government in making concessions towards a new constitution. Hoping to win support from the African nationalists from the Central African Federation in Rhodesia and Nyasaland, the British government persuaded Edgar Whitehead to invite NDP representatives to a conference which would consider revising the Southern Rhodesia constitution. Just the prospect of attendance at this crucial official conference caused jubilation among African nationalist members in Southern Rhodesia who had come to this juncture from nothing in just over four years.

The actual results of the conference, however, proved to be a serious disappointment to NDP and the period of growing hopes was overtaken by one of frustrated bitterness. The NDP representative, according to historian John Day, mishandled the conference which was held in January and February 1961. Demanding universal franchise, they had to swallow down a much more watered down version of what the whites were prepared to offer. They supposedly agreed to work on a constitution where Africans could only accept 15 seats in an assembly of 65 seats.

Almost immediately after the conference the NDP delegates, acting on massive pressure within the party, denied that they had ever agreed to the proposed constitution. To emphasize its disapproval of the 15 African seats the NDP adopted a policy of boycotting elections under the new constitution which was drawn up as a result of the conference. At the same time, the NDP continued to demand an all-embracing constitution which recognized universal franchise of all the Africans; and equal political status between the whites and the blacks.

What must be pointed out is that the 1961 constitution caused a huge rift among the African nationalists, and those who attended the talks were increasingly viewed with suspicion and mistrust. In the extreme, they were labeled as traitors and sell-outs. Almost all the outstanding future nationalists were members of the NDP. This included the likes of Ndabaningi Sithole, Robert Mugabe, Jason Moyo, Morton Malinga, and as noted earlier, Herbert Chitepo, Enos Nkala, Bernard Chidzero and so on.

In the wake of the notorious Law and Order Maintenance Act, NDP was banned in 1961. But NDP had equally failed to effectively mobilise the African population for a struggle against the settler regime. Their main mode of attacking the settler regime was to demand a fresh constitution which was fully representative of the black majority.

Colonial historian John Day argues that NDP's undoing was that they issued a series of empty threats which really scared nobody. For instance, they threatened to paralyse all industrial activities if the industrialists stood in the way of democracy. They also threatened to call for civil disobedience to unjust laws. Yet, none of these threats were carried out. Instead, a series of unco-ordinated violence by African nationalist supporters did break out and the leaders were not responsive to it. They did not order violence or claim credit for that which occurred. In that way, NDP's methods of attempting to wrestle powers from the colonial regime were futile.

Whilst NDP was struggling to win limited concessions for the African population, their counterparts in Zambia and Malawi were making milestones in constitutional reforms. Being the richest of the federal colonies, the Rhodesians were not prepared to relinquish power without a fight. Thus, while the situations in Zambia and Malawi made local nationalists more determined to negotiate similar deals for their population in Zimbabwe, the reverse could only be realized.

But NDP failed partly because of the poor focus which some of its cadres placed their nationalist activities. In some areas NDP was criticized because it was concerned more with the rural than with urban grievances and tended to sideline urban workers in their struggle for higher wages. Needham, Mashingaidze and Bhebhe, et al, in their book From Iron Age to Independence: A History of Central Africa (p 185), argued that the NDP was suspicious of Zimbabwean industry in which there were strong British interests. They believed, with some justification that those interests would always stop Britain from giving Africans power in Zimbabwe.

Coupled with a whole host of colonial legislation, the NDP suffered news blackouts as its main mouthpiece newspapers such as the African Daily News and the monthly publication Central African Examiner were silenced by LOMA's censorship restrictions. The black-oriented print media which did survive, like The Parade, did so by avoiding controversial political subjects. When they strayed from this course as did the Catholic Church's Moto in the 1970s, they too were shut down.

In addition, the state deepened its control by co-opting some civil society organisations as a way of isolating the emerging and seemingly dynamic political parties, such as the NDP. Black residents associations, for example, were steered towards co-operation with white local government structures through the development of African Advisory Boards which were established as weak sounding boards for African opinions. These boards in fact, helped muffle and contain the frustrations which the black residents associations sought to represent and address. Such calculated infiltration in African affairs served to dilute and silence African grievances.

In many other areas of activity too, the Rhodesian state used coercion, containment and covert interventions to undermine the effectiveness of the early political parties. White opposition targeted not only political parties per se. Rather, the settlers sought to confront and sniff out any sign of insubordination among the Africans in churches, human rights groups, intellectuals, press, and even burial societies. In such an environment, the NDP soon followed the ANC, into oblivion. It was obviously going to take many years of struggle using a more violent approach to dislodge the whites from their positions of entrenched power in Zimbabwe.

THE FORMATION OF ZAPU AND ZANU.

ZAPU was formed in 1961 following the banning of NDP and the new party moved a gear up in both goals for the country's continuity in terms of leadership between NDP and ZAPU. Joshua Nkomo was president and many former senior members of NDP joined the new party. These included George Nyandoro, James Chikerema, Robert Mugabe, Leopold Takawira and many other nationalist luminaries.

ZAPU continued to advocate for one man one vote, equal distribution of land, equal opportunities in education, employment and in the social sector. The aim of independence was readily pronounced. However, after protests in Bulawayo, ZAPU was banned and the government again passed more restrictive legislation. Many of the ZAPU leadership was either imprisoned, restricted or went into exile.

Meanwhile, among the whites, the racist party, the Dominion Party joined with other segregationist groups to form the Rhodesia Front in 1962. The Rhodesian Front was to be the main vehicle of white racist opinion over the next two decades. Its policy was, "white supremacy for the foreseeable future". The Rhodesia Front wanted an independent white-run state, free from the intervention or control of the British government.

Hence, in December 1962 the Rhodesia Front gained power and its leader, Winston Field became Prime Minister. He at once began putting Rhodesia Front policies into practice. He brought broadcasting under government control, made death the penalty for attempted treason and provided the white security forces with the most modern military equipment to deal with the African military nationalism. It must be emphasized that even when it was apparent that the methods of dealing with the Rhodesian Front government, such as demonstrations, negotiations, petitions, protests and even limited violence, ZAPU was not prepared to go beyond that. They felt that the legal restriction would not in any way provide an enabling environment to effectively challenge the settler regime.

The need for more vigorous action led to the formation of the Zimbabwe African National Union, ZANU which increasingly argued for the use of armed confrontation to dislodge the settler regime. That difference in the mode of operation led to the division or split in ZAPU with Ndabaningi Sithole, Herbert Chitepo, Robert Mugabe and others forming ZANU. ZANU was the first to send young men out of the country to train in conventional and guerilla warfare, with the likes of Josiah Magama Tongogara, who was trained in Tanzania and China.

WHAT PROBLEMS WERE FACED BY ZAPU AND ZANU AFTER 1961?

From 1961 the nationalist movement had to contend not only with its inability to overthrow the existing system, but also with increasingly serious internal divisions. The African nationalists often avoided the pain of acknowledging their disunity as much as possible, but often these re-surfaced and would paralyse their activities.

The first major disagreement within the African nationalist movement in Southern Rhodesia was a consequence of the NDP's representatives' conduct at the 1961 constitutional conference. Some members of the party did not believe that the denial by Nkomo and his fellow representatives that they had turned down the provision of 15 out of 65 seats for Africans was true. This serious rift in the NDP was covered over at a special party congress in March 1961, but in June 1961 some of those discontented with Nkomo's leadership founded a new African Party, the Zimbabwe National Party (ZNP). This did not, however, attract much support partly

because of the NDP intimidation.

Much more damaging to the nationalist movement was the split of ZAPU in 1963 into two warring factions. Again, the cause of this division was the quality of Nkomo's leadership which was precipitated by his leading the ZAPU executive into exile in Dar es Salaam during the period when the party was banned. From August 1963 two rival African nationalist parties opposed each other: the People's Caretaker Party (PCC) which called itself ZAPU abroad, under Nkomo and the Zimbabwe African National Union, (ZANU) under Rev Ndabaningi Sithole.

Notably, ZANU, during its early years, never commanded as much support as ZAPU, but unlike ZNP, it was a substantial party, until they were outlawed in 1964. The two parties fiercely attacked each other by words and physical violence, diverting much of their energies from their avowed primary aim of opposing the government. Even after they were declared illegal, the PCC and ZANU continued their hostility in exile abroad.

When disputes within the nationalist movement reached the points where the dissidents formed separate parties, those in the established parties dealt with the trauma by denying reality to the break-away parties. A rival party was pictured as a few power seekers scheming against the united people who were represented by the dominant party. For instance, Robert Mugabe of the NDP referred to the so-called ZNP (if any party it be) and the Democratic Voice, the NDP organ, claimed that ZNP was non-existent.

It was true that the ZNP did not attract much political support, but the PCC made worse claims that ZANU did not exist. Nkomo himself claimed that 99.9% of Africans supported him. In fact one of Nkomo's lieutenants stated in April 1964 that ZANU had failed to show public proof of its existence. Rank and file members of the PCC followed the same track. "I for one don't know what is ZANU". Some one maliciously claimed, "Myself I have never seen a ZANU man. ZANU exists only in newspapers and nowhere else". Four university students who resigned from ZANU articulately expressed the popular equation of party and people which deemed the non existence of ZANU. "We are joining the people. The PCC is the people; it is a reality, just as the people are a reality. To fight or to oppose the PCC is to oppose a reality".

Of course such mud-slinging among these early nationalists played into the anxious hands of the Rhodesian Front. Nothing worked as bad as self-betrayal among and against the nationalists. The more the nationalists were divided and not complimenting each other's efforts, the easier they got subdued by the settler regime. To some extent the nationalists were their own worst enemies.

The facts of the situations in 1961 and 1963 were that the African nationalist movement in Southern Rhodesia split into rival factions. Those who left NDP and ZAPU rejected Nkomo's leadership, but remained African nationalists. The rival parties still continued to share common policies and ideologies. This was in spite of the fact that each party was accusing each other of conspiring with the European opponents of African nationalism. On another level Mugabe, attacking ZNP, said that the people were not prepared "to accept borrowed ideas pushed by imperialists down the throats of gullible puppets". On the other hand the PPC stated that ZANU might form a government with the Federal Prime Minister, Sir Roy Welensky, an arch enemy of the nationalist cause. ZANU claimed in 1964 that Nkomo, who was confined to a restriction camp, had a refrigerator there supplied by Rhodesian Front admirers.

What cannot be ruled out is the fact that at some point or other, Zimbabwean nationalists tore each other down as a show of their self-seeking and power hungry scheme. While the object of

destroying the settler regime remained quite paramount, it often got side-tracked by ethnic, personality and petty methodological differences. Such differences and de-campaigning of each other, no doubt, postponed the goal of national independence and could have accounted for in-fightings within each political party.

Worse still, such lack of tolerance could easily betray the lack of democracy among the nationalist movement. Ironically, while the nationalists were aiming to introduce noble virtues of democracy such as one man one vote, and removal of all vestiges of discrimination, the same evils bedeviled their ranks and were to follow them right up to independence.

It cannot be denied that the period before 1965 was characterized by excessive whims of dominance. The Unilateral Declaration of Independence on November 1965 followed fears by the whites that the majority rule which had been achieved by Africans in neighbouring Zambia and Malawi, was very likely to follow in Zimbabwe as well. The UDI simply meant more concerted restrictions upon African nationalism in Zimbabwe, with ZANU and ZAPU getting banned in 1964. Leaders in either detention or exile, the political playing field became extremely uneven against the local nationalists.

While their own inter-party squabble certainly weakened them, the nationalists were more damaged by the many heinous pieces of mis-legislation put in place by the Rhodesian Front. John Day's argument that divisions among the nationalists indeed did more to ruin them has accuracy, but has to be challenged and put into more accurate historical perspective. John Day was writing in 1974/75 at the height of colonial dominance and he argued that African related problems affected the cause of nationalists most because he wanted to remain ideologically and racially correct during this period.

Indeed, if the colonial settlers were receptive to the calls for majority rule, as was in Northern Rhodesia and Tanganyika, there would never have been any need for division, because negotiation, not armed conflict, would have sufficed. Divisions came in the nationalist movement mainly due to the stubbornness of the Rhodesia Front which puffed out any oxygen of political latitude among the nationalists.

The international and regional restrictions too, presented nationalists in both ZANU and ZAPU with major hurdles. Before 1964 it was impossible to dream of regional support. Both Zambia and Tanganyika were still under British domination and therefore unable to lend the nationalists any form of help whatsoever. The breakup of federation in 1963 and the subsequent independence of Zambia and Malawi created allies for the nationalists to send out youths for military training in order to fight the settlers and dislodge them. Whilst the idea of the liberation struggle might have been as old as nationalism itself, its practical application to achieve the desired, results, no doubt, remained bleak for most of the period 1950 – 1965.

