

A HISTORICAL STUDY OF ZIMBABWE'S AFRICAN ELITE: CONFIGURATIONS,
NETWORKS AND TRANSITIONS c. 1900-2013.

BY

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A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY OF
ZIMBABWE IN FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN HISTORY.

FACULTY OF ARTS
MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY
NOVEMBER 2016

Declaration

I Gilbert Tarugarira declare that this Thesis entitled *A Historical Study of Zimbabwe's African Elite: Configurations, Networks and Transitions c.1900-2013* is based on my own research and reading and has not been submitted for any degree or examination in any other university. All the sources consulted and quoted have been acknowledged as complete references.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Acknowledgements

I wish to recognize tremendous support I received while writing this thesis. Intellectual guidance and inspiration came from Prof. N. M. Bhebe, Dr. T. M. Mashingaidze and Dr. G. C. Mazarire. Their vision, interest and confidence in my work persuaded me to work hard. The generous comments they made goaded me to refine my ideas. My deepest gratitude and appreciation also go to all lecturers in the Department of History for the stimulating intellectual exchanges. I am particularly grateful to Dorothy Goredema and Joshua Chakawa for the hours they spent debating with me on the weaknesses and strengths of my research. Colleagues, you provided stimulus and helped mitigate the isolation of postgraduate research.

Outside the Midlands State University, I benefitted greatly from comments and suggestions by Dr Rory Pilosof of the University of the Free State and colleagues from the University of Zimbabwe's Department of History who provided intellectual inspiration and motivation through Seminar presentations.

This study had a long gestation period. Consequently, there are many people who supported me at various points. During my fieldwork, I was invited into the homes of many people that I interviewed. Honourable Ransome Makamure, Stanislaus Mupunga and Simbarashe Tarugarira offered me their hospitality, sometimes in ways that seemed to exceed their means.

Funding for this study was provided by the Midlands State University through the Department of Research and Postgraduate Studies headed by Professor D.Z.Moyo. I thank the Vice Chancellor Prof.N.Bhebe for a deliberate policy which created a 'golden age' whose 'golden fund' enabled me to meet the financial demands of the research process. This research would have been impossible without the financial support. I would also like to acknowledge directors and personnel of various archives and libraries especially the National Archives of Zimbabwe for giving me access to classified documents when required and the Gutu District Administrator Mr. Roy Hove and staff for generously providing me with free office space whenever needed.

Finally, I thank my family – my wife Dorcas, children Precious, Prince, Mukudzeishe and Makanaka for the many sacrifices over the years necessary for this thesis to reach completion. It may seem a commonplace to say this, but it is undoubtedly true that without their support, this

thesis would not have been possible. Needless to say, all errors, factual or in interpretation, are mine.

Dedication

To the memory of my mother and victims of elite power and politics.

Abstract

This thesis employs ‘elite’ and social capital as analytical tools to explore the history of African elite formation and the development of power relations within a socio-economic and political context in Zimbabwe. Using the case of elites from the Gutu district of southern Zimbabwe the thesis traces patterns of social differentiation and mutation of elite organisation. Besides unpacking the diverse elite groups, I seek to explore elitist modes of social reproduction and transmission of privileged positions in society. Contrasting patterns of recruitment and selection in terms of career paths, the relative influence, visibility, power and prestige of different elite groups are considered. The thesis underscores that networking contacts among the elites occurred both formally and informally. My central argument is that within the diversity of elite typologies, networks facilitated resource mobilization and ultimate access to power. This is largely viewed through the prevalence of elitist enclaves and clusters and their interaction with socio-economic and political environments in both country and town settings. Many of the individuals referred to in this study were pluralists of power who held influential positions in a number of elite groups. The thesis contends that due to elite ‘interlock’, intra-and extra socio-economic and political networks were established towards the realization of material rewards and privileges. I pursue these network concerns to develop insights into how new forms of inequality are created. Antonio Gramsci’s theory is used to draw attention to the question of hegemony in an attempt to reconcile perceived notions concerning the development and functions of elite groups in relation to serving the wider public and their endeavour to enhance and maintain power. The study reveals that while the elite continuously seek to acquire more resources through networking and predatory means, strategies deployed in manufacturing selves are generally embedded in a continuum from pre-colonial to post-colonial historical contexts. The qualitative nature of the research afforded the convergence of information from oral and archival sources as well as documents and texts.

List of Acronyms

AAG	Affirmative Action Group
AMS	African Marketing Services
ANC	African National Congress
CONEX	Department of Conservation and Extension
DC	District Commissioner
DDF	District Development Fund
DRC	Dutch Reformed Church
ESAP	Economic Structural Adjustment Programme
IBDC	Indigenous Business Development Centre
ICA	Intensive Conservation Area
LAA	Land Apportionment Act
LDO	Land Development Officer
NADA	Native Affairs Department Annual
NAZ	National Archives of Zimbabwe
NC	Native Commissioner
NDP	National Democratic Party
NLHA	Native Land Husbandry Act
NPA	Native Purchase Area
PC	Provincial Commissioner
PF	Patriotic Front

RAR	Rhodesia African Rifles
RATA	Rhodesia African Teachers Association
RCC	Roman Catholic Church
SRNA	Southern Rhodesia Native Association
TLA	Tribal Land Authorities
TILCO	Tribal Trust Lands Development Corporation
TTL	Tribal Trust Land
VIDCO	Village Development Committee
WADCO	Ward Development Committee
YFC	Young Farmers' Club
ZABA	Zimbabwe African Business Association
ZANLA	Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army
ZANU	Zimbabwe African National Union
ZANU-PF	Zimbabwe African Union-Patriotic Front
ZAPU	Zimbabwe African People's Union
ZIPRA	Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army
ZNP	Zimbabwe National Party
ZNLWVA	Zimbabwe National Liberation War Veterans Association

Table of Contents

Declaration.....	i
Acknowledgements	ii
Dedication	iv
Abstract.....	v
List of Acronyms	vi
The Study in Perspective.....	1
0.1 Introduction.....	1
0.2 Thesis Objectives and Research Questions.....	6
0.3 Justification of the study.....	7
0.4 The theory of hegemony considered.....	13
0.5 Conceptualizing the Elites.....	15
0.6 Elite typologies: The matrix and overlapping indices of elite attributes	18
0.7 Research Methodology and Fieldwork Experiences.....	23
0.8 Literature Review	27
0.9 Architecture of Study	38
Chapter 1: Elite Formation in Historical Perspective: The Gutu Experience	41
1.0 Introduction.....	41
1.1 Geographic preface and peopling of Gutu.....	41
1.2 The ideal of status and socio-economic inequalities	46

1.3 Dimensions of dominance and elitist prerogatives.....	49
1.3.1 Symbols and enclaved commodities as signifiers of elite status.....	54
1.4 The African council and the consolidation of the chiefs' elite status	58
1.5 Conclusion	62
Chapter 2: The Agricultural Enterprise, Accumulation and Rural inequities: 1900-1960 .	64
2.0 Introduction.....	64
2.1 The Land, patterns of settlement and social stratification.....	64
2.2 The Native Purchase Areas and the Creation of a 'modern' Agricultural Elite	69
2.3 The Gospel of the plough.....	73
2.3.1 Destocking.....	80
2.3.2 Authoritarian planning of African agriculture.....	84
2.4 Working parties as social capital.....	85
2.5 Progressive Farmers, Education and the ideology of efficiency	88
2.6 Conclusion	94
Chapter 3: The Missionary factor and elite formation: 1900-1975.....	95
3.0 Introduction.....	95
3.1 Of capitalists and preachers.....	95
3.2 Education and social stratification	100
3.2.1 The rise of the educated elite.....	103
3.2.2 Naming the road to elitism	110

3.3 Missionaries and African entrepreneurship.....	112
3.3.1 The making of rural salariables and artisans	115
3.4 African Independent Churches and the religious elite.....	118
3.5 Conclusion	121
Chapter 4: African Entrepreneurship and the Growth of the Business Elite 1920s to	
1970.....	123
4.0 Introduction.....	123
4.1 The Genesis of African, Indian and Greek business networks.....	124
4.2 Business coaching.....	128
4.2.1 Business Pioneers: Recruitment and case histories	132
4.3 Crafting selves and keeping up appearances.....	138
4.3.1 The Feminine factor in the socialization of eliteness	143
4.3.2 The power behind esoteric socialization	147
4.4 The family modes of social reproduction.....	148
4.5 Conclusion	156
Chapter 5: The Town-Country Interface and Networked urbanism	
5.0 Introduction.....	157
5.1 Migrant labour and the development of town-country networks	157
5.2 The Gweru-Gutu dichotomy in networked urbanism.....	163
5.3 Acquired power and inherited status	167

5.4 Conclusion	169
Chapter 6: The Liberation Struggle and the Fluidity of the social structure: 1970-1980..	171
6.0 Introduction.....	171
6.1 Nationalism and the politics of belonging.....	171
6.2 The web of political elite networks: ZANU’s Mozambican experience	178
6.3 The Gun and the manufacture of the war elite	180
6.4 The hegemonic precepts of the <i>Pungwe</i>	185
6.5 The rural salariats and the war	188
6.6 Conclusion	192
Chapter 7: The Diversity of Elite Configurations and Clusters of power in the post-colonial era: 1980-2013	193
7.0 Introduction.....	193
7.1 Seizing opportunities and crafting selves.....	194
7.2 The elites and the politics of land redistribution.....	201
7.3 Business is politics and politics is business	205
7.4 Social Reproduction: Pathways and recruitment to elite status.....	211
7.5 Elite Associations	225
7.6 The clergy and the advent of a new power elite	230
7.7 Conclusion	234
Chapter 8: Conclusion	236

8.0 Introduction.....	236
8.1 Brief insight	237
8.2 Summary.....	238
References	250
Interviews.....	253
APPENDICES.....	271

The Study in Perspective

0.1 Introduction

This study unpacks the making of African elites in rustic Gutu district as it transitioned from the pre-colonial, colonial to the post-colonial dispensation. It disentangles the various and intersecting modalities of elite making in a rural polity on the cusp of the ‘traditional’¹ realm and the colonial capitalist interlude. Thus, I reveal how social capital shaped and allowed the various categories of elites to emerge and self-imagine in Gutu.

Social capital refers to the ‘features of social organization such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit’.² In more instrumental forms, it equips people towards mobilizing resources by virtue of their memberships of groups and networks. I also show how networks have been a means of securing ties and hence forging connections of a ‘bonding’ or ‘bridging’ type.³ Within social network analysis, the analytical focus is on distinguishing elitist cliques and factions within networks bringing together the simultaneous capacities of networks to link and separate individuals.

I briefly consider the concept ‘elite’ and offer an operational definition. Weinrich acknowledged the difficulty of drawing a line between those men and women who constituted the elite in the proper sense of the word, and those who formed an intermediate category between the newly emergent elite and African masses given the progressive economic diversification among Africans.⁴ Lloyd proffered that the term elite could be used to denote those who were western educated and wealthy; who earned an annual income of at least 250 British pounds.⁵ For

¹ Traditional in this instance refers to a worldview in which patterns of thought; action and feeling have been shared over a long period of time. In a traditional set-up, there is a close union between the spiritual and non-spiritual where everybody is known by name and individual interest is subordinated to the overall interest of the group through traditional ceremonies or other depictions of the human and God relationship. Societal sanctions against the violation of accepted norms and values are held in high esteem. There is a collective participation, everybody sharing in the joys and sorrows of his/her neighbour.

² R.D.Putnam, ‘The Strange Disappearance of Civic America’, *American Prospect*, 24, 1996, pp.34–48.

³ Bonding is the cementing of relationships within an elite cluster while bridging refers to the transitional phase in elite circulation or mobility from a non-elite category to an elite cluster.

⁴ A. K. H. Weinrich, *Black and White elites in Rural Rhodesia*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1973, p.104.

⁵ P. C. Lloyd, *The New Elites of Tropical Africa*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1966, p.2.

Lloyd, possession of western education and wealth are therefore the major criteria distinguishing the elite from the masses. Lloyd was aware of the fact that by defining his elite in this manner, he consequently underrated the power and influence of the traditional rulers in tropical Africa. He tried to correct this mistake by saying that there was need to appreciate that through their close contact with the masses, both the marginal elite and the sub-elite may, in some contexts, be more significant as reference groups to the masses than are the elites of his definition. He admitted that excluded by his definition were the wealthy but illiterate or semiliterate traders, traditionally orientated and often prominent within their place of birth.⁶

To qualify as the elite, Benoi added that these groups or individuals needed to be people of admiration, deference, imitation and sources of suggestion and centres of attraction.⁷ Nadel equally considered the elite as a definable group of people which is exclusively aware of its status and group character, but is not necessarily fully organised or closed to new members who also aspire for wealth and recognition based on special skills and talents.⁸ In this thesis, I consider that the common denominator for eliteness was possession of material goods, control of the major institutions of power and the capability of imposing one's will on others because of one's superior condition or quality wherein nature or public esteem were responsible for the selection.⁹

The term 'elite' is however gender neutral. Women's partial invisibility in some parts of the thesis largely stemmed from their marginalization and absence from mainstream historical studies which include family histories. It is after independence that women in Zimbabwe sought to reclaim their past, broadening the focus of historical enquiry into their role in the liberation struggle and the post-colonial era.¹⁰ A new focus on 'history from below' added momentum to research and writing on aspects of women's history.

⁶ Ibid, p.2.

⁷ E. Benoi, 'Status, Status Types, and Status inter-relations', in Biddle, B.C and Thomas, E.T (eds) *Role Theory*, Wiley and Sons, New York, pp.77-80.

⁸ S. F. Nadel, 'The Concept of Social Elites' in *International Social Science Bulletin*, VII, 1955, p.413-424.

⁹ See H. K. Girvetz, *Democracy and Elitism: Two essays with Selected Readings*. New York, Publisher, 1967, p.30.

¹⁰ See works by Irene Mahamba, *Women in Struggle*, Mambo Press, Gweru, 1984; Tanya Lyons, *Guns and Guerilla Girls: Women in the Zimbabwean Liberation Struggle*, Africa World Press, Asmara, 2004; Sekai Nzenza, *Zimbabwean Women: My Own Story*, Karia Press, London, 1988; Ruth Weiss, *The Women of Zimbabwe*, Nehanda Publishers, Harare, 1986; Irene Staunton (ed), *Mothers of the Revolution* Baobab Books, Harare, 1990; Josephine Nhongo-Simbanegavi, *For better or Worse? Women and ZANLA in Zimbabwe's Liberation Struggle*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2000; Zimbabwean Women Writers (eds), *Women of Resilience: The Voices of Women Ex-Combatants*, Zimbabwe Women Writers, Harare, 2000. The writings by women seemed to be propelled by the African proverb that until lions have their own historians, tales of hunting will always glorify the hunter.

The introduction of Christianity and Western education was also critical to the stratification of colonial society along gender lines. The initial disadvantage of females in the education system is arguably the main determinant of women's inferiority and lack of access to resources in the colonial and the post-colonial period. Oyewumi observed that priority was given to male education "where boys were educated to become clerks, catechists, pastors, diplomats, and even politicians while the role of the girls was to look dainty and attractive, ready to become wives and helpmates of these potentially powerful men".¹¹ The exclusion of women from education and employment was therefore profound and proved devastating because they were dispossessed of the ability to negotiate the 'modern' world which led to wealth, status and leadership roles.

Patriarchy as a form of social organisation had a profound and negative impact for women. According to Urdang, African women suffered a 'double colonization'; one from European domination and the other from indigenous tradition imposed by African men.¹² In gender terms, the commercialization of land and the production of cash crops also generated new wealth from which women were by and large marginalized. The commodification of land where access was through lineage membership (by birth) and marriage (access through husband) shortchanged women in the transition from collective rights of access to private ownership. Comparably limited opportunities for accumulating wealth opened up to women. In addition wage labour involved the migration of men to centres of commerce which meant that acquiring property and breadwinning came within the sphere of men. The combination of wage labour and migration produced a new social identity for females as dependents and appendages of men. Their resourcefulness and entrepreneurial spirit were muted and came to be shaped by the emergence of men as the apparent sole breadwinners. That men were breadwinners also explains why they had more educational opportunities than women. As Rodney noted,

Since men entered the money sector more easily and in greater numbers than women, women's work became greatly inferior to that of men within the new value system of colonialism: men's work was "modern" and women's work was "traditional" and "backward". Therefore the deterioration in the status of

¹¹ O.Oyewumi, *The Invention of Women: Making An African Sense of Western Gender Discourses*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1997, p.128, 131.

¹² S.Urdang, *Fighting Two Colonialisms: Women in Guinea-Bissau*, London: Zed Press, 1979. See also Elizabeth Schmidt, *Peasants, Traders and Wives: Shona Women in the History of Zimbabwe, 1870-1939*, Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann Educational Books, 1992. She made a similar claim that Shona women of Zimbabwe were beholden to two patriarchies- indigenous and European.

African women was bound up with the consequent loss of the right to set indigenous standards of what work had merit and what did not.¹³

Although the construction of women as a subordinate group conversely instituted and legitimized male hegemony in African societies the thesis demonstrates that emphasis on male power does not imply that women have always been victims without any influence and resources. Indeed women created networks, weaving their political and social lives into national affairs, to quash the idea that passing on history was more of a men's relay.

I explore the elites' contingent self-definitions, meaning making and social reproduction strategies in an effort to address how social capital is embedded in webs of power and inequality. Social reproduction refers to the structures and activities that transmit social inequality from one generation to the next. Revealing the social reproduction strategies of the elites in various temporal spaces allows an understanding of their agency in entrenching, normalizing sectarian interests and hegemony over their communities. During the colonial period, rural society witnessed the emergence of distinctions between the growing proportion of the landless, the small peasant cultivators, more successful master farmers, shop and transport owners who were often substantial cultivators in their own right. The rural salarieds who were in government service particularly the teachers, agricultural extension officers among others, formed the elite who elicited admiration. Their income levels, aspirations and life style, distinguished them from the general populace.¹⁴ The study shows how the dynamism of such kinds of identity and consciousness could be manipulated to realize economic opportunities, prestige, influence and control through elite networks.

While Zimbabwe's war of liberation manufactured its own elites, of interest is unveiling how war credentials became instrumental in catapulting people to positions of authority in society. As the Gutu case study illustrated, the aftermath of the war of liberation shows that elite recruitment and mass exclusion in public institutions was based on such socially manipulated criteria as wealth, education and social networks. This study contends that clientelism born of elitist networks of amity contributed to widespread nepotism in recruitment and promotion practices.

¹³ W.Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, Tanzania Publishing House, Dar es Salam, 1972, p.227.

¹⁴ See Coenraad Brand, 'The Anatomy of an Unequal Society' in C.Stoneman (ed), *Zimbabwe's Inheritance*, Macmillan Press, London, 1981, p.44, 53. P.Bond, *Uneven Zimbabwe. A Study of Finance, Development and Underdevelopment*, Africa World Press, Asmara, 1998, p.94, notes that Purchase Area farmers began to view themselves as having much closer interests to white commercial farmers than to black peasants.

The thesis explores how African business enterprise developed during the colonial period amidst discriminatory laws and practices which worked against African entrepreneurship.¹⁵ Without financial support from the government, the late 1950s and early 1960s witnessed the launching of societies which provided Africans with loans for bigger projects.¹⁶ According to West, “the primary reason for the huge expansion in the number of African general dealers in the post-war years was the ease with which wholesalers now gave credit to budding African traders”.¹⁷ In this light, I trace these business networks in an attempt to establish why the African business people remained at the service of the international bourgeoisie instead of developing into a full-fledged local or national bourgeoisie.

By drawing the nexus between business and politics, the Gutu experiences exposed how these businessmen-cum-politicians have come to control the commanding heights of societal political and economic life. My research shows that for the majority of the elites, business is politics and politics is business. Equally fascinating is demonstrating how upon the exhaustion of their temporary political usefulness these elites (who are of peasant origin) would resort to all sorts of coercive measures, physical and psychological to win back the people’s support.

While emphasis is on exploring the vagaries associated with elite formation, particular attention is given to different strategies of accumulation and penultimate processes of stratification. I clarify that, different social groups vary considerably in how much social capital they have access to and that people chose their social contacts in an environment where they share common interests with. This insistence on the spatiality of social capital immerses me in a discussion on the politics of territoriality. On this issue, I reveal that social capital also involves contestation over space, understanding of other people’s identity and social positioning. Using illustrations from Gutu, I show how the development of town centres or enclaves exerted a magnetic influence over the country. With the perennial one-way movement from the country to town, the urban interpretation of reality had a tremendous influence over the rural population. The town and country interface pitting rustic Gutu and the city of Gweru is used to show the means by which the elite would make claims on territory as they seek to define themselves.

¹⁵ V.Wild, *Profit not for Profit's Sake*, Baobab Books, Harare, 1997, p.xxii, argues that in Zimbabwe, colonialism facilitated rather than prevented African enterprise because it provided the institutional framework, economic opportunities and the cultural stimuli for growth.

¹⁶ P.Bond, *Uneven Zimbabwe*, p.105. Joshua Nkomo chaired the Bulawayo based Bantu Cooperative Society in the late 1950s.

¹⁷ M.West, *The Rise of the Middle-Class in Southern Rhodesia*, p.290.

0.2 Thesis Objectives and Research Questions

The study provides a historical analysis of the factors behind the emergence and growth of varied elite social networks in rural Zimbabwe between 1900 and 2013. Using Gutu as a case study, this exploration has the following goals;

- To analyse the mechanisms or formulae for elite formation, hierarchical relations and variations in complexity and size of their networks.
- To assess the coordination of elite actions on both formal and informal basis in the construction of group identity.
- To examine the extent to which social networks defined group relations and facilitated the perpetuation of elite status and privileges in society.

To achieve these objectives, the thesis is informed by the following research questions:

- How and to what extent did colonialism reinforce the inequalities of the pre-colonial structure which contributed to colonial and post-colonial elitist discrepancies?
- What strategies did the elites employ to systematically, consistently validate and sustain their claim to possess rare or exclusive qualities ‘essential’ to the society at large?
- In what ways did the country-town dichotomy contribute in explaining the politics of belonging among Gutu’s indigenes?
- How were wealth and privilege advantageous in transmitting intergenerational elite social reproduction?

The thesis thus examines the contingent factors behind the emergence of elite groups; transformative processes and multi-dimensional struggles which have characterised group relations in Gutu. While I acknowledge that social differentiation occurs in all societies, my thrust is to unveil how the twin concepts of eliteness as well as power vary with time and space; in terms of qualities and competencies which provide the bases for group-action. Given that rank, power, prestige and resources also come through kinship and descent; my interrogation of community power analysis through social networking draws a line between elites and common people. The study thus problematizes the extent to which society is a universe of complementary and competing elite typologies whose (un)intended consequences of interaction seek to validate as well as sustain their elite status. I argue that through a repertoire of socio-economic and

political strategies, the elites sought to manipulate the allocation of resources and to influence the pace and direction of social change within any polity.

0.3 Justification of the study

My interest in elites arises from the desire to understand the variety of stratagems that elites used in order to manipulate the course of social, economic, political change and the flow of material benefits through social networking. The zeal to focus on elites was inspired by both the need to relate social capital to matrices of power and inequality. Furthermore, there was a desire to explore how the actual ties and relationships which bring social capital about are spatially as well as socially organized. Hence, I explore how trust, bonds and connections are relationally constructed, focusing specifically on the elitist network dimensions of social capital.

The use of the term elite should not be misconstrued as based on a rigid interpretation of Marx's concept of class, its integral aspects of class struggle and class consciousness which the elite theory considers as irrelevant in the study of Africa.¹⁸ Manghezi has argued that class analysis is not only relevant but the only appropriate theory and method for the study of the socio-economic problems of Africa. He dismisses the theory of elites as weak and not clear on the causes of social problems and the factors which generate the necessary changes in the social relations of production, exchange and distribution.¹⁹

While to deconstruct and redefine the parameters of African social classes is beyond the scope of this study, I argue that these two schools of thought, though opposed in some respects and still the source of hot debates are in fact focusing on two extremes of one continuum.²⁰ Marx conceived of classes "not as monolithic unidimensional entities, but as conglomerations of a multiplicity of groups, where members share similar work, functions, values, interests and way

¹⁸ In general this issue is characterised by an inconclusive debate over the applicability of Marx's concept of the 'Asiatic mode of production' to Africa, and over the other concepts proposed to replace it: the 'African mode of production' by Coquery-Vidrovitch, 'Research on an African Mode of Production', in G.W Johnson and M.Klein (eds.) *Perspectives on the African Past*, Little, Brown, 1972, pp. 33-51; the 'lineage mode of production' by Meillassoux and the 'tribute-paying mode of production' by Samir Amin among others. See also M.A.Klein, 'The Use of Mode of Production in Historical Analysis', *Canadian Journal of African Studies* Vol. 19, No. 1 (1985), pp. 9-12.

¹⁹ A. Manghezi, *Class, Elite and Community in African Development*, Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, Uppsala, 1976, dismisses the theory of elites on the grounds that it sees rule by the minority over a supposedly passive majority and fails to explain the forces of social, economic, political and cultural change.

²⁰ See P. Geschiere who has advanced that in the wake of operational and conceptual ambiguities that the notion of class has acquired, the future relevance of the mode of production concept to African studies may largely depend on questions of operationalisation where it can provide cues for empirical research.

of life”.²¹ The elitists would concede that, while serving the general interests of society, elites develop organisational mechanisms to enhance and maintain their status. The two theories evidently cast some attention on power relations wherein power is rooted in the relations of production, exchange, and distribution and in the ultimate control of physical coercion. And yet, as Cohen puts it, “power is everywhere embedded in interpersonal and intergroup relationships and is therefore always mystified in the process”.²² Notwithstanding the above, my stance is that social class and elite status are entangled and porously demarcated by subtle differences over issues of morality and values, social influence or power.

According to Marx’s class analysis, the class struggle is the motive force for change. Elite theorists on the other hand view that social change results from continual interaction between individuals and groups seeking to improve their position in the social hierarchy. Through the use of existing resources and new opportunities, social change thus results from the efforts of persons acting individually or in small groups and in competition against others for positions of power, prestige or occupational status.

The power mystique is thus developed by a social class or privileged elite to validate and perpetuate their domination in support of their material interests and positions. As such, while I concede that there are grounds for calling some African elite a class, I maintain that using the term ‘elite’ does not suggest the non-existence of a class either. Lloyd states that,

...while the elite has the cohesion, the consciousness of privilege and distinct styles of life to merit the term class, it is not balanced by another recognizable class-unless one restricts one’s use of such terminology to the modern sector, and terms the urban manual workers an incipient class.²³

Lloyd further argues that no class system can be expected to develop within a social structure which remains ‘open’ allowing members of the society to compete freely for positions of power, privilege and prestige. In line with this argument, African societies both traditional and contemporary are ‘open’ implying that channels to elite positions as well as status foster social mobility. Lloyd registers his rejection to the use of class analysis in African studies, on the grounds that the African elites are still recruited from a ‘humble social background’ or that

²¹ A. Cohen, *The Politics of Elite Culture. Explorations in Dramaturgy of Power in a Modern African Society*, University of California, London, 1981, p.5.

²² Ibid, p.10.

²³ P. C. Lloyd, *The New Elites of Tropical Africa*, London, 1966, p.62. Lloyd also proffers his argument towards his rejection of class analysis in African studies in his other work: P.C Lloyd, *Class, Crises and Coups: Themes in the Sociology of Developing Countries*.

despite their educational achievements the elites still maintain links between town and country. Along similar lines, I argue that social relations between the elites and the masses do not always involve exploitation and conflict. In this connection, Samir Amin also suggests that although social differentiation on the basis of social division of labour already existed in African village communities, such class differences that existed were not antagonistic.²⁴ By maintaining links with their village, the elites continue to redistribute wealth to their family and kin.

Another objection against the use of class analysis is that it would be erroneous to assume that the system of class formations which characterised the development of European societies observed by Marx would be reproduced in Africa. Although capitalism helped to accelerate the process of decomposition of the African communal village life, Walter Rodney argues that the Western model of class formation was not reproduced, at least not in its exact form, through the process of colonisation.²⁵

In view of the above, I give preference to the use of the term 'elite' because it is an empirically grounded concept which is more neutral and encompassing than the concept of class. Class is also used to refer to a group of people who are considered equal in status or community esteem, who socialize on a regular basis formally and informally sharing and exhibiting their own distinctive behavioral patterns. However, the term does not give prominence to normative traits in its categorization and yet broader descriptions of elite Africans also recognize lineage and association as variables. Thus, classes are indeed social categories sharing subjectively-salient attributes used by people to rank those categories within a system of socio-economic stratification. In this thesis, my elite index revolves around numerous variables which may be economic (occupation, wealth, and income), social (prestige, association and social mobility) and political (power and class consciousness). Through use, interpretation of social variables as well as social construction of identity, I argue that the diversity of elite configurations is generated by the diversity of social structures and political systems prevailing within any historical epoch. Eliteness is therefore sometimes interpreted more normatively in terms of a responsibility to exercise moral leadership. While education and wealth remain important variables, in defining both class and elite statuses, for the later, respectability or even more personal attributes like behaviour and attitude would tend to eclipse other factors as signifiers of class.

²⁴ S. Amin, *The Class Struggle in Africa*. Reprint Number 2, Africa Research Group, Cambridge, Mass. 1964

²⁵ W. Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*. Tanzania Publishing House, Dar es Salaam, 1972.

Intellectual curiosity also explains why I undertook this study. Upon observing that there are widespread, reasonable suspicions and allegations that the elites are to blame for the extreme inequalities within societies; I saw the need to dig into the history of the powerful and privileged, to probe, analyze standards of knowledge, training and skills upon which the elite's maintenance of sectional interests found anchorage. The general assumption that all societies are regulated by elite minorities who employ hegemonic ideologies and techniques of mystification to maintain themselves in power as well as serve the public is brought under closer scrutiny in this thesis. My intention is to establish whether elite groups manipulated the public or that the desires and inclinations of the majority were without effect upon the conduct of the elite.

The rural focus of this study is justified by the fact that rural areas are the theatre where the incumbents of modern and traditional prestige positions display their numerous characteristics. It is in rural areas where traditional prestige positions appear to have comparatively lost influence to the new occupations which require higher education and familiarity with western culture.

I however argue that the accumulation of positions to acquire maximum visibility or what Daloz terms the 'Big Man' model²⁶ applies to all types of the so-called traditional and modern elites. This is a trend that has seldom been emphasized here and elsewhere. Reflecting upon the rural life I grew up in, I could not resist the temptation of challenging the misplaced assumptions people may hold that it is in the village where the poor are made, where they are losers in resource struggles and also victims of their own superstition and ignorance.²⁷ On the contrary, I advance that 'rural' (through benefits derived from social capital) can also be a site of natural harmony and beauty, the repository of cultural tradition and morality, particularly when pitted against the modern city. Chief Masanganise Gutu marveled,

Rural life is without greed, competition and stress. People look after each other when they are sick... and there are traditional systems for helping those in crisis. There are rich people among us but the empathy and natural bond which the villagers exhibit makes it difficult to differentiate between the rich and poor.

²⁶ The 'Big Man' model is a situation where one is surrounded by the greatest possible number of supporters and clients. See Daloz, J.P., 'Big Men' in Sub-Saharan Africa: How Elites Accumulate Positions and Resources' in Dogan.M.,(ed.) *Elite Configurations at the Apex of Power*, Brill,Boston, 2003.

²⁷ Alvord in his 'gospel of the plough' philosophy attacked the African farmers for their superstition and ignorance which he alleged worked against increased agricultural yields.