Even with the independence of Zambia and Tanzania, what the best the nationalists could gain was military training and limited infiltration of guerillas into the country. It was only after 1975, when Mozambique had gained independence that the nationalist movement became truly massive, and troop deployment came through the northern, western and eastern fronts. This way the Rhodesian military machine could be meaningfully engaged.

In conclusion, it must be noted that the period 1950 to 1965 was characterized by the rise of liberationist nationalism. Due to the heavy constraints, internally and externally, the Rhodesian Front remained almost unscathed until after the mid 1970s when a new political dispensation really heralded itself in Southern Africa.

Examinations Type Questions

- 1) Assess the impact of trade unions in addressing African greivances from 1950 – 1965.
- 2) Discuss the importance of political parties during the period 1950-965.
- 3) How and why did the aims of the national movements change between 1950 and 60.
- 4) “An attempt to provide a peaceful solution to African greivances”. Discuss the validity of the assertion with reference to early nationalist movements.
- 5) Assess the factors that assisted R. Mugabe and ZANU PF to win the elections in 1980.
- 6) Disuess the effects on foreign investements of the transition from colonial domination to independence.
- 7) Why did Trade Union Movements fail to address African political and social grievances?
- 8) Why, and with what results did African nationalist parties fail to unite against the settler minority regime of Ian Smith?

THE ARMED STRUGGLE IN ZIMBABWE (1966-1979)

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

After studying this chapter students should be able to

Outline the reasons why African nationalists decided to engage in mass armed

confrontation against the settler regime.

Describe the general causes of the second Chimurenga in Zimbabwe.

Explain the reasons for the formation of the Patriotic Front in Zimbabwe.

Describe the impact of UDI upon armed uprising for majority rule in Zimbabwe.

Explain why nationalist guerrilla armed confrontation escalated during the second half of the 1970's

Assess the role played by ZANU and ZAPU in forcing the Smith regime to agree to negotiations.

Account for the role played by the

International community i.e. Britain, USA, USSR, China

OAU

Southern African region – Zambia, Botswana and Mozambique.
in Zimbabwe's drive for independence.

This is an important part of the syllabus, which requires a guided and focused coverage by the 'A' Level student. There is need to identify the salient aspects of the topic which will focus the candidate on the examinable areas. Generalized study does not usually reward candidates. The major issues to focus on included, the causes of the Second Chimurenga (Armed Struggle), the prosecution of the war itself, especially the major highlights, the role of the masses and that of the international community. The Lancaster House Agreement is the last part of this chapter.

Causes of the Second Chimurenga

The following are the National Grievances, which caused the Second Chimurenga.

- (a) **Land**:- loss of land and relocation to the infertile and dry native resources. Such legislative Acts as the Land Apportionment Act and the negative effects of the Land husbandry Act, the Maize Control Act, etc were major causes of the war. Land was the major means of production for the majority in Zimbabwe and a source of their livelihood.
- (b) **Economic Marginalization**:- Deprived of their land, the Africans were forced to look for employment in the mines, factories and farms where the wages and

- working conditions were poor. The compound system in towns and mines separated families over long periods of time. Blacks treated as second class citizens in their own country by foreigners.
- (c) **Racial Segregation:-** This centred around taking the African as a sub-human species and included denial of access to all facilities used by whites such as toilets, shops, churches, hotels and even emotional issues such as cross-cultural and cross-racial marriages or relationships were criminalized. The idea of apartheid i.e social stratification based on race and colour.
 - (d) **Disenfranchisement:-** As third-vote citizens, Africans could not participate in politics and were disqualified from voting. Many laws were passed to restrict the natives from articulating their political aspirations. This closed the door for political dialogue and finally triggered the war.
 - (e) **Political Repression and Suppression:-** The Native Affairs, Law and Order Maintenance Act and The Emergency Powers Act, effectively proscribed African Political activity and criminalized all political activity, even the most trivial forms of protest by Africans.

Prosecution of the war

In this section, an inventory of the major highlights of the armed struggle will be done. It would not be possible to include all the events of the armed struggle. A sequential order of events will be followed. By 1963 the Nationalists had secured external bases in independent African countries such as Egypt, Tanzania and Zambia to train their armed wings. ZANU's armed wing became the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) and ZAPU's armed wing became known as the Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA). Training also took place outside Africa in places like Cuba, China and Russia.

In 1966 – Chinhoyi battle:- Here the first externally trained ZANLA combatants clashed with the security forces and all the seven members of the group were killed. They were outnumbered and ran out of ammunition. This battle is believed to have effectively marked the beginning of the armed struggle.

1967 (August) – ZIPRA in alliance with the South African National Congress's armed wing, Umkhonto WeSizwe deployed four groups of 20 combatants each. The majority of the combatants were killed in and around Wankie district. Another group of 150 was deployed and met the same fate.

Late 1969 and early 1970 the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO) fighting the Portuguese in Mozambique formed an alliance with ZANLA and with more experience they provided training and logistical support which proved invaluable and led

to the opening of the eastern front. Mass mobilization became the preferred tool of the armed struggle and this met with great success.

1970 – Formation of the Front for the Liberation of Zimbabwe (FROLIZI) by Dambaza Chikerema and Nathan Shamuyarira and others who broke away from ZAPU. They cited the need to circumvent what they perceived as tribal limitations within ZANU and ZAPU, as the reason for their break. The group gradually fizzled out and leadership either joined ZANU or went back to Rhodesia.

1972/ December – ZANLA forces score military successes with the attack on Alterna Farm in Centenary. In the same year, the keeps or ‘protected’ villages were introduced in order to deny guerillas access to food and clothing from the rural peasants.

1973 – John Vorster, South Africa’s Boer Premier and Zambia’s president, Kenneth Kaunda, initiated Detente, a policy of accommodation, which was to neutralize the armed struggle by promoting internal reactionary African Nationalities in Zimbabwe. Muzorewa and Nkomo and Sithole were flown from prison in Rhodesia to Lusaka and forced to sign the declaration of unity by Kaunda on the pain of losing Frontline support.

1974 – Internal rivalry rock both ZANU and ZAPU. In ZANU, a group calling themselves ‘vashandi’ led by such people as Rugare Gumbo and Henry Hamadziripi caused major headaches for the party.

1974 – In December. The OAU demand ZANLA and ZIPRA to unite and fight jointly. This led to the formation of the Zimbabwe People’s Army (ZIPA). It had a joint command of 18. However, ZIPA did not last because of differences in leadership.

1975- The assassination of Herbert Chitepo on the 18th of March in a parcel bomb. Chitepo was the ZANU chairman of the Dare ReChimurenga, an organization formed after the banning and jailing of nationalist leaders in 1964 and his task was to prosecute the war while the leadership was in prison. He was also a renowned Lawyer assassinated in Zambia.

1976 – Ian Smith conducted separate peace negotiations with Joshua Nkomo in March. However, as a result of mounting criticism of these talks by African leaders, especially Julius Nyerere and Samora Machel and following Smith’s ‘no majority rule in a thousand years’ speech, Nkomo discontinued talks with Smith. At the same time American secretary of state, Henry Kissinger initiated the Geneva talks. ZANU and ZAPU formed the Patriotic Front (PF) to oppose the talks.

26 September 1976 – Smith announced his acceptance of majority rule as long as the army and police remained under white control. He also began to negotiate with internal black collaborators, or those who had abandoned the armed struggle, e.g. Ndabaningi Sithole, Abel Muzorewa and Chief Jeremiah Chirau.

1976 also saw the bombing raids on camps in Mozambique. Rhodesians killed many

refugees at Chimoio and Nyadzonya in Mozambique and Freedom camp, Mulungushi and Chifombo in Zambia.

1976-1978 – The liberation armed struggle intensified. In fact, by 1977, it had covered almost the whole country. ZANLA forces operated from the Eastern part of the Country, while ZIPRA entered from the West. A number of liberated zones had been opened up, where the enemy had been driven away into the urban areas. Zimbabwe's armed struggle was a rural based struggle.

1978 saw important military victories by both ZANLA and ZAPU. ZIPRA forces downed a Viscount Plane in the Kariba area, while ZANLA burnt petrol tanks in Salisbury.

3 March 1978 – the so-called Internal Settlement was reached, Smith on the other hand and anti-war black leaders such as Muzorewa, Sithole and Chirau.

April 1979- the ANC's Bishop Muzorewa was elected Prime Minister in sham elections, leading to the temporary Zimbabwe – Rhodesia Hybrid State. This government was not recognized by any state except South Africa.

1979 Lancaster House Agreement

The Lancaster House talks began in October. The parties to the talks were the British government, the Patriotic Front (ZANU and ZAPU), Muzorewa's ANC and Smith's Rhodesia Front (RF). The talks could not reconcile the demands of the parties especially on the land. However, finally a compromise was reached.

- (i) Land Distribution and Resettlement was agreed upon and the government of Britain was to meet half the costs of resettlement. The Zimbabwe government was to fund the other half. In 1980, the UK pledged an initial amount of 20 million pounds.
- (ii) Land was thus to change hands through a willing seller- willing buyer mechanism, with the white farmers who wanted to continue farming being free to do so.
- (iii) The Whites had to retain 20 uncontested seats in the New Assembly.
- (iv) There was to be the ceasefire and the ZANLA and ZIPRA guerrillas to be put in assembly points.
- (v) This was to be followed by free and fair elections, based in a one-man one-vote basis.
- (vi) There was to be no constitutional amendment of those terms for a period of 10 years.

Candidates are expected to critically and objectively analyse the implications of the Lancaster house agreement. This was an important settlement in the history of Zimbabwe and a possible examination area.

1980- Elections were held in March. These were internationally supervised. Results – Muzorewa’s ANC-3 seats, ZANU (PF) –57, PF-ZAPU –20 and ZAPU-Ndonga 1. The Africans contested for only 80 seats. The other 20 were reserved for whites. Thus on 18 April 1980, Zimbabwe became an Independent State, with Robert Mugabe as Prime Minister. The new PM formed a government of National Unity and offered Joshua Nkomo the position of president, but he declined. Canaan Banana eventually took up the post.

The role of the Peasants and Workers in the Armed Struggle:

These two groups constituted the masses of Zimbabwe.

- (a) **Peasants:-** These were in the war front since the armed struggle was a rural based one. They bore the brunt of the war. They were the ‘men in the middle’ between the guerrillas and the settler forces. They provided the following: - food, shelter from settler forces, intelligence information on settler movements and location, logistics and essential cover – e.g. according to Mao Tse-Tung – the masses were the water and the guerrillas, the fish. The fish cannot live or survive without the water. This under scored the critical role of the peasants in the struggle. The young men called (mujibhas) and young ladies (chimbwidos) – carried supplies to and from bases within Zimbabwe and in neighboring Mozambique and Zambia.

Now recruits for guerrilla training came from the two groups

They were also the ‘ears and eyes’ of the guerrillas.

Peasants suffered many hardships such as brutality of government agents, collecting fines for not reporting the guerrillas, extreme torture for harbouring the ‘enemy’, curfews, imprisonment for supporting the guerillas and being put in ‘protected villages’. Many lost their lives in enemy attacks and bombings of guerrilla bases.

However the peasants who collaborated with Smith forces- the sellouts – were mostly killed by the guerrillas.

- (b) **Workers:-** Because of their earning power, workers were called upon to provide guerrillas with clothes and boots, food, cigarettes, radios, money etc.

They also provided transport – teachers, nurses, agritex officials etc, used their cars to ferry guerrillas’ supplies to designated areas.

In towns – which were tightly controlled and policed, it was difficult to organize resistance. However, many individual workers, helped by transporting guerrillas who

came to urban areas disguised as civilians. They provided temporary shelter for them.

Many urban workers still had contacts with their families in the rural areas and helped by sending money, food, clothes and other items to the guerrillas.

However, the struggle could not have been won by the masses (peasants/workers) alone without the guerrillas themselves. The war was won by the concerted efforts of both the masses and the guerrillas.

The aim should always be to give a balanced assessment of all those who contributed to the success of the armed struggle.

The role of the international community

Students are also expected to evaluate the role of the international community in the armed struggle in Zimbabwe. The types of assistance ranged from military training, provision of arms of war, providing shelter for Zimbabwean refugees, to the provision of food, medical supplies such as bandages and medicines.

Mostly countries such as China, the Soviet Union, Cuba and other Eastern block countries outside Africa, provided military training while in Africa, Tanzania, Egypt, Mozambique and Zambia provided it. However, Zambia and Mozambique had additional responsibilities. They harboured Zimbabwean refugees in camps in their own countries, thus exposing their countries to danger of attack by the Smith regime. ZANLA forces were trained mostly in Tanzania, Mozambique and China, while ZIPRA forces were trained in Zambia, Cuba and the Soviet Union. Both liberation groups were trained in the use of guerilla tactics. These included sabotaging communication lines such as railway lines and roads. They were also trained on the importance of political education and conscientization of the masses on the aims of the armed struggle. This led to the 'Pungwe' concept, used mostly by ZANLA guerrillas. This was whereby the masses attended all night meetings where they were taught on the importance of supporting the guerrillas. This politicization programme is what lacked in the early stages of the armed struggle, resulting in the defeats at Chinhoyi and in the Wankie area.

Therefore an overall assessment of those of who contributed to the success of the armed struggle in Zimbabwe must, of necessity, include the above-mentioned countries. In addition, various organizations and agencies gave humanitarian support. These included UN agencies such as UNICEF for refugees, FAO for food and UNESCO for education in refugee camps. The OAU liberation committee also helped by providing both moral and military support. It was a conduit through which assistance from the international community reached the guerrillas in Mozambique and Zambia.

Examination Type Questions

- 1) Why did Africans undertake armed struggle in Southern Rhodesia in 1966.
- 2) The armed struggle was a direct reaction to colonial Insensitivity.” Do you agree
- 3) Critically examined various method used by Africans during the second Chimurenga
- (4) ‘The peasants suffered and contributed most to the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe’. Discuss
- (5) ‘The terms of the Lancaster House constitution were meant to benefit the minority at the expense of the majority.’ Discuss.
- 6) Lancaster was a half baked cake, dangled in front of African leaders as the only meaningful end to war.” Discuss the validity of the assertion with reference to the pre-independence settlement.
- 7) Assess the impact of guerrilla warfare on the result of the armed struggle.
- 8) Assess the role of foreign support in the armed struggle in Zimbabwe.
- 9) Critically examine the roles played by Zimbabwean societies to gain independence from Britain.

What was the impact of the armed struggle upon the rival population in Mashonaland and

Matabeleland?

Evaluate the role played by the international community in aiding Zimbabwe’s liberation

struggle.

“The outcome of the armed struggle revealed a set of compromises”. How far do you

agree?

ZIMBABWE AFTER INDEPENDENCE

POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENTS

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

After studying this chapter students should be able to

Describe the political, economic and social status of the country at independence in 1980.

Explain the limitations placed on the new black government by the Lancaster House Constitution.

Describe the land holding/ownership status at independence.

Assess the successes and failures of the first phase of the land reform and resettlement programme in Zimbabwe.

Estimate the reasons for, and impact of the Fast Track Land Reform and resettlement programme.

Explain the reasons why ESAP was adopted and assess its impact on the economic, political and social situation in Zimbabwe.

Describe and explain the role played by the political elite in either promoting or frustrating reform measures in land redistribution or ESAP.

GENERAL BACKGROUND

ZANU PF came to power following the election victory on April 18, 1980, under the premiership of Robert Gabriel Mugabe. Mugabe's most immediate task was to assure the divided, war-torn nation of reconciliation, national healing and economic and social development. This helped to ease tempers among the jittery white community who had feared an imminent racial war. Nevertheless, the biggest challenge for the new government was to chart the way forward in the area of economic development, particularly in the area of land redistribution. Equally needing attention were the social aspects of the country such as health and education. Save for the towns, the situation in the rural areas was chaotic since most schools, hospitals and clinics had been closed due to the war.

EDUCATIONAL REFORM IN POST INDEPENDENCE ZIMBABWE

When ZANU (PF) came to power in 1980 it had promised to establish free and compulsory primary and secondary education for all children in Zimbabwe. The Ministry of Education in actual fact managed to achieve remarkable increases in school enrolments, particularly at secondary level. It also undertook to allow all pupils to sit the 'O' Level examinations after four years of secondary schooling.

However, a bottleneck entry to Form Six was created, because there were insufficient places for those who wished to proceed to sixth form studies. There were also inadequate vocational training facilities, and an inadequate rate of creation of new jobs for school leavers.

Expansion of Primary and Secondary Education : 1980 – 2000

The ZANU (PF) 1980 election manifesto pledged, as one of its cardinal education principles, to establish "free and compulsory primary and secondary education for all children" in Zimbabwe, regardless of race, colour or creed. Given that the country's rural education facilities had been decimated by the civil war, and that, the educational financing of urban schools under the Smith and Muzorewa regimes had favoured White school children, to be an easy one to fulfill.

The country was, though, fortunate in the nomination of Dr Dzingai Mutumbuka as

Minister of Education after the landslide election triumph of ZANU (PF) in March 1980. During the Rhodesia civil war, Mutumbuka had been responsible for the education of thousands of refugee children in Mozambique and his success in that sphere earned him the undiminished trust of the ZANU leader, Robert Mugabe, and an uninterrupted place on the supreme Politburo of the ruling party. The new Government's first budget gave Mutumbuka's Ministry of Education a staggering Z\$1,202,2 million, which represented some 17,3% of the total national budget, with which to effect an educational miracle.

Faced with an influx of over two million refugees, many of the children, after the cessation of hostilities in 1980, and a massive need for schools and teachers, the Ministry of Education employed radical strategies for survival. Hundreds of expatriate teachers were flown in from Australia, Britain and Canada. These were usually engaged on three year contracts, and were permitted to remit part of their earnings to the countries of origin. Moreover, recruiting such teachers, matters of selection and travel were arranged by the teachers' home countries. All this was done to fill in the huge staff shortage that existed in both secondary and primary schools.

Apart from that, a system of what came to be known as "hot-seating" was introduced in which, in many areas, half the school population was taught in the morning and the other half in the afternoon – thereby utilizing human and material resources to the maximum.

Moreover, teacher education colleges experienced massive and rapid expansion, and the Ministry sponsored a new form of "on-the-job" teacher training called the Zimbabwe Integrated National Education Course (ZINTEC), which, by 1986, had fed an extra 8 000 primary school teachers into the system. In addition, huge school building projects were initiated with local communities encouraged to build schools that had been destroyed during the fifteen unhappy years of UDI.

As a result of the collective efforts outlined above, by 1984 the number of primary schools in operation had increased by 73,3% from 819586 in 1979 to 2 214 798 in 1984. The figures for secondary education were even more impressive. In the period from 1979 to 1984 the number of secondary schools increased by 537,8%, with a four-fold rise in teacher staffing. These are astonishing figures, and all the more so, when we consider that they were achieved in the first four years of full independence.

Whereas in 1979 a total of 885 801 pupils were enrolled in primary and secondary schools, that number had increased to 2 159 288 within three years and by 1986 the total school enrolment was approaching the three million mark. At primary level, growth took place uniformly across all grade levels. The massive 50,8% increment in total primary enrolments between 1979 and 1980 has been followed by much more modest, but consistent, percentage increases in succeeding years. This growth rate has been sustained by the continuing return of refugee children, and by the government's decision shortly after independence, to make primary education free.

However, it is in the area of secondary education that the most dramatic school population increases occurred. Of the 182 742 pupils who completed primary school education in 1984, 83.96% went into Form 1 entrance in secondary schools the following

year – compared with only the 30,41% of 1979's intake who entered secondary school in 1980. In 1986 the percentage of pupils entering secondary school was 79,19 percent, only marginally less than it had been the previous year. In addition the Government then gave an undertaking that all those pupils who completed primary school in 1986 onwards and wish to proceed to secondary education in 1987 would be permitted to do so.

The Ministry of Education also insisted that every pupil, entering secondary schooling would have the automatic right to sit the ordinary Level examination. This decision must have been taken at the end of 1982 or earlier. This is because the directive initially referred to all the Form III pupils of 1983, wishing to take the 1984 examination if they so wished.

It must be noted that Dr Mutumbuka's positive and forceful approach to the functions of his Ministry certainly produced remarkable quantitative results. Besides providing educational opportunities for hundreds of thousands of children who would never otherwise have attended school, his policies also encouraged children to stay in school. By way of comparison, the Form 1 intake of 1977 had an average fall-out rate of 12,96 percent per annum on its journey towards Form IV (these figures were derived from the Quarterly Digest of Statistics, December 1985). In real terms, therefore, not only did Zimbabwean administration improve initial access to school education at both the primary entrance point and the secondary school threshold, but it had also enhanced opportunities for pupils to progress through the school system. This has accorded them access to eleven years of school education and guaranteeing them the right to sit for the 'O' Level examination.

Problems of Mass Education Drive

The policy of automatic promotion hit serious bottlenecks at Form IV level when learners either failed to qualify to proceed to the next levels, or that such facilities were badly inadequate. In the three years preceding national independence a very low ratio of Form IV pupils proceeded to Form VI education – only some 12,1%. Soon after independence, the percentage of fourth year pupils entering the sixth form rose impressively, peaking at 22,4% in 1983. Thereafter, a strong decline has been in evidence with the percentage of Form IV pupils entering Lower sixth reducing to 8,3% in 1985 and to 7,1% in 1986.

In effect, a lower proportion of fourth year pupils were now entering sixth form studies than was the case in the years immediately before independence. This was because by universalizing primary education, the government had created a crisis of expectations. Swept along by the system that has granted them it was easy for the 'O' Level aspirants to expect that successful completion of the examination will open up all kinds of opportunities for them. Such expectations took several forms; firstly, pupils might expect to proceed with their school education to sixth form work; secondly, they would wish to enter pre-vocational training programmes, and, finally after eleven years of school education, students would expect to find employment. Sadly, the government failed to meet these expectations for most of the pupils. The reasons for this were varied and

complex and some analysis of them might be useful.

EXPECTATIONS OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PUPILS

Sixth Form Education

It has already been noted that the proportion of Form IV pupils entering Form VI (Lower) has actually been on the decline since 1983. It will be noted too that although Form VI intakes have increased by 396,6% since 1979, in the same period Form IV intakes rocketed by 709,4%. It would take a massive building and teacher training impetus to narrow the ever widening gap between provision and expectation in this respect. Such an impetus could only happen if large sums of money were allocated to the Ministry of Education. Unfortunately, expenditure on education was in decline since the 1983 – 1984 budgets. It was noticeable that while the 1982 – 1983 education budget won a 19,3 percent share of the total budget, this picture had declined in the 1985 – 1986 financial year. During this year education got 15,4 per cent.

Moreover, in his financial statement of 31 July 1986, Finance, Economic Planning and Development Minister, Bernard Chidzero, only announced a 10% increase in the education vote. This was despite the fact that inflation was running well beyond that rate. Notably, in the same finance bill, he announced an increase of 27 percent in defense spending caused by South Africa's disruption of Zimbabwean exports going through South African ports. Hence the defense of the Beira rail corridor through Mozambique became a matter of utmost urgency. Unfortunately, attacks by the Mozambique National Resistance (MNR) movement necessitated the deployment of more than 10 000 Zimbabwean troops inside Mozambique to protect the rail route. This was a costly but unavoidable venture, and one which would continue until Mozambique's civil war was resolved. Defence, therefore, continued to take precedence over education until Mozambique's civil war was officially ended.

The Ministry of Education could not therefore provide the material facilities needed for an increased sixth form intake, and even if it were possible to do so, the talks of supplying teachers in sufficient numbers to utilize such facilities would be well beyond the country's current teacher training capacity. The problem was compounded by the fact that "although all schools are fully staffed, over 40% of the teachers are unqualified" (Re-building Zimbabwe: Achievements, Problems and Prospects. Harare : Mardon Printers for ZANU (PF) Department of the Commissariat and Culture, 1986).

Furthermore, the importance of expatriate teachers proved difficult on two counts. Firstly, from an ideological point of view, it ran contrary to the government's expressed policy of Zimbabweanisation and self-reliance. Secondly, since expatriate teachers worked on a contract basis which allowed them to remit their earnings abroad, their employment would place a heavy burden on Zimbabwe's foreign exchange reserves at a time when the threats of retaliatory sanctions from South Africa, and various other economic circumstances were placing in jeopardy the country's ability to earn foreign currency.

It seemed then that no spectacular increase in sixth form provision would be possible in light of the above inhibiting circumstances. Rather, due to the escalating demand for sixth form places, that demand continued to outstrip supply, and that the gap between the two continued to widen even further during the 1980's and 1990's.

Vocational Training Programmes

Since independence, the Government has made considerable strides in the expansion of vocational training facilities available to Form IV school leavers. For instance, before independence there were only two technical colleges, but by 1986 a further five had been built at Kwekwe, Masvingo, Mutare, Gweru and Kushinga-Phikelela. This brought the total technical college enrolments up from 3663 in 1979 to 18 213 in 1985.

Equally impressive were enrolments at agricultural colleges which grew five-fold in the five years of independence from 171 in 1979 to 888 students in 1985. In addition to this, the number of students registered at teacher training colleges rose from 3085 in 1979 to 9504 in 1985.

But important qualifications need to be made on these statistics, encouraging as they are. The total immediate post-independence capacity of vocational training colleges falls far short of the demands that massive numbers of 'O' Level school leavers were placing upon it. Even though, expansion in student capacity at all such colleges continued with the addition of Bulawayo Technical College, Gwanda Zintec, Seke Teachers' College as well as the expansion of Belvedere Technical Teachers' College, the demand for college places continued to outstrip supply even beyond year 2000.