Somehow we are all connected. *Tiri svinga rehuni* (We are a bunch of twigs). We are just like fingers in a hand with their different shapes and sizes but so united in a fist.²⁸

Hence, in my study of the elite, I discuss questions of power, differentiation, coping and struggle not just as abstractions but as issues deeply rooted in the daily practices as well as experiences of the people of Gutu. Anthropologists and historians alike have depended on local elites - headmen, school teachers - as the repositories of local knowledge. Underlying this approach has been the notion that society can best be studied through its leaders. The problem has been that of limiting leadership to the pinnacle of the political structure and yet the study of leadership should not only focus on formal government officials and bureaucrats but also other informal agencies of power. While it has been common to study societies in terms of the actions of dominant and competing elites, what has been lacking is a model for analyzing elites. I consider it critical to identify elites for purposes of understanding how people access resources and deploy power. As the study shows, those who could be labeled as commoners or outsiders within the polity could still gain influence through affinal connections within the ruling line at various levels of the political hierarchy.

By narrowing the field of study to one district and its immediate setting, it has been possible to get 'under the skin' of the community in order to understand peoples' relations to one another in greater detail. The opportunity to recover memories by interviewing religions, political leaders and many other practitioners allowed a degree of depth that simply is not possible in more wide-ranging studies. This explains why I have also taken particular interest in exploring the lives of little-known and obscure people whose lives though cast light on the social patterns of the society in which they lived.²⁹ I consider the micro-level analysis of the Gutu community. In some cases, I trace interactions at the levels of an individual and family as a means of generating conclusions that come to grips with the larger universe of historical circumstances and transformations. In any case, historical transformations are embedded in individual interactions.

²⁸ Interview with Chief Gutu at Gutu, 13 July 2013. The chief's remark is rather idyllic. A. M. Babu states that it would be reckless to talk of African societies as classless given that there are some wealthy individuals from the ruling stratum whose wealth is due to their position in the power structure. See A. M. Babu, *African Socialism or Socialist Africa?* Zimbabwe Publishing House, Harare, 1981, p.125. In the context of the chief's remarks, I also take it that being highly interconnected does not mean the same as being homogeneous.

²⁹ See B.Caine, *Biography and History*, Hampshire, Macmillan, 2010, pp.111-116. Caine argues that in microhistory, individual lives can be used to illustrate wider historical patterns.

By exploring how individual actors have influenced the meaning and deployment of social categories through a combination of kinship not forgetting personal loyalties, my approach helps illustrate or explain larger themes in macro-history. As Feireman observed, ‘The closer we get to a careful empirical concern with peasant discourse, the less uniform the peasantry appears’.³⁰ I hold that Gutu exhibits an appropriate case for analyzing the critical facets of my research topic. It is endowed with a corpus of distinguished personalities (politicians, prominent lawyers, business people, farmers and other professionals) born from the womb of the countryside who have immensely contributed in the socio-economic and political history of Zimbabwe.³¹

Equally fascinating are observations that, during World War II, about 8 percent of RAR soldiers originated from Masvingo and Gutu and that between the 1950s and 1960s, Gutu became a reliable source of RAR security force recruits.³² Such claims raise interest in micro-histories and warrant due scholarly attention. My thesis though does not just confirm a general trend but explores how networks and connections are relationally constructed. Rather than attempting to fit the individuals’ experiences into preconceived social histories, I celebrate the idea that a small unit (an individual, event or small community) can reflect a larger whole, thus, highlighting and demonstrating their significance in historical debate. As Werbner observed, “Only through knowledge of the sensitive, sometimes petty, personal discourse among family members can we understand the moral argument resonating in each life history and between all the life histories”.³³ This explains why I also devote some sections of my thesis to expressions of the family’s personal discourses by analyzing changes in property relations and pathways of social reproduction which gain a perspective on the broader national scale.

³⁰ S. Feireman, *Peasant Intellectuals. Anthropology and History in Tanzania*. Wisconsin, University of Wisconsin Press, 1990, p.41.

³¹ Gutu is the home of political luminaries like Simon Muzenda (former Vice President of Zimbabwe), Michael and Nelson Mawema, Oliver Munyaradzi, Josiah Tungamirai, Vitalis Zvinavashe, Charles and Jethro Dhauramanzi, Shuvai Mahofa, Crispen Mandizvidza among others. Personalities from Gutu have also garnered prominent positions in opposition politics for example Heneri Dzinotyiwei, Nelson Chamisa, Job Sikhala, Elphas Mukonoweshuro, among other Senators and Members of Parliament.

³² T. Stapleton, *African Police and Soldiers in Colonial Zimbabwe 1923-80*, University of Rochester Press, Rochester, 2011, p.43. See Peter Godwin, *Mukiwa: A White Boy in Africa* (New York: Harper Collins, 1996), p.283.

³³ R. Werbner, *Tears Of The Dead. The Social Biography of an African Family*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 1991, p.3.

0.4 The theory of hegemony considered

Derived from *hegemon*, literally meaning, leader, hegemony traditionally signifies some combination of authority, leadership and domination.³⁴ Gramsci redefined hegemony to describe processes of power in which a dominant group does not merely rule by force but leads by consent. Hegemony thus entails a subtle calibration of coercion and consent by dominant groups in society. In a hegemonic situation, subordinate groups appear actively to support and subscribe to values, ideals and objectives which incorporate them into the prevailing structures of power.³⁵

In his work, Gramsci is particularly concerned with what he perceives as the division of all societies into two groups namely the privileged and the marginalized, the oppressor and the oppressed, the dominant and the subordinate. He argued that the political structure resorted to coercion to maintain its domination while the civil society resorted to obtaining consent of the citizens to maintain its domination. The institutions of civil society, that is, the family, school and church would familiarize the citizens with the rules of behaviour and teach them to show natural respect to the authority of the ruling class. Thus, private life, the work place, religion and civil society in general are contested battlegrounds in the struggle to achieve societal transformation.

Hegemony, thus, assumes a plain concern given by the majority of the population to a certain direction suggested by the society's opinion leaders. As Strinati puts it, the theory suggests that 'subordinated groups accept the ideas, values and leadership of the dominant groups not because they are physically or mentally induced to do so, nor because they are ideologically indoctrinated, but because they have reasons of their own'.³⁶ This signifies the ideological supremacy of a system of values that supports the interests of the predominant groups.

Hegemonic ideals dictate that dominant groups in society maintain their dominance by securing spontaneous consent of subordinate groups through the negotiated construction of a political, socio-economic consensus. According to Gramsci, any group that wishes to dominate

³⁴ For a more detailed overview of the historical precedents to Gramsci's hegemony, see Jeremy Lester, *Dialogue of Negation: Debates on Hegemony in Russia and the West*, Pluto Press, London, 2000, pp1-51.

³⁵ J. Storey, *Culture and Power in Cultural Studies; The Politics of Signification*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh 2010, p.6.

³⁶ D. Strinati, *An Introduction to Theories of Popular Culture*, Routledge, London, 1995, p.166.

has to move beyond narrow interests, to exert intellectual, moral leadership, make alliances and compromises with a variety of social forces. The union of social forces would then form the basis of consent to a certain social order which produces and reproduces the hegemony of the dominant group through a nexus of institutions, social relations and ideas.

Gramsci also gave much thought to the question of the role of intellectuals in society. He does not define intellectual activity by its intrinsic nature but locates it in the ensemble of the system of relations in which these activities are manifested. He states that, ‘all men are intellectuals in that all have intellectual and rational faculties, but not all men have the social function of intellectuals’.³⁷ In my analysis of elitism, I also invoke Feireman’s interpretation of peasant intellectuals whom, he says, are not characterized by their thought but by their social position which is directive, organizational or educative.³⁸ In his study of the Shambaai of Tanzania, Feireman underlines that poor or uneducated (in the Western sense) as people might be, this does not imply that they are necessarily an imbecile lot to seek leadership from other status groups to create dissenting discourses. It is therefore, the submission of this thesis that when referring to the elite in Gutu, focus should not be on the educated as has been the celebrated position because every social group creates its own intellectuals.

By invoking the theory of hegemony into the analysis of elite making, the thesis also provides means towards understanding cultural consumption in terms of an active relationship between modes of production and consumption. As Dombroski puts it, ‘culture is the stuff of which power is made and by which it is maintained’.³⁹ Gramsci’s concept of hegemony becomes an ideal lens for revealing how the persistence of differences in educational opportunities reinforced the dominating customs, style of living and the whole elite subcultures with regard to consumption patterns, cherished life goals and the general mode of life.

The theory also helps delineate what constitutes success, good social relations and a desirable life. As a result, to understand the complex social issues that lie at the heart of the African elite in Gutu, I take into account the way people’s daily experiences were organized. As Williams has succinctly observed, although hegemony is characterized by high levels of consensus, it is never without conflict or resistance. His argument is that, hegemony does not just

³⁷ A. Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebook*, edited and translated by Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith, 1971, p.9.

³⁸ S. Feireman, *Peasant Intellectuals. Anthropology and History in Tanzania*, University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1990, p.5.

³⁹ R. Dombroski, *Antonio Gramsci*, Twayne, Boston, 1989, p.132.

passively exist as a form of dominance. In fact, it has to be continually renewed just as it is also continually resisted and altered by pressures which are not at all its own.⁴⁰ In this study, I deploy the concept of hegemony to reveal how the African elite might have progressively asserted their domination upon the majority of the population or vice versa.

0.5 Conceptualizing the Elites

The concept 'elite' poses analytical difficulties as it can be seen working in different social, political and economic contexts, often displaying contradictory dimensions. With particular reference to Africa, the study of history has been dependent on the elite as an analytical and methodological tool. However, despite the centrality of the elite to African history, what has been lacking is a model for analyzing them. The big question is who are elites?

John Scott has professed that the word is probably one of the most misused or abused in the sociological lexicon in that it can be viewed as a system of classification; a structure for the definition and interaction of groups; a system of social inequality or a strategic network of redistribution. He went on to define the elite as "social groupings whose members occupy similarly advantaged command situations in the social distribution of authority and are linked to one another through demographic processes of circulation and interaction".⁴¹ The term can also be seen, *inter alia*, as a socio-economic format in which individuals and groups navigate the imperatives of economic survival, material appropriation and inter-personal power.

Theories of dependency, development and underdevelopment which came into vogue in the 1970's have discussed the developing countries' elite primarily as a part of the world economic order. The general thinking of the theorists was that colonialism shaped the elite through the process of "bourgeoisification" of Africans during which leaders of the nationalist movement and the educated were increasingly concerned with acquiring wealth and power. Samir Amin has linked the elite of developing countries with the rich countries, arguing that the African elite originated from the needs of colonialism.⁴² He has analyzed the elite of developing

⁴⁰ R. Williams, *Marxism and Literature*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1977, p.112.

⁴¹ J. Scott, 'Transformations in the British Economic Elite' in Mattei Dogan (ed.) *Elite Configurations at the Apex of Power*, Brill Leiden, Boston, 2003, p.157.

⁴² S. Amin identifies the elite in institutional terms born of colonial experiences as people who occupy commanding positions. See Samir Amin, *The Class Struggle in Africa*.

countries and given the characteristics of the elite as valued work, high income, good education and the ownership and control of an enterprise.

Theorists on elite studies like Vilfredo Pareto and Gaetano Mosca generally came to define the term ‘elite’ as a French derivative where it meant something ‘excellent’.⁴³ Apart from intelligence and talent; Pareto also recognized courage and cunning as the qualities of elite. He argued that no matter what their occupation, whether they are prostitutes or scholars – all those who had succeeded were considered by their peers and the public as the best qualified to be considered as the elite of society. Even though Pareto placed emphasis on the so-called ‘best’, these were indeed not the best in any moral sense, but in the social.⁴⁴ On a broader spectrum, when Pareto spoke of the elite, he did not only mean those who exercised the political functions of administration or government, but also those who, without being officials, influenced or determined the conduct of the governing minority. Thus, in the most general and abstract way, ‘elite’ was used to refer to any ostensibly powerful group or, any arbitrarily defined category of advantaged, qualified, privileged or superior people.

For de Swaan et al, elite groups are those who control a wide range of material, symbolic and political resources.⁴⁵ This control differentiates them from the rest of the population and transforms them into groups that may be aware of their particular role as ‘elites’. An important question for investigation is the extent to which, in any particular empirical situation, the occupants of top command situations are integrated through interaction and association into one or more cohesive blocs.

Wright Mills defines elites as those who occupy the command posts, who may be seen as the possessors of power, wealth and celebrity. He went further to define them in terms of psychological, moral criteria, as certain kinds of selected individuals of superior character and energy.⁴⁶ Admittedly, the concept has aggregated and accumulated different meanings overtime.

Towards my mould of an operational definition, I also observed that the typical public definitions and most academic usages of the term obscure more than it explicates. Conventional usage applies elite to almost any powerful, upper class, wealthy, privileged person, who is also assumed to be more intelligent. This makes elitism a socially constructed phenomenon whose

⁴³ See G. Mosca, *The Ruling Class*, p.62.

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, p.258.

⁴⁵ A. De Swaan, J. Manor, E. Oyen and E. Reis, ‘Elite Perceptions of the Poor: Reflections for a Comparative Research Project’, *Current Sociology*, 48 (1) 2000, p.46.

⁴⁶ C. W. Mills, *The Power Elite*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1956, p.13.

purpose is to inculcate beliefs; ensure group cohesion and legitimate institutions. I also came to realize that in as much as the characteristics for eliteness were largely Eurocentric, the Shona language possessed some pragmatic and unique concepts like *vakuru-vakuru*, *mitekwatekwa*, *mbozha*, *hwereshenga*, *vahombe*, *shasha*, (which refer to society's rich, 'big' and respectable people), *hurudza* (rich successful farmers) and *chef*⁴⁷ among others, which connote some form of stratification in accordance with the context in which they are used.

I deduced that possession of material goods that allowed consumption patterns well above the average was an obvious trait of those who could be labeled the elite. However, beyond material advantages were other attributes, like control of social and political resources as well as a prominent position within society. The prominent position would be reinforced by a strategic situation with which the individual understood the functioning of society itself as well as the formal and informal institutions with which one would be associated. In other words, there are multiple bonds of kinship which are major sources of personal and local identity which overshadow the importance of material possessions. This resonates with Foucault's view that "individuals are conditioned not by economic and social forces but by ways in which society thought about, described itself, and by social practices elaborated to impose them".⁴⁸

Given the intrinsic ambiguities it carries, the term 'elite' therefore encapsulates all those who are high in the hierarchy and occupy any privileged positions in diverse activities. The concept also denotes that although there may be an incongruence of status as determined by normative expectations, whereby an individual displays some contradictory stimuli to others, one can still qualify to be the elite of a society. In other words, if the individual simultaneously projects two conflicting stimuli such as respect and contempt; some people may react to the former type of stimuli and show respect. On the other hand, others may react to the latter type of stimuli and show their contempt for the individual. Such a situation arises because as already indicated, bonds of kinship, religion, language, loyalty as well as tradition are major sources of personal and social identity.

In this study, the elite are defined as a formal or informal reference group of individuals or groups who show highest ability in their field of activity and are believed to wield informational, utilitarian and value expressive influence within a given society. These may be the

⁴⁷ *Chef* is a term borrowed from Mozambique denoting a person of high political standing.

⁴⁸ M. Foucault, *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*, Tavistock, New York, 1965, p.89.

rich, powerful and influential; those who have managed to rise noticeably above the rest of the population in terms of wealth, power, prestige and privilege. From a stratificational perspective, these elite occupy positions on the top levels of the social hierarchy which gives them the leeway to control or influence strategic decisions while in a functional sense, these groups may or may not be alienated from the formal authority structures.

0.5.1 Elite typologies: The matrix and overlapping indices of elite attributes

The muddle in terminology associated with the overlapping indicators of elite status namely wealth, prestige and power has made any discussion of the elite rather confusing because each concept conveys a different image to a reader's mind. In my analysis of the heterogeneity characterizing elite configurations, I construe that whether traditional or modern; the elite exhibited certain patterns of behaviour and attitude which were typical. The constellation of elite typologies embraced in this thesis required the pluralist interpretation of elite configuration because of the strength of the interconnections, interlock, interchangeability or interpenetration among the various elite categories.⁴⁹ The guarantees of status stratification hinge upon whether status is ascribed or achieved. Within African society, members of a chief's family were assured of higher status than members of a commoner's family because status was ascribed.⁵⁰ Ascribed roles as well as statuses would go hand in hand with a monopolization of ideal and material goods or opportunities. As shown later in the study, among chiefs, such honorific preferences consisted of the privilege of wearing special costumes or eating special dishes taboo to others.

During the pre-colonial era, people of Gutu had no special currency or 'money' and yet they were not without their rich people. Their wealth was in their 'stock' - their wives, daughters, their cattle, sheep and goats. Those with cattle holdings and farming equipment were indeed

⁴⁹ In this thesis, elite diversity refers to the differentiation of elites according to structural functions — (political, agricultural, economic, cultural, religious, military, etc.). 'Configuration' refers to the relative position, size of various elite circles and their convergence or interchangeability in the constellation of power. Elite interlock or interpenetration signifies movements or transition from one elite position to another, for example from being a business person to assuming political party leadership. Through elite circulation, reproduction, interlock or interpenetration becomes both horizontal and vertical. A common acceptance of each other's actions and roles as legitimate brings about elite cohesion. Elite cousinhood refers to common parentage of multiple elite typologies for example a family which might have business people and politicians, indicating a narrow social base of elite recruitment. In the majority of cases recruitment into elite status through cousinhood is through social reproduction rather than meritocracy. Mattei Dogan discusses the concepts of elite interlock, interchangeability and cousinhood in greater detail. See Mattei Dogan (ed.), *Elite Configurations at the Apex of Power*, Brill, Boston 2003, pp.1-17.

⁵⁰ A. K. H. Weinrich, *Black and White Elites in Rural Rhodesia*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1973, p.102.

among the richest people in their villages. Cattle could be invested in several ways, each with differing implications. Cattle could be herded out and such arrangements were a measure of wealth. For a tradesman, wealth was his skill and wares. The colonial and post-colonial periods witnessed different strategies in accumulation for survival and earning capacities in the cash economy. This played a fundamental role in differentiating society. The great disparity in living standards meant that status could be achieved. The extent to which the achieved status by European-trained-African elite induced the revaluation of traditional prestige positions is among the dominant trends in my analysis of the gravity of hegemonic status stratification in Gutu. The status factors are collapsed to include relative wealth (amount of economic assets), power (the degree of personal choice and influence over others) and prestige (the degree of recognition received from the authority of traditional rulers colonial situation had the effects).

In as much as Kruijer considers power as the ability to further the objectives of a person or group by limiting the behavioural choices of other persons or groups,⁵¹ this thesis advances that there are several forms and locations of power. Individuals may exercise power formally and informally. However, if formal sources of power were to be defined exclusively as institutional or organisational positions, as Camp argues, this would also limit our understanding of actual elite decision-making.⁵² In this thesis, I hold that power is not concentrated in official structures only, but it is widely diffused through the society. Scott is of the view that the shaping of society is through ‘a complex interaction of repressive and persuasive power where people are discursively formed into subalterns with or without a direct coercive action on the part of the state’.⁵³

Foucault viewed power as dynamic, dispersed, circulating, heteromorphous and always linked to knowledge, adding that the differences in the distribution of knowledge are a source of power.⁵⁴ This confirms that power is an equally elusive concept partly because of its range of conceptual applications. Another fairly sympathetic definition of power is that it is the ability to influence the decision-making process or ability to draw up rules for a group together with the

⁵¹ G. J. Kruijer, *Development through Liberation: Third World Problems and Solutions*, Macmillan, London, 1987, p.47.

⁵²R. Camp, ‘Informal and Formal Networking among Elite Mexican Capitalists and Politicians’ in Mattei Dogan (ed.), *Elite Configurations at the Apex of Power*, Brill Leiden, Boston, 2003, p.136.

⁵³ J.Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*, 1985, p.37.

⁵⁴ M. Foucault, *Power or Knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings 1972-1977*, Harvester Press, Sussex,1980, p.62.

necessary sanctions.⁵⁵ In this study, power is seen in the framework of the social system, bound up with certain positions from which it can be exercised. Beyond this, there is need to avoid confusing power with related concepts like authority and prestige or status.⁵⁶ I consider it the thrust of my thesis to establish the extent to which power is constantly contested, keeps on changing or even when this contest and change are clouded by the arrogance of dominant. The elite thrive on the overt submission on the part of the masses. The question which begs for an answer is whether in situations that seem to be hegemonic, are there always acts of resistance or ‘weapons of the weak’⁵⁷ through which various strategies to resist publicly are expressed in disguised form?

As indicated above, the indices of elite status are intertwined. A wealthy person will be expected to have power because he can use his wealth to acquire the labour and services of others who, as his employees, have to take instructions from him. The absence of wealth on the other hand will not enhance prestige neither will it help in the acquisition of power nor the conferment of any privileges. In this instance, privileges are the advantages, immunities or rights a person enjoys in society while prestige represents a person’s standing in society which determines the extent to which others look up to him with respect. As a key to elite status, I consider that prestige results from real or imagined power and influence. Beyond material advantages, a member of the elite has other attributes like control of socio-political resources and a prominent position within society. In my conceptualization of indices of elite status, the different positions within social space were taken to correspond to life styles and systems of differential deviations.

Production and consumption were considered to have the capacity to remake or redefine the life situations and objective conditions of elites. As Michael Goldhaber puts it, ‘variations within materialistic culture which include conspicuous consumption presupposed that personal identity was created through personal consumption of a unique assembly or constellation of

⁵⁵ Power can be political, social and economic thus it can be used in making political decisions as well as in appropriating goods.

⁵⁶ Authority is legitimate power but not all power is authority. Status or prestige involves the subjective evaluation of an individual or group by others. Power and status often exist in symbiotic union but are not identical. In this study, the terms ‘honour’, ‘respect’ and ‘esteem’ are considered synonymous.

⁵⁷ J. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*, 1985, p.295. Scott reveals a cornucopia of strategies and actions that lie beneath the surface of open revolt, marked by passive non-compliance, subtle sabotage, evasion and deception. These ‘weapons of the weak’ also include foot dragging, dissimulation, false compliance, pilfering, feigned ignorance, slander, arson, sabotage and so forth. Such resistance means that it does not require strategic co-ordination; it avoids direct confrontation with the authority of elites.

status goods'.⁵⁸ Though embedded in culture, lifestyle is described in this thesis in terms of shared values or tastes as reflected in conspicuous consumption patterns towards the manufacturing of the elite.

Weiss notes how after independence, the lifestyle of Zimbabwe's powerful political elite changed to match that of whites. She observed that 'the homes of elites took on a 'Rhodie' flavour, while official cars and bodyguards became a norm which created new barriers between new rulers and ruled'.⁵⁹ The work of Timothy Burke is equally important for the thesis's understanding of identification. He incorporates materiality into social constructivist thought and proposes the use of 'consumption' and 'commodification' in the construction of identity. Identity is about who 'we' are, whether this 'we' is an individual or a group. Of interest in this study is establishing whether identity is an individual or communal trait and how the concept ties in with the symbolic expression of difference.

People recognize themselves in their commodities. As Burke has noted, 'failure to consume at the proper rhythm, to keep one's body in style becomes the object of social reproof'⁶⁰. 'The body', Burke argues, 'is a distinctive site for the production of identity and selfhood'. Burke succinctly shows how commodification as a process continued to reshape the daily life, meaning and identity for the African elite through the use foreign luxury items.⁶¹ The thesis demonstrates how people depended upon consumerism to define their relationships and construct their identity. The concept of identity reinforced elite formation in that changes in status that came with physical relation were enhanced and given reality by new forms of dress, new names, new activities and games, new appropriate gestures and postures.

Accordingly, rather than solely focusing on identities, the thesis presents a case for identification. It also positions individuals as people can belong to numerous networks with varying socio-economic and political outcomes. I show how elite cousinhood or kinship networks binds an individual to a family group within which people based their self-identity; and the context within which decisions were made and actions taken. Norman Jacobs notes that 'by adhering to the relationships of father and son, husband and wife, older brother and younger

⁵⁸ Consumer commodities or material objects can play a role in esteem by improving a person's standing or status in a group. I take it that goods are used to mark the identities of different groups in society. See also John Desmond, *Consuming Behaviour*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2003, p.151; G.Simmel, 'Fashion', *American Journal of Sociology* 62, 6, pp.541-558.

⁵⁹ R. Weiss, *Zimbabwe and the New Elite*, British Academic Press, London, 1994, pp142-143.

brother, a person automatically conforms to a hierarchical social arrangement that reflects and promotes group interests over those of the individual'.⁶⁰

My study also shows how subordination of the individual to the family carried with it a complex set of social roles as well as socially imposed definitions of the individual. Studies by Hart yielded that in South Korea, a family's ability or inability to study Confucianism became a means to perpetuate a class, tangible, and long lasting distinction between those wealthy families with those without riches.⁶¹ Through the family, some status may be inherited thereby conferring widely varying degrees of power and wealth upon individuals.

Within communities are opinion leaders who formally and informally influenced the actions or attitudes of others who may have been opinion seekers or merely opinion recipients. In his study of the Samkange family, Ranger describes Grace and Thompson as first-generation modernizers and a model of progressives. He highlights where Grace Samkange is referred to as a 'leader', 'a Mother with a voice', 'great prophetess', 'mother to us all', 'a famous and honoured figure' whose wisdom was sought by women of the *Ruwadzano* movement.⁶² As a mother-figure, Grace achieved status and influence which slotted her into the membership of the new elite as an opinion leader. Opinion leaders were gregarious, self-confident and innovative people who served as role models and commanded respect in society because of their social accessibility.

In this thesis, I recognize opinion leaders as an elite group whose effectiveness or ineffectiveness borders on their credibility as sources of information in addition to the advice they dispensed. Taken together, these groups constituted what were referred to as society's creams (*musvo*) who were presumed to possess the capacity to wield influence and take important decisions in society. Central to my study is the use of social network analysis for handling the various contacts, ties, connections, group attachments and meetings that people have and which relate one person or group to another as discussed below.

⁶⁰ N. Jacobs, *The Korean Road to Modernization and Development*, University of Illinois Press, Urbana, 1985, p.229.

⁶¹ D. Hart, 'Industrialization of Culture and Class Formation: The Case of South Korea's Emerging Middle-class' *Asian Profile*, April 1993, p.33.

⁶² T. Ranger, *Are We Not Also Men? The Samkange Family and African Politics in Zimbabwe 1920-64*, Baobab, Harare, 1995, pp.32, 34, 39, 43.

0.6 Research Methodology and Fieldwork Experiences

The Social Network Analysis (SNA), being a method largely used in the mapping and measuring of relationships, flows between people, was quite appropriate for this study. Network analysts believe that how an individual lives largely depends on how that individual is tied to the larger web of social connections. The SNA distinguishes between ‘points’ and ‘lines’ where the points in a network are the individuals, groups or organisations, while the lines are the social relationships that connect them. In this study, characteristics of networks were not investigated through the use of specific mathematical techniques designed to handle the geometrical properties of points and lines. Instead, the use of the reputational method for the identification of the interview sample proved inevitable. This approach attempted to overcome the possible discrepancy between formal and real positions of power. I identified several ‘nominators’ whom I asked to prepare independent lists of local leaders ranked in order of their importance. I then used these lists to generate a group of elites on whom there was common agreement.

The method revealed that there were some people who wielded real power but preferred to do so from behind the camouflage of front men. To some extent, this reflected the underlying imprecision about the social location of elites and the fluidity of the political arena. This approach again confirmed that there are no clear cut-off points to distinguish elites from non-elites given that an element of dynamism and movement always characterizes the achievement and loss of elite status. Some abdicated from their relatively exalted positions to being non-elites due to natural causes like old age or sickness. This created a challenge of establishing a rigid cut-off point separating the local elites from the non-elites in the village.

As a solution, I fixed an operational lower threshold of ‘eliteness’. Hence, my respondents included senior politicians, prominent businessmen and women; war veterans and former war collaborators, religious leaders, academics and socialites largely because my definition of ‘elite’ does not rely on occupational or wealth categories but encompasses a wide range of social groups and actors. My broad definition of elites provided room for a flexible sampling protocol and for my study to be feasible, participants had to be drawn from different gender and social groups. This enabled me to discover a core of tightly interconnected individuals from each circle (for example politics, business, agriculture and intellectuals) in close contact with other elites inside and beyond their immediate circle and group. The study also used

snow-ball sampling especially in cases where I was referred to potential informants by interviewees.

In their studies Gulliver⁶³ and Kapferer⁶⁴ made use of the social network concept as a means of containing and classifying the persons encountering one another within their field situations. Their studies established that the residential neighbourhood, kinship, equivalent occupational status and common associational membership may all be important means of recruitment to a personal network which is essentially ego-centred and composed of approximate social equals. Formally structured or unstructured interpersonal relations through which individuals carry on certain activities (and are also directly or indirectly coordinated with one another) determined my properties of networks. The incongruous mixture of network relationships and modes of recruitment and interconnectedness considered in this study had much to do with networking contacts which occurred in multiple settings for example educational (typically between any two students), occupational, social engagements, economic and political contacts among others.

The research methods used in data gathering, data analysis and presentation were qualitative rather than quantitative. I made use of a wide range of oral sources which included oral traditions or collective memories of the community and oral histories. Oral histories collected were mainly in the form of personal reminiscences of life histories. Individual memory is usually an indispensable source of evidence at the historian's disposal when investigating such fields of history given the silences of the written sources. The life stories throw light on the ways in which people crafted identities.

Culture and identity are not immutable 'givens' that are inscribed in population groups like genes, but are forged out of each individual's and each family's own experiences.⁶⁵ Thus, as a research method, a life history approach allows unique experiences of individuals to inform the broader history of the community whilst allowing the nuances that would otherwise not be found in official documents be revealed.⁶⁶ Oral histories also have to be treated with care, given that

⁶³ See P. H. Gulliver, *Neighbours and Networks: The idiom of kinship in social action among the Ndendeuli of Tanzania*, University of California Press, London.

⁶⁴ B. Kapferer, *Strategy and Transition in an African Factory*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1971.

⁶⁵ T. Keegan, *Facing the Storm: Portraits of Black Lives in Rural South Africa*, Zed Books, London 1988, p.146.

⁶⁶ See J. B. Wallace, 'Life stories' in J. F. Gubrium and A. Sankar (eds.), *Qualitative methods in aging research*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1994.

current attitudes as well as ideas can be projected back and past events reinterpreted in their light. I checked oral accounts against each other and against written materials when possible. However, since many of the persons covered by the study are now either dead or retired from public office, I also commented on what my informants were not saying in these accounts pointing to inconsistencies and unintended consequences that flow from their narratives. Faced with these kinds of problems, which affect any attempt at conducting oral history, I have tried to be quite conservative in determining what information could be utilized and how.

Family histories were also collected alongside more individual life histories. Family histories afforded me the opportunity to trace the trends of ‘reproduction’ and ‘replacement’ in the perpetuation of elite status and power. Their main weakness was that at times some were reluctant to be drawn into responding to questions they considered to be family secrets and highly personal. Issues like entrepreneurial continuity within families also evoked emotions bordering on envy and accusations of witchcraft. However, my own interpretation is built around the accounts which were most convincing. In an attempt not to isolate what people know and believe from what they are actually doing, the most qualified individuals within families were selected for information where possible.

Interviews were supplemented by my observations and field notes that I documented during my visit and stay in Gutu. Interviews were neither conducted exclusively nor predominantly in English or Shona but mainly according to the preferences of interviewees. These were taped and transcribed in order to capture original expressions and exact wording. Few requested that pseudonyms be used to ensure anonymity and confidentiality when making reference to issues they considered sensitive, for example, factional politics, wartime profit and the use of charms in business.

As a member of the Gutu Business Development Association and founding member of GESDA⁶⁷, I was privy to minutes of board meetings, annual statements, correspondence with donors and external constituents which proved helpful in investigating not only their missions, goals, and strategies but also the challenges elite associations faced.

⁶⁷ The researcher was behind the formation of GESDA initially as an idea to bring together former students of Alheit Secondary School where I was a deputy Headmaster. I was elected as the first Secretary of the association and later deputized Dr. Kokerai Rugara when the association assumed an appeal for membership beyond the confinement of former students to embrace all people from Gutu.