What was noticed was that by pushing every individual's right to proceed to 'O' Level, the government unwittingly encouraged what could not be sustained by facilities on the ground. That such circumstances have evolved is ironic indeed. Deputy Minister of Education Joseph Culverwell is on record as saying at a school prize giving day in October 1983 that, "We should like to move away from the capitalist system of education which lays emphasis on exams, grades and degrees" (at NemaKonde High School in Chinhoyi). And yet quite the opposite movement has occurred. The emphasis on 'O' Level examinations was such that by 1984 the Zimbabwe Junior Certificate (ZJC) a school leaving certificate available to Form II school leavers, which had acted as a selection hurdle for 'O' Level candidates – had all but lost its currency in the eyes of pupils and employers alike. Almost everyone, it seemed, had set their eyes on 'O' Level, encouraging the Minister of Education, Mutumbuka's affirmation that "It is the right of every child to be allowed to attempt 'O' Level examinations". By 1999 ZJC had been abandoned altogether.

Scholars such as Clayton G. Mackenzie, in his article, "Zimbabwe's Educational Miracle and the Problems it has created" (1988) in *International Review of Education*, pp337 – 353, No. 34, has argued that the universal policy of automatic promotion to 'O' Level bore tragic examination results for 'O' Level in 1985 and 1986. The results published in 1985, February showed that of the 67 962 Zimbabwean pupils who sat 'O' Level, only 22 986 passed more than two subjects with a Grade C or better. Although Dr Mutumbuka declared on national television that the "results were higher than anyone would find in other African countries", the Prime Minister, Robert Mugabe, himself declared, a few weeks later, that "It is hardly an exaggeration to describe the results as appalling".

The figures that came out in 1986 were even worse. In fact, the Ministry was so shocked by them that they delayed their release for several weeks. When they were finally published they revealed that of the 88 532 students who sat the 'O' Level examinations only 27 759 had scored more than two passes, and only 10 452 more than five. Some 38,5% of the entrants (34 121 pupils) failed to secure even a single 'O' Level pass.

Unfortunately too, there was little vocational provision available for those in the 16+ age groups who had not performed well in the 'O' Level examinations. Most of the vocational programmes offered by the various ministries required a minimum of four or five 'O' Level passes. There were however, exceptions to the rule. The Ministry of Agriculture, for example, offers three tiers of qualifications to degree studies (open to candidates holding two 'A' Level passes) diploma studies (open to applicants with three appropriate 'O' Level passes plus relevant

experience) and certificate courses (open to youngsters with a minimum of two years of post-primary education).

Since most of those who wrote 'O' Level in 1984 and 1985 failed to achieve more than two 'O' Levels, they could qualify only for a certificate course. Yet the four agricultural institutes that taught the three-year National Certificate in Agriculture had a total capacity of just 725 places, with a total annual first year intake in 1985 of less than 300 students. This clearly shows that even the vocational avenue offered little hope as an alternative to the academic route during the first ten years after independence.

Employment Opportunities After Independence: 1980 – 1990

If the majority of the country's annual crop of 'O' Level entrants were unable to proceed into Form VI, or to enter vocational training programmes, their obvious alternative was to seek employment. Here too, the outcome was quite disheartening. Rene Loewenson, writing in a 1982 edition of Zimbabwe News, official organ of the ruling ZANU (PF) party, noted that, "between 1980 and 1981, although the economy grew by 12,4 per cent, employment grew by only 2,7 per cent. After 1981, employment steadily declined. There was a net increase of only 7 000 jobs per year between 1980 and 1985, although 80 000 people entered the job market every year.

The introductory section of Zimbabwe's First Five-Year National development Plan (1986 – 1990, published in July 1986, admits that "one of the most disturbing issues is that the fact that, in spite of the good performance of the economy in 1985, unemployment has remained at an unacceptably high level", and that the large number of school leavers now entering the labour market each year is one of the major causes of "the persistent and growing unemployment problem". It is clear that the government planners anticipated that, far from improving, the unemployment situation in post-independence Zimbabwe was set to worsen.

On one hand, the Plan's (1986 – 1990) statistical tables reveal that the total number of wage earners would increase from 1 029 000 in 1985 to 1 173 000 by 1990; on the other hand, the population in the 15 – 64 age group would rise from 4 197 000 in 1985 to 5 097 000 by 1990. In other words, while employment opportunities would increase by about 14 percent by 1990, in the same period the number of potential employees would rise by 21,4 per cent. It seems, therefore, that Zimbabwe's annual school leaver output of more than 80 000 would face an extremely harsh competitive job market, and many school leavers, perhaps even

most of them, would fail to secure full time employment.

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS 1980 – 2000

The One-Party state and political monopoly: ZANU (PF)

The top-down strategies and politics which were needed to win a liberation war strongly influenced the behavior of the ruling nationalist party once it was in power. In relation to both its members and voices in civil society, the leadership of the new party in government soon displayed signs of intolerance which raised questions about the nature of Zimbabwe's emerging democracy.

The clearest example of this intolerance was ZANU (PF)'s increasing focus on the establishment of a legal one-party state in Zimbabwe. Until ZANU (PF)'s official and begrudging abandonment of this objective in 1990, the party leadership worked determinedly towards its realization.

Preparations for a one-party state involved:

The tightening of control over debate and political expression within the ruling party;

The promulgation of the party's views and perspectives to the exclusion of others in the wider space of civil society;

The monopolization by ZANU (PF) of the state, the bureaucracy and a range of the public institutions.

Most importantly, it involved the marginalisation, if not eradication, of the opposition (especially ZAPU), which was seen as the chief obstacle to one-party rule. Within ZANU (PF), real democracy was fragile from the beginning. Ordinary party members often found it difficult for their voices to be heard. The culture of "chefs" and military structures seen as necessary for undertaking an armed struggle was a powerful and lasting one. As Margaret Dongo, a ruling party cadre in the 1980s explained;

"It was not easy during those days to criticize whatever issues within your own party. We grew up in a command line in the struggle: when you are asked to stand to attention, you do as what your commander says. And there was a belief that the leaders are always correct, and you have to obey what the leaders say"

Although ZANU (PF), including (PF) ZAPU set up "civilian" political structures

at independence, the flow of power more often than not remained a distinctly top-down affair from national to branch and cell level. Very soon there were allegations, particularly among ZANU (PF) members that the revolution was being “hijacked” by newcomers and opportunists without due regard to the interests of the party. These included war veterans, many of whom were openly complaining by 1983 that they had been “dumped” into poverty without adequate political and financial support from the new government.

Such criticisms – and many forms of debate – were not tolerated by the party’s own hierarchy. The party was headed by a politburo of hand-picked senior leaders far removed from direct contact with the party base. In addition, the narrow application of “scientific socialist” policy-making within the party, again emphasizing the leading role of senior authorities, further helped to silence debate.

When ZANU (PF) did acknowledge weaknesses of its own leaders and the desirability of political checks and balances, little actual headway was made to shift the balance of power. For example, the ZANU (PF) leadership code was announced in 1984 in response to allegations of corruption and wealth accumulation by the political leadership. Its adoption, however, was half hearted. Indeed, this was followed by a series of corruption scandals which demonstrated the leaderships bold non-compliance with its own rules.

The Leadership Code: 1984

In august 1984, the second ZANU (PF) National Congress formally adopted the Code as a means of curbing avaricious behavior on the part of senior party and government officials. The Code barred senior officials and relatives from:

Owning property or real estates yielding rents and other incomes.

Owning more than 50 acres of land.

Receiving more than one salary simultaneously.

Holding the position of a director in a private commercial company/firm.

At the time, ZANU (PF)’s President Robert Mugabe, said that acquisitive leaders would face a choice “to quit their posts or relinquish their property”. However, by the 1989 ZANU (PF) – (PF) ZAPU “Unity” Congress, visible evidence of the Code had all but disappeared, and it eventually died a natural death.

Attitude towards Civil Society

In civil society, the opportunities for debates leading to an active form of national

democracy based on popular participation in policy-making appeared to shrink soon after independence. While government tolerated and sometimes encouraged the formation of civic organizations, it also made every effort to ensure that such organisations were firmly on-sides with it politically. In some cases it even helped to establish these bodies.

The Monopoly of the Media Houses

ZANU (PF) moved to occupy and control the space of national debate and opinion-making. Central to this was governments “capturing” of the leading national media: the renamed Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation and Zimpapers. Both institutions, along with Ziana, the national news agency had closely reflected the interests and needs of the white minority for decades. In the UDI years of 1965 – 1979, they had fallen even more closely under the control of Ian Smith’s Rhodesian Front as censorship and other restrictions were imposed on a white-run media fraternity which was largely acquiescent to the white government’s demands for support.

Despite claims that ZANU (PF) would reform the media so that they reflected a much wider range of views, government in fact carried forward many of the same restrictive practices. The Broadcasting, which since the early 1960s had given the state radio and television a legal monopoly over broadcasting and made these services directly responsible to the Ministry of Information, was preserved unchanged, and remained so until 2000. Journalists approved by the Rhodesian Front were replaced with those approved by ZANU (PF), and news coverage and commentary shifted to reflect one-party ideology.

At Zimpapers, government established a new body, the Mass Media Trust, to take over the South African Argus company’s controlling interests. The Trust was meant to act as an independent holding company, a buffer between government and the only national newspaper chain. Its Board of Trustees was legally insulated from government influence. However, in practice, the body became both dependent upon government for financial, political and management support. Hence, the Trust became ineffective in wielding power inside the newspaper company, it theoretically controlled. In fact, ZANU (PF) ensured that its loyalists were placed in strategic positions within the company and thus giving the party leadership direct access to the key editorial, personnel and other management decisions.

The erosion of the Trust’s independence was made more apparent by government’s successive dismissals of four prominent Zimpapers editors for “political” offences. In each case, the Mass Media Trust failed to intervene effectively. This called the independence of both Zimpapers and the Trust into question. By the late 1980s, many Zimbabweans jokingly referred to Zimpapers flagship daily, The Herald, as Pravada, a reference to the tightly censored official

state newspaper of the then Soviet Union.

Parastatals

ZANU (PF) monopoly of public institutions was even more stately evident within the state bureaucracy and parastatals. It is common practice for a governing party to place its officials in positions of responsibility in the bureaucracy and other public bodies. While the political situation faced by the ZANU (PF) government demanded special measures due to the fact that Zimbabwe was in transition from a racist to majority rule, the ruling party took advantage of this to cement its partisan control over much of the national state bureaucracy to the exclusion of other interests. In other words, the government bureaucracy in many ways was more or less absorbed to become a functionary of the ruling party.

This was not fully evident at first as the rapid integration of blacks into the public service proceeded. But a pattern of partisan control quickly emerged. It was seen initially, but not exclusively, in the security and intelligence agencies which brought in the firm control of ZANU (PF) loyalists. Soon the same tendency was recognised as widespread in the civil service and parastatals. Top civil service posts such as permanent secretaries and under secretaries were filled by ruling party loyalists. By the mid 1980s it was sometimes difficult to distinguish between the votes of individuals as party and government officers, especially in matters of policy making.

The invasion of the state bureaucracy by the party was rationalized and consolidated in 1987 with the creation of the Ministry of Political Affairs. One of only three senior ministries in government, along with those for economic and rural development, this new ministry formalized the link between the party and the state by placing ZANU (PF) officials responsible for managing the affairs of the party directly on the government payroll. With this move, for example, the bulk of the administrative and publicity staff of the ruling party would become “state” employees. While it was argued that the Ministry of Political Affairs was meant to serve all political parties in Zimbabwe, ZANU (PF) leaders, including President Mugabe, repeatedly stated that it should be dedicated to meeting the needs of ZANU (PF) only and that its staff should be loyal primarily to the interests of the party.

Opposition Parties Under Attack

The main obstacle to a legal one-party state and the consolidation of power was the political opposition. Chief among these was ZAPU, the other liberation movement which commanded majority support in Matabeleland with a significant following in the Midlands and elsewhere in the country. The other major party in parliament was Ian Smith’s renamed Republican Front (later again renamed the

Conservative Alliance of Zimbabwe). This party had, under the Lancaster House constitution competed for 20 reserved white seats or 20% of all parliamentary seats. Both would come to represent a block on the free exercise of power by government.

Mike Auret, a leading member of the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace, noted,

“Until 1987, they faced two strong opposition parties – and some other smaller parties. There must have been some fear in the minds of ZANU (PF) that the one-party state could not be achieved in those circumstances, and therefore something had to be done about it. And what was done was Matabeleland – Gukurahundi”.

At independence, senior ZAPU officials were given leadership positions as cabinet ministers in the first government of National unity, but this did not last long. Lingering tensions from the liberation struggle when the two parties competed for followers and sometimes fought each other while doing so, soon erupted.

The sacking of Joshua Nkomo and three other ZAPU ministers in the wake of the discovery of large numbers of arms caches on ZAPU-owned farms were used as an alibi: such action clearly added to the already ripe distrust of central government in Matabeleland over what was considered insufficient ZAPU representation in the Cabinet and the demotion of Nkomo from the Ministry of Home Affairs in January 1981. The demotion and subsequent worsening of relations between the two parties led to a steady stream of desertions from the national army by former Zimbabwe People’s Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA). Estimates of the number of dissenters in early 1983 varied from 2000 to 4000 soldiers. This prompted some of them to take up arms against the government from March 1982 which culminated in the spate of armed violence in Matabeleland during the late 1982 and 1983. This was the so-called dissident problem.

The Dissident Problem and the Gukurahundi Backlash

A chain of events was set in motion which saw ZAPU expelled from the government of national unity and vilified as a dissident party. Several leaders of its former military wing were arrested and charged with treason.

The limited support, or tolerance of at least some Ndebele-speaking people for the dissidents” led to harsh government measures against the local population to flush out dissidents and discourage eventual supporters, yet in many cases, this merely added to popular resentment towards the central government. The latter, seemingly not having learnt from the independence struggle the important lesson that political problems could not find a long-term solution by military means, in

early 1982 deployed the North Korean trained Fifth Brigade in Matabeleland in an attempt to dismantle the logistical support which the dissidents were believed to enjoy in the rural areas. The Fifth Brigade was composed almost entirely of former Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) cadres and trained in isolation and in considerable secrecy, away from the bulk of the national army.

Thousands of innocent civilians were killed. Many more were raped, tortured, beaten, detained without charge and had their property destroyed. Government security forces and primarily the Fifth Brigade which was directly accountable to Prime Minister Robert Mugabe, were responsible for the vast majority of this violence and suffering.

Lawyer Byron Hove, whose family was heavily involved in politics in the Midlands during this period, recalled that:

“So many innocent people were killed. Every week we buried people. Some burnt alive... some with heads chopped off, others bayoneted. I couldn't imagine that these things could happen in my country”.

ZAPU, had forewarned trouble when North Korean military trainers first arrived in August 1981 to help establish the Fifth Brigade. At the time, Prime Minister Mugabe announced the Brigade would be used to deal with “dissidents” and thus dubbed it “Gukurahundi” and equally the year was code named the “Year of Gukurahundi” – or the rain which washes away the chaff before the spring rains. However, Joshua Nkomo’s view of Gukurahundi was different. He alleged that it was ZANU PF’s militia which was used to attack internal political opponents with the aim of quickening the setting up of a one-party state dictatorship in the country.

1983 and 1984 a reign of terror and violence descended on Matabeleland North and later on Matabeleland South. Curfews, detentions, house-to-house searches and terrible physical violence were all used to attack and silence any form of ZAPU organized community political activity.

Government also employed several repressive laws inherited from the colonial regime. These included the Law and Order Maintenance Act, Emergency Powers Regulations and the Indemnity and Compensation Act in July 1982 to harass ZAPU and freely persecute its perceived supporters, all within the bounds of the “law”. Joshua Nkomo pointed to the political motivations of governments “security operations” against “dissidents” at the time:

“This is a curious security operation when the military gather people together and start singing political songs, ZANU (PF) songs, and start denouncing me, and denouncing ZAPU. What type of security operation is that?”

Prime Minister Mugabe, too, hinted at the political underpinning of the “security” operations by the Fifth Brigade and other ZNA detachments, CIO, PISI, police

and ZANU (PF) activists:

“The situation is one which requires change on the part of the people of Matabeleland. They must be re-oriented. Nkomo, has not accepted political defeat”

Not only ZAPU structures and officials were targeted. Thousands of civilians were “disappeared, killed, maimed and severely victimized. Many thousands of civilians fled across the border into Botswana, settling at refugee camps such as Dukwe and elsewhere. Others fled to South Africa as well. Meanwhile the ex-ZIPRA leaders charged and later acquitted of treason remained under detention without charge. These included Dumiso Dabengwa and Lookout Masuku. They were only released in 1986 after spending four years in custody. Joshua Nkomo himself was placed under house arrest, and fearing for his life after an attack on his house, fled to Botswana in March 1983.

Nevertheless, the attacks by government on ZAPU merely wounded it as a party, but not destroying it. The attacks did not damage its popular grassroots support. Despite two years of violent intimidation and the arrest of its leaders and functionaries, ZAPU still won all 15 seats in Matabeleland in the 1985 parliamentary elections.

However, the party’s political survival in the 1985 elections was a bitter sweet “victory”. Pre-election and post-election violence and intimidation which was primarily committed by ZANU (PF) youths and other ruling party activities left many dead, several thousand homeless, hundreds injured. Few perpetrators were charged or admonished by the legal system for such acts of terror.

One notable outbreak of violence against ZAPU followed a speech delivered in Harare by Prime Minister Mugabe shortly after the elections in which he urged his supporters (in Shona) to “*go and uproot the weeds from your garden*”. In the ensuing three days of violence a losing local ZAPU candidate was killed along with several others, and Ndebele residents were attacked, many losing their homes and property.

What was noted was that after the 1985 elections, government sponsored violence and pressure were stepped up against the opposition. Five ZAPU MPs were arrested and several senior ex-ZIPRA army officers were detained. The aim of all this blitz, on ZAPU became clearer in 1986 – 1987 : to force unity or a merger between ZAPU and ZANU (PF) which would enable a quicker transition to a formalized one-party state under the new party.

The press played a vital part in fueling the persecuting of ZAPU supporters and anyone construed to be a ZAPU supporter. For instance, on 2 October 1987, referring to the dissolution of elected Matabeleland North district councils, the Herald threatened:

“Chop down a weed and it will grow again unless the roots, too, are

destroyed. And if councils and councilors serve as roots nourishing the bandits, then they too must be destroyed”.

Not to be undone in this kind of hate propaganda were senior ZANU (PF) government ministers whose shock speeches exploded like bombshells upon the Matabele. In 1985, Enos Nkala, Minister of Home Affairs, said,

“We want to wipe out the ZAPU leadership. You have only seen the warning lights. We haven’t yet reached full blast. The murderous organization and its murderous leadership must be hit so hard that it doesn’t feel obliged to the things it has been doing”

This speech was made in Matabeleland whilst Nkala was on tour of duty in the region.

This pressure finally succeeded in forcing the ZAPU leadership’s acceptance of unity. On 22 December 1987, a Unity Pact was signed by the two rival parties. It was later revealed that the deal followed two years of protracted negotiations, initiated by the then President Canaan Banana, which brought together senior members of the two parties. However, before examining the Unity Accord, it is important to give a brief summary of the report on the Gukurahundi; compiled by Catholic Commission for Peace and Justice.

Gukurahundi: A Long “Moment of Madness”

The full details of the atrocities committed in Matabeleland and the Midlands in the 1980s will never be fully known, but recent research in just two districts, Nyamandlovu, (Matabeleland North) and Matobo (Matabeleland South) provides documented evidence of the deaths of thousands, and the torture injury and other abuses of many thousands more.

The research was compiled in **Breaking Silence, Building True Peace: A Report on the disturbances in Matabeleland and the Midlands, 1980 to 1988**, published in 1997 by the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in conjunction with the Legal Resources Foundation. The report is a public document and is on sale in bookshops across the country.

In contrast, the findings of the Chihambakwe Commission of Inquiry, appointed by government in 1983 to investigate the first wave of atrocities were never made public. The following summary, as aforesaid, is based on the breaking silence report. The triggering of events which became known collectively as Gukurahundi began soon after independence. A contributing factor was the slow pace and poor planning of the integration of ex-combatants into the new Zimbabwe National Army (ZNA) in 1980 – 1981. By the end of 1980, only 15 000 former ZIPRA soldiers out of a total of 65 000 ex-combatants had been allocated places in the ZNA. Obviously this caused great anxiety and suspicion

among ZAPU ranks.

Meanwhile, skirmishes at demobilization Assembly Points between ex-ZANLA and ex-ZIPRA combatants had led to bad feelings and simmering tensions in November 1980. These erupted at Entumbane, near Bulawayo, where soldiers from the two guerrilla armies were housed in close proximity. A second and more serious outbreak of violence occurred at Entumbane in February 1981, spreading to parts of the Midlands and leading to more than 300 deaths.

After the fighting at Entumbane there was a rising wave of desertions by ex-ZIPRA members of the ZNA, who felt under threat and overlooked within the new integrated army. The desertions grew after February 1982, when government “discovered” arms caches on ZAPU farms and accused ZAPU of planning to overthrow the government by force. This resulted in the arrest on treason charges of the ex-ZIPRA military leadership, including Dumiso Dabengwa, Lookout Masuku and four others, and the expulsion of ZAPU from the government of national unity.

In early 1982 government began to use Emergency Powers to impose curfews, set up road blocks, conduct house-to-house searches and carry out other security operations in Matabeleland. These activities escalated as banditry and dissident attacks increased. Political tensions rose further after the ZAPU treason accused were found innocent, only to be immediately re-detained under Emergency Powers. Masuku and Dabengwa spent the following four years in detention without charge. Thousands more would follow.

Furthermore, in 1983 the Fifth Brigade was deployed in Matabeleland North, along with other security agencies including the Central Intelligence Organisation and the Police Internal Security Intelligence Unit (PISI). Within weeks there were reports of atrocities. Government initially denied these reports by churches, human rights groups and foreign journalists, but later appeared to acknowledge wrong doings. The scale of the killings by the army declined after April 1983 and the curfew was lifted, but beatings and deaths would for the next year.

In early 1984, the fifth brigade was deployed in Matabeleland South. This coincided with a curfew and the sealing off of the region from badly needed food aid during the drought stricken years. Thousands were beaten, detained and interrogated at Bhalagwe camp in Matobo District and many were killed. In late 1984, the Fifth Brigade was withdrawn for further intensive retraining.

Dissident activity continued after the 1985 elections and government moved to other forms of intimidation and harassment to undermine ZAPU. In 1985, five ZAPU MPs and several ex-ZIPRA ZNA officers were detained for an extended period. ZAPU parliamentary chief whip Sydney Malunga, MP, was charged with aiding and abetting dissidents, but was found innocent on weak evidence.

In 1986, government banned ZAPU rallies and temporarily closed the party's

offices. Political harassment continued until the signing of the Unity Accord in December 1987.

It is difficult to estimate the total number of those who died or suffered severe trauma because of the disturbances. Many people were displaced others died in detention due to extreme torture and thousands who were victimized have not been able to tell their story. But based on its case study documentation and using reliable information from some but not all other areas of Matabeleland and the Midlands, *Breaking the Silence* makes the following conservative estimates:

Dead or presumed dead: confirmed dead are more than 2000; but the total dead were as many as 10 000.

Confirmed homesteads destroyed: 680

Detention: at least 10 000

Tortured, wounded: not less than 7000.

The vast majority of these offences were committed by the Fifth Brigade. Dissidents and bandits accounted for only a small proportion of the killing and destruction.

So, how many dissidents were there and what threat did they pose?

After an April 1988 Amnesty only 122 came forward to surrender. At their peak, it is estimated the dissidents were unlikely to number more than 400. No convincing commanding link between ZAPU and the dissidents was ever presented to the government.

Nevertheless, the government leadership was slow to make amends with Gukurahundi's victims. No compensation was paid despite repeated requests from the civic groups; and legal and other issues involving the disappeared and the dead remain unresolved for the most part.

At the funeral of Vice President Joshua Nkomo in July 1999, President Robert Mugabe referred to events of the 1980s as "regrettable". In the run up to the 2000 parliamentary elections while campaigning in Matabeleland, he called them a "moment of madness" and said compensation would be made. In the event, ZANU (PF) lost all but two seats in Matabeleland in the election, and there was no further talk of compensation for Gukurahundi victims.

The Unity Pact, December 22, 1987

The “Agreement unity between ZANU (PF) and ZAPU” or the Unity Pact as it became known, made it clear who would enjoy the most power under the new arrangements. Its preamble stressed that “ZANU (PF) commands a greater percentage of the overwhelming majority of the people of Zimbabwe”, and the third clause of the agreement specified that Robert Mugabe would be the First Secretary and President of the expanded ZANU (PF)

The other clauses in the document highlighted key policy positions for the new party:

Clause 5: ZANU (PF) shall seek to establish a socialist society in Zimbabwe on the guidance of Marxist- Leninist principles.

Clause 6: ZANU (PF) shall seek to establish a one-party state in Zimbabwe.

Clause 7: The leadership of ZANU (PF) shall abide by the leadership code.