Archival research at the National Archives of Zimbabwe (NAZ) constituted one of the important stages of data gathering which form the mainstay of the study. The archival material used in this study include delineation reports, Native Commissioners' reports, native purchase areas files, education files and letters produced by some inhabitants of the district to district administrators. Target files included government publications, ministerial and departmental reports, Native Commissioner's Reports and publications in the *Native Affairs Department Annual (NADA)*. The archival material was crucial for purposes of establishing how the colonial system sustained the closely-knit hereditary or lineage elite culture. The challenge of using archival files has remained that the files are a colonial production riddled with biases and prejudices against the colonized. I have compared colonial accounts with oral historical accounts as well as other sources in order to counter their bias.

Biographical works offered insights into the motivations of particular individuals and the meanings of certain events in which they were partakers or observers. In *History in Practice*, Ludmilla Jordanova argues that taking a person "as the unit of analysis is to adopt a quite particular historical approach, which emphasizes individual agency and sees the individual as a point at which diverse historical forces converge, while taking the span of life as a natural period of time".⁶⁸

Bhebe in *Simon Vengayi Muzenda and the Struggle for and Liberation of Zimbabwe* shows how Muzenda's early life coincided with the formative years of a western educational system and the era of primitive accumulation, when white settlers were robbing Africans of their land and livestock.⁶⁹ Makari's *Magamba eChimurenga: Josiah Tungamirai* attempts an identification of functions of education in different areas of social life.⁷⁰

The problem with the use of biographical works is that the stress on individual motives and actions directs attention away from broader and more important questions underlying social and economic causes and political developments. For example, Mhiripiri argues that Bhebe eulogizes Muzenda and minimizes the significance of the former statesman's transgressions and, at times, outright criminal activities.⁷¹ Given that both Muzenda and Tungamirai were among

⁶⁸ L. Jordanova, *History in Practice*, London, Arnold, 2000, p.41.

⁶⁹ N. Bhebe, *Simon Muzenda and The Struggle For and Liberation of Zimbabwe*, Mambo Press, Gweru, 2004.

⁷⁰ C. S. Makari, *Magamba eChimureng. Josiah Tungamirai*, Mambo Press, Gweru, 2003.

⁷¹ N. Mhiripiri, 'Legitimising the Status Quo through the Writing of Biography: Ngwabi Bhebe's Simon Vengayi Muzenda and the Struggle for and Liberation of Zimbabwe' in *Journal of Literary Studies, Volume 25 Number 2, June 2009*, p.84.

Gutu's prominent political elites, their weaknesses might have been glossed over in an attempt to create likeable grand personalities of national importance worth emulating. In addition, for purposes of understanding elite formation in Gutu, the socio-economic and politically selective and allocative functions of education were subjected to further scrutiny. Indeed, Ranger's study of the Samkange family has shown how education reinforced elitist attitudes, whereby there was the tendency on the part of the individual to consider oneself, not only different from, but superior to the common people.⁷² Through the biographical studies, issues of identity and consciousness came to the fore and as a result, the importance of individual initiative and class aspirations was explored further in this study. These methods discussed are complementary – providing different sorts of information and throwing light on the topic from different angles.

0.7 Literature Review

In Zimbabwe, a vigorous body of research on the elites is largely dominated by social anthropologists-cum historians whose works exude the vitality of acknowledging rural social differentiation without advocating a return to the imagined glorious pre-colonial, pre-class society. As shall become apparent in this thesis, I make no serious attempt to refute or confirm their findings because that is not the thrust of my study. Instead, the choice of scholarly works that are reviewed in this section is not arbitrarily arrived at but was determined by my desire to identify emergent themes, problems and findings on the subject as well as critical knowledge gaps that bear upon my thesis.

Weinrich, whose main research on black and white elite in Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) was done between 1962 and 1964. It heavily draws from and strikingly resembles Lloyd's framework of describing and presenting the African elite. Lloyd has written extensively and more consistently on the subject of elite and their social role in his studies of West Africa, which, although mainly centred in Nigeria, are assumed by the author to have a general application or validity throughout tropical Africa.⁷³ In his theory of African elites, Lloyd describes in detail the various groups into which he has divided African society-their composition, group characteristics, relationship to each other as well as the respective roles which each group plays

⁷² T. Ranger, *Are We Not Also Men? The Samkange Family and African Politics in Zimbabwe 1920-64*.

⁷³ P. C. Lloyd, *Africa in Social Change: Changing Traditional Societies in the Modern World*, Penguin Books, Harmandsworth, 1967.

in African development and change.

Along similar lines, Weinrich also displayed categories of elite membership namely the religious, medical, educational, agricultural and commercial elites and sub-elites.⁷⁴ During her research, which focused on interactions of Africans and Europeans in the rural areas of Rhodesia, Weinrich had contacts with members of the European elite who included district commissioners, extension officers, missionaries, farmers; and African elites such as doctors, school inspectors and school managers among others. As a result, even in her definition of the elite, there is a deliberate slant or temptation towards acknowledging the possession of western education and wealth as the major criteria distinguishing the elite from the non-elite. Even though, to varying degrees herculean efforts to deal with aspects of social differentiation and elite statuses were made, they exhibited conceptual bankruptcy through the creation of a rigid template which assumed that Africans who enjoyed elite status in their own society are indeed those who had most thoroughly accepted European values and behaviour patterns.

In this thesis, I argue that the acceptance of the western conception of an educated person as a paradigm for Africa, for instance, does not recognize the traditional African holistic view which attaches ethical dimensions to education. The canons of western intellectualism are not only mechanically reductionist, but exercise a distorting influence over the ideals of African peasant intellectualism. While the concepts of 'education' and the 'educated person' are both common in all cultures, they nevertheless, have respective different connotations in different cultures. In his scholarly conception, J.A. Akinpelu gives a vivid picture of an African understanding of an educated person. He argues that,

The educated man can be described as one who combines expertise in some specific economic skills with soundness of character and wisdom in judgment. He is one who is equipped to handle successfully the problems of living in his immediate and extended family; who is well versed in the folklores and genealogies of his ancestors; who has some skill to handle some minor health problems and where to obtain advice and help in major ones; who stands well with the ancestral spirits of his family and knows how to observe their worship; who has the ability to discharge his social and political duties; who is wise and shrewd in judgment; who expresses himself not in too many words but rather in proverbs and analogies leaving his hearers to unravel his thoughts; who is self-controlled under provocation, dignified in sorrow and restrained in success; and finally and most importantly, who is of excellent character.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ A. K. H. Weinrich, *Black and white elites in rural Rhodesia*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1973, p.v.

⁷⁵ J. A. Akinpelu, *An Introduction to the philosophy of Education*, London, Macmillan Publishers, 1987, pp.178-179. Accessed on <http://www.ipanafrican.com/docs/vol2no3/IdeaOfAn EducatedPerson.pdf>:27-Jan-2013.

Evidence of a well-integrated personality with positive moral dispositions and observance of the ethical norms and values of the society were indeed prerequisites for elite manufacturing. In her study of the Msengezi area, Cheater established that while wealth, occupation and leadership were the most important criteria for social status, “there were other ‘less’ important components which included capacity for hard work; organizational ability; empathy and knowledge and good behaviour among many others”.⁷⁶

Weinrich seems to have mostly concentrated on the description and tabulation of quantifiable life-style traits without analyzing the symbiosis between social networks, accumulation of wealth and power relationships in the making of elites.⁷⁷ People are assumed to be guided by instinct. Whatever social structure develops, is founded on the instinct of survival without due consideration of the primacy of social capital. In addition, her works are largely preoccupied with discussions relating to the system of positions and marginally to the individuals occupying the positions. In this thesis, I proffer that it is one thing to ask why different positions carry different degrees of prestige, and quite another to ask how certain individuals got into those positions. I further argue that access to and ability to deploy power and resources are very critical in identifying elites. As such I treat elite transformation and mobility in the context of how social roles are dictated by differences in socio-economic and political structures.

While her version of elite analysis is definitely a distinctive and illuminating contribution to relevant insights on elite studies, it does not incisively explore the social backgrounds, recruitment and socialization processes of inter and intra-elite networks and fruits of their social reproduction. Her works though provide a stimulating intellectual framework around which I have organised my research focusing on the micro-historical processes that drive elites to engage in collective action. My thesis further extrapolates on the aspects of elite interlock and interchangeability as essential factors of elite configuration and analysis.

S. I. G. Mudenge, G. C. Mazarire and C. Mararike concur that cattle as indicators of socio-economic status and public displays of wealth, occupied a central place since the pre-

⁷⁶ A. P. Cheater, *Idioms of Accumulation. Rural Development and Class Formation among Freeholders in Zimbabwe*, Mambo Press, Gweru, 1984,p.120-121.

⁷⁷ A. K. H. Weinrich, ‘Rhodesian African Elites’ pp 22-28. See also A. K. H. Weinrich, *Black and White Elites in Rural Rhodesia*. Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1973.

colonial economies.⁷⁸ Indeed, pre-colonial elites could more easily transmit wealth, opportunity, power, and privilege to their children. As a function of networks of amity, Mazarire describes how lineage heads transformed their *vakuwasha* (son-in-laws) from unrelated totemic groups into *makota* (councillors) and their totemic kinsfolk into *machinda* or governors.⁷⁹ The interesting feature which my thesis develops further is elite cousinhood whereby intermingling by marriage and personalized bonds of mutually beneficial reciprocity have contributed towards the transmission of elite positions. My argument is that, the legitimacy of the elites is ultimately derived from their ability to nourish the clientele on which their power rests.

Robert Leys' study in Zimbabwe's southern province of Masvingo established that the roots of processes of social, economic and political differentiation lay in the colonial past. At the micro-level, his classical analysis distinguished between 'rich', 'middle' and 'poor' peasant households on the basis of criteria that distinguish between different patterns of labour utilization in household production. Schematically, 'rich peasants' hired non-household labour, 'middle peasants' used exclusively household labour and 'poor peasants' hired out family labour.⁸⁰ I explore this further to show how working parties were markers of elite status.

In his study of the Shambaai District of Tanzania, Feireman observed that the peasant was not an undifferentiated and homogenous mass but had diverse experiences beyond the peasant world.⁸¹ The rural population, largely labeled as 'the peasantry', is certainly not a homogeneous category because there are cumulative advantages accruing to the better-off in a rural economy as in any other. In acknowledgement of the heterogeneity of the peasant community, Mahmood Mamdani argues that the community cannot be understood as a given traditional constant dragged through historical time.⁸² Instead, the peasant communities are constructed and reconstructed in practice through social struggles.⁸³ In the present thesis, I posit that by identifying peasants as a distinct social or economic group and by stressing their

⁷⁸ S. I. G. Mudenge, *Political History of Munhumutapa c 1400-1902*, African Publishing Group, Harare 2011; C.G. Mararike, *Survival Strategies in Rural Zimbabwe: The role of Assets, Indigenous Knowledge and Organisations*, Mond Books, Harare, 1999, p.89.

⁷⁹ G. Mazarire, 'Reflections on Pre-colonial Zimbabwe, c.850-1880s.' In *Becoming Zimbabwe: An History from the Pre-colonial Period to 2008*, edited by Brian Raftopolous and Alois Mlambo, Harare, Weaver Press, p 13. See also Michael Bratton, *Power Politics in Zimbabwe*, p.35.

⁸⁰ R. Leys, 'Drought and drought relief in southern Zimbabwe' p.259.

⁸¹ S. Feireman, *Peasant Intellectuals*, p.24.

⁸² M. Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the legacy of Late Colonialism*, James Currey, London 1996, p.205.

⁸³ Ibid.

subordination to other social groups, there is a risk of overlooking differences of social and economic status within the peasant society itself.

My study further buttresses the concurrence in the studies by Ranger and Cheater among others, that peasants are not a uniform, homogeneous set of families, all with the same status and prospects within their communities, but are always and everywhere typified by internal differentiation along many lines. Ranger in *Peasant Consciousness and Guerrilla War in Zimbabwe* has shown how differentiation and the emergence of a rich peasantry were encouraged, both directly and indirectly by the policies of colonial government.⁸⁴ He has also noted that in the 1940s and 50s, the Native Purchase farmers began to show signs that they would blossom into a ‘class’ of rural entrepreneurs.⁸⁵ To this end, I contest that the process of impoverishment born of colonial policies would not be found uniformly through the social landscape of the rural populace.

The crucial point I maintain is that the Africans were not simply passive receptors or active resistors of the penetration of capital, but they often contained reactions to it which led to the emergence of a distinct and contradictory internal transition towards capitalism leading to the emergence and growth of an elite. Among Africans, ‘the incentive to become wealthy was ever-present, [as] individuals associated wealth with better and easier life, hence, the need to acquire it.’⁸⁶

Gloria Passmore in *The National Policy of Community Development in Rhodesia* has shown how the training of agricultural demonstrators and Alvord’s ‘Gospel of the plough’ brought sweeping changes not only in the improvement of tillage methods but general standards of living.⁸⁷ I pursue her observations in an effort to reveal how the Alvordian philosophy ushered an avalanche of elite status factors upon African communities.

Michael West discusses the development of an African middle class in Zimbabwe between 1890 and 1965. He illustrates how Africans were able to avail themselves of scarce educational opportunities in a bid to achieve some degree of upward mobility. By 1965, there had come into being a self-conscious, corporate African middle class that conceived itself as

⁸⁴ T. Ranger, *Peasant consciousness and guerrilla war in Zimbabwe: A comparative study*, James Currey, London, 1985.

⁸⁵ Ibid, p.237.

⁸⁶ R. M. G. Mtetwa, ‘The Political and Economic History of the Duma People of South Eastern Rhodesia from the early 19th century to 1945’, Unpublished DPhil. Thesis, University of Rhodesia, 1976, p.284.

⁸⁷ G. Passmore, *The National Policy of Community Development in Rhodesia: With Special Reference to Local Government in the African Rural Areas*, University of Rhodesia, Salisbury, 1972, p.17.

different both from the white community and from African workers and peasants.⁸⁸ Yet, although West's work is invaluable, his consideration of the origins, identity and consciousness of the elite, their social and political affiliations that provided the structure and strength to their numbers tends to have an urban bias.

Davis and Dopcke demonstrated how the introduction into the spiritual citadel of behavioural traits borrowed from the secular world aroused protests against the overall operations of the Dutch Reformed Church in Gutu.⁸⁹ They show how missionaries were a veritable self-contained governing structure which wielded power over Africans' access to farmland, to collect taxes, administer statutory destocking, labour requisitioning and agricultural edicts for their benefit.⁹⁰ These scholars have made an incisive analysis of missionaries' conspicuous practices of accumulation in Gutu, as epitomized by Orlandini's acquisitive tendencies. However, without downplaying the impressive contribution by these scholars, I go further to consider the profound contradictions that characterized the whole process of rural dispossession through missionary activities.

My thesis delves deeper to establish how the rural salarieds exploited contradictions between the ideal and the reality of missionary domination to the extent that some teachers survived and even occasionally thrived despite the tightening coils of missionary hegemony. Teachers would distance themselves from the 'traditional' community, refusing, for example, to participate in 'collective' tasks such as carrying water for dip tanks, which they regarded as demeaning.⁹¹ Like Summers⁹², Davis and Dopcke reveal cases leading to the rejection of mission authority by school pupils and the community at large. Evaluated through the prism of the DRC's civilizing mission, the authors give the general impression that Orlandini failed the people of Gutu.

Little credit is given to the role of missionaries in facilitating entrepreneurship among Africans. This is an area which I address in concurrence with McLaughlin's claim that Catholics

⁸⁸ M. West, *The Rise of an African Middle Class: Colonial Zimbabwe, 1898-1965*, Indiana University Press, Indianapolis, 2002.

⁸⁹ B. Davis and W. Dopcke, 'Survival and Accumulation in Gutu: Class Formation and the Rise of the State in Colonial Zimbabwe, 1900-1939' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol.14, No. 1, 1987, pp.64-98.

⁹⁰ *Ibid*, p.75.

⁹¹ *Ibid*, p.77-78.

⁹² C. Summers, 'African Activism and Educational Strategies in Southern Rhodesia 1920-1934', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Volume 20, No.1 (March 1994), p.14.

stimulated the rise of African entrepreneurship.⁹³ My thesis explores the missionary enterprise from a multi-dimensional perspective. The thrust is to show how missionary activities catalyzed the creation of varied elite typologies given that some of the political luminaries of Gutu namely Simon Muzenda and Josiah Tungamirai were indeed products of Mutero mission.⁹⁴ Thus, I develop Davies and Dopcke's African strategies for accumulation and survival beyond the Great Depression era.

Michael Owusu also argues that throughout rural Africa, sharp class inequities and peasant exploitation were worsened by world recessions like the Great Depression when drastic measures were taken to curtail African peasant production.⁹⁵ While these measures had the desired consequences of forcing Africans to participate in wage labour market, I contest the stance that Africans were everywhere driven out of business by European competition or changes in economic structure. My thesis makes an effort to expose the gaps between the law and its implementation which Africans capitalized upon to create opportunities for themselves. I argue that Africans' relative exploitability and vulnerability to dispossession enabled some of them to survive more or less independently in the interstices of economic or social life.

Cheater's study of the Msengezi area established that among the farmers, distinctions of wealth were reflected most noticeably in ownership of machinery, standards of housing, employment of workers, number of wives and thrift.⁹⁶ She inadvertently addresses some aspects of how adherence to a Christian denomination was significantly related to farming efficiency upon observing that in Msengezi in 1973, fewer Methodists and more Anglicans and Seventh Day Adventists were found in the 'capitalist' category.⁹⁷ Similarly, in his study of the south-eastern Shona districts of Gutu, Bikita and Umtali, Daneel found that the Zionists had a slight advantage over the Apostles in numbers of 'Master Farmers'.⁹⁸ Along similar lines, a survey of the social status of saints by Weinrich yielded that among the rural Karanga, the Christians of the Mission Churches formed an upper stratum, the Ethiopian Churches a middle stratum and the

⁹³ J. McLaughlin, *On the Frontline. Catholic Missions in Zimbabwe's Liberation War*, Baobab Books, Harare, 1996, p.191.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ M. Owusu, 'Agriculture and rural development since 1935' in Ali Mazrui (ed.) *General History of Africa VIII Africa Since 1935*, UNESCO, 2003 p.344.

⁹⁶ A. P. Cheater, *Idioms of Accumulation*, p.118.

⁹⁷ Ibid, p.93.

⁹⁸ M. L. Daneel, *Old and New in Southern Shona Independent Churches, Vol.1*. Mouton, The Hague, 1971

Zionists, Apostles and pagans a lower stratum.⁹⁹

The above sentiments are used to sustain a stereotypical belief, which my thesis refutes, that African Initiated Church (AIC) followers were uneducated, rural and culturally marginal yet these evangelicals were and are prominent power brokers increasingly well represented among economic and political elites. Although literature on church groups operating in Gutu abounds through works of scholars like M. L. Daneel, these works have tended to stress the rise, development and general history of such groups leaving out the interface between religion and the manufacturing of power elites. Of interest in this study, however, is to establish the sprouting of religious movements (particularly in the post-colonial era) as cases where people use their faith to serve the common good or whether we have merely witnessed the triumph of another interest group with a distinctive vision for society.

Ranger's study of the Samkange family shows the nexus between motivation for mobility and ego-needs operating within stratified societies. He lays emphasis on the notion that families cannot remain at the top of the class system without considerable training, discipline and even devotion to duty.¹⁰⁰ He has shown how education reinforced attitudes of elitism with affluent and educated parents transmitting elite class status to their children.¹⁰¹ Ranger thus brings to the fore matters of elitist identity and consciousness which my study build upon to establish how intergenerational social mobility and social reproduction were propelled within families where parents had some prior claim to elite standing.

Bessant and Muringai's study of the Nyangoni family of Chiweshe resonates with Ranger's findings that being born into a middle-class or a working class home profoundly influences the family members' prospects of obtaining education and the penultimate mobility.¹⁰² A careful tracing of the socio-economic position of individual families through a consideration of overlapping status factors like property, prestige and stratum is developed in my thesis to show prospects of upward and downward social mobility among communities.

Timothy Burke's *Lifebouy Men and Lux Women* relishes on the role played by commodity culture and changing patterns of consumption in marking and reinforcing identity and distinction within and between groups. Within this framework, Burke explores the intricate

⁹⁹ A. K. H. Weinrich, *Black and White elites in rural Rhodesia*, 1969, p.114.

¹⁰⁰ T. Ranger, *Are We Not Also Men?* p.26.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² L. Bessant and E. Muringai, 'Peasants, Businessmen, and Moral Economy in the Chiweshe Reserve, Colonial Zimbabwe, 1930-1968,' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol 19, Issue 4 (Dec., 1993), p.582.

relations between the history of commodification and the embodied aspects of aesthetics for the African elite in a colonial society.¹⁰³ He shows that although goods are neutral, their uses are social and so, they can be used as fences or bridges in the transmission of status. He saw fashion helping in reproducing social power and privilege by marking, maintaining social differences and distinctions upon which it in part depended as well as depends. He stresses how most of the African students attending missions and state schools from the 1920s onwards found themselves in a world where they were encouraged to think of themselves as the favoured clean among the ‘great unwashed’ of the uneducated and unconverted.

Such background knowledge opens avenues for my thesis to unpack how colonial norms of hygiene, appearance and manners touched on other forms of social positioning, definition and struggle among the Gutu communities. Burke’s work provides a base for further interrogation of the extent to which arbitrary tastes and changing patterns of consumption were continually transmitted into hegemonic ways of life by dominant elites for example teachers who ‘showed an evident pride and confidence in their new habits...’¹⁰⁴

Bhebe’s *Simon Vengayi Muzenda and the Struggle for and Liberation of Zimbabwe* is a biography written in honour of a veteran freedom fighter and illustrious Zimbabwe nationalist and politician, the late Vice President Simon Muzenda. True to this gallant fighter and cultural icon, Bhebe also presents Muzenda as a wise elder and statesman, a shrewd, diligent and compassionate man of action. While the book provides a profound understanding of Muzenda, I pursue the complexities of the liberation struggle and some challenges of post-independent Zimbabwe to unpack the primacy of political capital in the social reproduction of political elites. With reference to the Muzenda family experience, I navigate the role of political parties as agencies of elite recruitment, channels of promotion, networks of decision-making, and patronage for the selection of top ruling elites. This study makes an incisive analysis of the transmission of a political capital with emphasis on the social reproduction within families in the transmission of privileged positions in the society. I grapple with this aspect of Zimbabwean history which appears to have been given little attention to date.

Makari’s *Magamba eChimurenga: Josiah Tungamirai* is a historical novel on a Zimbabwean nationalist. The biographical work shows awareness among Africans that, positions

¹⁰³ T. Burke, *Lifebouy men and Lux Women*, pp.155-158.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, p.48.

of authority and prestige could be gained through individual effort and success in school as well as vocational achievement. Such insights propel my study to evidently consider how education in Gutu was perceived as an instrument for effecting economic change by training people for different occupations and also changing people's personalities and attitudes towards work and related status factors. Given that Josiah Tungamirai was an astute businessman, a veteran nationalist, a Member of Parliament for Gutu North Constituency, a Minister of State for Indigenization and Empowerment and Director of several companies, I show how individuals are hardly characterized by a neat differentiation between political, administrative and economic roles. My thesis vigorously sustains the argument that it is much more current to meet a politician/businessman who constantly draws resources from his economic activities to finance his political activities and maintain his social prestige than the contrary.¹⁰⁵

Weiss's *Zimbabwe's New Elite* shows how following independence in 1980, the black society became stratified as new 'classes' emerged. Weiss articulates how the political elite used its power to build up patron-client networks through which to foster private business. Weiss's work touches on some aspects of how top jobs went to the political elite of the colonial era which had been instrumental in achieving independence.¹⁰⁶ Weiss's work is influential in that it reminisces how wealth and family connections were important in the dispensation of multiple patronage through which social structures/stratification came to be manifested.

Volker Wild's *Profit not for Profit's Sake* is one of the earliest works that reflected a chequered and contradictory history of African entrepreneurship following independence in 1980. He has shown how the ruling elite –both urban and rural –used the accumulated advantages of wealth and power to reproduce their statuses through education and investment in physical property. Wild has touched on how veteran nationalists, who, after independence, occupied leading political and military positions, used their considerable power to enrich themselves in the ostentatious quest for status which they fancied.¹⁰⁷ He points out variations in

¹⁰⁵ The late Retired Air Chief Marshal Josiah Tungamirai was a businessman who believed in the 'indigenization of the economy envisaging the empowerment of black people by restoring their control over Zimbabwe's resources and wealth. He held Directorships in companies which include Climax Investments, Bindura Nickel Mine, BLC Company, Cardiff Estate and Havana Tobacco Company.' Quoted from "Zim Robbed of Great Strategist", Africa News Services, August 29 2005 Issue. See *A Guide to the Heroes Acre...Some basic facts about Zimbabwe's Heroes and the Heroes Acre*, Ministry of Media, Information and Publicity, Harare, 1986, p.177.

¹⁰⁶ Weiss, *Zimbabwe and the New Elite*, p.139.

¹⁰⁷ V. Wild, *Profit not for Profit's Sake. History and Business Culture of African Entrepreneurs in Zimbabwe*, Baobab Books, Harare, 1997, p.29.

people's endowment and motivation for success and further shows how these were highly correlated with the advantages that are a legacy of what the superior environment, education and influence provided. Wild exudes how the purposes of African entrepreneurship were embedded more in the provision of needs of the entrepreneur and his kin as well as to accumulate status, influence and power.¹⁰⁸ Many areas of my thesis are fully in accord with observations made by Wild.

Kruger has shown how after independence, the elite and the guerrilla veterans who fought under the banner of state transformation often used 'war credentials for legitimacy' and drew on the history as well as symbols of the liberation struggle to construct their power base with privileged access to state resources.¹⁰⁹ I also concur with what Kruger says and go on to explore how the war situation created a new elite.

Sadomba argues that the liberation war went through phases which had distinct types of recruits, leadership styles, levels of military engagement and ideological thrust, producing rather different sets of guerrilla fighters, in terms of their ideological persuasions and visions for emancipation.¹¹⁰ To this end, Sadomba claims that the ferociousness of war veterans was aggravated by the deficiencies of the demobilization process and the penultimate marginalization of war veterans at a moment of victory. Here too, there is much to reflect upon in terms of the pains of transition and promises and prospects from a long-fought and endured guerilla war.

Mlambo points to the war influenced generational tensions in the rural areas as the young male (*mujibhas*) and female messengers (*chimbwidos*) exercised an unprecedented measure of power over their elders. Brian Raftopolous has added his voice by revealing how the civil service, particularly in rural districts, local government officials lost their posts to war veteran committees.¹¹¹ For Jocelyn Alexander, war veterans did not only initiate occupations but also assumed leadership roles in popularizing a political discourse that legitimated the abrogation of the law.¹¹² In the context of the above, my thesis makes an assessment of the extent to which the

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, p.277.

¹⁰⁹ N. Kriger, *Guerrilla Veterans in Post-War Zimbabwe. Symbolic and Violent Politics 1980-1987*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2003, p.6.

¹¹⁰ Z. W. Sadomba, *War Veterans in Zimbabwe's Land Occupations: Complexities of a Liberation Movement in an African Post-Colonial Settler Society*, 2008, p.18-19.

¹¹¹ B. Raftopolous, 'The Crisis in Zimbabwe' p.215.

¹¹² J. Alexander, *The Unsettled Land, State -making and the Politics of Land in Zimbabwe 1893-2003*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2006, p.185.

hostility and unpredictability of the political environment was itself a catalyst to the emergence of self-producing or manufacturing elites.

Michael Bratton has traced the emergence of social differentiation in Zimbabwe's communal lands, concluding that differentiation which began under the colonial regime has continued under the independent government. He postulates that even the 2008 power-sharing settlement in Zimbabwe, was "an 'elite-driven social order' where the powerful actors and political elites in possession of superior resources strove to gain state office".¹¹³ This thesis delves deeper to show how the centralization and capture of state power as well as resources in a system of patronage and corruption promoted the manufacture of varied elite categories as the ruling elite gained in status and power. While Bratton's work is invaluable, he lukewarmly treats the demands of networks which may force patrons to act against their own immediate interests in order to meet the obligations on which their social rank and political authority depend.

Unlike some studies on the African elite cited above, this thesis grapples with the complexity of elite typologies within the broader questions of the construction and imagination of identities through materiality, power and networking. Given that the main function of this research is to maintain, consolidate as well as contest hegemony of values that define particular social formations, I am largely concerned with group characteristics that might be regarded as significant sources of power and influence.

0.8 Architecture of thesis

This study has eight broadly thematic chapters. The introduction sets the scene for the study by outlining the purpose, some key concepts and pertinent issues of theory and the literary background that are building blocks of the later chapters in the thesis. Different interpretations of the range of elites or degree of diversity are considered. Relevant literature on social differentiation and the making of African elites is reviewed, complementing established researches and also identifying knowledge gaps that the present study seeks to fill.

Chapter 1 defines Gutu by providing an overview of the geo-historical and socio-economic organisation of this agglomeration of polities. The peopling of Gutu and the pre-colonial administrative system linked to the genealogical structures are given prominence. The

¹¹³ M. Bratton, *Power Politics in Zimbabwe*, Lynne Rienner, London, 2014, p.19.

thrust is to consider how the pre-colonial forms of ownership, the levels of production and exchange and the political system mirror the whims and perceptions of elitism. The chapter discusses how political leverage through chieftainship was institutionalized into local norms and then handed down to the subsequent generations as a historical legacy.

Chapter 2 sets the stage for understanding how social differentiation premised on land policies and patterns of settlement provided the basis for the emergence of an agricultural elite. The chapter reflects upon the Alvordian philosophy of the ‘Gospel of the Plough’ and the authoritarian planning of African agriculture and the use of farmland in shaping distinct strategies of accumulation and survival which produced a consciousness of difference within the Gutu community.

Chapter 3 discusses the profound effect of the missionary impulse in the area of education. It unpacks the contested and polarized identity formations associated with the introduction of Western influences on the African population. While education offered tools for the construction of identities of an educated African elite, the chapter considers how missionary attempts to wipe out African religious practices also offered unexpected tools for self-empowerment as African Initiated Churches (AICs) arose to create a religious elite.

Chapter 4 covers aspects of African entrepreneurship with emphasis on the growth and development of business networks in the face of colonial restrictions. The roles of Greek and Indian communities and Christian religion in the development of African entrepreneurship are considered. The chapter also discusses at length the attitudes, habits of African business people in relation to identity and desire for elite status through conspicuous consumption as well as family modes of social reproduction.

Chapter 5 presents an overview of how the Gutu-Gweru dichotomy as an epitome of the rural-urban interface necessitated as well as facilitated processes of identity construction, social relations and way of life among migrant workers who maintained direct links with the rural homes. The chapter further establishes the importance of social networks as migrants sought out kinsmen or ‘home-boys’ (people from the same rural area) for companionship, help in securing accommodation and job information. The movement of urban elites to identify with their rural origins is also discussed in the context of how links might have nurtured bases of political power through electoral appeals.

Chapter 6 explores the development of social and political networks borne of African nationalism and addresses the war of liberation and its penultimate strains and tensions which befell the people as they adapted to roles and demands of the war situation. The chapter explores the avenues through which people enjoyed various degrees of social opportunity and success as they obtained a new lease of life by participating in the war of liberation. Examined in this chapter are some of the larger political and social consequences of wartime experiences as well as memories which became tools to help cultivate and promote networks compatible with the growth of new elites. The chapter further shows how elite configuration depended largely on the political environment as the political processes of competition and exclusion by people with different degrees of accumulation; ambition and resolve took centre stage.

Chapter 7 explores the post-independence period and its [re]definition of success and assumptions about the self as evidenced by the predatory tendencies towards accumulation and perpetuation of elite statuses. The chapter discusses how varied elite categories seized opportunities to amass wealth and gain political power.