However, in less than three years all of these three policy guidelines were abandoned as the party was transformed, but in unexpected ways.

President Banana underlined the fundamental and immediate value of the agreement at the signing ceremony:

“Never again shall a Zimbabwean point a gun at another Zimbabwean. That is intolerable, that is anti-revolutionary, reactionary and anti-Zimbabwean, anti-progress. It must never be allowed to happen again”.

Politics after the Unity Pact

The merger of the two largest parties brought peace but it also increased the “threat to Zimbabwe’s fragile multi-party democracy posed by ZANU(PF)’s ambitions for a one-party state.

In September 1987, the 20 seats reserved under the Lancaster House Constitution were abolished by a simple majority vote of the Parliament. They were replaced by non-constituency MPs elected by the remaining parliamentarians. All of the 20 replacement MPs “elected” in this way were candidates nominated by ZANU (PF) since the ruling party already had a simple majority in parliament. Significantly, the new MPs included no obvious representatives of social interests.

By December 1987, therefore, ZAPU was the last remaining obstacle to a “constitutional majority” in parliament – that is – a voting majority which would enable parliament to amend the constitution by itself. The establishment of a legal

one-party state, for example, would require such a constitutional change. When ZAPU merged with ZANU (PF) on 22 December 1987, the stage was set for the formal, legal abandonment of multi-party democracy.

Mugabe becomes Executive President

In December 1987, Constitutional Amendment No.6 created the post of Executive President, first occupied by Robert Mugabe on 31 December 1987. Up until then the President of Zimbabwe had been a ceremonial position with a Prime Minister as head of government. The new Executive President was also hurriedly given wide-ranging powers without meaningful parliamentary debate. These powers would be extended by legislative and constitutional changes in coming years. Included among these was the Executive President's right to dissolve parliament.

In 1989, Constitutional Amendment No. 9 abolished the Senate (the less powerful wing of the legislature) and restructured the remaining legislative assembly to include 150 MPs. Of these 30 MPs (including eight provincial governors, ten chiefs and twelve non-constituency MPs) would be appointed directly by the President.

This gave the ruling party very strong advantages. The presidential appointees meant that a party needed to win only 40 generally elected seats in the 150 member parliament to command a majority government (46 + 30 = 76 seats. 76 seats is already over 50% of 150 seats).

Despite these measures, ZANU (PF) was frustrated in its determination to create a one-party state due to unforeseen circumstances. At the end of the 1980s, the international, regional and domestic political environment unexpectedly shifted, diminishing the prospects for one-party government. First, communist regimes of Eastern Europe fell in quick succession to national mass democratic movements which had emerged as political liberalization was gradually allowed. Zimbabwe, because of its close political links with the eastern bloc, lost much of its international political and financial support for highly centralized government and "scientific socialist" policies. The collapse of communism also exposed one-party state model of government as corrupt, dictatorial, unpopular and therefore unworkable.

ZANU PF formally abandoned their objective of a one-party state in mid 1990 after rising pressure from various interest groups in civil society. However, it still worked hard to contain the space of multi-party politics with considerable success. As Edison Zvobgo, ZANU (PF) legal expert and veteran Politburo member said:

"A party's eyes are focused on one thing if it is a political party: conquest of power and retention of power. Conquering power and keeping it – that is the primary function of ZANU (PF)".

What was the Genesis of Inequitable Land Share in Zimbabwe?

Much of the answer to this question has been given in the previous chapter dealing with the nature of colonial rule in Zimbabwe. What follows, therefore, is a historical outline of land acquisition and expropriation from the initial European settlement in the 19th century to independence from British rule in 1980.

How the Land came under Settler Control

As early as 1879 only a small proportion of the African continent was under colonial rule. Africa was still ruled by African governments. But in the 1880's there ensued a "hasty and haphazard process of enclosure" by European powers, so says historian B. Davison (1984), Africa in History. This process was driven by suspicion of the ambitious rivals. As a result, the Berlin Conference of 1884 – 1885 was convened to define the broad limits of territorial expansion of each of the European powers. In line with this policy and exercise, historians R. Oliver and J.D. Fage (1988) in their book, A short History of Africa, wrote that "The British sphere of interest between Botswana and the Zambezi, thus Mashonaland and Matabeleland were allocated by the European powers to the British sphere of influence".

Henceforth in the year (1888), the Ndebele King, Lobengula, was misled into signing the "Rudd Concession" which effectively granted Cecil Rhodes the right to occupy Mashonaland. The British government was eventually persuaded to grant a charter to the British South Africa Company following Cecil John Rhodes' presentation of Lobengula's signature to the Rudd Concession.

The area of present day Zimbabwe was ceded to the Company in 1891 and named "Rhodesia" in 1895. Settlers, many of who had been urban dwellers of South Africa, in search of gold, demanded land and the labour to work it. This sparked wars with the Shona and the Matabele, with enormous casualties. Conflict between the generally white-ruled Mashonaland and the independent black state of Matabeleland culminated in the Anglo-Ndebele War of 1893 – 1894, which gave Matabeleland to the BSA Company's territories.

Consequently, the settlers helped themselves to the best land, enslaved the original inhabitants or pushed them out into the barren and thirsty reserves. The indigenous population had to pay rents and taxes on what remained of their land and property to the BSA Company. A loose policy of settling aside reserves for Africans became regularised and intensified in the 1920's. In 1922 for instance, the settlers voted to run the country (later then Southern Rhodesia) themselves with only limited supervision by the British government. It became a self-governing British colony the following year.

The Land Apportionment Act of 1930 "allocated fixed Reserves – generally poor, remote and inadequate – to the people". The settlers then alienated the best African lands and demarcated them as "European land". The new settler government concentrated all its

policies during the next 30 years on the promotion of further white settlement, and built up its power and economic predominance. Through immigration, the number of white settlers increased from 80 000 to 220 000 between 1945 and 1960. Due to this increased influx of white settlers, there was a “wholesale forced removal of African people to make room for white farming up to the 1950’s”, writes Lionel Cliffe in his article, “Land Reform in Zimbabwe: Constraints and Prospects”, published in the book The politics of land reform in Zimbabwe edited by C. Stoneman and TAS Bowyer-Bower. (2000). Indeed, black people continued to be forced out of their land right up to the 1970’s. White labour was “reproduced” in the African reserves, now re-labelled “communal areas”. Competition in the market from African smallholders was prohibited.

Special designated areas for “emergent” black farmers were first established in 1930. This was done in response to the growing pressure for arable land by proven black farmers. Hence successful master farmers were granted portions of land of up to 100 hectares with the intention of developing a black yeoman class. These are now called small-scale commercial farmers.

Meanwhile, in the communal areas, enormous land pressure was building up, between 1961 and 1977 the area under cultivation increased by 70%. At the same time, the carrying capacity of the communal areas was continuously eroded by population growth as well as the steady rise in the size of the livestock herd. This was despite colonial measures aimed at destocking in the communal areas. It must be noted as well that in these areas no credit or financial institutions supported the farmers. Not until 1978 was a small farm credit scheme established and this was too little, too late.

What was the land-holding situation at independence in 1980?

When Zimbabwe won independence in 1980, it inherited a strikingly unequal, racially distorted agricultural system. Through a systematic process of eviction, approximately 6000 white commercial farmers came to occupy 15,5 million hectares out of 33.2 million hectares altogether. Small scale commercial farms took up about 1.6 million hectares and the remainder was occupied by 750 000 black families in the communal areas. The average farm size in the large scale commercial farms was about 3 000 hectares or 12 square miles, while that of the communal areas was about 20 hectares. This historical imbalance in the access to and ownership of the most vital resource of the country lay at the root of the causes of the liberation war of the 1970s and constituted a central policy issue after independence.

It must be noted that the expropriation of fertile land from African farmers and their settlement in marginal areas ensured there was an enormous difference in the quality of farmland in large scale commercial farms (white) and the communal areas (black). Land in the best agro-ecological zones, classified as Natural Region 1 in the Eastern Highlands, occupies only two per cent of the total area. The highly fertile Natural Region II (NR II) occupies 15%, most of which is in the Highveld. NR III, occupying 19% of the land is

best-suited to intensive crop and livestock production, and maize cropping is unreliable because of high-temperatures. NRs IV and V are suitable only for extensive livestock production in the absence of irrigation facilities.

Hence, the land in NRs I and II was dominated by the white commercial farmers at independence in 1980. While in 1983/4 only 23,5 % of the 6.58 million hectares of this land was occupied by communal farmers, fully 66.5% was in the large scale commercial farmers. So the best areas were, and until 2001 – 03 remained, dominated by large scale commercial farmers.

Put differently, 750 000 African households occupied less than 50% of the agricultural land, and 75% of that land was in agro-ecological regions IV and V that is drier and less fertile. There was therefore a keenly-felt sense of historical injustice and deprivation over the question of land, and it was one of the most contentious issues negotiated at the Lancaster House conference. Nationalist negotiators at the conference subsequently remarked that there had been a promise by the UK and US to contribute significantly to land purchase in order to redress the imbalances in land ownership. Whatever the cause might have been, that promise was not enshrined in the independence constitution which instead contained onerous clauses on the protection of private property, including land.

At independence land reform therefore focused on settling people on land acquired from large-scale commercial farmers on a “willing seller, willing buyer” basis. Hence the cost of land was relatively expensive as historian Cliffe observed;

“The independence constitution tied government’s hands by entrenching property rights so that only under-utilised land could be compulsorily purchased and only then by immediate payment of the full value in foreign exchange”.

There were to be no changes to clauses relating to provisions in the constitution relating to land until 1990, and this significantly restricted the government’s room for manoeuvre on the land question in the 1980’s. It is important to note that the “willing seller” principle ensured that whites only sold the land that had been abandoned during the war of liberation, or else was of poor quality, thereby denying new settlers the opportunity to establish a successful economic sector.

LAND RESETTLEMENT AFTER INDEPENDENCE

In 1979 the post UDI government of Prime Minister Muzorewa was persuaded, together with the Patriotic Front (PF) i.e. ZANU and ZAPU, to join the negotiation table at Lancaster House in London. What is important is the fact that the conference laid down

British terms for the legal independence of Southern Rhodesia, then renamed Zimbabwe. Constitutional constraints for the next 10 years (1980 – 1990) have been noted above, but the British also promised to fund half the cost of a resettlement scheme for black farmers.

Nevertheless, the new government of Zimbabwe in 1980 set out to acquire 8.3 million hectares of land on which to resettle 162 000 families under Phase One of its Land Reform and Resettlement Programme. But between 1980 and 1989 it acquired only 2,6 million hectares and resettled only 52 000 households from the congested communal areas; 70% of these had been resettled by 1983. According to political analyst and historian Lloyd Sachikonye, the failure to achieve the projected settlement target was due to “resource constraints and limited political will”. Another scholar, Neil Thomas of Cardiff University, also writing on land reform points out that part of the reason for failure to meet target was caused by white farmers who pegged the most lucrative prices for their properties in line with the policy of willing buyer, willing seller.

While the purpose of the resettlement programme was to alleviate land poverty, it was also designed to ensure that aggregate production would not be endangered. It was heavily regulated on over what was to be produced, how much and by what methods. Leases could be revoked unless new settlers carried out efficient commercial farming. Well over 90% of the families resettled were in the so-called Model A schemes, in which farmers receive small plots of around 6 – 7 hectares to cultivate, and some grazing land, often held in common with other families.

Be that as it may, the broader question pertaining to reform was still whether resettlement, no matter how significant the numbers involved, would succeed in resolving pressures on the congested communal areas. Population projections of the central statistical office (CSO) in 1985 estimated that by year 2000, there would be an extra 500 000 rural households against a projected resettled 62 000 households. The conditions in the communal areas were thus bound to deteriorate rather than be ameliorated. Lloyd Sachikonye believes that this was indeed the crux of Zimbabwe’s agrarian question, which even the latter-day massive “fast-track” programme has not addressed adequately.

Why did the Resettlement Programme slow down, and in some cases, stall in the 1980’s and 1990’s?

The reasons for the stall in land redistribution in the mid-1980’s are complex. According to Neil Thomas, pressures to retain the Lancaster House principle of voluntarism came from the predominantly white Commercial Farmers’ Union (CFU), the civil service and foreign donors, including the British government and the World Bank. Such pressures took different forms. The government was persuaded that the loss of experienced commercial farmers would drain the economy of vital export earnings, but it was also subjected to implicit threats of the withdrawal of aid. At the same time recurrent, limited balance of payments deficits and the burgeoning price of land, persuaded them to hold back on compulsory acquisition.

However, in the 1990’s there was less urgency attached to resolving the land question.

This was perplexing in view of the earlier impetus, and the expiry of the restrictive clauses of the Lancaster House constitution in 1990. Less than 20 000 new settlers received land between 1990 and 1997, signifying a substantial slow-down in land reform. By 1997, the total number of resettled households amounted to 71 000 a far cry from the original target of 162 000 households. A total of 3.4 million hectares, constituting about 22% of former large scale commercial land had been made available to those 71 000, while about 500 indigenous commercial farmers had graduated into becoming fully-fledged commercial farmers. About 80% of these new commercial farmers had bought land from their own resources, while the remainder rented the government's leasehold forms which had formerly been run by white farmers.

The official explanation for the slowdown in land reform in the 1990's was that land acquisition through the "willing-seller willing buyer" approach significantly limited, the scope of spatially matching land supply with demand for resettlement (L. Sachikonye, 2003, p. 231). Land sold in small parcels was expensive to develop for resettlement. In sum, according to this position, scarcity of land, exorbitant prices of available land in the market and the inability of the government to pay the prices pegged limited its capacity to achieve its reform targets in the Zimbabwe Government official policy statement, 1998. It was estimated that by the mid- 1990's land prices had increased three fold since the late 1980's and that unless the amount of land for sale increased, it was doubtful whether the government was capable of purchasing land in sufficient quantities to implement a new programme. Although two legal developments in the form of a Land Acquisition Act (1992) and the 14th constitutional amendment were passed during this period, there was still little political will and momentum for land reform. (L. Sachikonye, 2003, p231).

In general, the political pressures for land reform in the mid- 1990's were less intense than before. The ZANU PF had comfortably won the 1990 and 1995 elections, sweeping about 95% of the parliamentary seats. Despite a low turn-out, President Mugabe had been re-elected by a wide margin in the 1996 elections. Opposition parties were fragmented and weak, and thus unable to mount a credible challenge to the incumbent party. Until 1997, there was little organised pressure from peasants and the landless. What must be noted is that as the government's ruling party entrenched itself in power then opportunities for enrichment with an increase in corruption opened up. (L. Sachikonye, 2003, p232). The government extended its focus on land reform so that for the first time it would also cover "the emergent black large-scale commercial farmer" (Government of Zimbabwe – "Growth with Equity: An Economic Policy Statement) quoted by Sachikonye, p232.

A significant development in the 1990's was the emergence of a growing group within the ruling elite who sought access to land ownership. The political and economic environment of liberalization was favourable to this aspiration, which found expression in leasing of state land to cabinet ministers, parliamentarians and judges, senior civil servants and senior army officers. Although the majority of this elite lacked farming experience and did not derive their livelihoods mainly from land, state land was made available to them at very low rates while the more pressing needs of the poor and landless were given less attention. (Sachikonye, 2003, p231). The subsequent publicity given to

the list of elite beneficiaries by member of parliament Margaret Dongo, provoked a heated discussion about the government's commitment (or lack of it) to a land reform programme that would benefit the poor. Notably, 90 000 householders still needed land in order for the land reform programme to reach its original target of 162 000 householders. The main element of this process therefore was the "embourgeoisement" through state-facilitated access to land. Inevitably, there were strong critiques of this development, due to both the potential for corruption or cronyism embedded in the process and the resulting deepening of inequalities.

How did the donors view the land reform exercise, as government conducted it?

The above scenario was the immediate background against which donors began to insist on consistent transparency in any future land reform programme. For example, an international conference with donors organised by the Zimbabwe Government in 1988 stressed that such a programme should be implemented "in a transparent, fair and sustainable manner, with regard to respect for the law, and broadened stakeholders as well as beneficiary participation; and that it should be affordable cost-effective and consistent with economic and financial reforms". (Communique issued at the end of the International Donors Conference on Land Reform and Resettlement in Zimbabwe, 1998) quoted in L. Sachikonye, 2003, p232. A mission which prepared a report a year later for the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) and the European Union was even more emphatic when it advised that conditions should be attached to any future financial support as it would help to "eliminate gross abuses such as the use of funds for the purchase of land from land owners who may have been allocated state land under an earlier process", (L. Sachikonye, 2003, p232). This new insistence on transparency and accountability irked the Zimbabwe Government for this appeared as part of the broader discourse on "good governance" which the Blair government propagated with more zeal than the conservatives under John Major and Margaret Thatcher. Hence, while donors did not contribute as much aid as expected the government was its worst enemy in ensuring that the land reform moved as expeditiously as expected.

ECONOMIC STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT PROGRAMME (ESAP)

In 1990 Zimbabwe introduced its five year Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP). Zimbabwe had entered the decade of the 1990's with a large fiscal imbalance and declining tax revenues caused by declining commodity prices. This was accompanied by virtual stagnation of the economy and record levels of unemployment. Although billed as a home-grown adjustment programme, ESAP needed the International Monetary Fund (IMF) support for access to US\$3,5 billion in foreign exchange for its implementation.

The first phase of ESAP began in October 1990 with an introduction of trade liberalisation which scrapped a whole lot of import controls. However, the US\$700 million which was pledged for the first phase did not become available until March 1992. By then Zimbabwe was reeling from a balance of payments crisis which was worsened by the drought. As a result, Zimbabwe had to make further concessions by agreeing to more

stringent IMF conditionalities.

ESAP required the government to scale back its expenditure by imposing wage restraints, reducing subsidies and cutting social spending. The government was also encouraged to free trade restrictions and devalue the currency. ESAP called for a more vigorous export programme and despite claims and views to the contrary, the negative impact of the programme has been more than a passing phase. An IMF study across a number of countries admitted that stabilisation measures were not working as well as they had hoped, and that their impact on gender inequality had been particularly disastrous. Zimbabwe has not been exempt from the negative impact that the mindless application of the ESAP has had.

ESAP led to the increase in the prices of food and other basic commodities. Cuts in government subsidies led to sharp increases in the cost of living and health and education provision. Currency devaluation assisted the movement of Zimbabwe from a middle income to a low income country almost immediately after the implementation of the economic reforms. The hardships caused by economic restructuring were compounded by a culture of political patronage, where populist measures were implemented at the cost of more meaningful reforms. One such decision was that of buying off the challenge to the government from war veterans. This has been particularly costly and unpopular. Thousands of war veterans were granted lump sum payments of Z\$50 000 plus a Z\$2 000 a month pension. In the summer of 2000, violent clashes erupted between veterans and white farmers over access to land.

Public expenditure had been the driving force behind Zimbabwe's strategy of "growth with equity" but ESAP called into question the country's welfare provision. The adjustment programme had been intended to boost government revenue but it achieved the exact opposite. According to the IMF, between the financial year 1993 and 1997, Central government revenue fell by over 27%. The main reason for this was due to a shrinking tax base resulting from the growth of a large informal sector.

Although in 1994/1995 health care spending amounted to 8.8% of government expenditure, compared to 8.2% in 1990/1991, the reduced size of government expenditure had meant a decline in real terms. Total real spending in 1994/1995 amounted to Z\$386,7 million against a figure of Z\$566.8 million for 1990/1991. The absolute size of the health care sector had continued to decline since the mid- 1990's. Its contribution to GDP declined by an average of 5.4% each year between 1996 and 1998. Preventive health delivery systems and outreach programmes were the hardest hit. Earnings for health workers declined by nearly 30% between 1991 and 1995. Some of this loss was, however, recovered in wage increases in 1997.

Although health workers were protected from retrenchments, reductions in Ministry of Health and Child Welfare administration and maintenance staff reduced efficiency and may have added to a range of other difficulties. Declining life expectancy and increased maternal deaths are symptomatic of the reduced quality of general health. Life expectancy peaked at 61 years in 1990 and fell to 52 years in 1997 and 51 in 1998. However, after 2003 it fell further to between 29 and 33 years old. Similarly, maternal

deaths increased from 73 per 100 000 in 1987 to 144 per 100 000 in 1997 (World Bank Report, 1999).

Between 1990 and 1993 maternity fees in Harare were raised from Z\$150 to Z\$500. The biggest jump in costs came between December 1993 and March 1994, when the burden of comprehensive care jumped by a 164% for the average family. The average wage in the urban areas at that time was about Z\$300 a month, thus placing the benefits that accrued from maternity care beyond the reach of a large number of people. Clearly, it was women who had most to lose from changes in the health care system, not just because of maternity- associated issues but also because of general ailments arising from under-nourishment and overwork.

The acts in health care, which resulted from ESAP, could not have come at any other worse time, especially in light of Zimbabwe's AIDS crisis. It is estimated by the Ministry of Health that in 1996 some 300 people a week were dying from AIDS related diseases.

INFLATION

Inflation was one of the most persistent problems since ESAP was launched. The downward spiral in the exchange rate e.g. 75% decline in 1997 alone, significantly fuelled inflation. The composite consumer price index (CPI) has risen by a factor of 4 between the start of ESAP in 1990 and December 1996. Between 1991 and 1996 the price of food more than trebled. Within the first six months of ESAP the price of grain increased by 60%. In January 1998, the price of maize increased by 21% compared with two earlier price increases in the preceding year alone. In September 1998 the price of food and other basic commodities rose by another 40%. This was followed by a 24% rise in the period up to January 1999.

What this scenario clearly shows is that ESAP meant more than good to the ordinary man in Zimbabwe. Salaries and wages did not rise concomitantly with the price hikes which reflected the decline in the value of the currency. Many companies shrank or closed altogether, retrenching thousands of workers. As already noted above, ESAP was a desperate economic policy which was meant to rescue the economy from imminent collapse. However, it led to more economic woes.

Again, in response to a desperate situation, the government introduced policies which were meant to cushion the ordinary consumers. Prices of basic commodities were gazetted and could only be reviewed upwards at the discretion of the government. These measures came in place after 2000 as IMF funds dried up. These produced included cooking oil, mealie- meal. The impact of such measures was even more disastrous. First, a parallel but higher and more realistic price peg was introduced by dealers on the parallel market, or "black market". Next, shortages of the gazetted as well as any other products became the order of the day. Shelves got empty as products were secretly hoarded, fuel stations got dried up and the situation got more and crazier as hyper-inflation set in after the 2008 election re-run.

Therefore ESAP was far from successful. Its targets for growth and development were missed by huge margins and real wages fell by about 30% since its implementation in the early 1990's. The exclusive focus, on exporting primary products, to an increasingly hostile international economy, that was bogged down in recession, did not generate internal economic growth in Zimbabwe.

Furthermore, Zimbabwe had very little control over the international prices of the primary commodities which plunged to historic lows during the 1990's. Consequently, formal sector employment declined and public services in health, education, and housing were cut deeply thereby worsening the plight of the urban poor, and making it extremely difficult for them to meet their basic needs. The deteriorating macro-economic climate, induced in part by the structural adjustment programmes, eroded the limited gains which the World Bank had helped achieve in urban housing for the low and medium income groups.

Moreover, the emphasis on the reduction or elimination of public sector spending in health, education and housing failed to produce alternatives for addressing the needs of those on the economic margins of the Zimbabwean society. In fact, ESAP's budget downsizing was always done in a way that affected the poorest, whether it was in Zimbabwe or anywhere in the Third World.

How did the ruling elite worsen the negative impact of ESAP?

Cases of corruption and embezzlement of public funds surfaced as the general population sank deeper into poverty. For instance, in March 1997, a major national scandal erupted when it was discovered that Z\$450 billion were 'missing' from the War Victims Compensation Fund, which was set aside to compensate ex-combatants for injuries suffered during the Liberation War. President Mugabe appointed a judicial commission of inquiry chaired by Justice Godfrey Chidyausiku. The Commission revealed that senior officials in the political and military wings of government including the late First Lady's brother, had appropriated the funds. The powerful Zimbabwe National Liberation War Veterans Association under the leadership of Chenjerai Hunzvi staged mass demonstrations from June through July 1997, meeting with and finally compelling Mugabe to agree to a lump sum payment of Z\$50 000 to all ex-combatants who fought in the national liberation struggle plus Z\$2000 monthly allowance as pension.

Since many of these ex-combatants populate the military and police forces, Mugabe agreed to these demands without consulting his cabinet or parliament, putting additional stress on the country's already weak economy. Furthermore, Mugabe announced that 1480 mostly white-owned farms would be seized, and 20% of that land would be given to the War Veterans. On 14 November, the day also known as "Black Friday", Mugabe's unbudgeted Z\$4 billion settlement with the War Veterans resulted in the collapse of the Zimbabwean dollar, which fell by 75% in just a few hours. Interest rates were increased by 6% in the course of the month, as were sales taxes on petrol in order to help cover the costs of this scheme.

The above events no doubt sent a vicious wave of hardships towards the urban and rural poor. For instance, Building Societies froze mortgage lendings because the economic environment was now harsh. Given the absence of a public sector housing scheme/programme in Zimbabwe due to the factors discussed above, the urban poor were forced to rely on their own meagre resources once again to house themselves.