Chapter 8 revisits the major themes discussed in this study and provides a general conclusion to the whole study by drawing on all preceding chapters. An attempt is made to assess the feasibility of the theory of hegemony in interpreting power relationships between the elite and the populace in Gutu. The chapter illuminates the contribution of the thesis to understanding elitism in Gutu in terms of the objectives of the research. In addition, major conclusions on rural social differentiation and aspects of elite formation drawn from the thesis are highlighted, underlining that elitism is not a historical accident but rather a context created over time as people adjust their accumulation and survival strategies.

Chapter 1: Elite Formation in Historical Perspective: The Gutu

Experience

‘If you pick a cola nut in the forest, look for the tree from which it fell’

(Cameroonian proverb)

1.0 Introduction

This chapter explores how the traditional social hierarchy played a preponderant role in the pre-colonial struggles and contestations over power among elite identities. It underscores the fact that power was fluid with elite structures challenging and complementing one another. The chapter discusses how socio-cultural values contributed to the indigenous system of administration and integration in the Gutu community. The discussion revolves around traditional elite who comprise of the chiefs, herbalists or diviners, traders and those who were eminent and influential as a result of their status, affluence in riches and wealth. A physical description of Gutu and its demographic composition deserves attention in this study and at this stage as a unit of administration. The district has deep historical roots and specific traditions within which elite groups were being formed and shaped as they struggled to shape society and how it was ruled.

1.1 Geographic preface and peopling of Gutu.

In the pre-colonial period the geographical space now referred to as Gutu was just an effect of practices of representation, valorization and articulation fabricated through real or illusory occupations. Before 1902, there were no proper, systematic methods or guiding scientific surveys for demarcating boundaries. Mountains Rasa, Ziro and Chomfuli and rivers such as Mungezi, Nyazvidzi and Dewure were largely the recognized features marking the fluid and porous boundaries.

¹As such, sedimentations of successive histories and ‘imaginative geographies’², both products of accumulations of time claim that the area then inhabited by the VaHera-Shava and the

¹ Interview with Chief Gutu, 13 July 2013.

vaDuma before the vaRufura invasion encapsulated the regions lying between Shashe and Nyazvidzi rivers, Zvivagwe (now Sebakwe) to Ndanga and the confluence of Dewure and Nyazvidzi rivers.³ As a performance of space, the polity remained more of an ‘imagined political community’⁴ with a galaxy of politically independent units which were initially not arranged into a single political unit until 1902 when the boundary of Gutu reserve was drawn. What is today homogenized as the people of Gutu is nothing short of what Mazarire terms ‘a conflation of linguistic, cultural and political attributes of a people who did not even know themselves by that name until 1902’.⁵

Even then, the reserve was considered a ‘land lying between two points and outside the unsurveyed farms.’⁶ To that extent, the terrain hereinafter referred to as Gutu district, is situated in the south-east of Zimbabwe. Its northern boundary is on the main watershed south of Chivhu. It is separated from the Buhera district to the north by the Nyazvidzi River, from Bikita district to the south-east by the Dewure River and its tributary, the Mungezi. To the west and south-west, it abuts on the Chirumhanzu and Masvingo Districts. To the west, the district is bounded from Zimuto communal lands by Popoteke River. In this study, I use the name ‘Gutu’ in retrospect to refer to the terrain inhabited by the VaHera-Shava and the vaDuma before the vaRufura invasion. As Mazarire has argued,

the pre-colonial history of Zimbabwe is best appreciated from “breaking points” or those contexts of buildup and fragmentation already written in the larger narratives of the “rise and fall” of states where new identities emerge and old ones are transformed, negotiated or accommodated.⁷

This prescient analysis is very relevant towards an understanding of the issue of clan identities in pre-colonial Gutu where an anachronistic label applied to a diverse range of groups with no single cultural or political identity. Figure 1 below shows the map of Gutu.

² E. Said, *Orientalism*, London, Penguin, 1978, p.54.

³ Interview with Chief Gutu, 13 July 2013.

⁴ B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*: p.6.

⁵ G.C. Mazarire, ‘Reflections on Pre-colonial Zimbabwe, c.850-1880s.’ In *Becoming Zimbabwe: An History from the Pre-colonial Period to 2008*, edited by Brian Raftopolous and Alois Mlambo, Weaver Press Harare, 2009, p.1-8.

⁶ I. Phimister, ‘Zimbabwe: The path of capitalist development’ in Birmingham, D and Phyllis, M (eds.) *History of Central Africa* Vol.2, Longman, London, 1983, p.258.

⁷ G. C. Mazarire, ‘Reflections on Pre-colonial Zimbabwe’, p.2.

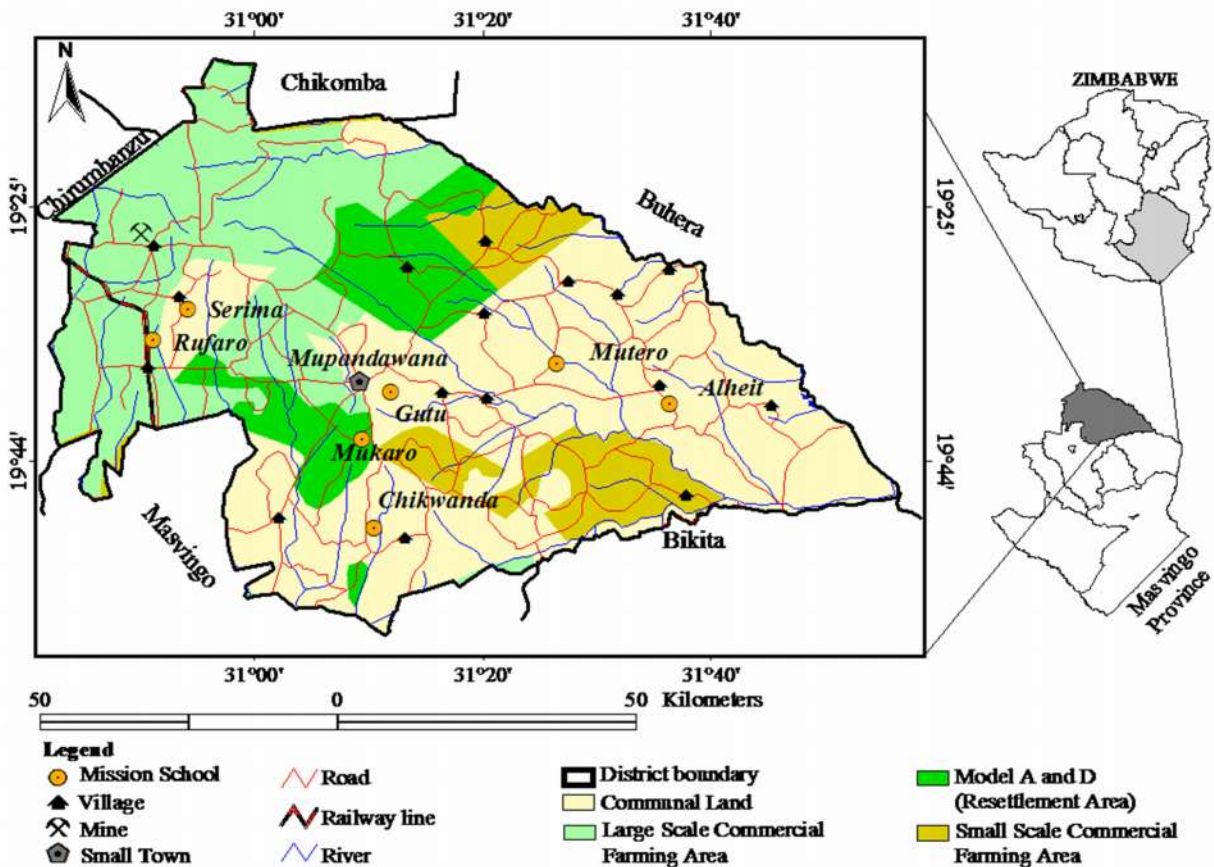


Figure 1: Source: Adapted from the Gutu District Administrators' maps and developed to scale by Kudakwashe Muringaniza.

Chiefly-elite categories are analyzed with a view to laying the basis for a more open and inclusive approach to the study of elites and their roles in the making of the Gutu society. Plotnicov distinguishes between 'traditional' and 'modern' elite typologies which function in different behavioural regions.⁸ For Weiss, the traditional elites include chiefs, headmen, traditional healers and spirit mediums and those whose wealth derived in part from their command of pre-colonial modes of production and continued to perceive wealth through land, cattle and wives.⁹ In her study of the African rural elite, Weinrich also distinguished between the traditional and modern elite. Under the traditional elites came the chiefs, diviners and herbalists.

⁸ L. Plotnicov, 'The Modern African Elite of Jos, Nigeria', in *Social Stratification in Africa*, edited by Arthur Tuden and Leonard Plotnicov, The Free Press, New York, 1970, p.277-288.

⁹ T. Burke, *Lifebow Men, Lux Women*, p.182.

Historical testimonials dealing with the origins of the Gutu chiefdom have Musana at the head of the Gutu genealogy. The earliest recorded accounts of the Gutu story are those made by J. H. Williams and E.T Kenny. Williams was the NC at Gutu from 1897 to 1902 while Kenny served as NC at Gutu briefly in 1903-1904 and then for a second time from 1907-1921. These accounts, point to the Musana country north of Salisbury (now Harare) as the original home of the Gumbo-Madyirapazhe lineage. The defeat of the Shiri and Garwe signaled the beginning of the end for many of the surrounding chiefdoms namely Mukaro, Norupiri, Mawere, Munyaradzi and Chiwara who were forced into senior or junior partnerships with Gutu and his powerful followers. As such, the main genealogies living in Gutu are the Gumbo-Madyirapazhe under the chiefs Gutu, Munyikwa, Chitsa and Chingombe, and their kinsmen Headmen Nyamandi, Denhere, Mataruse, Makura, Nemashakwe, Maburuse, Magombedze, Makumbe, Maungwa, Ndawi, Mupata and others.

There are also the Hera Shava-Wakanonoka of Headman Munyaradzi, a kinsman of Munyaradzi; the Garwe (Shumba-Muvavarirwa) of Nesongano; the vaMukaro (Moyo-Nyakuvengwa) of Headman Mukaro. There are also the Duma people of Chief Chiwara settled around Mount Vinga and Makore and a few Rozvi and Shiri scattered all over the District. Many other clan groups, for example, the Ngonya-Serima dynasty that moved from Zvimba to the upper Dewure area in the early 19th century or the Shonga-Wozhere group from Maungwe that settled a little to the north-west of Serima some years later, were accepted as subjects of the paramount chief Gutu. Beach notes that other *dzinza* or *rudzi* titles which included names such as Govera, Mhari, or Ngowa; Nyamondo's son Ndidzi of Rozvi and Mkushi of the Negove Rozvi ancestry also found their way to the area of Chief Gutu during the dispersal of the Rozvi dynasties of the 1840s and 1850s. Since the creation of the modern Gutu District in 1902, successive chiefs in Gutu followed a policy of consolidating Rufura domination by placing members of the ruling family in key positions as sub-chiefs (*machinda*).¹⁰

In full cognizance of its boundaries, the district encapsulates other chiefs who have different totems, for example Chiwara, Mukaro and Chikwanda of the Moyo totem, Gonye of the Shonga totem, Munyaradzi- Shava; Mutema-Shoko; Serima-Gushungo and others. These migrated into Gutu from different places, Serima from Zvimba, Gonye from Makoni,

¹⁰ F. Mashasha, The Early History of the Gutu Chiefdom, Department of History, University of Zimbabwe, p.11.

Munyaradzi from Buhera, and Chiwara from Musikavanhu.¹¹ The inhabitants of Gutu (*vanhu vemaGutu*) came from diverse clans of varying historical depth. This coalescence, believed to have begun between 500 and 300 years ago, has continued to this century. The absence of unifying historical traditions, coupled with the contrasting histories of numerous clans, has not prevented interaction among them. Although two or more clans or villages may differ historically, both accept the identification of being considered people of Gutu.

I argue that the subsequent status and style of life of these communities as a function of the point of entry implied a denial of equality. Given that the majority of the leaders of the outside clans were military; their marginality to the society at large was automatically resolved upon being given wives and geographical areas to rule over.¹² They would assert personal dignity and take prestigious positions in the *mambo*'s entourage. They served as messengers, trading agents, retainers at the courts of rulers and high officials, warriors and 'military commanders'. Some set up their own enclaves and communities in the midst of the Madyirapazhe people. The process of incorporating the descendants of the non-Madyirapazhe was largely a function of rewarding those who had assisted militarily in the expulsion of the Hungwe people.

Besides that, even within the hierarchies of position and power, the points of entry or gates by which the outsiders entered the community were more varied. According to Mazarire, chiefs had their principal clients (*makota*) who were not related to them by descent but would usually serve as councilors at a chief's court and in addition were allocated responsibility over a particular area in exchange for their loyalty. In the 19th century, as Mazarire has noted, most of Karanga *makota* had military responsibilities, serving as prefects or peripheral buffers on the fringes of a chief's territory while the chief's agnatic kin (principally his brothers, nephews and sons known as *machinda*) maintained closer proximity to him because of their interests and roles in the patrimonial estate and their direct involvement in ritual functions.¹³

Chiefs and their henchmen who were well up in the political hierarchy also enjoyed a distinct advantage in attracting strangers to their lineage. As already noted, heroism in war was the highest of all virtues and such persons or *makota* were sure to have royal favours, of greater

¹¹ C. S. Makari, *Magamba eChimurenga: Josia Tungamirai*, p.14.

¹² Interview with Chief Gutu, Gutu, 13 July 2013.

¹³ G. C. Mazarire, 'The Gadzingo: towards a Karanga expansion matrix in 18th- and 19th-century southern Zimbabwe', *Critical African Studies*, 5:1, 2013, p.4-16.

or lesser degree, bestowed upon them. It was to be expected naturally too, that the chief would always have a certain entourage of personal favourites outside his kin. These people would from time to time appear at the chief's court on friendly visits and entertain the chief.

Thus, in Gutu, some descendants of the non-Gumbo clans enjoyed certain flexibility by being able to attach themselves to the hosts. Munyaradzi was spared because one of his daughters had been married to the Chief.¹⁴ Gutu Chaurura, for example, later married the daughter of Nesongano who bore him his two eldest sons Rwodzi and Denhere.¹⁵ Far from being an immutable and unchanging political system, the elite structure of the Gutu chiefdom was as varied as it was amorphous through networks of amity. However, what defined traditional elites was not just a place on the political hierarchy but the skills and capacity to deploy resources in staking claims to pre-eminence.

1.2 The ideal of status and socio-economic inequalities

The concept of elitism describes a way of organizing a system or society in such a way that only a few people have power or influence. These few people are powerful and influential either because they are rich or intelligent, or both. In such vantage position, they are able to determine the thrust of progress and development in their society. W. H. Stead observed that in Shona society, there are ideas which instituted certain people as having special roles or powers, or as comprising a group distinguishable from the rest or from other similar groups whose people were bound to one another by similar biological or ideological links.¹⁶ What needs emphasis here is that, the Gutu community was not homogenous. Social differentiation took place amongst the large scale cattle owning communities who lived side by side with agricultural peasants, hunters and gatherers.

Other statuses which had emerged revolved around professionals and skilled households whose products or services were required by members of the society. This put them in positions where they accumulated wealth, by providing the required products or services. These included *mhizha* (smiths) *vaumbi* (potters), *vavezi* (carpenters), *vashambadzi* (traders), *n'angas* (herbalists), *masvikiro* (spirit mediums). Beach argues that although industry and specialized

¹⁴ Interview with Kudakwashe Munyaradzi, Gutu, 10 August 2013.

¹⁵ F. Mashasha, *The Early History*, p.12.

¹⁶ W. H. Stead 'Concepts and Controls in Native Life: Elements of Sociological Analysis' *NADA Vol.13* 1935, p.7.

agriculture were marginal to the basic economy, there were cases where some of the groups turned their skills to good advantage and became sufficiently well-off to become politically dominant.¹⁷

Gelfand's postulation that the Shona were all equal, had similar opportunities and enjoyed the same privileges tends to contradict his acknowledgement of the existence of the poor and rich in society.¹⁸ Gelfand notes that in former days, there were few rich people as there was no wish to become rich and also there were very few ways of acquiring wealth. However, the *mupfumi* and *hurudza* were the wealthy who had plenty of possessions; much grain and many cattle as well as wives and children. The *hurudza's* fields brought in abundant crops. He had granaries full of crops and always had beer to share with his kinsmen. Besides having material security in the form of cattle, they would have many wives and, as a rule ten or more children because the more children one had, the more *fuma* or wealth he had.¹⁹ Women were desired for economic reasons which entailed production of wealth and reproduction of children. In some cases, wealthy individuals used their surplus to negotiate a wide network of marital unions through which the requisite bride wealth heightened capital accumulation. For instance, Posselt observed that the *roora* for a chief's daughter was invariably greater than that of the commoner.²⁰

The Chief, his councilors and ward-heads employed *varanda* (plural of *muranda*) to work in their villages and fields.²¹ A *muranda* was a poor man with no means of subsistence, who appeared at the village. In the majority of cases, he was a stranger from another *nyika* and thus of a different totem. The *sadunhu* or *sabhuku* would allow him to live there and depend on him for a livelihood.²² While Gelfand acknowledges that there were some wealthy people in society, he maintains the argument that sharing wealth with relations was the rich person's way of restoring the equilibrium in the presence of inequality.²³ In the same vein, Bourdillon also observed that anybody who was exorbitantly rich and who did not allow others to share in his wealth was thought to be in league with evil spirits and to have acquired his riches by evil means, namely

¹⁷ Beach, *Zimbabwe Before 1900*, p.43.

¹⁸ M. Gelfand, 'Who is rich and poor in traditional Shona society?' *NADA* Vol. X. No.4, 1972, p.50.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ F. W. T. Posselt, *Fact and Fiction*, Government House, Salisbury, 1935, p.67.

²¹ M. Gelfand, *Diet and Tradition in an African Culture*, E and S Livingstone, Edinburgh, 1971.p.23.

²² Gelfand, *Ukama: Reflections on Shona and Western Cultures in Zimbabwe*, Mambo Press, Gweru, 1981, p.22.

²³ M. Gelfand, *Diet and Tradition*, p.24.

witchcraft.²⁴ The above observations, I argue, merely serve the purpose of showing that there were some elaborate bonds of personal client-patron relations which tied the people of various strata of society to one another.

Thus, the power of status was commonly found in conjunction with other powers. The status which a father possessed in his own home was also determined by the fact that the entire community reckoned that he was the head of his family, which means that it rested on traditional status. Whether ascribed or inherited, status was augmented by the personal contributions of the possessor. The role of personal ability and that of lineage can be deduced from what Junod said,

Thus the man who has succeeded in life becomes famous, his advice will carry weight in the discussions in which he takes part; he will perhaps be even more esteemed than the chief himself, though he does not enjoy the special prestige which the royal family owes to the blood running in its veins.²⁵

As already alluded to, kinship was the basis of dynastic power and authority. Beach contends that Zimbabwe's rulers based their power on the strength and number of kinfolk of the main dynasty and in many cases social groups and individuals were identified in terms of their totems (*mitupo*).²⁶ In the case of Gutu, the Gumbo-Madyirapazhe formal statuses were clear-cut and discrete, and had definite rights and obligations associated with them. Thus, a series of different statuses existed for 'acquired persons' and their descendants and the 'royal' lineage.

Differences in wealth created some distinctions within villages. Although wealth was only one of an individual's social statuses, it was the single most important determinant of the relative position of the Gutu people's lineages. Isaacman and Isaacman note that among the Sena of Mozambique, individual wealth was translated into increased lineage status through the acquisition of *nhapwa*, the incorporation of strangers, and the arrangement of marriage alliances.²⁷ Holleman also observed that in the pre-colonial society, wealth as a concept was understood as securing the survival of the kin group and ensuring biological reproduction. He states that,

²⁴ M. F. C. Bourdillon, *The Shona People*, Mambo Press, Gweru, 1987.

²⁵ H. A. Junod, *The Life of a South African Tribe*, Macmillan, London, 1927, p.129.

²⁶ Beach, *The Shona and Zimbabwe: 900-1850*, p.169.

²⁷ A. Isaacman and B. Isaacman, *Mozambique: From Colonialism to Revolution*, Zimbabwe Publishing House, Harare, 1985, p.115.

Wealth meant the capacity to maintain and reproduce one's own kin-group as an organic unit... Prolific reproduction of the family was also the natural way to an enhanced social status and political power...wealth for any other than these organic and primary needs was meaningless. This particular conception of wealth established a very close correlation between livestock (especially cattle) and women. Cattle were thought of in terms of wives; wives meant children for one's kin-group; of these children, the daughters represented a potential value in cattle which provided wives for the sons and in this manner yet another generation of the family.²⁸

Though subject to moral, social and economic constraints, acquisitiveness was not completely unknown in pre-colonial times. Despite some strong social taboos, profitable niches and wealth differentials were evident among 'simple' cultivators in the pre-colonial society. Bourdillon also draws our attention and says,

... there were clear differences between rich and poor. With labour of poor dependants, and through trade of surplus crops and of iron work, salt, tobacco, or other variables, wealthy individuals were able to acquire cloth for clothing instead of goatskins, to wear beads and other ornaments, to have larger huts always in a good state of repair, to have others to perform their unpleasant labour, and to have many wives and dependants.²⁹

Although the division between the wealthy and the poor persisted at village level,³⁰ Wild argues that the social distance between them remained relatively small. He posits that the low level of production due to the technological limitations, the socio-normative regulation of private acquisition and the ritual control by means of witch-hunts inhibited high levels of private accumulation of wealth.³¹

1.3 Dimensions of dominance and elitist prerogatives

Whilst it is relatively true that wealth and status go together, it is also frequently the case that chiefly status in the pre-colonial period was a mark of political, religious and social eminence. The sub-chiefs who ruled over the Shiri, Chiwara and Mukaro groups under Chief Gutu's jurisdiction paid homage to the *mambo*. This deed was in itself the main mark of distinction. Thus, in the Gutu chieftainship succession history, from Chief Makuvaza (1892-

²⁸ J. F. Holleman, *African Interlude*, Nasionale Boekhandel, Cape Town, 1958, p.219.

²⁹ M. F. C. Bourdillon, *The Shona Peoples: Ethnography of the Contemporary Shona, with Special Reference to their Religion*, Mambo Press, Gwelo, 1976, p.81.

³⁰ D. N. Beach, *Zimbabwe Before 1900*, p.23.

³¹ V. Wild, *Profit Not For Profit's sake*, p.133.

1918), Guvamatanga (1919-1920), Mukoroverwa (1921-1927), Chinyama (1928-1938), Jaravaza (1939-1945) to Machingambi (1947-1955), paying tribute was not merely a token of vassalage or a policy of consolidating Rufura domination, but equally a gauge of the chief's eminence.

In as much as the accumulation of wealth, often in the form of cattle, gave the chief added economic clout, primarily, it was the embodiment of his greatness. The tribute had a direct role in making manifest, in the most highly visible form, the eminence of the chief's status. The accumulated wealth was sometimes put to specific practical use, such as buying off rivals and feeding the subjects during periods of drought so that chiefs acted as the keepers of the status attached to their rank.³² Chiefly status went hand in hand with a notion of chiefly responsibility. What is crucial here is to note that status could not be maintained unless chiefs discharged their duties and fulfilled their responsibilities. According to Mazarire, all political and judicial matters were heard at the chief's court; visitors, emissaries, embassies and refugees reported first to the chief.³³

The colonial period weakened the link between power and obligation by forcing chiefs to work for and account to the imperial authorities. One of the consequences of this change in the nature of chiefly power—especially among appointed chiefs - was that, the office came to be seen instrumentally as a device for accumulating resources. The dissolution of accountability downwards to the population induced a shift from collective responsibility to a more individual quest for power and wealth. This transformation was facilitated by the colonial authorities who saw chiefs merely as auxiliaries and sought to buy them out cheaply by making it clear they would sanction personal accumulation so long as political compliance was guaranteed.

Since in most instances chiefs were entrusted with the responsibility of collecting taxes and often delivering labour, the scope for legal and illegal accumulation was vast. The most significant colonial legacy in this respect was not that the chiefs were suddenly able to enrich themselves personally (which they often were) but that they became detached from the moral and social matrix within which they had hitherto related to their people. Some chiefs might have continued to behave honourably but the use (and abuse) of what the colonial authorities defined as customary law effectively gave the chiefs power they had never had before. Being salaried

³² Patrick Chabal, *Africa. The Politics of Suffering and Smiling*. Zed Books, New York, 2009, p.122.

³³ G.C. Mazarire, 'The Gadzingo: Towards a Karanga expansion matrix in 18th- and 19th-century southern Zimbabwe', *Critical African Studies*, 5:1, 4-16, 2013, p.10.

officials and protected by colonial authority, the chiefs could afford to act far more ‘irresponsibly’ without fear of collective sanction. In 1932, chiefs were to be paid £12 per annum and this amount was to be increased on by the Native Commissioner as to his ‘good’ conduct and ‘efficiency’ by 30/- per annum until a maximum of £24 per annum was reached.³⁴

Traditional leadership remained institutional, implying that it was an established order rooted in the past and an office or position which primarily created the power and privileges as well as the responsibilities of the leader. Haw observed that, ‘Even though the chief may be from our (white men’s) point of view, a useless, beer-sodden old foggy, he often has tremendous influence over the elders. Thus any campaign for progress should be approached through the chief.’³⁵

By virtue of being of royal descent or *weimba youshe*, each *mambo* since the time of Mahwazhe (the first Gutu) inherited secular and religious responsibilities to safeguard the ancestral land and the sole right to alienate territory within his polity. Isaacman and Isaacman similarly observed that among the Sena society of Mozambique, as ‘the owner of the land and guardian of its inhabitants, the *mambo* performed a wide range of activities to maintain the health and well-being of the polity’.³⁶ The chief was at the same time the repository of supreme power and authority. The chieftaincy was the birthright of that family in the clan which had held the most direct descent in the male line from him who first gave the clan/lineage its birth and independence. The dignity was therefore hereditary.

The *mambo* served as the principal link between the people and the royal ancestors and so would periodically propitiate the *midzimu* to ensure both abundant rainfall and the continued fertility of the land. In the secular sphere, he resolved all serious litigation, appointed all subordinate officials, served as the final judicial authority, and directed the militia in times of emergency.³⁷ The *mambo* distributed grants of land to both junior kinsmen and strangers willing to acknowledge his authority. Succession to the position of *mambo* was restricted to candidates, who belonged, by descent, to the founding lineage of the chieftaincy-the Gumbo-Madyirapazhe. Below the *mambo* in the political hierarchy were the village headmen. Although many village

³⁴ Executive Council CNC 882/1932

³⁵ R. G. Haw, ‘Some Thoughts on Native Development’, *NADA* 1950, p.22.

³⁶ B. Isaacman and A. Isaacman, ‘Slavery and Social Stratification among the Sena of Mozambique. A Study of the Kaporo System’ in S. Miers and I. Kopytoff (eds.) *Slavery in Africa: Historical and Anthropological Perspectives*, University of Wisconsin Press, Wisconsin, 1977, p.114.

³⁷ Interview with Chief Mupata, Gutu, 28 May 2013.

headmen were junior kinsmen of the *mambo* of the Gumbo-Madyirapazhe lineage, it was very common to appoint the senior member of a prominent local lineage to this position. Such a practice prevented the growth of a narrow political elite of 'royal' blood.

The periodic establishment of new villages in response to demographic pressures and internal conflicts ensured a continued availability of new elite positions. Consequently, throughout the county, a pattern of inter-relationships existed between the various chieftaincies. This created a hierarchy of subordinate and dominant clans (*rudzi*) and lineage (*dzinza*) heads, which in part defines the attitude of the people of one clan to another and the power of one chief over others. Before European occupation, each *nyika* (chiefdom) had sub-chiefs or headmen, known as *masadunhu*, chosen by the chief to rule certain provinces or wards. The *masadunhu* claimed to be descendants of the early members of the original chief's family and hence the *sadunhu* would bear the same *mutupo* as the chief and other members of the royal lineage.

The principal determinant of status was seniority which proved to be an important organising principle at all levels. At the base of the political pyramid one found the common person (*munhu*) or people (*vanhu*). Above the *munhu* in the hierarchy of socio-political control, was the *mhuri* or *musha*, a family unit headed by the *samusha* or *baba*.³⁸ The *dare* acted as a court where family or *musha* disputes could be settled. Domestic issues which could not be settled by the *samusha*; would be uplifted to the next court of the *mana*.³⁹ The *mana* referred to an extended family group of men, their wives, sons and elementary families. The *samana* had very limited authority. He settled petty domestic differences and presided over the day-to-day activities of the *mana*. Matters affecting the rights of people other than those comprising the *mana* were referred to the next level in the social hierarchy, the *sadunhu*.

The *samana* controlled a number of *misha* and within this larger group, the *vatorwa* (strangers or outsiders) were admitted into the *mana* community. These people may have been admitted because of personal friendships with the *samana*, or another member of the *misha*. They could be related by marriage, or the strangers might have sought and been granted permission to reside within the *mana* having left their original areas as a result of friction, or alternatively might have approached the *samana* as the result of a desire to live in his area for other diverse reasons. At the *samana*'s court (*dare* or *chivara*) disputes which arose as a result of

³⁸ C.G Mararike, *The Role of Madzishu in Nation Building*, Best Practices Books, Harare, 2003, p.8.

³⁹ Interview with Gibson Zvotoona Tarugarira, Makura, Gutu, 24 December 2013.

daily contact between the people of the *mana* were arbitrated. Immediately above the *samana* came the *sadunhu* or *sabhuku*. As Mararike has noted, the term ‘*sabhuku*’ was introduced during the early stages of colonial rule when the *samana* was required to keep a register (book) which contained names of adults in the *mana* to ease tax collection.⁴⁰

The *sadunhu* is the person who had jurisdiction and control over the *dunhu*. The *dunhu* was a ward consisting of a defined geographic area in which a number of *misha* and *mamana* (the plural for *mana*) were resident. The *sadunhu* was usually the lineage head of those people whose political and social cohesion as well as hierarchical order was largely determined by *madzinza* (kinship) among other factors. A *dunhu* could have far more *vatorwa* (people not related to the hierarchy but have been admitted into the area) than one would find in the *mana*.

The *sadunhu/sabhuku* had the powers to allocate land and adjudicate in matters of land disputes. He acted as a court of appeal to which the *samana* would bring disputes that were beyond their own ability to settle. Conversely, any case which was presented to the *sadunhu/sabhuku* which he felt could not resolve by his arbitration would be referred upward to the Chief (*Ishe* or *Vashe*-a plural of respect). The *nyika* under the *Ishe* or Chief was made up of several *matunhu*.⁴¹ The dominant social and political order in a *nyika* was based upon the *Ishe*’s lineage (*dzinza*). As mentioned earlier, many *matunhu* in Gutu were formed around and governed by different *dzimba* of the Gumbo-Madyirapazhe lineage.

However, it was common to find that some *matunhu* were governed by different *dzimba* not of the principal genealogy (*vedzimba huru dzoushe*). Chief Munyikwa created some *matunhu* for Matombo Guranungo, a *muDuma* originally from Mandadzaka, Bikita whom he also gave a wife Mariyana; Mushangwe; Soro and Mhuru for assisting him (Chief Munyikwa) in the fight against the Shava and Shiri people⁴². While emphasizing the power of traditional status which a chief enjoyed, the chief also possessed many powers over other people. The following words by Junod would equally apply to the foregoing discussion,

⁴⁰ C. G. Mararike, *The Role of Madzishe in Nation Building*, p.8. It has to be stated that Mararike’s treatment of the socio-political and administrative structures does not have the position of the *samana* and hence in this citation, he has *samusha* and *musha* in the place of *samana* and *mana*. Chiefs Mupata, Chingombe and Munyikwa interviewed by the researcher acknowledged the existence of the *mana* within the Gutu communities.

⁴¹ In an interview Chief Gutu indicated that terms like *nharaunda yaShe* were used to refer to Chiefdoms instead of *nyika* which more appropriately fell under the *Mambo* (Paramount Chief).

⁴² Beach, *Zimbabwe Before 1900*, p.23.

Endowed with supernatural power which he owes to his magical medicines, feared and sometimes loved by his subjects, with plenty to eat and richer than any of his people, who readily consent to be taxed, the chief occupies an enviable position. The chieftainship therefore is very much sought after and no one refuses to be a chief.⁴³

Elites were always contesting among themselves for all political offices. As the following section illustrates, the change and adaptation of the people of Gutu to the new socio-political framework born of colonialism distorted the existing value of their conception of chieftainship.

1.3.1 Symbols and enclaved commodities as signifiers of elite status

Prior to the arrival of Europeans, Africans had certain hunting rules and even ‘royal game’. There were hunters and trappers who relied to a great extent on game and other animals for food and skins for clothing. Jackson observed that the hunting laws arose from the desire of chiefs to obtain personal gain from the efforts of their subjects-the hunters-and to impress upon them that the chiefs were their rulers.⁴⁴ Anyone who found a pangolin (*haka*) had to take it to the chief and for this, he was given a goat. The animal was placed in an enclosure and anyone wishing to see it had to pay an ‘entrance fee’.⁴⁵ Upon killing a porcupine (*nungu*), the hunter had to take it to the chief where it was degutted and have the quills removed in the presence of the chief to whom the whole carcass was handed.

The hunter was rewarded with a fowl or something of more or less value, depending on the generosity of the particular chief. In the event of the hunter killing a lion or leopard, he had to inform the chief who then removed the *chivombo* ball from the beast. The ball was believed to have been formed by the hairs of the various animals (or perhaps human beings) devoured during the animal’s lifetime. *Kuvomba* is to roar. A lion, as a symbol of strength and dignity, would help the possessor of the *gona* (charm) to gain the respect of the public.⁴⁶ Hence the possession of the *chivombo* ball was believed to give the chief a roar or power to frighten people. It assisted in the molding of a strong personality who would bellow judgment (like the leopard or lion’s roar) at the *dare* (chief’s court).

⁴³H. A. Junod, *The Life of a South African Tribe*, pp. 407,408.

⁴⁴A. P. Jackson, ‘Native Hunting Customs’, *NADA* 1950, p. 39.

⁴⁵Ibid.

⁴⁶M. Gelfand, S. Mavi, R. B. Drummond and B. Ndemera, *The Traditional Medical Practitioner in Zimbabwe*, Mambo Press, Gweru, p.8.

The skins were the property of the chief. The head gear made out of the skins later became popular with early nationalists. The hunter was rewarded with an ox or cow.⁴⁷ The skin on the eland's forehead was the chief's property. He used this for *miti youshe* (medicines of chieftainship) so that when he walked about, he would appear to be a big person. Elephant (*nzou*) tasks and feet and the (*mvuu*) hippopotamus' feet and teeth became the chief's property.⁴⁸ When a hunter killed the crocodile (*ngwena/garwe*) it was skinned in the presence of the chief and others. The stone in its stomach near the *nduru* (gall bladder) was taken out and was regarded as a *ndarama/gona* or charm which gave long life to him who swallowed it. When the chief who had swallowed the stone and was dying, attempts were made to get him vomit it so that the successor would in turn swallow it. In case of succession disputes, the one who obtained the stone from the dying chief and swallowed it was proclaimed successor.⁴⁹

All clothing was originally made of animal skin, but the type of garment varied. Diviners and herbalists wore elaborate costumes which included certain characteristic touches such as a cap of baboon, monkey or leopard skin. Chiefs, when in their formal dress, were distinguished in most groups by a cloak of leopard skin which was reserved for royalty. When Manguvo Machingura was installed as Chief Gutu at the DC's office in 1967, he was dressed in the skin of a leopard.⁵⁰ As for ornaments, before the introduction of glass beads, many other objects were used—pieces of reed, wood, shell or root, claws and teeth of animals were strung for necklaces.⁵¹ Metal too was used for ornaments, especially arm and head-bands. In his analysis of 'kingly things', Gluckman has shown that the main function of these royal monopolies was to maintain sumptuary exclusivity, commercial advantage and the display of rank.⁵²

Sometime after the occupancy of the Gutu reserve by the vaShava and the vaDuma, wandering clans of vaRozvi entered the land and brought greater knowledge of iron-smelting which they had learnt from the vaNjanja in the Buhera reserve.⁵³ Upon visiting the remains of a habitat from which the Rozvi Chief Mushayavanhu had been driven away by the vaGumbo in what is now the country of Munyikwa, van der Merwe found several clay moulds used for iron

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid, p.40.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ *Moto*, Vol 9, No 5, May 1967.

⁵¹ Interview with Bhiti Matombo, Gutu, 20 December 2013.

⁵² See M. Gluckman, *Custom and Conflict in Africa*, 1983

⁵³ D. J. van der Merwe, 'Some History of the Vakaranga in the Gutu Reserve', *NADA*, No.14, 1936-7, p.72.

smelting.⁵⁴ In 1891, a Methodist Missionary, Isaac Shimmin, visited Njanja country and described it as “the Wolverhampton of Mashonaland”⁵⁵ where the manufacture of iron implements went on from dawn till dusk.

Njanja traders traversed the Gutu and Chibi areas which had their own blacksmiths. Njanja economies of scale, the nature of their ore and their refined technology enabled them to trade successfully and possibly under the local producers of the Victoria/Ndanga area. Njanja blacksmiths are known to have settled among other people and are remembered as leading *mbira* makers and traders.⁵⁶ These achieved acceptance and extraordinary expansion not through success in warfare, but by remarkable entrepreneurship. Although iron manufacture must have been known in Gutu before the arrival of the Njanja, young men from neighbouring peoples like the Hera, the Rozvi and the Shiri were encouraged to join the Njanja to apprentice themselves and learn the iron skills.

Large quantities of hoes, axes, adzes, knives were produced and traded. Some would carry smaller luxury items like arm and leg bands, hooks, needles, badges for chiefs, and razors. Iron smelting was often associated with *mbira* (the African piano) playing, and several traders would take with them their own *mbiras* to amuse themselves and their customers on the journey. In this way they stimulated a demand for *mbiras*, which were subsequently traded as an extra luxury item.⁵⁷ Most of the Njanja trading parties proceeded south, towards Chilimanzi, Ndanga, Gutu and Chibi, and south-east to Nyashanu and the country of the lower Sabi.⁵⁸ Before their departure, traders presented the local headman with a small gift and gave a piece of cloth and some food to secure loyalty.

The chief’s income was derived mainly from fines imposed for offences, including those coming under the heading of *maropa* (blood) and *makunakuna* (incest). In cases of witchcraft; the accused’s property was generally confiscated. In all civil and criminal disputes coming before the chief’s court, the parties had to pay fees known as *nyama* (meat).⁵⁹ There were also fees payable to the chief for permission to bury the remains of a stranger who had died within

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ J. M. Mackenzie, ‘A Pre-colonial Industry: The Njanja and the Iron Trade’, *NADA*, Vol XI, No.2, 1975, p.202.

⁵⁷ Ibid, p.214.

⁵⁸ Ibid, p.215.

⁵⁹F.W.T. Posselt, *Fact and Fiction*, p.49.

some homestead.⁶⁰ The fee for the grave was one or more head of cattle in addition to part payments broken down as *itso* (the hoe for digging the grave), *ndonga mabwe* (the stones for filling the grave), *fuko* (shroud), *dara* (bier) and *nyama* (meat).⁶¹

The chief's revenue was augmented from various sources, for example, members of the community were obliged to render personal service in the cultivation of the chief's fields and the harvesting of his crops – a form of tribute known as *zunde* and also in the building of his residence.⁶² The Njanja trading parties which settled their trading transactions outside the chiefs' markets risked the confiscation of their goods. At the end of the chiefly market, a present, usually of one or two hoes would be provided for the chief himself.⁶³ Chiefs could also monopolize the trade by securing all orders and have these traded out by their own *machindas*.⁶⁴ Communication with the spiritual world was another ultimate source of his power. In her research among the Karanga, Sr. Mary Acquina O.P. established that the power of an ancestor-spirit depended on the social status he occupied in life. As such, the *mudzimu* of a chief was considered to have more power than that of a commoner, because it controlled not only the chiefly family, but also all the people living in the chiefdom.⁶⁵

The *svikiro* (spirit medium) had a very significant role to play in the selection of chiefs. The *svikiro* would be consulted in the event of both calamities and thanksgiving in the *nyika*.⁶⁶ The spirits were the ultimate court of appeal and no one in his right sense would dare to ignore their wishes. They were approached either through a *n'anga* or a *svikiro* and it would be realized that these intermediaries were very powerful because the fate of the whole *nyika* rested on their interpretation of the wishes of the spirit world.

Below the chiefs were other sub-elites. *N'angas* were believed to be spiritually endowed and had the gifts of healing and divining. Even the chiefs sought their assistance. Rutsate recalled the constant use of the *katazo* plant, the heart of a lion and the elephant hoof by his great grandfather in the making of charms so that he would gain prestige and respect from the public.⁶⁷ There were powerful individuals, who were not chiefs but known for their charms and

⁶⁰ Interview with Chief Mupata, Gutu, 28 May 2013.

⁶¹ F. W. T. Posselt, *Fact and Fiction*, p.47.

⁶² *Ibid*, p.49.

⁶³ Interview with Chief Munyikwa, Munyikwa, Gutu, 16 July 2013.

⁶⁴ *Ibid*.

⁶⁵ Sr. Mary Acquina, 'Spirit Beliefs Among the Karanga', *NADA* Vol. X No.5 1973, p.53.

⁶⁶ C. J. K. Latham, 'The Social Organisation of the MaShona Part 111', *NADA* Vol. xii, No.1 1979, p.6.

⁶⁷ Interview with Togara Muzondo Rutsate, Gutu, 28 December 2013.

power. Rev. A. Burbridge observed that the chief, ostensibly the medicine man's master was equally afraid of him.⁶⁸

A general belief appeared to be held that there was a type of *zango* or *dumwa* designed to confer or increase certain benefits such as prosperity and abundant crops. Spectacular success could also be attributed to *divisi* (fertility medicine). Among the Njanja smelters, medicines were used to encourage efficient smelting. A plant called *durura* was crushed and the mixture was smeared on the ore.⁶⁹

Professional musicians and dancers were also part of the coterie of village elites. It is indeed a truism that the song has always been the newspaper of the non-literate societies.⁷⁰ There are numerous musical instruments which were played and these slotted the musicians into prestigious positions within the society. The most important musical instruments of the period before the coming of the whites were the *ngoma* (drum) and the *mbira* (the hand piano). These instruments were played during ritual ceremonies and on other social occasions. Snowden observed that the vaNjanja of the Gutu District, Southern Rhodesia were the exponents of the art of playing on the *chipendani*, and were recognized as such by the local natives of the Salisbury district of Southern Rhodesia.⁷¹

Other personal and individual instruments were the *chigufe* and the *mukubhe*. For being good pianists, Nyashanu rewarded Chinemukutu and his brothers with wives.⁷² Jekera became very popular in Chief Chingombe's area for his perfected *mbakumba* and *ngororombe* dancing skills. He earned himself wives out of this skill.⁷³ The discussion shows that there were different pathways towards earning elite status and recognition.

1.4 The African council and the consolidation of the chiefs' elite status

When Charles Bullock, the Chief Native Commissioner developed the concept of the African Council, his intention was to ensure that local people take action for the betterment of

⁶⁸ Rev. A. Burbridge, 'The Witch Doctor's Power: A study of its source and scope', *NADA*, 1940, p.10. In the event that the chief was ill, the diviners and herbalists were turned to in order to identify the source of illness and to advise on a strategy to ward it off.

⁶⁹ J. M. Mackenzie, 'A Pre-colonial Industry: The Njanja and the Iron Trade', *NADA*, Vol XI, No.2, 1975, p.203.

⁷⁰ R. Finnegan, *Oral Literature in Africa*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1970, pp.272-314.

⁷¹ A. E. Snowden, 'Some Common Musical Instruments Found Among the Native Tribes of Southern Rhodesia' in *NADA*, No.15, 1938, p.99, 100.

⁷² Interview with Chief Gutu, Gutu, 13 July 2013.

⁷³ Interview with Chief Chingombe, Gutu, 28 December 2013.

their own conditions. This explains why the Native Council Act passed in 1937 and amended in 1943, gave the council statutory powers for levying taxes through which they could undertake the construction of roads, conservation, sanitation, education and other facilities. The policy was clarified in 1950 to reinforce the traditional position of the chiefs.

The year 1951, saw a complete restructuring of African Chieftainship as the European administrators solicited their support for the impending Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland and the rising tide of African nationalism. The Federal period 1953-1963, proved a turning point in the position of the chiefs. According to Passmore, 'the period witnessed the ascendancy of African chiefs from obscurity to stardom.'⁷⁴ The need by the state to use chiefs as a buffer against nationalists, led *inter alia*, to the rapid increase in the chiefs' allowances in 1957, the joy plane ride of 1958 where chiefs toured the Kariba Dam site and other major cities; the chiefs' attendance at the opening of parliament and the tour of the University College of Rhodesia and Nyasaland in 1958.⁷⁵ Chief Magaya Gutu was among the seven chiefs who visited troops of the Rhodesia African Rifles on the shores of Lake Kariba to see weapons used by the army, the ration packs and other equipment.⁷⁶

In 1961 chiefs got back their power to allocate land and their salaries were increased. A meeting of 500 chiefs and senior headmen convened by the settler government in May 1961 in Gwelo resulted in the setting up of a National Council of Chiefs to facilitate the manipulation of these traditional leaders.⁷⁷ Paramount Chief Gutu Magaya and chiefs Nyamande and Mataruse among others, were in attendance.⁷⁸ The abandonment of the NLHA in 1962 and its replacement with the Tribal Trust Land Act (TTLA) of 1967 transferred authority over land allocation from District Commissioners (DCs) to traditional leaders. The colonial state began to stress the power of 'communal' land tenure, to shift the responsibility for land shortages in the rural areas from the state to traditional leaders, and also to ward off the rising tide of African nationalism.⁷⁹

⁷⁴G.Passmore, *The National Policy of Community Development in Rhodesia: With Special Reference to Local Government in the African Rural Areas*, University of Rhodesia, Salisbury, 1972. 2002, pxxiv

⁷⁵A.K.H. Weinrich, *Chiefs and Councils in Rhodesia: Transition from Patriarchal to Bureaucratic Power*, Heinemann, London, 1971, p15

⁷⁶*The African Times*, November 5, 1969, Vol 4, No.17

⁷⁷V. E. M. Machingaidze, 'Agrarian Change from Above: The Southern Rhodesia Native Land Husbandry Act and African Response', *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 24, 3 (1991):557-88, p.557.

⁷⁸Interview with Chief Gutu, Gutu, 13 July 2013.

⁷⁹P.S. Nyambara, 'Traditional Leaders and the Rhodesian State: The Power of 'Communal' Land Tenure and the Politics of Land Acquisition in Gokwe, Zimbabwe', p.773.

The emphasis on chiefly power was essential for the colonial state during the 1960s and 1970s because the state still wanted chiefs to impose agricultural and conservation measures on rural communities. After the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) by Ian Smith, a strong alliance emerged between the colonial regime and chiefs, such that by the 1970s, some chiefs had even become Cabinet ministers.⁸⁰ Although in the mid-1950s NC J. R. Duncan had advised that the approval of the parent house be sought before one could be nominated as chief, the advice was no longer heeded barely ten years later. In 1970, Menzies the DC Gutu was rebuked by the Head Office for dragging his feet in regard to succession matters.⁸¹ As a result, he made appointments of sub-chiefs Makotore, Chitsa and Nemashakwe.⁸²

While the colonial government made desperate efforts to improve and consolidate the chiefs' position, it should be noted as well that the chiefs and headmen did not compliantly accept the new dispensation. Instead, they tried to exploit the government's need for allies by setting conditions for the exercise of powers, refusing some, and making strategic use of the new authority conferred on their offices. Chiefs were also aiming at designing pragmatic strategies for evolving power which would enable them to act in 'an advisory and consultative context, unlike the bureaucratic model imposed under colonialism which emphasized command and control'.⁸³

This stance challenges the conventional thinking that has tended to emphasize the weakening power of traditional leaders during this period. Nyambara succinctly states that the position of the chiefs and headmen was much more complex than that of being merely a 'government stooge'. Chiefs and headmen adopted a wide variety of political ideologies and strategies depending on local circumstances.⁸⁴ While some chiefs complied with and enforced state policies, others used their newly acquired powers to enhance their positions or undermine government efforts. Chief P. J. Chitsa complained to Menzies that headman Mukaratirwa was not attending meetings and did not want people in his area to dig contour ridges, pay dipping fees

⁸⁰ See L.Cliffe, 'Zimbabwe's Political inheritance' in Colin Stoneman (ed.), *Zimbabwe's Inheritance*, Macmillan Press, London, 1981, p.20.

⁸¹ PER 5/Gen/1/70 R. Menzies DC to PC Victoria

⁸² PER 5/HM/Gtu/70; PER 5 /Makore/70; PER 5/Chitsa/70

⁸³ M. Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the legacy of Late Colonialism*, James Currey, London 1996,p.45.

⁸⁴ P.S.Nyambara,'Immigrants, 'Traditional' Leaders and the Rhodesian State: The Power of "Communal" Land Tenure and the Politics of Land Acquisition in Gokwe, Zimbabwe, 1963–1979', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 27, 4 2001, pp. 771–91.

'Communal' Land Tenure and the Politics of Land Acquisition in Gokwe, Zimbabwe, 1963-1979', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 4. (Dec., 2001), pp. 771-791, p.780.

and council tax.⁸⁵ For personal aggrandizement, Kiripo Chitsa, the Deputy Chief Chitsa, pestered the DC Menzies to facilitate the issuing of a drivers' license to him, organize a position for his wife as a woman adviser and process his application for a rifle (to shoot a baboon and to give him maximum security).⁸⁶ Although none of Kiripo Chitsa's requests was met, what is crucial is the extent of 'benefits' which chiefs could also claim.

The period between 1962 and 1973 had people taking advantage of the absence of formal law to expand their allocations in various ways. Chiefs received (over and above their basic allowance) an allowance in respect of their followers, among other things and this provided an attractive incentive for them to bring immigrants in large numbers. Through 'freedom ploughing'⁸⁷ or *kurima madiro*, Chiefs and their subordinates grabbed land for themselves, and demanded gifts and bribes for allocating land to the landless and even brought aliens onto the land.

In a study on changing patterns of African land use in Southern Rhodesia, Floyd concluded that 'corruption of the kraal heads' authority with regards to land allocation was commonplace and by 1950, land allocation had become a negation of those traditional customs.⁸⁸ Chief Makore had to seek the advice of the DC Menzies on how to deal with the question of squatters at Gono's kraal.⁸⁹ Those who were labeled squatters were those from whom the chief would have failed to extort 'gifts'. Chirikure's people who had been displaced during the creation of Native Purchase Areas in the Dewure area lost many cattle to the chiefs through bribery and *rufimbi*.⁹⁰ Cattle rustlers who used *rufimbi* enjoyed some prestige amongst the commonality given that in the majority of cases, they lived as honoured servants of the Chief and so enjoyed many privileges. Upon stealing some cattle, the thieves would bring their booty to the chief for distribution. According to Chief Gutu,

The chiefs received one or two beasts, while the cattle rustler took a couple of herd as his fee. The balance was handed over to the man who engaged his professional services. Nesongano's people are strongly

⁸⁵ PER 5/Chitsa/69 'Minutes of Headman Chitsa's meeting 15/08/69.

⁸⁶ Ibid

⁸⁷ Freedom ploughing entailed utilizing and accessing land in the rural areas often in violation of the Native Land Husbandry Act injunctions.

⁸⁸ Floyd, B. N. in Native Affairs Annual Report, 1961, *NADA Vol 40*, p.98.

⁸⁹ PER 5/Chief Makore/72 Squatters at Gono kraal.

⁹⁰ E. G. Howman, 'Rufimbi' in *NADA*, 1950, p.31. *Rufimbi* is a medicine which was believed to have mesmeric effects. Its use enabled cattle rustlers or thieves (*makororo*) to get away with a number of cattle from some villages without being detected or caught. It was common among chiefs to engage professional thieves in acquiring cattle. See also D.C.H.P. 'Mangoromera' in *NADA* 1933, p.61.

believed to have possessed *rufimbi*. Some of the people accumulated a lot of cattle and became respected people within their communities.⁹¹

A deduction from the above is that those who had *rufimbi* were part of the rural elite even though they did not belong to the royal family. The chiefs also helped the councils to collect rates in terms of the African Councils Act and the Council rates resolution. Those who could not pay had pegs put in their lands and instructed not to plough until they were paid up.⁹² This provided ample room for the chiefs to abuse their positions.

In a letter to the District Commissioner of Gutu, anonymous ‘Rhodesian Informers’ alleged that Chief Vondo Mude Mukozho Gutu was taking goats and money for himself from people in Chikwanda and was also demanding money for making wrong and unknown boundaries. Chief Nerupiri was forced to pay £40 for the redrawing of a boundary and £4.50 for *badza* (the hoe the chief had used to mark a boundary peg).⁹³ The ‘Rhodesian Informers’ went on to plead for a European Paramount chief to try all Chikwanda cases than Chief Gutu, a tyrant who harassed people.⁹⁴

One Mudyamadzo also reported that Chief Chitsa had demanded £48, 2 cattle and 2 sheep from Mutuvi so that he would become a new kraal head in an area to be allocated.⁹⁵ An anonymous reporter also complained that Pome, a member of the TLA from the Serima area was being paid heavy money for allocating land alone, gambled and took poor men’s wives.⁹⁶ While extortionate chiefs clandestinely accumulated wealth, it is however important to note that those who leveled charges of incompetency might have been aspirants to the chieftainship position who were out to defame the incumbents.

1.5 Conclusion

The chapter has provided an introduction to the social and historical context in which the local elites operated and blossomed. The chapter brought to light that the socio-economic and political authority in pre-colonial Gutu was largely ascribed on the basis of hereditary lineage membership whereupon several members of the ruling Gumbo-Madyirapazhe lineage were

⁹¹ Interview with Chief Gutu, Gutu, 13 July 2013.

⁹² PER 5/GEN/73, Anonymous. A letter from the informers in Rhodesia 17/04/73.

⁹³ PER 5/CHIEFS/14/6/73 Boundaries.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ PER 5 Chief Chitsa/72

⁹⁶ PER /SERIMA/75 True Reporter, ‘Pome making money as the member of TLA’.

selected to hold office. While members of other totemic lineages like the Shava, Shumba, Duma and others were ostensibly chosen for the qualities that were thought to be desirable in the leader; wealth, marital unions and military prowess were the dominant criteria for suitability.

Military titles and leadership were important forms of political power. It has been made implicit that inequalities bordering on land distribution among the ruling and subordinate groups and other skill based crafts created a gap between the rich and poor of society. The chapter has however demonstrated that the notion of elitism had distinct features that did not only bear on material interests, but on integrity or uprightness. Chiefs usually accumulated wealth in order to redistribute as another way of gaining political support. This political capital, in turn, allowed them to extract more economic resources.

Although local politics and its elite actors had elite categories which were tenuous and interconnected all the elite categories possessed wealth, power, prestige and privilege to varying degrees and within different contexts. The chapter has shown how the power of status was commonly found with other powers as colonial rule induced a mentality whereby all those who exercised some degree of power within the colonial administration felt entitled to negotiate it for personal benefit. Overall, the chapter has discussed issues regarding the inevitability and positive functionality of stratification or institutionalized social inequality in rewards.

Chapter 2: Agricultural Enterprise, Accumulation and Rural inequities, 1900-1960

2.0 Introduction

The early years of colonialism fomented a desire among the people of Gutu to exist independent of state and capitalist control, as the missions and other categories of accumulation aroused entirely new wants which enhanced economic opportunities as well as manifold social deprivation. In the history of settler colonialism there was a high degree of social differentiation on the basis of land asset holdings where land holdings and productivity were transformed into wealth and prestige. The social differentiation premised on land allocation and missionary education provided the basis of differential opportunities or life chances for varied social groups.

This chapter shows how within the landowning category arose differences in socio-economic status born of unequal land ownership. The different ways through which the rural salariat and farming communities understood, used their farmland, resources and opportunities; showing how the emergence of distinct strategies of accumulation created socio-economic and political contradictions which produced a consciousness of difference among the rural populace are considered.

2.1 The Land, patterns of settlement and social stratification

Within the Gutu polity, the major stratifying variables were the control over the allocation of land and the ability to mobilize human resources. The political elite dominated by the Gumbo-Madyirapazhe used landownership to explain and legitimize its preeminent position.¹ The chiefs and village heads were more privileged than the rest because all land was vested in the chieftdom. As a result, the positions they held afforded them opportunities to occupy quality land and keep more cattle than others.

¹ Interview with Chief Gutu, Gutu, 13 July 2013.

The fact that the head of the village would grant land to the head of the household does not follow that every house and household had an equal share of land. Beach argues that in practice, land was not of identical quality within each state.² In areas where large territorial zones were covered, there would be highly-prized, well-watered, well-wooded, fertile areas which would augur well for better harvests. Thus, Gelfand's claim that since land belonged to the clan and so could not be bought and sold thereby restricting the accumulation of material wealth falls away.³ Even in the micro-environment of the village, differences existed because land could not be shared equally in quality.⁴

Losers in various political struggles ended up holding poor land. According to Beach the distinction between those who held different types of soils did not lie exclusively between the dominant lineage and the others. On the contrary, since the central lineage was often bitterly and bloodily divided, each house within it went to get as many useful marriage alliances with other lineages as possible, using either cattle and other wealth as bride-prices to bring young women into its body and thus to increase its number, or by using its numbers and military strength to guarantee these other lineages access to good land.⁵ For example, Mberikwazvo Chifambausiku married wives from amongst the Shava and Shonga and so the Chifambausiku lineage blossomed.⁶

Between 1892 and 1898, the official policy with regard to African traditional land tenure system in Gutu District was to let the Africans continue operating as they had always done. This explains why land aggrandizement which took place in some parts of colonial Zimbabwe during the 1890s was less pronounced in the Gutu District as Palmer noted,

In this District which lies to the North-east of Fort Victoria and to the South of Charter, very little land had been alienated to Europeans during the 1890s so that the Native Commissioner had no difficulty in creating the Gutu Reserve.⁷

However, as a way of implementing the 1898 Order-in-Council, Native Commissioners who did not even know what land had been alienated to Europeans were asked to demarcate land to the Africans. An estates department established in 1908 to promote European settlement requested

² Beach, *Zimbabwe Before 1900*, p.22.

³ M. Gelfand 'Who is rich and poor in traditional Shona society?' in *NADA Vol x No.4, 1972*, p.49.

⁴ Ibid

⁵ Ibid

⁶ C. S. Makari, *Magamba EChimurenga*, p.24.

⁷ R. Palmer, *Land and Racial Domination in Rhodesia*, University of California Press, Los Angeles, 1977, p. 256.

for the readjustment of the original land distribution on the basis that some reserves were too large compared to others.

In 1900 Chief Shumba and his people were forced to move into Gutu reserve so that they could pave way for settlers who wanted to live around the Chatsworth area. In 1905, the Cademeyer brothers pegged a farm on the Chidza River which encroached into the reserve thereby displacing Maungwa's people.⁸ Although the Cademeyer brothers' action infringed the African land rights as legalized by the reserve boundary, boundaries of the reserve had to be altered so that the whites could be given a favourable consideration. In the same area south of Chikwanda, J. Vermaal who had occupied Braakfontein farm in 1908 did not even wait to be granted permission by the Civil Commissioner to change his farm to the one adjoining Dromore farm which was his other farm.⁹

The pegging of the Braakfontein farm robbed the people under Mabheure and Murombo of their grazing land. In the above cases, the white farmers in question had found that the loose sandy soils in the south of Chikwanda were suited to the growing of tobacco and so it was the profitability of tobacco in 1905 which gave impetus to land alienation. The Verlos and Excelsior farms extended far deep into the Chikwanda reserve only to be surrounded by Makore, Muunde and Vhetu families.¹⁰ To justify the land grabbing, Huntley, the Superintendent of Natives in Victoria claimed that many thousands of acres of the reserve were not required or used by the Africans and so were being locked up to no purpose.¹¹ Such remarks were however contrary to observations made by the Native Reserves Commission (NRC) in 1915. which recommended an additional 95 200 acres to the existing 99 943 acres to Chikwanda because the reserve was thickly populated and closely cultivated so that more land would be required to support an increasing population.¹²

In 1909, Kenny the NC of Gutu, recommended that Chiwara reserve which was one of the independent chiefdoms in the Duma Confederacy lying east of Gutu reserve, be allocated 10 000 acres of land including the Vinga hills and not the Mungezi area which had fertile soils. According to Kenny, all the graves of the preceding Chiwara chiefs were still seen on the Vinga

⁸ L 2/2/117/47 Secretary to the Administrator, Victoria Farmers Association.

⁹ L 2/2/117/47 Letter from the Estate Department and Civil Commissioner to Secretary Victoria Farmers Association, 1908.

¹⁰ Interview with J.Chikombingo, Gutu, 6 August 2014.

¹¹ R. Mtetwa, 'The Political and Economic History of the Duma People of South Eastern Rhodesia 1716-1945', p.311.

¹² Command Paper 8674: Papers relating to the Southern Rhodesia Native Reserves Commission, 1915, p.19

and so it would be very hard for the Chiwara people to leave the country which had been occupied by their ancestors for centuries past.¹³ It would have been unthinkable for Africans to make a self-destructive sacrifice of preferring rocky land to the fertile Mungezi bank where crops grew well. The wanton looting of African land by the whites had with it the common excuse by the whites that land was virtually lying waste.

The reorganization of the Department of Agriculture under Eric Nobbs fueled the BSAC to pursue what Palmer termed the 'white agricultural policy.' Africans were to be moved from Crown land into reserves so as to pave way for the settler farmers. In 1909, Taylor, an official of the Estates Department recommended that the Native Department should 'thoroughly inspect, locate and report on any land considered suitable for settlement and make up proposals for new boundaries for these reserves so as to exclude from them such as is recommended for farming purposes.'¹⁴ C. D. Wise the Director of Land Settlement attacked the practice of leaving a lot of land in the hands of the Africans. He recommended the reduction of reserves where these were situated near the railway lines and also pressed for the exchange of all 'red and black soil which the natives never work for a lighter class of soil.'¹⁵ In 1909, the imposition of a rent on those Africans residing on Company lands witnessed a large scale movement into the reserves. In 1910, the NC of Gutu reported that the movement into the reserves was so enormous that it had badly disfigured his register.¹⁶

The BSAC continued however to make an attack on the Reserves as and when it was necessary for it to get land for incoming settlers. The dominant school of thought within the Company circles was that, Reserves would be extinguished under the onslaught of economic progress leaving a stratified African society of miners, farmers, artisans and labourers. It was held that with time, all the good lands in the reserves would be swallowed up by pegged European farms. It should however be noted that, even though most of the white farmers who took up farms in Gutu in 1913, did not do so in the reserves, it was later seen necessary to reduce the size of Gutu reserve as per the NRC's recommendation of 1915 to cater for incoming settlers. By the time D.E Mackintosh took over his farm in Fairburn in 1913, Kenny the NC of Gutu and

¹³ L 2/2/117/47 Kenny NC Gutu to SN Victoria 1909.

¹⁴ L2/2/117/1 F. W. Taylor to Wise, Director of Land Settlement 20/07/1909.