The poor, experienced additional hardships, because, of the Structural Adjustment programmes and price hikes in the aftermath of Black Friday. Their massive and violent demonstration over rising food prices in Harare in January 1998 left nine dead, hundreds injured and caused over Z\$70 million in damage.

The contempt of the ruling elites on the plight of the poor was demonstrated further by the fact that during the same week, the government announced that it had spent some Z \$60 million on fifty new Mercedes Benz automobiles for twenty-six cabinet ministers and two vice presidents.

Worse still, instead of committing resources, to the provision of basic needs of the Zimbabweans, the government committed troops to a foreign war in the Democratic Republic of Congo at a cost of nearly US\$1 million a day.

With respect to low-income housing in particular, about Z\$3 million from the National Housing Fund and the National Housing Guarantee Fund were “borrowed” by Mugabe’s wife, Grace, in order to build herself a 32 roomed house with three servant cottages in a rich suburb of Harare in 1998 (Edward Ramsamy – “The World Bank and Urban Programmes in Zimbabwe : A Critical Appraisal, Review of African Political Economy, Vol. 33 No. 109, p520). Nick-named “Graceland”, the house was hardly used because the First Lady “changed here mind about living so far away from the city centre”, E. Ramsamy, 2006, p520.

Hence, it was not merely the fact that ESAP and the World Bank’s programmes were unpopular, the negative effects and suffering were worsened by institutionalised corruption within the ruling elite. Post-independence history is somewhat difficult to document because most of the available research work goes up to 2006, yet the economic blizzard actually unfolded after 2008. Some historians feel rather nervous to open such files because real balanced analysis may be difficult to present for obvious reasons.

The Second Phase of the Land Reform and Resettlement Programme.

After the expiration of the Lancaster House agreement in 1990 the government amended the constitution to allow for compulsory acquisition of land with “little compensation and limited rights of appeal to the courts”. There followed in 1991 a Land Acquisition Act to facilitate the purchase of farms. Mugabe decided that perhaps 50% of remaining commercial farming areas would be purchased for resettlement. However, for reasons noted above, very little land redistribution actually occurred.

Finally in 1997 the government decided to act. It launched the second phase of the Land Reform and Resettlement Programme (LRRP₂) based on compulsory acquisition, but

with compensation. It identified a number of farms for acquisition based on criteria spelt out in the 1990 Land Policy statement. These were: where farmers owned more than one farm; the farmer is absentee; the farm is derelict or underutilised; or borders on a communal area.

On the question of compensation, at the 1997 Commonwealth Heads of Government Conference, President Mugabe urged the UK to compensate white farmers for the land they were to lose. In November 1997 the government published a notice of intention to compulsorily acquire 926 commercial farms. This notice was valid for 12 months. All except 85 were legally contested, on a variety of grounds. In September 1998, as noted earlier, the government convened an International Donors Conference to mobilise support for the programme, and Mugabe again asked donors to compensate dispossessed white farmers.

In November 1998 – 12 months after the preliminary notice, the government issued orders for 926 farms. Although this did not lead to actual dispossession, donors were upset, as this was thought to conflict with the “spirit” of the conference. Although the compulsory acquisition of land was not specifically prescribed by donors, it had clearly been hoped that their promise of financial support would slow the process down.

How and why did the Fast Track Land Resettlement Programme begin?

It has been noted earlier on that the rate of land transfer under LRRP₂ was painfully slow, and led to 15 major land invasions in 1997 and 1998. Occupations by war veterans began on a small scale in 1999, but lessened after government assurances that resettlement would be speeded up. But in February 2000 a draft constitution, which included a clause to make compulsory acquisition easier was rejected in a national referendum. The referendum defeat together with the withdrawal of several contested farms from the legal process angered the war veterans still further. But the fact that between the Donors Conference in 1998 and March 2000 a mere 90 000 hectares of land were acquired for resettlement, a rate just 7% of the planned one million hectares a year, was the real motivation behind the massive occupations from February 2000.

Donors had made their support for LRRP₂ conditional on “continuous consultation, transparency and adherence to the law”. But on the crucial question of whether they would tolerate the compulsory acquisition of land, their language was arcane and their position impenetrable. Throughout 1999, the government, constrained by IMF threats to withhold loans vacillated and contradicted itself over this question. At the same time the process of judging the legality of land acquisition was interminable and ensured once again that very little was redistributed.

However, despite the referendum defeat, the government still amended its constitution on 6 April 2000, giving it the right to acquire commercial farms. A few weeks later the government sent here three Ministers to London to request British funding. They returned empty-handed and in May 2000 a change of the law was announced to allow the confiscation of land. This was the start of the government’s “Fast Track Land

Resettlement (FTLR) Programme”.

Why was the FTLR Programme executed so intensely as from May 2000 onwards?

The timing of the FTLR Programme leaves no doubt in anyone’s mind that issues of political mileage must have been seriously at stake then. The Movement for Democratic Change, a newly formed but vibrant party seemed poised to win the parliamentary elections set for the following month. It came therefore as no surprise that ZANU PF narrowly won the parliamentary elections in that election. Its support being concentrated in the rural areas where the land policy would have the most appeal, assured the party of a narrow victory. Joseph Musika on 15 July 2000 in fact stated that “Having realised that donors and some stakeholders such as the CFU were not genuinely interested in assisting government undertake a successful land reform and resettlement programme . . . government is determined to go it alone using its own limited resources to settle people”.

Consequently, on 31 July 2000 they announced that 2237 farms would be added to the 804 originally planned, without compensation, to be distributed, “to the landless”. According to Lupiya and Hakata (2001), 80 000 families were resettled on 2.5 million hectares of compulsorily acquired land between June and December 2000. A further 2.5 million hectares were planned to be resettled by the end of 2001. Mugabe’s press secretary, George Charamba, argued that legal hardness and the explosion in land prices ruled out any other approach to land reform.

Furthermore, an input loan scheme of US16 million was established for the farmers before the start of the rainy season in November 2000. After a number of European governments had suspended aid Mugabe allocated a further US21 million at the end of 2000 to finance resettlement. A further list of 2030 farms was gazetted for acquisition without compensation on June 2001.

Applications for resettlement in 2001 were so great that the authorities had to take over more white-owned farms and cut down on the size of the plots. According to the World Food Programme (WFP) the area planted to maize increased by 14% in 2001 “mainly due to expansions in the communal and resettlement areas”.

In January 2002, 4874 commercial farms, covering 9.23 million hectares were listed for acquisition. But from January through April there followed the most severe drought in 20 years. In late January the first consignment of WFP food aid arrived. Nevertheless, despite suspicions that the programme was merely an electoral ploy, Mugabe immediately pledged the acceleration of land reform on his re-election as President in March 2002.

In August 2000 Mugabe declared that the “Fast-track resettlement Programme is now over and the government is now concentrating on making the new farmers productive” White farmers would continue to own land but not large properties or multiple farms. Resettled black commercial farmers were expected to take up land immediately, in time for the rains.

In his 2003 national budget statement in November 2002 Finance Minister Herbert

Murerwa announced a series of tax incentives for lending to new farmers. The government also introduced soft financial schemes for inputs like seed and fertilizer. But it was hampered by growing international sanctions. International credit lines were all, except one, cut, resulting in severe difficulties in sourcing foreign exchange.

By the end of 2002 the resettlement scheme based on Model A was virtually completed with a 100% uptake in all the ten provinces. Government figures showed that 210 520 families had been resettled on 3159 farms totalling 7,43 million hectares. However, a parallel resettlement programme to stimulate competition within the commercial farming sector had “triggered the fiercest resistance from organised white landed interest”.

Hence, as from April 2003, the FTLR programme was very advanced, although at this moment reliable and consistent data seem to be unavailable. Large scale commercial farming was disrupted, while small-scale farming was impeded by the relative absence of support, and much by a combination of sanctions and a domestic economy in crisis. This critical situation was compounded by a long-lasting and terrible drought.

IMPACT OF THE FTLR PROGRAMME

The political dimension of the post-referendum situation no doubt spurred an increased role for the ‘war veterans’ under their leader, Chenjerai Hunzvi, who began to launch “land occupations” (or land invasions as they were termed) from February 2000 onwards. Those land occupations were accompanied by considerable violence and disorder which the police largely condoned, presumably as a result of ‘political instruction’

In spite of the land orders issued to the ‘land invaders’ to vacate and allow for a more orderly distribution, the occupants continued up to and after the 2000 election. More than 150 people, including farm workers as well as 13 white commercial farmers, were killed, thousands of others injured and displaced as a consequence of the orchestrated violence.

Worse still, the land occupiers consisted of war veterans, peasants, youth mostly belonging to ZANU PF, but also members of the elite including the army and police officers and politicians. There was now no clear selection criteria; it was more of a “free for all” reform programme.

It must be emphasised that the ‘fast track’ programme was much more wide ranging than originally planned. The target actually increased by 11.4 million ha and the average farm size ranged between 39 and 45 hectares, and in October 2002 the Lands Minister, Joseph Made, announced that about 300 000 families had been settled under the A1 model. By the time of the presidential election in March 2002, the ‘fast track’ programme had, by far, exceeded its original target/objective of land redistribution. This had two negative results: first, we have already noted above that this was at an enormous cost in terms of intimidation, violence, displacement, lawlessness and disruption to production.

Secondly, the fact that the resettlement programme, (resettling 300 000 families) had taken place, in such a short space of time, posed, a staggering financial burden. According to the United Nations Development Programme, UNDP’s perspective, the programme was not likely to be viable and sustainable. It argued that “The economic

consequences of trying to implement such a large programme, without considerably extending the time-frame would be negative because of the resources it would drain from the government budget and private capital”. The massive cost was indeed confirmed by the Minister of Agriculture, Joseph Made, who estimated that US\$3 billion (up from US \$1,9 billion) would be required for infrastructure and credit over a 5 year period. (Herald, 28 March 2002). According to this perspective, the land reform process was therefore riddled with problems which could potentially derail it. (L. Sachikonye, 2003, p236).

Furthermore, the land reform programme, especially the A1 scheme was really intended to benefit the poor, the landless as well as relieving the unbearable land pressure in the communal lands. Hence, it was supposed to recognise the complex social, gender and citizen issues, not only in the communal lands, but even among the farm workers as well since these needed to be prioritized in land redistribution. However, there was no systematic consideration of the social or class interests involved in the reform process. Yes, the A1 model of resettlement largely benefited the poor, but what was disturbing to note was that some beneficiaries were people in the urban areas, including those in gainful, full-time employment.

Moreover, while female-headed households constitute about 35 per cent of all households in Zimbabwe, those resettled constituted only about 16 per cent. This outcome may be because the reform has been state-driven “from above”. Such a scenario, no doubt complicated and postponed a holistic approach to the land question in Zimbabwe.

As far as the A2 model is concerned, it is clear that well-connected members of the ruling elite took advantage of the scheme and thereby acquired commercial farms at “a song”, although the model was meant to accommodate those with farming skills, experience and start-up capital. (L. Sachikonye, 2003, p236). There was growing published evidence that the ruling elite had allocated to itself some of the best land. (Daily News, 6 September 2002). Newspapers were awash with stories of a frantic scramble for such land by Cabinet Ministers, Governors, senior army officers, police officers, top civil servants, war veterans and others connected to this elite.

Members of the elite had become privileged through patronage or clientelism and benefited in a process that should have been largely aimed at poverty reduction through de-congestion of communal areas. As white farmers left for neighbouring countries or relocated to urban centres, the ruling elite got its cut from the land reform. The sharing of spoils allowed for “instant accumulation” with state backing, and beneficiaries were now more likely to be former members of Zanu PF than the opposition movement which advocated transparency in the land reform process! (L. Sachikonye, 2003, p236). However, it remains doubtful whether this increased number of “part-time” and “cell-phone” farmers would keep the newly acquired farms sufficiently productive to maintain the sector’s contribution to GDP growth, food security and foreign exchange earnings. (L. Sachikonye, 2003, p236).

Examinations Type Questions

- (1) How effectively has the Zimbabwean government solved the economic and political problems it faced between 1980 and 1991?
- (2) To what extent can Zimbabwe's land Reform Programme since 1991 be explained in political rather than economic terms?
- 3) How valid is the claim that Zimbabwe foreign policy between 1985 -2000 aimed at maintaining the strangleholds of former nationalist movements in power
- 4) evaluate the Relative success of the Zimbabwean government from 1980- 2000.
- 5) The unity accord of 1987 ushered in a new political dispensation in Zimbabwe." Discuss the validity of this statement.
- 6) How valid is the claim that Zimbabwe's economic meltdown of 2000-9 was a result of the formation of the new political parties in the country?
- 7) "Zimbabwe shall never be a colony again" Discuss the truth of this statement with reference to political developments in Zimbabwe.
- 8) To what extent has the post Independence governments addressed the Land question
- 9 To what extent has the failure in the reform process after independence been blamed on
external forces.

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