¹⁵ R. Palmer, *Land and Racial Domination*, p.84.

¹⁶ N9/4/23 Report of the NC Gutu for the year ending December 1910.

his clerk Phayre had approved land acquisition by Joe Levason at Fernadow, Van Aswegan at Airlie, Alivier on Lorn in the stretch of land lying between Gutu-Mpandawana and Chatsworth.¹⁷

Shortly afterwards, Charlie Burrows (Mvimvi), Pywell (Glenary), Tom Bezuidenhout (Edina), Toe Bradshaw (Trafalgar) and Welman (Good Luck)-names of farms in brackets-acquired huge farms in the same area.¹⁸ Farms Mvimvi and Good Luck sliced part of Gutu reserve which was occupied by the Madondo and Mudzitiri families under the Denhere chiefdom. The affected people had to withdraw to Vutsinda.¹⁹

In 1915, the NRC recommended the reduction of Gutu reserve. Three portions with an acreage of 167 310 were carved from the reserve over and above the 1500 morgen of the Caledon Estate extending north of the Devuli river near Mount Rasa. Denhere and Musarurwa's people who had been occupying the area stretching from Nyazvidzi River to Soti Source had to leave. Denhere whose *dunhu* had five villages had to move to an area between Nyamaturi and Nyazvidzi rivers. This area later became Nyazvidzi Purchase Area. Following Denhere and Musarurwa's departure, there was an influx of soldier settlers and seven of them Fleetwood (Wheatlands), Jenkins (Gongwe), Tracey (Willand), Dyer (Chibakwe), Hudson (Chindito), Townsend (Chomfuli) and W. E. P. Nell (Surat), availed themselves of the offer and commenced farming operations in 1920.

The readjustment of reserve boundaries caused apprehension among Africans, many of whom refused to adopt modern agricultural techniques recommended by some Native commissioners since 1911. The fear which gripped Africans was that good crops would lead to further alienation of their land. The European desire to completely segregate African and European areas was concretized when Rhodesia was granted responsible government in 1923. The constitution of 1923 gave finality and set aside land for the sole and exclusive use of Africans with the corollary that Europeans could not acquire land in such reserves. Due to fear of a possible eruption of violent confrontation between farmers and Africans and the white men's fear of losing land to the Africans, a Lands Commission under Morris Carter was appointed by the imperial government in 1925 to,

¹⁷ Hist.Mss.W05/9/1 D. A. E. Mackintosh: Gutu Early Settlement days.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Interview with J. Chikombingo, Gutu, 6 August 2014.

Enquire into and report upon the expediency and practicability of setting apart defined areas outside the boundaries of the native reserves within which natives only shall be permitted to acquire ownership of or interest in land and within which only Europeans shall be permitted to acquire ownership or interest in land.²⁰

Even though the setting up of the commission was geared towards solving the land question, the unrealistic nature of the approach used by settlers and Commissioners failed to produce finality. Instances occurred where African witnesses who appeared before the Lands Commission stated that they were ignorant of the objectives of the Commission.²¹ Chiefs Chitsa, Nyamande and Makore were not afforded the opportunity to consult the members of their chiefdoms.

White farmers in Gutu also advanced socio-economic and psychological reasons for possessory segregation. They cited the fears that close proximity of their farms to native lands would spread livestock disease, that stock thefts would increase and that land values would depreciate. J. Crossby of the Chatsworth Farmers' Association filed a report to the Lands Commission complaining that African ownership of land close to white men's farms would lamentably lower the value of land and thus militate against white settlement.²² The Gutu–Felixburg Farmers Association also voted in favour of separate areas for the two races.²³ Although just a few Africans had managed to purchase land the settlers were increasingly becoming uneasy with the idea of allowing Africans to buy land anywhere in the country.

2.2 Native Purchase Areas and the Creation of a 'modern' Agricultural Elite.

Native Purchase Areas (NPAs) were created where 'only natives could acquire land or have interest in land. Europeans could only enter if their presence was for the benefit of the natives'.²⁴ The Lands Commission assigned four NPAs to Gutu District, namely Dewure (152 600 acres), Caledon (6 350 acres), Mazare (3 797 acres) and Nyazvidzi (68 600 acres). Dewure and Caledon were later merged to form Dewure in 1941.²⁵ Although theoretically Africans were free to purchase land anywhere in the country, very few were able to do so due to the settlers' reluctance to sell land to Africans and also due to prohibitive prices of the land. In the end, very

²⁰ Command Document No.8674, Papers Relating to the Southern Rhodesia Native Reserves Commission, p.9.

²¹ S 597 Letter from Superintendent of Natives in Victoria to NC Gutu 17/04/1925.

²² ZAH 1/1/4 Evidence to the Lands Commission 1925.

²³ S 597 Letter from the Chairman of the Gutu-Felixburg Farmers' Association to NC Gutu 03/04/1925.

²⁴ L. Powys-Jones, 'The Native Purchase Areas of Southern Rhodesia' p.21

²⁵ Palmer, *Land and Racial Domination*, p.256.

few Africans were able to purchase land and usually at very inflated prices.²⁶ While NPAs were created so that indigenous inhabitants of Gutu could buy out farms, the main aim of the colonial government was to settle the Sotho who had accompanied some white settlers from South Africa.

These were given the first preference when applications for farms were considered in the Dewure and Nyazvidzi Purchase areas. Mr. Craig, the government land surveyor working in Fort Victoria, actually advised all Basotho who came to him wanting to purchase land to go to Dewure Purchase Area which had been 'reserved for them'.²⁷ As Mujere observed, ownership of freehold land in Purchase Areas became one of the major ways through which the Basotho established a sense of belonging and claimed an attachment to the land which was otherwise dominated by the Karanga under Chief Nemashakwe and Chingombe of the Gumbo Madyirapazhe clan and those under Chief Chiwara of the Moyo Duma clan.²⁸

The indigenous inhabitants of Gutu who applied for farms were expected to have Master Farmer Certificates, failure of which they had to prove ownership of cattle, farming implements like ploughs, harrows, cultivators, scotch carts and indicate how much money they were able to pay in monthly installments. According to Shutt, in the early years of the purchase areas, many applicants 'were from towns while others were alienated from reserve life-those cut off from traditional avenues of wealth accumulation and prestige, such as black South African immigrants (such as Basotho), mission based farmers and ordinary clergy.'²⁹ For the African landholders, the small farms expressed their elite status in society while the state expected that the educated elite should maintain modern, efficient farms.³⁰

Basing on constraints imposed by international economy to the growth of rural capitalism during the Great Depression, Palmer has shown how the collapse of world commodity prices helped to frustrate emerging capitalist classes among Africans. Michael Owusu also argues that throughout rural Africa, sharp class inequities and peasant exploitation were worsened by world recessions.³¹ When the Great Depression hit the nascent settler economy, the government took

²⁶ A. K. Shutt, 'Purchase Area farmers and the middle class of Southern Rhodesia, c.1931-1952', *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol.30, No.3 (1997), p.558.

²⁷ S138/81 Superintendent of Native Fort Victoria to CNC Salisbury, 10 October 1932.

²⁸ J. Mujere, 'Autochthons, Strangers, Modernising Educationists, and Progressive Farmers: Basotho Struggles for Belonging in Zimbabwe 1930s-2008', p.75.

²⁹ A. K. Shutt, 'Purchase Area farmers and the Middle Class of Southern Rhodesia, c.1931-1952', p.562.

³⁰ A. K. Shutt, 'Pioneer farmers and family dynasties', p.2.

³¹ M. Owusu, 'Agriculture and rural development since 1935' in Ali Mazrui (ed) *General History of Africa V111 Africa Since 1935*, UNESCO, 2003, p.344.

drastic measures to curtail African peasant agriculture that had been successfully competing with the emerging settler commercial agriculture. These measures had the desired consequences of forcing Africans to participate in wage labour market.

Admittedly, it is erroneous to think that African farmers were everywhere driven out of business by European competition or changes in economic structure. This dimension has not gained coverage in historical works on the impact of the Great Depression on Africans' quality of life. Davies and Dopcke have largely emphasized Gutu's first experience of 'semiproletarianisation' during the 1930s, noting that as the great depression hit the colony hard on all economic fronts, the weight of economic collapse was shifted to Africans through various laws meant to shelter the mining industry and settler agriculture from its worst effects. Restrictions prohibiting all movements of cattle were imposed in varying forms from 1935 to 1939, and again in 1943. The restrictions had a differential impact on the African population. Wealthy individuals who derived their income primarily from cattle sales were hardest hit. Those who sold grain to cover taxes and other necessities also came under severe pressure as transport and terms of exchange worsened, mostly due to state intervention on behalf of European maize farmers.³² The impact of the Maize Control Act of 1931 in Gutu was aggravated by transport problems.

Unable to get their crop to the nearest Maize Control Board (MCB) depot in Fort Victoria, producers had to accept trading goods in place of cash. Africans were forced to barter trade against their will. In Gutu Reserve, Maize Control was opposed by emerging elites, traditional leaders, and ordinary peasants alike. The Gutu Native Board Meetings in 1931 and 1934 condemned the traders for not paying cash. They further indicated that they were unable to pay their tax and again called for government assistance in marketing.³³ As rural sources of cash dried up in the early 1930s, paying taxes became more difficult. The drop in tax revenue in Gutu District earned Acting NC Lemon a rebuke from CNC Carbutt.³⁴ Besides taxation, the state also exacted dip fees, rent on Crown Land and cattle levies.

The Cattle Levy, enacted in 1931, was like the Maize Control Act a direct African subsidy for European agriculture.³⁵ The economic effects of the maize marketing scheme were

³² B. Davis and W. Dopcke, *Survival and Accumulation in Gutu*, p.71.

³³ S 1542/N2 (G), Minutes of Gutu Native Board Meetings 27/5/31 and 12/6/34.

³⁴ S 132/2 (1932), Acting NCG to SONV, 12/1/32.

³⁵ Davis and Dopcke, *Survival and Accumulation*, p.74.

an impetus to stratification in the black communities. Faced with shrinking income from rural sources and growing state demands for their cash, an increasing number of men from Gutu were forced into migrant labour. Davis and Dopcke argue that while “capital penetrated rapidly into the African rural economy through both wage labour and cash crop production, the pattern of penetration was complex, creating both constraints and opportunities for the rural population”.³⁶ Africans attempted to exploit the limited opportunities presented by peripheral capitalism to reproduce what they saw as a traditional social order. This set the stage for a prolonged struggle, which did not end with the 1930s.

The Africans’ relative exploitability and vulnerability to dispossession enabled many of them to survive more or less independently in the interstices of economic or social life as they capitalized upon the gaps between the law and its implementation to create opportunities for themselves. Against all odds, society continued to have its own *hurudza*. The crucial point I maintain is that, the Africans were not simply passive receptors or active resisters of the penetration of capital, but they often contained reactions to it which led to the emergence of an agricultural elite.

The implementation of the LAA whose effects began to be recognised in 1934 in Gutu District witnessed the pegging of 19 farms on land which was occupied by Musarurwa and Zinyemba’s people. The farms namely: Zeru, Jermanda, Rufundi, Masaisai, Jerenye, Soti, Zinyemba, Gandi, Dara, Chirongwe, Chakata, Mumunya, Muluti, Soti Source, Hlonjani, Gabi, Inyamaturi, Machengura and Sikatu, all ranged from 1100 to 1700 morgen in extent.³⁷ Some of Musarurwa’s people who resided in the area on which Gabi farm was pegged were prosecuted when they were found farming and wandering about without permission.³⁸

Some of the evacuated people moved to Chiguhune where they joined Denhere’s people who had also been moved out of Eastdale Estates owned by Lonrho while others crossed the Nyazvidzi River into Gombe in the Buhera District. Tavaziva’s people, who had been moved out of Eastdale West and Shashe Fountains, either settled in the Serima Reserve or proceeded into Chilimanzi (Chirumhanzu) District. Many other evicted groups had to wander from one chief to another negotiating for settlement areas.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ S 1857 General Report of the ‘Soti Area’ by Land Inspector R.Cecil Boyes, 27/08/34.

³⁸ S 1857, NC Gutu’s letter No. 288/43 to CNC with regard to Gabi farm.

By 1936, 59 farms had been bought and occupied in the District. The establishment of the NPAs saw the driving out of people into the reserves and loss of land by Chiefs Chiwara, Nemashakwe and Chingombe. Chiwara who controlled the south-west of the Dewure Purchase Areas lost some of his land to the farms and the boundaries had to be moved.³⁹ Nemashakwe, Manhenhe and Mutakura who lived in the area which became Dewure Purchase Area moved to Vhunjere where they mixed with Chipiro's people.⁴⁰ Chizema also led a group and established himself at Mataruse. Denhere and Musarurwa's people were driven out of Nyazvidzi Purchase Area and found their way to Chiguhune and Mutunduru.⁴¹

2.3 Gospel of the plough

When Alvord preached his 'gospel of the plough', the hallmark of his teaching was working together with God in order to get good crop yields while at the same time taking good care of the soil. In 1930 Alvord warned that 'Prayers are unclean without action' and that 'Faith without work is dead.'⁴² His argument was that, if poverty had to be alleviated and people's quality of life improved, emphasis was on combining prayer with hoeing if the prayers were to be answered. He cited superstition, ignorance, witchcraft and worship of the 'unknown' and taboos which shrouded methods of agriculture as factors which militated against increased production among African farmers. From his point of view, African agricultural practices were wholly primitive, wasteful and destructive.

Alvord remarked that the Africans had 'many superstitions, taboos and customs which are just as foolish... and these are connected with the Africans' cattle as well as with his crops and as his cattle are concerned, they are a great drawback to his advancement. To the African, his cattle are regarded as a bank, where numbers count more than quality or value for beef. They are also essential for lobola'. Alvord's psyche pictured Africans who lamentably lacked in the qualities of initiative, application and discipline. Thus, when Alvord initiated his scheme for training Africans in agricultural demonstration work, he held the conviction that a fellow African

³⁹ S2929/8/3 Delineation Report-Gutu: Report on Chiwara Chieftaincy, Chikwanda Reserve, Gutu, 19 February 1964.

⁴⁰ Interview with Francis Mukaro, Gutu, 26 July 2013.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² S 1542/C19, précis for NAD Conference, Victoria Falls, 1933.

was the best person to: ‘...teach agriculture to the superstition steeped African who attributed high crop yields to “*divisi*”, “*muti*”, witchcraft, charms and the favour of the ancestral spirits.’⁴³

Admittedly, the belief that magic was indispensable in successful business was strong among Africans and seashells (*nyengerezi*) were used as a charm (*divisi*) for bountiful harvests. When Paul Chidyausiku wrote *Pfungwa Dzasekuru Mafusire*, he was evidently bent on breaking the belief in witchcraft and magic. On agriculture and fertility medicine (*divisi*), he says,

Our people are no longer fools, but it is just that many of them have not yet seen the light. They are still being fooled like children in many things. There is no fertility medicine, listen that I may tell you, Mushongavende. Fertility medicine is in your hands. Fertility medicine is knowing to cultivate in the correct way. These things of anointing and blowing, or of little animals that are said to go and fetch grain in people’s stores, I do not believe in the least. I say it is just a lie.⁴⁴

The character Mafusire attributed his own excellent crops to the use of enlightened agricultural methods. Obviously such remarks were good music to Alvord’s ears. Alvord directed the ‘Alvord Scheme’ for agricultural development in Native Purchase Areas and Reserves and was credited with the foundation of the agricultural extension service for African areas. He devised measures for the improvement of farming whereby he hoped to eliminate bush-fallowing, maintain more or less continuous cultivation of arable lands, maintain or raise soil fertility, increase yields and lay a basis on which more advanced farming techniques could be developed.

Since the concept of Purchase Areas came with the loss of Africans’ right to purchase land elsewhere in the country, the scheme was also interpreted as some kind of compensation for their loss of this right. Shutt argues that ‘Purchase Area farms were conceived as ‘single’ family farms, large enough for a family to live comfortably, but not so large as to compete with Europeans.’⁴⁵ Thus, Purchase Areas were part of the colonial administration’s dilemma of how to deal with the African elite. As a result, officials in Southern Rhodesia sought to skirt that dilemma by maintaining the purchase areas as enclaves of “modern” or “civilized” farming, established not so much to promote a rural middle class on par with Europeans as to provide a geographically distinct home for “advanced natives”.⁴⁶

⁴³ Report by the Commissioner on Native Education 1925.

⁴⁴ P. Chidyausiku, *Pfungwa Dzasekuru Mafusire*, pp.31-32.

⁴⁵ A. K. Shutt, ‘Pioneer farmers and family dynasties in Marirangwe Purchase Areas, colonial Zimbabwe, 1931-1947’, *African Studies Review*, Vol.43, No.3 (2000), p.62.

⁴⁶ A. K. Shutt ‘Purchase Area farmers and the Middle class of Southern Rhodesia’ c.1931-1952’, *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol.30, No. 3, (1997), p.558.

Purchase areas thus satisfied the African elite's ideals of an emergent middle class which included 'privacy, a measure of respect from the colonial government and a symbolic and concrete separateness from African farmers in the reserves and from lower paid workers.'⁴⁷ The 'progressive' Africans who could not find suitable land and were hampered by the inherent insecurity of tenure in the reserves sought land in the purchase areas. Although the farms Niekerk's Rust and Erichsthal were initially earmarked for the Basotho, their divisions were acquired by the Karanga from surrounding areas such as Munyikwa, Chiwara, Serima and Chingombe among other areas in the District. Among those who acquired farms in the Dewure Purchase area were Vengai, Dondofema, Maraiwa, Mudyahoto, Madheya, Mavhundu, Madare, Mukonoweshuro, Madzura and Dumbu.⁴⁸

What Terence Ranger wrote of the Samkange family upon their purchase of a farm in Msengezi purchase area that the acquisition was "a landmark in the establishment of an elite family,"⁴⁹ equally applied to the families of Nyeruke Gumbo, Hamios Mukonoweshuro, Ndotsemuka Dumbu and Marewa Gonye. From their beginnings as reserve entrepreneurs, they rose to become independent landowning farmers and would compare favourably with other elites like Aaron Jacha, Thompson Samkange, and Petros Kapeta who aspired to the respectability due their rank in society.⁵⁰

The Native Land Board (NLB) which oversaw development in the areas and selected applicants for farms demanded "personal occupation" of the farms where the applicant would make farming a full time occupation. If the applicant received instruction from a demonstrator, then a short report from the demonstrator was to accompany the application. As Cheater observed, this policy was difficult to enforce, especially when "absentee farmers" worked for the state as clerks, police-men, repeatedly continued to receive warnings were sounded for farmers to occupy their farms. Moore and Vaughan argue that while yeoman farming in colonial Zimbabwe 'was an indication of wealth and a sign of status, it was rarely in itself the source of such wealth'.⁵¹

⁴⁷ A. K. Shutt 'Purchase Area farmers and the Middle class of Southern Rhodesia' c.1931-1952', p.558.

⁴⁸ Interview with Dondofema, Sengai, Gutu, 30 May 2013.

⁴⁹ Ranger, *Are we not also men*, p. vii.

⁵⁰ *Ibid*, p.14.

⁵¹ L.Moore and M.Vaughan, *Cutting Down Trees: Gender, Nutrition and Agricultural Change in the Northern Province of Zambia, 1890-1990*, Portsmouth NH, 1994, p.116.

There were professional men like Dzingai Ziso, Dzinotywei and Hamios Mukonoweshuro who also had small business shops. From the very beginning, the purchase areas were intimately bound up with the emerging middle class in the urban areas. Applications poured in from government messengers and clerks, police, and those who manned other minor, though critical offices of the state.

Kuchinani from the Chingombe area was a police officer, Kereke Devison was a soil conservation overseer, Kwangware was a builder, Chingwa Joseph was into carpentry while Dzingai Ziso was a teacher. Many of these men were also reserve entrepreneurs, using monies from the business units to purchase ploughs, harrows, cultivators, scotch carts and other agricultural equipment. Admittedly then, Purchase area farms offered not only the prestige of private property, but also the personal privacy so desired by elites. This privacy was enjoyed not only in an individual sense with others, but included a sense of some freedom from government intrusion.⁵²

Matizira from Makore, Purazeni from Chitsa, Nyere from Munyaradzi and Derera from Nyamande were among some applicants who sought to secure land for the first time upon establishing that their land in the reserves was inadequate for their needs.⁵³ As already noted, due to lack of agricultural surveys, a high percentage of the NPA units were not economically viable when they were allocated. By the mid-1940s criticism mounted of purchase area farmers as poor, inefficient farmers who rarely even visited their farms. Many thought the scheme should be abandoned as a failed freehold experiment and that given the shortage of land for reserve Africans, the amount of land so far settled in the purchase areas was too generous. This prompted the government to cease allocation of farms to those who had no Master Farmer certificates. By 1948 agricultural demonstrators Mapfumo, Ndongwe, Mutihero, Mashingaidze, Nyashanu, Zimudzi, Mbiri and Chipondoro had been deployed in Gutu so as to assist the farmers in Purchase Areas on the proper manuring of land, strip tilling, cattle breeding, digging wells and marketing of crops.⁵⁴

The deployment of the demonstrators into NPAs saw a shift of focus from assisting those in the reserves who needed the help most considering that they were crowded. Demonstrators later went into the reserves where they engaged people in many agricultural and community

⁵² A. Shutt, *Purchase Area Farmers and the Middle Class*, p.568.

⁵³ S 2044, *Applications for Land in Native Area 1950-1955*, Native Commissioner Gutu.

⁵⁴ Land Development Officer Monthly Report, July 1948.

work activities meant to improve the people's quality of life. Their mission was to train Africans in the reserves in intensive farming methods, both by direct teaching and by example as they farmed and managed their own plots.⁵⁵ Mapfumo, Ndongwe, Katandwa, gave lectures on winter ploughing, manuring of lands, making of compost, crop rotation.⁵⁶ Moyo, Makoni and Ndlovu specialized in the moulding of bricks and the construction of huts and houses. Zimudzi, Nyashanu, Musukutwa and Mbiri among others, assisted people building new houses. By August 31, 1948, a total of 176 houses had been completed in the Gutu reserve.⁵⁷

According to Weinrich, Purchase Area farmers saw themselves as constituting what could be termed an African middle class with values, interests and grievances which were quite different from those of their counterparts in the reserves.⁵⁸ As a result, Purchase Area farmers even excluded their counterparts in the reserves from their farmers' associations and unions. Within the Dewure NPA, there were four main bodies which served the interests of the farmers, namely the Dewure Native Council, The Farmers Association, the I.C.A Committee and the Co-operative Society. According to Latham, "the farmers considered the Association to be theirs and it is something in which they can readily identify themselves... It is therefore active in schemes and projects for the betterment of conditions in the NPA".⁵⁹ Matters to do with conservation, better farming techniques through which extension work in agriculture was channeled were under the supervisory role of the I. C. A. Committee. Messrs Shabi, Dondofema, Chakawa, Nerutanga and Makonese were active on nearly all the bodies that had anything to do with the development of the NPA.

Unlike the Dewure NPA, Nyazvidzi did not have a Native Council. However, its Farmers' Association (affiliated to the African Farmers' Union) acted as a general vehicle for the airing of public opinion. Minor disputes and petty '*mhosvas*' were brought before the chairperson in informal sessions instead of bringing them before the District Commissioner. The Farmers' Association ceased to represent farmers in purely farming matters and in Latham's words, 'it could be recognized as the local governing body'.⁶⁰ Notwithstanding the above, the

⁵⁵ N.Bhebe, *Simon Vengayi Muzenda*, pp.42-43.

⁵⁶ NC Gutu Report for month ended August 31, 1948.

⁵⁷ NC Gutu Report for the month ended August 31, 1948.

⁵⁸ A. K. H. Weinrich, *African farmers in Southern Rhodesia*, Oxford University Press, London, 1975, p.53.

⁵⁹ C.J.K. Latham, 'The Social Organisation of the Mashona, Part III' in *NADA* Vol. XII, No. 1, 1979, p.57.

⁶⁰ *Ibid*

African Farmers' Union was very much conceived in the interests of a district yeomanry. This was the basis on which there developed some strained relations between them and the peasant farmers who remained in the reserves. Raymon Dumbu described the vulnerability of purchase area farmers,

Lone purchasers, isolated from the support of the *mudzviti* (native commissioner) or other *vatemala vakabudirira* (elite Africans), often found themselves terribly vulnerable to the threats of reserve farmers. We (purchase area farmers) clashed, often spectacularly, with chiefs and peasant farmers whose lands were designated as purchase areas. Peasant cultivators resident on designated purchase area farms like Chumi area, stole survey pegs, drove their cattle into our farms, cultivated within the boundaries of pegged farms, and even killed or maimed animals. Others whose lands faced Chief Chimwana Chingombe's area particularly Chamba Chiwara consistently complained of peasant encroachment and woodcutting and even urged the government to prosecute the offenders. During the rainy season, the flooded, crocodile-infested Dewure River would act as a barrier for people and their stock from crossing into the farms. However the dry season (*chirimo*) would always witness people from deliberate driving of animals from the Mugariwa, Mudyandzo, Makamure, Gumindoga, Chagonda, Mupata and Guzha villages deliberately driving their cattle into the farms where there was tall grass. People from the reserves would also cross into the farms to trap game for meat and in some cases the farmers' cattle fell into the snares.⁶¹

The narrative by Raymon Dumbu justifies why Mr. Ndotsemuka and his neighbours went on to apply for guns so that they could 'scare away' the marauding villagers from the Maungwa and Bako areas.⁶² The Nyazvidzi Purchase area farmers also clashed with the penurious reserve farmers from the Mutunduru area. The farmers came to consider fencing as one of their most immediate needs, owing to the constant friction with peasants from the villages. The Farmers Association and individual farmers agitated for fencing loans until most farmers were able to ring-fence their farms much later in the 1950s. Publicly, farmers were for the most part on friendly social terms with their reserve neighbours, but it was clear that there was a firm division in property terms.

The Master Farmer programme introduced by Alvord in 1929, provided that whoever wished to become a Master Farmer was inspected and examined by the Extension Service. If the farming activities reached the required high standard one was awarded a Master Farmer

⁶¹ Interview with Raymon Dumbu, Dumbu Farm, Sengai, Gutu, 30 May 2013.

⁶² Ibid.

certificate and badge.⁶³ The Victoria Master Farmers Association represented 201 affiliated Master Farmer Clubs with about 8000 Master Farmer members. By 1942, there was an increased interest in village improvement and sanitation where people competed for shields and cups in football and other sports. As already indicated, the master farmer's certificate became an essential prerequisite for obtaining a purchase area farm, and remained so until the early 1960s.

Besides having cattle, master farmers were expected to have equipment which included ploughs, harrows, cultivators and scotch carts. The number of ploughs in Gutu rose from 550 in 1923, to 1300 in 1929.⁶⁴ The acquisition of ploughs meant that the acreage under cultivation increased while on the other hand, soil erosion which played havoc in the reserves was also being traced to the development of the plough technology. As people with ploughs swallowed up large portions of arable land, those without ploughs were forced to relocate or simply stayed on the dwindling space. Ranger has also linked the predatory expansion of the ox-ploughing entrepreneurs to the colonial construction of the concept of 'shifting agriculture' and administrative arguments to limit ceilings on landholdings.⁶⁵

The plough also reduced the grazing land for the African owned cattle whose population continued to increase. While in 1922 Gutu and Chikwanda reserves had 31 559 cattle, the population had risen to 81 799 by 1945.⁶⁶ The growing use in ploughs which connoted an advance in the economy of human labour was so unintelligently applied that its results were of doubtful economic benefit. Both the expansion of arable lands and the improper use of the plough contributed to the irreparable damage of land resources in the reserves. In 1938, 4 million acres in the reserves were said to be damaged seriously and in 1941, it increased to 8 million.⁶⁷ Although less damaging than the sleigh or sledge, the wheeled ox-drawn cart vehicle, like the plough, added to the menace of erosion in the poorly maintained roads. Reports by conservationists that Gutu among other reserves was in a deplorable state in terms of declining natural resources resulted in the campaign to destock.

⁶³ T. W. F. Jordan, 'The Victoria Master Farmers' Association' in *NADA Vol. XI, No.5, 1978*, p.516.

⁶⁴ S235/503 NC's Annual Report 1923.

⁶⁵ Ranger, *Peasant Consciousness* pp.69-70.

⁶⁶ S1862 NC Gutu's Miscellaneous Report 1950.

⁶⁷ Bhebe, *Benjamin Burombo*, pp.20-21.

2.3.1 Destocking

The consequence of the people's high valuation of cattle was profound in that it led to greater opportunity for differentiation on the basis of ownership and greater discrepancies between rich and poor. While returns from land were a function of labour, returns from cattle were returns on capital investment. Cattle served three distinctive economic roles: as real capital, money and consumption goods. Cattle were stores of value, standards of value and media of exchange. As such discrepancies of wealth were expressed in cattle. The possession of cattle gave social importance as a means of securing many wives and adherents, and of dispensing hospitality and showing generosity. These were the virtues upon which status largely depended.

Whereas the average man might have owned five to ten cattle, the chief could have as many as 30 head. It was accepted that the chief should have additional food supplies since many of his clansmen would visit him to discuss matters of importance as well as have their cases judged and would be offered some of the food. Cattle were a principal form of wealth and any other person's most treasured possession. A man would often know his cattle by name, and his bull (*bhuru remusha*) the pride of his herd would bear the clan name and be hailed in laudatory phrases when coming out or getting into the kraal. Goats and sheep would be numerous but no one ever made praises of goats. Fowls were very common. They were often killed for eating and also used to settle domestic disputes. Destocking thus fractured the backbone of the rural economy and the penultimate stratification of society.

Already by 1939, the colonial government had cited overstocking as one of the causes of ecological collapse in Gutu. This closely followed a remark which Alvord had made in 1930 that,

On many Reserves the populations are dense and they are heavily stocked with cattle so that much of the area is what we term old, worn out Native lands. On these Reserves we are trying to induce the people to centralize their arable lands and set aside permanent grazing lands for their cattle. It is not our intention to necessarily encourage greater production, but rather to reduce the area under cultivation and to encourage better methods on smaller lands in order that people may grow sufficient for their needs and more land may be available for grazing purposes.⁶⁸

⁶⁸ S1193/F3 Alvord to Chief Agriculturalist 1/4/30.

The result was destocking which started in 1945. Within two years, compulsory destocking had taken away from Africans 59 614 cattle.⁶⁹ NCs were empowered to cut down herds on a culling and quota basis where voluntary control was not deemed sufficient. One dip tank attendant Ronnie grew unpopular in the Munyikwa, Mazuru and Chinyika areas. ‘He would cull your fattest beasts which were taken to market centres such as Baro, Dahwa, Marangawni, Mugo and Chihonga where the beasts were sold to white farmers for 8 shillings or at times a bag of maize a beast’.⁷⁰

When destocking was introduced, Africans were told that their cattle either had diseases or were the wrong breed and had to be eliminated. To some extent it was true as some cattle including those owned by whites were attacked by foot and mouth disease but what puzzled African cattle owners was that some of their cattle which were said to be diseased were sold to Europeans, mostly farmers or butchers. While some independent buyers participated, all cattle sold ultimately went to Liebigs, whose cannery at West Nicholson was the only *de facto* market for low-grade cattle.

In the late 1950s a lot of ‘diseased’ cattle were driven by Ronnie’s men from Baro, Dahwa and Chinyika to an unknown destination where they were presumably burnt. Destocking, one can argue, was a weapon used by the government to ensure the impoverishment of the African. All senior staff of Alvord’s Department of African Agriculture were appointed culling officers and were authorized to enforce cattle owners to reduce their stock. The owners could sell or slaughter their excess stock. No price-support programme was launched and many Africans felt that prices paid were unrealistically low. This added to African resentment.

Family bulls (*mabhuru emisha*) were castrated during the destocking period. Native demonstrator Ndongwe carried out excessive castration in Gutu district in August 1946.⁷¹ Reports of coercion during the cattle culling aroused the concern of Rev.Arthur Shearly Cripps, Rev. A. G. Jackson (a DRC minister in Chibi), and Ruth Comberbach, the wife of the former Gutu NC who regarded destocking as a political experiment in coercion. On 6 September 1938 when the de-stocking team was at Dewure dipping-tank, the Assistant Native Commissioner du Plessis tried a divide and rule tactic on the villagers by telling the elders that teachers, policemen, and dipping-supervisors owned more cattle than anybody else in the reserves. Maposa the

⁶⁹ S 1217/9 Summary of Destocking Results 1947.

⁷⁰ Interview with Gibson Zvotoona Tarugarira, Makura, Gutu, 24 December 2013.

⁷¹ S 482/145/3A CNC’s December Memorandum 1949.

representative of the elite association retorted that chiefs and headmen were in fact the richest people in the area. The association refused to have its cattle culled.⁷²

People protested against destocking through songs which attacked the exercise. Teachers Mordekai Hamutyinei and Makamanzi became very popular in the Chingombe and Munyikwa areas respectively for composing such songs,

N'ombe dzedu dzapera!

Dzinopera navachena kuti tirime chibage!

Ticharooro namashamba zvaiita vakare!

(Our cattle have perished at the hands of the white men so that we may grow maize! We shall pay lobola using cattle melons like what our ancestors did).⁷³

Themes of suffering and humiliation ran through a whole body of songs such as,

Ndinorangarira gore!

Kwakatanga chibaro!

Kukauya maraini!

Kukauya magurwamiswe!

Ngombe dzedu dzapera!

(I remember that year! What started was forced labour! Then came unified villages! Then came the culling of cattle! Our cattle have perished!).⁷⁴

Peasants often manifested their hostility through multiple cultural symbols unintelligible to the authorities. Isaacman equally observed that the Chope of Southern Mozambique developed an entire repertoire of songs denouncing the colonial regime in general and the hated tax officials in particular.⁷⁵

Destocking was also countered by a refined system of ownership. To eliminate the risk of losing cattle, one would distribute the herd among his sons and it was common to have about five dipping cards for cattle from the same kraal. For the Africans in Gutu, the culling of cattle was a

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Interview with Garai Hamutyinei, Chingombe, Gutu, 27 December 2013.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ A and B Isaacman, *Mozambique: From Colonialism to Revolution*, Zimbabwe Publishing House, Harare, 1985, p.68.

new and ominous experience of aggressive state intervention into their daily lives. Munguke, addressing the Commission of Enquiry at the Devuli dip tank, eloquently expressed the meaning of this change, ‘...it was the authorities who assisted us to accumulate wealth and to get rich, and from that we have been told ...that the water is getting short and that we have too many cattle’⁷⁶ To implement a destocking scheme in a society which valued cattle not merely for their economic, but social and spiritual value, had far reaching effects.

To Africans, cattle meant more than agricultural stock. They constituted a significant measure of personal wealth, a traditional source of lobola, the medium of payment for tribute, or of retribution for wrong-doing. The importance of cattle to the relative rise in rural prosperity was recognized by the native commissioners. Cattle were the focus of festivities, rainmaking ceremonies and social observances of all kinds and could be exchange for grain during drought periods. The linking of de-stocking with community development in the minds of many rural people was to prove an obstacle in the implementation of this policy.

In any case, a closer look at the erosion problem in the reserves outrightly indicates that the bulk of it was a result of the African way of cultivation made imperative by the land segregation policies. People had no alternative but to continuously plough on sloppy and rocky areas. Thus the issue of ecological deterioration was actually not a matter of overstocking but a symptom of the negative impact of the colonial land policy on the African economic activities. In 1946, the Chief Native Commissioner even questioned the effectiveness of destocking as a means of control. The cumulative effect of the changes described so far was to accelerate deterioration of natural resources and reduce the productivity of land.

It was not state policy to encourage Africans to produce for the market. Instead, the objective of ‘native development’ was merely to enable the reserves to accommodate more peasants expelled from land expropriated for settler occupation. Centralization (separation of arable and grazing lands and allocation of standardized plots to each landholder) and soil conservation schemes were also carried out through forceful persuasion. Although centralization was generally welcomed by African cultivators because they saw the immediate advantages for cattle herding, it deprived their land of manure because it increased the distance between the cattle byres and the fields, and few peasants made the effort to cart cattle manure to their fields.

⁷⁶ ZAX I/1/2 Meeting at Devuli tank.

Centralisation also concentrated vast numbers of livestock in one area leading to overgrazing and exposure of soil to the damaging action of water and wind. The huge herds of cattle were also frequently driven to and from the dip-tanks as well as grazing and watering places along definite paths which soon developed into gulleys and dongas. As a means to raise production, centralization was generally a failure. As the chief technician behind centralization, Alvord later admitted: "We have wasted our time for 17 years in conducting agricultural demonstrations work."⁷⁷ The results had been poor and he placed the blame on what he called the African's failure to change and adopt new farming methods. He concluded that African peasant farmers "will never change without compulsion and control and called upon the state to adopt "drastic methods" to combat the deteriorating ecological conditions in the reserves.⁷⁸

The problem did not, however, lie with the peasants but with the poor and crowded land assigned to them, grossly inadequate technical services, and the total lack of credit facilities. Generally, Alvord's technological policies were a failure because he merely transferred political issues into ecological imperatives. His policies were meant to squeeze the black population and prevent them from competing with white producers.

2.3.2 Authoritarian planning of African agriculture

As already indicated, the technical development phase of the colonial agrarian policy comprised four main activities namely agricultural extension, centralization, destocking, and land husbandry. From the 1930s, the state had encouraged farmers to combat soil erosion and as Hughes put it, 'the American- born Alvord wished, at all costs, to avoid an African version of Oklahoma's Dust Bowl'.⁷⁹ Demonstrators, just like the Jeanes teachers would preach hygiene and building of houses with bricks to prevent deforestation. Incidentally the creation of many dongas due to brick moulding and cutting trees to burn the bricks were not considered as a threat to conservation strategies.

Both Alvord and the settler administration had to fight an uphill struggle against what some officials regarded as the Africans' 'stupid and short-sighted conservatism' regarding

⁷⁷ Quoted in Report of the Secretary for Native Affairs, the CNC and Director of Native Department, 1961, p.25.

⁷⁸ M. J. Drinkwater, *The State and Agrarian Change in Zimbabwe's Communal areas: An application of Critical Theory*. Unpublished Doctor of Philosophy Thesis, University of East Anglia, December 1988, p.72.

⁷⁹ D. M. Hughes, *Whiteness in Zimbabwe: Race, Landscape, and the Problem of Belonging*, Macmillan, Palgrave, 2010, p.79.

improved use of land. The demonstrators had to guide, advise and supervise people in all sorts of community improving enterprises. They may not have been completely wrong, but were not completely right either. It was not only the profit motive that determined the behaviour of the peasant. Security was paramount and yet for demonstrators, efficiency was the paramount principle. Similarly, the only way to persuade poor farmers to work harder and produce more was to pay them a good price for their crops.

Africans questioned Alvord over producing more crops when there was no market. If their income increased and their financial position improved, there was a good chance that they would welcome changes. When Alvord retired in March 1950 as Director of the Department of Native Agriculture, he was credited with providing a faithful service to all reserve and purchase areas of Rhodesia. Indeed, more than a vestige of Alvord's work can be seen in current programmes of rural development. However, many of the 'new men' who came forward to obtain a master farmer certificate did so in order to move out of the reserves.

A sample of 286 master farmers in 1960 showed that 40% had joined the training scheme to purchase a farm, and 60% to learn better farming techniques.⁸⁰ The different motives which farmers had for acquiring master farmer certificates were indeed indicative of the diverse socio-economic differences or preferences which prevailed. Instead of wholesomely adopting the much fancied modern techniques of farming, even master farmers continued to host working parties.

2.4 Working parties as social capital

As unequal production could not be solely based on unequal access to land, any designed inequality would be produced by unequal access to labour. In the first instance, field labour was recruited on a familial basis. Families relied on their labour for ploughing, planting, weeding, harvesting, food preparation, and related jobs that had to be done around the homestead. Apart from familial recruitment, people worked in each other's fields in response to invitations to join work parties in the form of *nhimbe* or *humwe* (implying oneness) and *jakwara*. There was a general assumption of reciprocity in these arrangements. Rewards offered to non-familial workers took the form of beer and meat. In times of plenty and when anything like a serious agricultural operation such as the clearing of land was toward, food and beer were prepared and

⁸⁰ T. W. F. Jordan, 'The Victoria Master Farmers' Association' *NADA*, Vol .XI, No.5, 1978, p.517.

neighbours, both men and women were invited to the *nhimbe* at which all visitors were expected to lend a hand in the work in return for food and beer.⁸¹

Part of the pleasure came from the songs people sang as they threshed *mhunga* and *rapoko*. Some of the songs were even aimed at the rich and poor. In practice however, since the working parties were fueled by the beer provided by the householders, those who already had more or better land or had worked harder or had luck in the year would have more and better beer to offer and thus would get better turn-outs to their fields and would thus get better crops.

From the 1920s, work parties which took the form of *nhimbe*, *humwe* or *jakwara* provided a way for families to get help from neighbours with tasks too big for them to handle alone. The weeding *nhimbesh* could be undertaken on *chisi* days specially secluded for resting and socializing. Besides getting the work done in the fields, *nhimbesh* provided opportunities for people to debate specific problems and relationships in their community. As Bessant and Muringai put it, ‘work parties were an intrinsic part of the system through which just and unjust relations were decided and enacted’.⁸²

These *nhimbesh* were planned well in advance and the hosting of a *nhimbe* created a web of obligation among the host family and the families who attended. As families began farming with the intention to sell, more families bought and used ploughs. And as ploughs became more common, people incorporated them into *nhimbe* dubbed *doro ramageja*. Those without ploughs could have tracts of land opened for cultivation through *nhimbe*. The shift from *chibhakera* (zero tillage) to ploughs meant that a single *nhimbe* could now open up a large field. When people realized the increase in the power inherent in *nhimbe*, they adapted these work parties to new use. Wealthy families could use *nhimbe* to get large fields ploughed more quickly, which would also allow them to plant their fields early and maximize their chances of getting large harvests. The new type of *nhimbe* also created a new setting for rich families to integrate the ‘old’ wealth-cattle and the ‘new’ wealth-store –bought ploughs.⁸³ These work parties gave people the chance to display both their cattle and their farm equipment, as neighbours convened at the host’s home for the day’s work. The wealthy man’s success was acknowledged by the host, who presented him with his own pot of beer, rather than asking him to drink from the common pot.⁸⁴

⁸¹ Interview with Gibson Zvotoona Tarugarira, Gutu, 24 December 2013.

⁸² L. Bessant and E.Muringai, ‘Peasants, Businessmen and Moral Economy in the Chiweshe Reserve’, p.566.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Interview with Biti Matombo, Gutu, 20 December 2013.

Hosting a *nhimbe* would also demonstrate a family's wealth because in some cases, some families would tell people not to bring their ploughs and oxen. They would provide all equipment needed and then the people would drink their beer and eat. Bessant and Muringai also observed that in Chiweshe, work parties "provided an opportunity for neighbours to assess a family's wealth or poverty, to form opinions on how they had come to that status, and to debate whether they were using their wealth or their poverty correctly".⁸⁵ Obviously, *nhimb*es of this type would contrast the status of a wealthy family, and a poor family, who had neither cattle nor plough for opening their field. Although the introduction of ox-drawn ploughs afforded rich families to enlarge their fields and to display their ploughs and store-bought goods, such parties also continued to serve as a way for the rich to help the poor.

As land became scarcer around the late 1940s, the discourse on moral economy and work parties became less relevant. As families grew, few families had more land than they could work by themselves. *Nhimb*es suffered a deadly blow with the departure of the robust young people for school or leaving the reserve to work in the urban areas. As families found it harder to succeed at farming, they also began to shun *nhimbe*. Bessant and Muringai observed that "those who were already adults by the 1940s and 1950s in Chiweshe remembered the late 1950s as the time when the work parties declined, because their children had become jealous and resentful of others' success".⁸⁶

Young people refused to work for beer and came to demand a cash payment for working in someone's field. Instead of working for beer, there was a drastic shift towards working for money, clothes or food items. Such a change was a product of colonialism, Mission and Independent Churches' teachings alike which discouraged beer drinking. The Reformed ministers insisted on abstinence from beer. Orlandini emphasized the moral code forbidding beer drinking and if he found people gathered, he would destroy the pots of beer.⁸⁷

The old ways of recreating the web of obligations and responsibilities through their society seemed to be fading away but survived into the late 1960s. As *nhimbe* came to be held less frequently, that also meant that people were losing one set of opportunities for assessing why and how some families came to be rich, and others poor. Human relationships started to drift

⁸⁵ L. Bessant and E. Muringai, 'Peasants, Businessmen and Moral Economy in the Chiweshe Reserve', p.567.

⁸⁶ Ibid, p.570.

⁸⁷ Interview with Bhiti Matombo, Chin'ai Township, Gutu, 20 December 2013.

asunder thus ushering a new sense of self-reliance and independence. It is however crucial to mention that the economy of affection does not disappear in a society with social differentiation as long as the means of production are shared among a multitude of smallholders.

2.5 Progressive Farmers, Education and the ideology of efficiency

We have already seen that the success which Alvord scored at Mt. Selinda following the introduction of a course on Methods of Teaching Agriculture resulted in the Government deciding to adopt Alvord's scheme for agricultural demonstration work for Africans in 1924. Domboshawa churned qualified demonstrators and by 1931, there were 265 demonstration plots in the country. Those peasant farmers who were trained in or followed the rigorous modern farming techniques prescribed by agricultural extension workers were able to increase the productivity of both staple food and cash crops. They formed local farmers' clubs, expanded their land claims and generally evolved into a distinct socio-economic group considered as part of the communal area agricultural prime movers. Statistics given by Yudelman highlighted that, 'while master farmer families in the 1960s were only 30 per cent of the communal area population, they accounted for all the increased productivity'.⁸⁸ Marveling at the success of new farming techniques, Dumbutshena remarked,

Agricultural demonstrators, trained and qualified lived with the people and taught them most effectively the value of crop rotation, manure and fertilizers. The settler governments seriously put into effect the plans for the training of Africans in the methods of farming. Their schemes paid dividends. Zimbabwe can be proud of having a rural population that knows, if not everything, at least the most important rudiments of agriculture. When Zimbabwe becomes independent, her problem will not be the lack of trained manpower in the field of farming. It will certainly be how to keep down agricultural produce in order not to flood the market.⁸⁹

Praises showered upon Alvord were admittedly deduced from achievements on the ground. However, although some of the measures meant to improve African agriculture were quickly adopted, Kay argued that they also made limited appeal. The Africans did not accept the views held by the Department of African Agriculture, the government and Europeans in general, that,

⁸⁸ M. Yudelman, *Africans on the Land. Economic problems of African Agricultural Development in Southern Central and East Africa with special reference to Southern Rhodesia.*, Harvard University Press, Massachusetts, 1964, p.140.

⁸⁹ E. Dumbutshena, *Zimbabwe Tragedy*, East African Publishing House, Nairobi, 1975,p.48.

African use or misuse of land constituted a serious threat to the basic resources of the country which ultimately denied them a reasonable standard of living.⁹⁰

The picture of Gutu before 1922 showed a peasant economy successfully defending itself against the demands of capital and the state for labour and taxes. Summers noted that Africans in Gutu as in some other regions, “consistently pursued work according to their own schedules, not those of would be employers, as they ploughed and harvested their fields at home before going out to seek wage work to pay taxes”.⁹¹ After describing the period of the late 1920s as the zenith of peasant prosperity, it has to be noted that this wealth was not generated solely from agricultural and stock sales, but that over the course of the three decades from 1900, the wage earnings of migrant workers had steadily become the dominant source of rural wealth.

By the 1920s however, Africans had developed specific educational expectations and wants such that they evaluated mission and government schools according to the curriculum and conditions they offered. While hundreds of unemployed labour migrants flocked to the schools, the hunger for education should not be viewed as a sudden decision to abandon ‘tradition’ and accept European culture. It was rooted in the pragmatic realization that an educated person had better job possibilities and more control over produce markets.

According to Davis and Dopcke the desire for education was consistent with a commitment to traditional strategies for accumulation.⁹² The DRC mission’s effort at agricultural improvement and ‘community development’ did not have much impact either as every promise of progress made by the missionaries seemed more and more to be a dream deferred. The curriculum was taught largely in English and concentrated on weaning the students from African to Western culture. Schooling alone was never enough to achieve social mobility. Not surprisingly then, the ‘efficiency analysis’ excluded the possibility that educational systems were well managed within the limitations of a system that only maximized the productive potential of a small percentage of the population.

The modernization perspective found in America which informed Alvord’s policies was totally different from what Zimbabwean farmers could adapt with alacrity. African belief systems were accompanied by specific values, logic and interpretation of cause –effect which led

⁹⁰ G. Kay *Rhodesia: a human geography*, University of Rhodesia, Salisbury, 1972, p.85.

⁹¹ C. Summers, ‘Educational Controversies: African Activism and Educational Strategies in Southern Rhodesia, 1920-1934’ in *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol.20, No.1, 1994, p.7.

⁹² Davis and Dopcke, ‘Survival and accumulation in Gutu: Class formation and the rise of the State in colonial Zimbabwe, 1900-1939’, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 14, No.1 (1987), p.80.

to different choices about lifestyle, spirituality and practices of farming. For the Africans, the role of ancestors, sacred animals and places, the role of rituals and spiritual technologies, the time concept and the relationship of humankind to nature were embedded in the much denigrated taboos. Totemism with its related taboos was rubbished and yet it was a resource management technique which protected animal and plant species from extinction. For Alvord, it was unthinkable that knowledge could be found in taboos. The education provided in Alvord's demonstrators' programme as well as the master farmer training programmes was mainly scientific, meant to uproot the 'barbaric' and 'superstitious' African thinking from people's minds. While African epistemology provided room for paranormal cognition where knowledge was based on spiritual mediumship and divination, in Western thought this would be equivalent to telepathy or premonition.

We have seen how during the Basotho stay on Niekerk's Rust and Erichsthal farms, the Native Commissioner of Victoria District perceived them as 'progressive' or 'better natives' compared to the indigenous Karanga communities in the reserves. By 1942, there was an increased interest in all sorts of community improving enterprises. There were inter-village connections in football and other sports and also in village improvement and sanitation, where shields and cups were competed for.⁹³ The pre-harvest meetings later developed into 'green crop shows' at which Africans, who were adopting modern farming techniques, exhibited their produce. By 1950, 1 665 Africans had become master farmers, and by 1965 the number had increased to 14 626.⁹⁴ Some of the Gutu master farmers had been trained at Makoholi Agricultural Institute and were given farms on the basis of certificates they had acquired.

Temerai and Tendeukai Makura were allocated farms in the Nyahonda area of Bikita while Mahohoma and Rwatiringa went to Mutunduru.⁹⁵ Sales of cotton were held in the Chikwanda Reserve and Nyazvidzi Purchase Area where the NC showered praises on one farmer

⁹³ E. D. A Alvord, *An autobiography*.

⁹⁴ G.A.Smith, *Agricultural Extension Work in Rhodesia with particular reference to African Areas*, Alvord Institute, Fort Victoria, 1966, p.29. In 1953, a master farmer's certificate became an essential prerequisite for obtaining a purchase area farm, and remained so until the early 1960s. Alvord bragged about the success of Vambe whom he regarded as a progressive and prosperous farmer and an outstanding leader of his people, who dressed well as any white man. The yardstick with which Alvord measured Vambe's success included a total of four wives, well dressed and well fed children, all living in well-built brick houses ownership of cattle, goats and pigs, a large wagon, a cart, ploughs, harrows, cultivators and planters. In addition, his many children had been or were being educated in mission and government schools and Vambe had raised their tuition fees and expenses from his farming operations.

⁹⁵ Interview with Gibson Zvotoona Tarugarira, Makura, Gutu, 24 December 2013.

in the Purchase Area who had harvested 50 bags of cotton from 8 acres.⁹⁶ Some members from the Domborenhikiti Young Farmers Club had learnt about poultry, bee and rabbit keeping upon touring the Alvord Institute.⁹⁷ By 1953, Mubaiwa and Chibaya for example were ferrying their chickens to Harare for sale.⁹⁸ Mawani, Chaurura and Christopher Muzhingi, struck tremendous success in small stock farming.⁹⁹ Extension officers also advocated for a correct spacing of seed and the planting of crops in rows in order to increase the plant population per unit area, seed selection and the adoption of new varieties, the dipping of cattle and selective breeding.¹⁰⁰ That as it may, both Reserve and NPA farmers resisted the teachings of these extension officers on the mixing of crops and in some dramatic cases, they were denied beer which was a mixture of mhunga and rapoko.

In the mid-1950s purchase area farmers and cultivators in the reserves formed their cooperative societies while at the same time, the Native Development Fund (later known as the Agricultural Loan Fund) also granted loans to African farmers on a 'community responsibility basis.'¹⁰¹ A revolving fund established in 1958 also granted loans to Africans. Long-term loans of up to £150, repayable over 10 years were granted for permanent improvements. Medium-term loans of up to £100 granted for equipment and livestock were repayable over 5 years while short-term loans of up to £25 were granted for fertilizers, seed and other farming expenses and repayable in one year at half percent per month.¹⁰²

While it was hoped that the implementation of the Native Land Husbandry Act would conserve the natural resources of the Reserves, maintain and improve peasant subsistence agriculture, and generate surpluses for sale, the entire project misfired. Regulations relating to stock and allocation of grazing rights or permits to individuals and the redistribution of arable land into compact holdings swept away the right of individuals to land. We have also seen that the de-stocking programme deprived African peasants of their stored wealth, given that the exercise required even owners of three large beasts to sell or slaughter one. By 1965 it was

⁹⁶ File 424/37 NC Gutu

⁹⁷ *Moto*, Vol 9, No, 9 September 1967, p.4.

⁹⁸ *The African Parade* November 1953, p.29.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ G. Kay, *Rhodesia: a human geography*, University of London Press, London, 1970, p.85

¹⁰¹ Although all African peasants who had been allocated land under the Land Husbandry Act were eligible for these loans and terms were attractive, a very tiny fraction of African peasants availed themselves for these loan possibilities.

¹⁰² A. K. H. Weinrich, *African Farmers in Rural Rhodesia, Old and New Peasant Communities in Karangaland*, Oxford University Press, London, 1975, p.27.

estimated that 48 percent of African farming families had no cattle. As Machingaidze noted, the main buyers at state-organized sales were settler speculators and auctioneers who "formed rings and fleeced the peasants."¹⁰³ The deteriorating ecological conditions created and maintained rural class divisions as large cattle owners and the large arable farmers were blamed for soil erosion. By the time of the NLH Act peasant choices of land were severely limited by overcrowding in the reserves. Land reallocations in Gutu resulted in the movement of people under headmen Nyanda, Mubvekeri, Mapurazi, Maduveko and Gofa from Cheninga area to Serima.¹⁰⁴

Young men who aspired to having their own holdings on getting married encountered the unfortunate development that land rights, the major form of social security for the vast majority of Africans, ceased to be a birthright. A new generation would grow up cut off from the possibility of ever owning land.¹⁰⁵ While the NLH Act sought to permanently industrialize part of the peasantry, the rate of industrialization slowed dramatically from 1957 onwards.¹⁰⁶ Thus between 1956 and 1960, as thousands of peasants were being dispossessed many workers were also being deprived of their land security.

Shortage of land due to discriminatory legislation and the essential economic, social, and cultural disruption led to a much more aggressive campaign against the Land Husbandry Act. Benjamin Burombo and his organization vigorously campaigned against de-stocking and the removal of Africans from their homelands. Although Burombo's influence was stronger in Matabeleland and Midlands, he also made regular visits to Gutu, Buhera and Chibi and other parts of the Victoria Province.¹⁰⁷ By 1957 the degree of agitation against the Native Land Husbandry Act, which had also become an attack on traditional rulers who co-operated with government policy, was such that some chiefs urged the government to introduce legislation to ban meetings in the Reserves. The working relationship between Michael Mawema and Benjamin Burombo catalyzed the frequency of meetings in Gutu with the result that by the 1960s, political consciousness in the area was high.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰³ V. E. M. Machingaidze, *Agrarian Change from Above: The Southern Rhodesia Native Land Husbandry Act and African Response*, p.563.

¹⁰⁴ PER 5/SERIMA/64 'Report on Serima Community'

¹⁰⁵ V. E. M. Machingaidze, *Agrarian Change from Above*, p.571.

¹⁰⁶ Among other factors, the major cause was uncertainty about the Central African Federation which reduced the inflow of foreign capital investment.

¹⁰⁷ N. Bhebe, *Benjamin Burombo, African Politics in Zimbabwe 1947-1958*, The College Press, Harare, 1989, p.73.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

By 1969, there were 38 Master Farmer Clubs in Victoria Province which had joined forces to form a Provincial Association.¹⁰⁹ An immediate boom in membership between 1970 and 1972 witnessed over 100 new clubs being formed and registered. The clubs sought to address the problems met by farmers, for example, organising transport and in many cases Cash on Delivery terms particularly for seeds, fertilizers and stock feeds for their group members. Clubs which were affiliated to the Provincial Association had their members exempted from paying sales tax on a selected list of agricultural inputs. This facility equated to a farming license in the commercial sector. Many field days and competitions were held, where plenty of beer was drunk. Through these shows, a keen spirit of competition developed.

Huge profits were being made by farmers in the Nyazvidzi Purchase Area from their pen fattened beef. Enthusiastic pen fatteners in the likes of Mr. Charamba and Mr. Mhiripiri, again, had evidence of extensive contour ploughing, building storm drains, good houses and homesteads with many fruit trees.¹¹⁰ When the Rhodesian Minister of Local Government and Housing Mr. Mark Partridge met Mr.Kaparai Gutu local market gardener in 1969, he was stunned upon observing that this energetic man had constructed his own dam, sunk wells, installed an irrigation system and pump with an engine and by careful use of manure and fertilizers, he realized a monthly profit of about 30 pounds.¹¹¹ Another successful farmer Mr. Vengesai Nyamande who grew oriental tobacco was found to have the best contour ridges and had won a prize in the local Good Farming Competition held by the Natural Resources Board.¹¹²

Since October 1969, 615 head of fattened cattle from Dewure Purchase Area had been consigned to the Cold Storage Commission works in Fort Victoria.¹¹³ In 1969, Elias Dzimba Madondo, a businessmen fattened 71 head which he sold to the CSC in Fort Victoria for \$5 508 at an average price of \$76 a beast.¹¹⁴ A profit of between \$24 and \$28 was realized per beast. Then a proud owner of four stores, two butcheries, a five tone lorry, a vanette and a new station wagon, Mr Madondo's success was attributed to personal efforts and the use of proper farming and business methods.¹¹⁵ In 1970, with the assistance and active encouragement of the local Extension Assistants, the Dewure Farmers' Association formed a Farmers' Producer Marketing

¹⁰⁹T. W .F. Jordan, 'The Victoria Master Farmers' Association' *NADA*, Vol. XI, No.5,1978, .p.517.

¹¹⁰ *The African Times*, 10 December 1965, p.6.

¹¹¹ *The African Times*, Vol 4, No.18 December 1969, p.3.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

¹¹³ *The African Times*. Vol 4, No. 21, 28 January 1970, p.3.

¹¹⁴ *The African Times* Vol 4, No.23, 25 February 1970, p.3.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

Committee, whose particular function was to make arrangements for the marketing of cattle fattened in the area.

2.6 Conclusion

The chapter has traced the racial segregation debate and its impact on land allocation showing how colonial land policies facilitated the movement of Africans into reserves to pave way for settler farmers. NPAs were created so that the indigenous inhabitants of Gutu could buy out farms. Those who applied for farms were expected to have Master Farmer certificates or prove ownership of farming implements and cattle. The chapter has highlighted the creation of an agricultural elite through the Alvord's 'gospel of the plough' which involved vigorous campaigns for better methods of African agriculture.

The dilemma of crafting a development policy which would allow peasant production to survive and subsequently meet the demands of the European labour market obviously rendered Alvord's efforts futile. Although the efforts to improve African agriculture met with distrust and reluctance by African cultivators and opposition from European farmers who feared African competition for the limited markets, some Africans managed to secure status markers like good houses, simple furniture among other possessions. The promulgation of Acts like the Cattle Levy and Maize Control, however, curtailed the prospects of accumulation through peasant production.

The chapter has also shown how productive and reproductive processes at the household level epitomized by *nhimbe*, *humwe* or *jakwara* practices (very much embedded in the economy of affection) sprang from networks of support and interaction among people connected by blood, kin, community or other affinities. It has been revealed in the chapter that such interactions were crucial in forging the emergence of an agricultural elite. The next chapter explores missionary activities where the agricultural enterprise also received support from the missionaries.

Chapter 3: The Missionary factor and elite formation: 1900-1975

3.0 Introduction

This chapter primarily concerns missionary activities in the rural areas set aside for occupation by the Africans who lived under chiefs or headmen. As pathfinders and co-bearers of the colonial flag, missionaries were key agents in the colonization process which was punctuated with the physical displacement of Africans from their productive and sacral spaces. Most importantly, they wielded power over Africans' access to farmland and the right to remain on the lands they received.

Early mission stations worked as rear bases and platforms for the deployment of personnel, equipment and the ideas that constituted the ecumenical discourse. Locals were recruited, trained as helpers, sent back into their natal communities or off into the expanding field. An ardent Christian faith became a part of the cultural baggage of many African accumulators. The chapter examines the rationale for the establishment of educational institutions as missionaries completely dominated the new formal education. The rise of African independent churches is considered in relation to how African accumulators used the new sects as a means of satisfying their ambitions for leadership and making business.

3.1 Of capitalists and preachers

By 1910, land in some parts of the Gutu reserve had been parceled out to missionaries at stations such as Gutu and Alheit missions founded by the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC). The carving out of the Gutu mission farm in 1908 saw the displacement of African villages. Headmen Wekwete, Zishiri and Jinjika paved way for the Gutu mission station and settled in areas around Chisheche, Chidembo and Magadzire.¹ The establishment of Alheit mission by Rev. Orlandini in 1910 witnessed the displacement of the Dondo family of the Shumba-Mhazi lineage which

¹ Interview with Empire Makamure, Gutu, 10 August 2013.

moved to the Mushangwe area east of Mupembezi River.² The Mudyadzo and Mugodhi families of the Madyirapazhe clan though dispossessed of land remained in the area and continued to share boundaries with the mission station.³ A group under the leadership of Bakuri migrated to Chikwanda where they joined Mupfudze and Bako.⁴

It is important to highlight that missionaries had great influence in the lives of their African converts in both reserves and purchase areas. According to Davis and Dopcke the early forms of economic accumulation and the development of statecraft in Gutu largely hinged upon the missionaries' exploitation of surrounding African communities, particularly the role of the DRC in the development of a capitalist economy.⁵ The life and work of Orlandini of the DRC provides an excellent instance of the important role played by Christian evangelists in the making of the new elite. Mr. P. J. Odendaal the Acting Native Commissioner found out that missionary Orlandini had committed illegal acts ranging from imposing and collecting fines from people to keeping over 600 head of cattle in the reserves apart from other animals distributed throughout the reserve at kraals and those placed with several of his teachers at their schools.

While on patrol in the Gutu reserves, a messenger Mapfumo found that Orlandini had herd boys Mandabu, Madabi and Varandi who tended his cattle in the Soti area; Chadana in the Ndadza area; Masara in the Chaminuka area then Dagwa and Polisa in Raurwe.⁶ A messenger Chifamba swore before Mr. P. J. Odendaal at Gutu on 26 June 1933 that he had seen some 70 oxen at Guzha and further herds at Ndadza, Nyaganwa and near Rasa which belonged to Mr. Orlandini.⁷ Mapfumo also gathered that Orlandini had cattle with all his teachers where in some cases he would buy cattle and leave them at the kraals.⁸ As a result, a class of cattle-owners whose members became respectable figures in society was created. These would give one or more beasts to their sons when they reached adulthood providing the base from which further capital could be accumulated through reproduction and through the investment of their parents'

² Interview with Garai Hamutyinei, Gutu, 27 December 2013.

³ Mudyadzo, Mugodhi, Hamutyinei, Chingombe, Makamure and Gonese belong to the same extended family of the Gumbo-Madyirapazhe totemic lineage.

⁴ Interview with Garai Hamutyinei, Gutu, 27 December 2013.

⁵ B.Davies and W.Dopcke, 'Survival and accumulation in Gutu: Class formation and the rise of the state in colonial Zimbabwe, 1900-1939', p.80.

⁶ S235/378-S235/379 Dutch Reformed Church Activities.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ S235/378-S235/379 Dutch Reformed Church Activities. From interviews with Garai Hamutyinei and Henry Mutubuki, it was established that a number of teachers among them Ruzi, Vengai, Abenia Hamutyinei, Matambura Feresu, Merkia Makamure and Joyce Chingombe benefitted from Orlandini's spoils.

cash earnings in additional livestock.⁹ While some individual teachers did not own land at their places of work, they came to own herds at least as large as, and probably larger than, the average-sized herd among cattle-owning peasant families among whom they lived. These were local people because as a matter of policy, the Director of Education did not object to requests by the churches to open schools for as long as the teachers were ‘inmates of the kraal and subjected themselves to tribal control’.¹⁰

With Gutu and Alheit Mission being the launching pads for DRC schools in Gutu, the opening up of Chingombe, Munyikwa, Mataruse, Chitsa, Nyamande, Mudzamiri, Chatindo, Sengai, Makonese, Masunda and Zinyemba in the early 1920s was approved by the Director of Education on the basis that at Gutu Mission, a teacher training programme had been launched.¹¹ According to Mazarire, the phenomenal expansion of preaching centres and a wide network of ‘kraal schools’ gave rise to a virtual denominational ‘monopoly’.¹² In this, the DRC received the subtle assistance of the colonial state, through its Native Affairs Department that considered it cheap to leave African education in the hands of Missionaries.

Between 1922 and 1926, the government awarded grants to the DRC-Gutu Mission in respect of services rendered by Miss R. Malan, Joachim Paulus Bester, Hester Ann du Toit and Thomas Bannard for the training of ‘native teachers’.¹³ Graduates, who were largely local, had to take up teaching posts in the schools located in their home areas. School inspections carried out between June 1933 and December 1939 confirmed that a local teacher Manjonjo was in charge of Mudzamiri School under headman Nyamande.¹⁴ Mashata Justinus (Maweni) and Joyce Tarusarira (Chingombe) were stationed at Alheit Mission while teachers Enerst Mandivenga, Chikomwe, Matambura Feresu, Marikanosi and Dhibha Makura manned the Munyikwa area.¹⁵ Incidentally, some of these teachers were among the first business people in the Chitsa,

⁹ Interview with Garai Hamutyinei, Gutu, 27 December 2013.

¹⁰ NVG 3/2/1 Mission Schools in Gutu Reserve. It should be noted that before a school was opened, the consent of the chiefs was sought. To a large measure the chiefs would not object where the teachers were their kith and kin.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² G. C. Mazarire, *The Dutch Reformed Church in the Victoria Circle: Chibi Circuit, Mashonaland, 1874-1956*. Although Mazarire was making reference to DRC activities in Chibi, this missionary approach was replicated in Gutu. This monopoly was later strongly challenged by the Roman Catholic Church which also created ‘kraal schools’ in the DRC domains.

¹³ S840/1/20 Native Education DRC-Gutu Mission.

¹⁴ S1542/S4 Schools Inspections June 1933-December 1939.

¹⁵ Ibid. The interview with Gibson Zvotoona Tarugarira on 24 December 2013 confirmed the deployments.

Chingombe and Munyikwa areas and as shall be seen later, they constituted the early elite clusters in Gutu.

Although the onset of the Great Depression in the 1930s put a strain on the number of outstations the church could maintain, Gutu did not lose many 'kraal school' teachers to South Africa as was the case in the Chibi circuit. According to the Feresu Matambura, DRC adherents with whom he went to South Africa like Hebert Chaputsira and Ndamba were sponsored by the church so that upon attaining higher qualifications, they would come back to be trainers of trainers in various outstations.¹⁶ The tendency to accumulate wealth, coupled with the hardships born of the Great Depression resulted in the missionaries' exploitation of their African converts. A certain amount of coercion was applied to the people to compel their attendance at school.

Fines were imposed for absence or free labour was also provided in lieu of payment. Missionaries imposed fines which they appropriated to their own use. Enquiries revealed that cases dealt with were confined to those of a sexual nature between teachers and pupils, or pupils and scholars who ran away from the mission.¹⁷ In 1931, Gwese, Chikanda and Zibayiwa were slapped with cash fines ranging between two pounds and ten shillings while in April 1933, Gwatidzo was fined one heifer.¹⁸ When Mushangwe's daughter, Itai, was impregnated by Murambiwa, a former teacher, Orlandini presided over the payment of damages which he kept to himself.¹⁹ Headman Makuvise under Chief Nyamande confirmed that it was Orlandini's custom to fine pupils but the fines were not paid to the parents of girls seduced. All fines were handed to Mazembe for onward transmission to Orlandini. It was common knowledge that Orlandini retained the fines but people feared Orlandini and so they would not disclose such cases.²⁰ Mazembe of Hapanyengwe village under Chief Chingombe, Orlandini's employee since 1926, described his work as that of rounding up children who remained away from school and also

¹⁶ Interview with Feresu Matambura, Mt.Pleasant, 16 March 2013.

¹⁷ S235/366 5423/95. Dutch Reformed Activities. Chikando and Musikirawe of Mabika were fined five shillings each because their daughters had run away from school. Mr.Herikanos Makura paid ten shillings because his son Guwarega (Kuvarega) had impregnated a girl. Jeremani from Muchechetere village under Chief Mukaro testified that Gwatidzo of Musokotera (Mutswakatira) village had also been fined a beast for impregnating Magodoro's daughter Mario. Although the beast was meant for Magodoro, it was not handed over to him. Mutswakatira had to pay one pound ten shillings to Magodoro in respect of damages. Orlandini demanded ten shillings because his son had committed a wrongful act at his school.

¹⁸ S235/366 5423/95 Dutch Reformed Activities.

¹⁹ S235/378-S235/379 Dutch Reformed Church Activities.

²⁰ Interview with Senator E.K.Makamure, Gutu, 10 August 2013.

collecting fines from those who ran away from the mission school. He covered the area between Munyikwa and Gonye ‘arresting’ the school run-aways.²¹ While he handed over the fines to Orlandini, he professed ignorance about what the missionary did with the money.²² Mazembe himself however became very rich in the process because he built a modern home and went to sell items like eggs at Bikita Minerals.²³

Mr. Odendaal concluded in his report, ‘There is no doubt that Orlandini has used his position to exploit the natives and accumulate wealth for himself’.²⁴ The people were dissatisfied with constant calls made for money by the missionaries and were unanimous in their desire for the removal of Orlandini and Murray from Alheit and Gutu Missions respectively. In the opinion of the Native Commissioner, Orlandini was not the type of man who should be allowed to conduct a mission in a native reserve. He went further to recommend that evidence against Orlandini be scrutinized by the Law Department and if they agreed that it was sufficiently strong, the lease of Alheit Mission to the DRC be cancelled until such a time as the DRC mission appointed an approved successor to Orlandini. A further recommendation was that Orlandini be given one month’s notice to collect his cattle and other chattels and get out of the reserve, failure of which his cattle were going to be impounded for trespass and he would be prosecuted in terms of Act 11 of 1928.²⁵ On 29 November 1933, the CNC Gutu wrote to Orlandini,

In terms of Act 11 of 1928, I hereby give you notice that you are prohibited from remaining in the Gutu reserve. You must leave the reserve and move from it all your personal property within 31 days of the date thereof, otherwise you will be subject to the penalties provided by the above-mentioned Act.²⁶

The missionaries’ unsupervised operations offered an opportunity to plunder the peasants. However mission stations produced teachers and evangelists who began to articulate interests distinct from those of peasants. These went on to capitalize on the contradictions between the ideal and the reality of missionary domination. They established their own niche despite the missionary grip on their activities. As Weinrich observed, out of a group of seven rural

²¹ Interview with Gibson Zvotoona Tarugarira, Gutu, Makura, 24 December 2013.

²² S235/378-S235/379 Declaration by Mazembe before Mr. Odendaal at Gutu 23/08/33.

²³ Interview with Gibson Zvotoona Tarugarira, 24 December 2013.

²⁴ File No. T.4378/92/16, p.1,2

²⁵ Ibid, p.3.

²⁶ File No. T.4837/33

businessmen, three had been teachers.²⁷ Michael West also documented how the process of middle-class formation having begun in earnest between 1914 and 1933 produced teachers, preachers, social workers, nurses, lawyers and doctors who saw themselves as different and of a higher status than other Africans. This thesis further unpacks how the very illegitimacy of black enterprise created opportunities for them.

Evaluated through the prism of the civilizing mission, the life of Catholic priests in the community with European missionaries at the mission slotted African priests into elites who would share in the Europeans' food and accommodation and all the facilities available to them. Weinrich noted how the clerical dress would set them into a category apart from ordinary people.²⁸ The sheltered mission grounds, functioned as apprenticeship spaces before the deployment of African priests back to their own people to impart the new cultures of worship, farming and of generally conducting oneself in "civilized" ways. Bourdillon has illustrated how Christianity as introduced by foreign missionaries in Africa offered a number of peripheral attractions to the indigenous people. These included education, which provided both access to high salaries in white-collar work, and also access to politics and power; more direct economic assets and various forms of improved social services.²⁹ Mutero mission for example, nurtured some of Gutu's political luminaries such as Simon Muzenda and Josiah Tungamirai.³⁰

3.2 Education and social stratification

Education provided a new base for social stratification. Chidzero captures graphically the human condition and pattern of life where only educated men's actions were considered noble.³¹ According to Kahari, education was a conduit through which Africans got 'a sense of western values, basic abilities and skills to help oneself, to give a judicious knowledge to classify facts and see the relatedness of things and give joy, satisfaction in perceiving, hearing and touching the various aspects of life'.³² Summers has brought to the fore the various problems the colonial government and churches such as the DRC faced in establishing and running schools in colonial

²⁷ A. K. H. Weinrich, *Black and white elites in rural Rhodesia*, Manchester University Press, Manchester 1973, p.194.

²⁸ Weinrich, *Black and white elites in rural Rhodesia*, p.116.

²⁹ M.F.C Bourdillon, *Religion and Society: A text for Africa*, Mambo Press, Gweru, 1990, p.88.

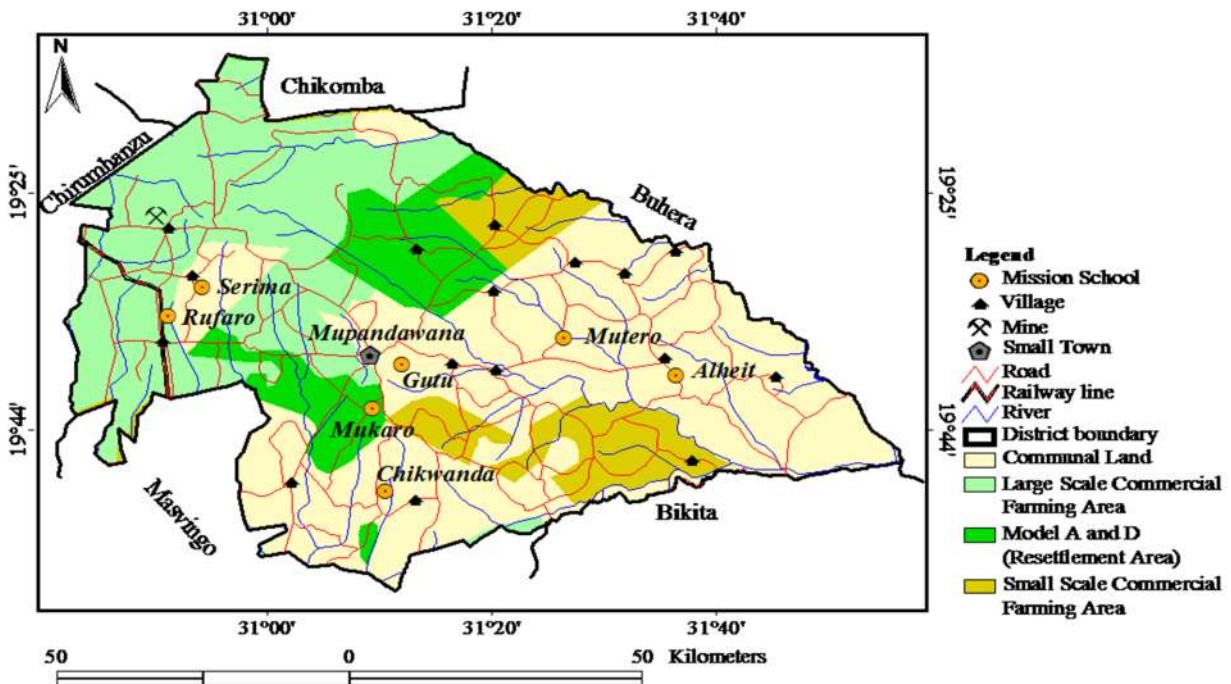
³⁰ McLaughlin, *On the Frontline*, p.191.

³¹ B. Chidzero, *Nzvengamutsvairo*, Longman, Salisbury, 1957.

³² Kahari, *Aspects of the Shona Novel*, p.113.

Zimbabwe and Gutu in particular. She has shown how the DRC struggled to establish quality schools in the district and how the church often came into conflict with the local people. The DRC dominated Gutu district and many other parts of Masvingo province, while their Catholic competitors were in parts of Zimuto, Chirumhanzu and before coming to Gutu.³³

The competition between the DRC and the Roman Catholic Church was manifested by the building of rival schools in close proximity to each other. Next to Gutu Mission (DRC) was Mukaro (RC), Alheit (DRC) competed with Mutero (RCC) while Munyikwa (DRC) was partnered with Makura (RCC). Such a pattern emerged in the building of other missionary outposts in Gutu where competition between denominations led to overlapping in personnel, money and effort.



Source: Adapted from the Gutu District Administrator's maps and developed to scale by Kudakwashe Muringaniza.

³³ The DRC had occupied a vantage position by virtue of being a pioneering missionary movement that was able to spread a network of preaching and teaching centres. The centres became outposts through which it was able to reach out to and influence the local African population. See G. C. Mazarire, *The Dutch Reformed Church in the Victoria Circle: Chibi Circuit, Mashonaland, 1874-1956*.

There was profound competition among the missions borne not only out of doctrinal differences but also from the political interests of their sectional hosts and benefactors. Missions competed to secure the patronage of leading chiefs like Chingombe, Nyamande and Mukaro among others. In such an environment, it was not long before an indigenous educated elite group developed from the products of mission schools. Thus, while the educated constituted an elite category with clear differences from other groups and the wider society, this elite was not in itself rigid or undifferentiated. While its members shared similar ideas of a modern society, they differed on meanings of that modernity and the strategies to achieve it. As we have seen, the DRC used coercive measures. On the other hand the RCC is said to have employed persuasive devices which included offering exotic clothing in the form of uniforms, foods and tea at the mission stations. Father Kaufman of the Roman Catholic Church was very popular with youths in the Mutero, Makura and Chingombe areas. He distributed some clothes among them and gave sweets to those who went to school and did not miss church services.³⁴

Education thus became one of the key issues in the emergence of a ‘progressive’ or ‘modernizing’ group of Africans. The missions also gave jobs to their most talented students and mission-trained men and women who assumed new responsibilities. In addition, former mission pupils took up part-time employment in commerce and in the Native Administration while continuing to work for missionary bodies. Sons of mission-trained men and women were sent to colleges wherever their fathers could afford the required expenses. Mission teachers engaged in such diverse activities as constructing their own buildings, cultivating their own crops and experimenting in agriculture. Through missionary activities, an African religious elite emerged. Weinrich observed that,

Their life in community with European missionaries at the mission station clearly classes African priests as members of the elite. They share in the European’s food and accommodation and all the facilities available to them. Their clerical dress, moreover, set them into a category apart from the ordinary people. For it is not money in itself which confers prestige but the status symbols which are evident to all.³⁵

The emergence and growth of an African religious elite was further galvanized by the rise of African Independent Churches (AICs). Some women also joined elites through marriage.

³⁴ Interview with Stanislaus Mupunga, Harare, 22 January 2013.

³⁵ A. K. H. Weinrich, *Black and White elites in Rural Rhodesia*, p.116.

3.2.1 The rise of the educated elite

In her study on Lagos, Mann uses the term ‘educated elite’ to refer to men and women at the top of a growing population of educated Africans.³⁶ Studies that examine the educated portion of Africans in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century have used different terms like ‘modern elite’ and ‘intelligentsia’ to describe the educated African elite. According to Zachernuk the educated African elite in the nineteenth century had ambitions to become “black Englishmen”.³⁷ In this thesis, I use the term ‘educated elite’ to refer to the Africans, who not only acquired English language at mission schools but also formed the earliest elite positions as missionaries, colonial civil servants, wealthy traders and other professions. In my conceptualization of ‘elite’ in the introduction of the thesis, I indicated that the category of elite was flexible and complex and was subject to influence by different circumstances. In the same vein, I found the term ‘educated elite’ appropriate for use in my research because it is more dynamic and situational in that it accommodates the use of education and occupation as determinants of educated elite status.

From the times of the early missionaries, people who rightly recognized the link between education and social mobility were advocates of education and rallied support for schools. Education headed the new status hierarchy which was asserting itself in African society. Educational attainment carried immense social prestige. Ranger’s study of the Samkange family is a manifestation of how those with affluent and educated parents could transmit their elite status to their children. In addition, overwhelming importance attributed to education was also evident in the high esteem in which academic professions were held.

In the social ranking of African occupations in 1969, Weinrich observed that with the exception of the Catholic priests, doctors and carpenters educated Africans rated all professions (health and teaching) as slightly higher than did the uneducated.³⁸ Dorsey in her 1970 study came to the conclusion that among the selected professions in Zimbabwe, the medical profession was deemed the most prestigious, followed by teaching while the entrepreneurial profession fell on

³⁶ K.Mann, *Marrying Well: Marriage, Status and Social Change among the Educated Elite in Colonial Lagos*. African Studies Series. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.

³⁷ See P. Zachernuk, ‘The Lagos Intelligentsia and the Idea of Progress, ca. 1860-1960’, 1991, p.149. The term “Black Englishmen” is synonymous with the Shona term ‘*murungutema*’ which was used to refer to the educated Africans as black men with white masks.

³⁸ Weinrich, *Black and white elites*, p.106.

the fringes of the elite.³⁹ Wild also noted that university trained Africans began to oust black businessmen from the upper levels of the status hierarchy. Levels of stratification began to solidify as the educated first generation made sure that their children also attended good schools.

The values attached to the western model of education encouraged Africans to uncritically embrace the idea of an educated person as one who was associated with paper qualification and bestowed with academic appellations. Marred in this conceptual distortion, African emphasis shifted to formal education at the total expense of other ethical qualities that made an educated person in traditional African culture.⁴⁰

In 1950 and 1951, the Southern Rhodesian government granted missionaries more administrative authority in both primary and secondary education. What was clear was that the demand for more education by Africans was gathering momentum and there was no way of arresting the tide. Education provided new opportunities for power and advancement for the young people. As noted earlier, formal classroom education was the main vehicle for self-improvement. Literacy went with some degree of self-sufficiency and affluence and families with long traditions of literacy within them tended to be more economically independent than those without this tradition. Linguistic hegemony for example, premised by the notion that command over a foreign language, for example rudimentary English provided an appeal to social status. The vernacular language like Shona spoken by people in Gutu would be viewed as more mundane, or pedestrian, given that everyone had a mastery of it.

People of Gutu accepted the general view that English conjured exotic images, notions of economic prosperity and elite status that became associated with them. In addition, the need for literate people in the lower level bureaucracy, schools, churches and businesses, gave indigenous people the impetus to acquire proficiency in the English language because the ability to read and write in English was regarded as the stepping stone to a 'middle-class' career. Accordingly, the growth in literacy in English was promoted along with the spread of primary and secondary education. The teachers' ability to speak, read and write English was found to confer status, distinction as well as open the floodgates to knowledge. It was the official language of the country and had brought the Europeans into the country enabling them to reach some admirable

³⁹ B.J.Dorsey, 'The African Secondary School Leaver: Aspirations, Academic Achievement and Post-School Employment' in M.W.Murphree (ed.), *Education, Race and Employment in Rhodesia*, Artca Publications, Salisbury, 1975, pp.120-138.

⁴⁰N. Sithole, *African Nationalism and Education*, Fountain Publishers, Ibadan, 1999.

stage of civilization.⁴¹ Any attempt to discourage English was regarded as retrograding or obstructive and a deliberate design to keep people ignorant or partly informed.

Literacy in English became the criterion for recruitment of an elite almost wholly independent of ascribed status. Linguistic versatility became important in that it tended to stratify society into those who spoke the language well and therefore had access to certain advantages, and those who did not speak it well and were thereby handicapped.

Even among the elites, language became the great symbol of differentiation and inequality. Apart from being a status symbol, knowledge of English was a basic requisite for access to bureaucratic offices, and therefore a key mechanism of social mobility. Irrespective of the fact that English was often grammatically pulverized and semantically twisted, one who displayed rudimentary skills towards its mastery was regarded with high esteem. Such were the cases like Ben Rogers Mabaya whose son remarked:

My father was one of the few people in Gutu who could fluently converse in English around the early 1930s. He used to tell us how some villagers would gather to listen to him speak on any subject of his choice. In the event of Catholic priests or Native Commissioners coming to our place, my father's duty was to facilitate communication. He became the envy of many villagers who were encouraging their children to go to school so that they could also speak English.⁴²

In confirmation of the above, Weiss noted that upon his return from a mission boarding school Nathan Shamuyarira was paraded in front of villagers by his proud parents and urged to demonstrate his education by speaking English. It did not matter what he said, but that he spoke the masters' tongue.⁴³ Similarly, Hart observed how among the Koreans mastery of English has become a sign of higher education which is in turn associated with good jobs, knowledge, upper and middle class status, and the lifestyle that goes with them.⁴⁴

Educational policies set in motion by Garfield Todd in 1954, Zvobgo argues, liberalized the crude racial oppression of previous governments so as to foster loyal African elite who would not threaten the continued dominance of British and South African economic interests.⁴⁵ Combined efforts of the government and mission churches witnessed the building of more

⁴¹ J. H. Farquhar, 'A Mass Literacy Campaign for Southern Rhodesia' in *NADA* 1946, p.19.

⁴² Interview with Fabian Mabaya, Mutare, 28 June 2014.

⁴³ R. Weiss, *Zimbabwe and the New Elite*, p.35. Nathan Shamuyarira is one of Zimbabwe's first generation nationalists and a founding member of ZANU

⁴⁴ Dennis Hart, 'Industrialization of Culture and Class Formation: The Case of South Korea's Emerging Middle-class' *Asian Profile*, April 1993, p.153.

⁴⁵ R. J. Zvobgo, *Colonialism and Education in Zimbabwe*, Sapes Books, Harare, 1994, p.45.

schools between 1956 and 1960. From the mid-1950s, the majority of college-educated people from Gutu attended the white, English–language South African colleges and universities. Simon Muzenda, Nehemiah Shava, Dish Chingombe, Matambura Feresu, Tererai Chagonda, and Danidzirai Makamure, among others, went to South Africa and came back changed men.⁴⁶ Many people got inspired. Matambura Feresu remarked:

Those who had acquired some education in South Africa became the *musvo* (cream) of the society. Education was the passport to success. Even the whites were afraid of us because we were a threat to their domination. We resented the colonial government’s practice of pampering the chiefs with allowances.⁴⁷

Joseph Magore Chitenene, a teacher in Gutu who vented the feelings of the rural, educated black elite had this to say,

There are two divisions of people today, the cultured division and the division of the illiterate. Cultured people are finding it hard to be ruled over by the illiterate, simply because the illiterate ate shallow things unchewed, that is they get anything from the authorities and they do not bother to ask why it is like this or who has made this thing. Cultured people like to do things when they understand why they should do them.⁴⁸

The establishment of the University College of Rhodesia and Nyasaland (now University of Zimbabwe) in 1957 did not brighten prospects for Zimbabweans in search of higher education since the government viewed educated blacks as a serious threat to whites in the professional services. For this reason, it was government policy to try to restrict the enrollment of Africans into the local university. Numerous people from Gutu, unable to pursue education through regular channels, continued their studies by correspondence. The re-organisation of secondary distance education which made the Department of Native Education a local authority for several South African Correspondence Colleges made correspondence courses much cheaper as the costs of printed lecture material were subsidized by the government. The government also provided some aid in the form of bursaries for the more competent students to pursue their studies outside the country. Preference was given to students who wanted to enter a Higher Teachers’ Course and who would return to teach.

⁴⁶ Interview with F. F. Shava, Gweru, 25 June 2013.

⁴⁷ Interview with Matambura Feresu, Mount Pleasant, Harare, 16 March 2013.

⁴⁸ M. West, *The Rise of an African Middle Class: Colonial Zimbabwe, 1898-1965*, Indiana University Press, Indianapolis, 2002, p.15.

This explains why even secondary schools which developed were essentially structured to produce school leavers who would enter a narrow range of specific occupations like teaching. While in January 1956, about 184 examinees sat for the Junior Certificate examinations through correspondence, the number rose to 678 in 1958. West observed that many who resorted to distance learning largely lacked money with the result that ‘the indigence of many a suitor made courting Miss Education a very quixotic affair indeed’.⁴⁹ For distant learners in search of post-secondary education and political prisoners unable to attend residential institutions; the school of choice was the University of South Africa (UNISA). Education had become the vital avenue for social mobility as a secondary school certificate became increasingly necessary for one to be eligible for the limited number of prestigious and comparatively well paid jobs. Schools were functional instruments in any emerging system of social stratification. Few Africans however could count on consistent family support to further their education. Many would-be students were forced to defer their plans, or even drop out of school to eke out a living for the family. The case of Josiah Tungamirai is instructive.

Born in a family of seven, Josiah Tungamirai went to Mutero mission before moving to Chikwingwizha to study for priesthood. Although he quit the diocesan seminary because of its political conservatism and racism, his interest to enroll for training as a medical doctor at the local university was dashed because of lack of finance. His parents had already parted with a lot of wealth and he could not force them again to sell cattle, goats and chickens to see him through his studies. His brothers and sisters needed to go to school as well.⁵⁰ The alacrity and gullibility with which he grabbed the scholarship offer to go and study in China landed him in a military training camp in Zambia enroute to Tanzania where he trained as a freedom fighter at Mgagao camp.⁵¹

Even Simon Muzenda’s decision to transfer from the academic stream to industrial training, specializing in carpentry was due to the poverty-induced inability to go on with academic studies.⁵² He paid for a train ticket from Plumtree to Cape Town using the ten pounds he had earned at the end of the first term as a teacher at Gwangu School.⁵³ With earnings from a

⁴⁹ M. West, *The Rise of an African Middle Class: Colonial Zimbabwe, 1898-1965*, Indiana University Press, Indianapolis, 2002, p.61.

⁵⁰ C. S. Makari, *Magamba EChimurenga: Josiah Tungamirai*, Mambo Press, Gweru, p.40.

⁵¹ *Ibid*, p.77.

⁵² N. Bhebe, *Simon Vengayi Muzenda*, p.60.

⁵³ *Ibid*, p.49.

part-time job, Muzenda was able to cover his fees at Marianhill mission. According to Bhebe, the experience of failing to go on with his formal academic studies at Marianhill had a lasting impact on Muzenda, so that all his life, he struggled to make education accessible to all students. Upon his return from South Africa, “one of his major contributions in Bulawayo was to successfully campaign for the establishment of three scholarships to enable bright students to pursue post-Standard VI academic studies or industrial training”.⁵⁴

While the professional occupational status of parents had a significant influence on pupils’ chance of continuing with education, peasant farmers equally made sacrifices to invest in their children’s education. According to Mutubuki,

Many people sold their cattle and farm produce to meet the fees obligations. Dish Chingombe’s father Joyce Chingombe had many cattle and was one of the prosperous peasant farmers in the Chingombe area. He sold part of his herd to finance Dish’s education in South Africa. Danidzirai Makamure’s father Humanikwa was a successful peasant farmer and like most Africans of his time, he ‘was educated on monkey nuts’. Nehemiah Shava walked to South Africa and through a strong work ethic, did menial jobs to finance his studies. Many people from Gutu pursued higher education and training in hops, with periods of training alternating with periods of work.⁵⁵

Students bereft of personal or family resources relied heavily on the generosity of individual benefactors, among them teachers. As an example, Makura School teachers who included Ephraim Mushoriwa, Ephraim Marwizi, PhillipVumba and Salpasio Shayawabaya, created a fund to pay fees for best pupils who had financial challenges.⁵⁶

Missionary societies also formally offered financial aid to students. Their programmes opened the door to higher education and professional mobility at different times to families like the Feresu, Hamutyinei and Maweni families among others whose children got sponsorship from the Dutch Reformed Church to pursue their educational careers.⁵⁷ Vincent Maweni acknowledged,

The success of our family rested upon our grandfather Mashata Justinus Maweni’s close friendship with the Dutch Reformed Church missionaries since the days of Orlandini. When Orlandini left Gutu, he left a lot of his

⁵⁴ Ibid, p.66.

⁵⁵ Interview with Henry Mutubuki, Gweru, 20 May 2014. The selling of monkey nuts to raise school fees was common among many families. See for example M. West, *The Rise of an African Middle Class: Colonial Zimbabwe, 1898-1965*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002, p.61.

⁵⁶ Interview with Ephraim Marwizi, 22 August 2013. Ephraim Marwizi later became a Member of Parliament for Gutu East from 1990-1995, Ephraim Mushoriwa rose to be a successful businessmen in Gweru and was also Deputy Mayor of Gweru in the late 1990s. Until his death, he was a Member of Parliament for Gokwe.

⁵⁷ Interview with Matambura Feresu, Harare, 16 March 2013.

cattle with my grandfather. These cattle were a springboard for the further accumulation of wealth. Some of the cattle were sold to finance educational careers. Mashata's children namely Andrew, Chengeto and Vuyai went to school courtesy of the church. Little wonder, then, that the Mashata Maweni family produced many teachers.⁵⁸

It is clear from the above that educational institutions played a crucial role in the permanent redistribution of power and privileges. The academic title like 'teacher' was both a weapon and a stake in the symbolic struggles in which what was at stake was social standing.

The frequent variation in mission pupils' farming backgrounds could also expose social and economic differentiation in the surrounding rural communities. Just as Leedy discovered in American missions, mission schools in Gutu also tended to differentiate the day scholars from boarding students in agriculture classes. Day scholars often took home the products of their instructional plots, thereby contributing to their households' economy. "Boarding students, however, saw their yields funneled into the general school food supplies that fed all boarders. Some day scholars even went to the extent of carrying a bit of manure from home each day until they accumulated enough to fertilize their beds".⁵⁹

Boarding students found themselves forced to rely upon a less potent composted green manure that they had to generate from leaves and grass. While boys gradually moved on to various classes in field crop production and animal husbandry, agricultural instruction for girls continued to focus on vegetable gardens. At Mutero (RCC), Mukaro (RCC) and Gutu (DRC) mission schools, the broader industrial curriculum for girls usually emphasized household tasks such as needlework, cooking, and laundry. Constancia Shava reminisced how at Gutu mission in the 1950s they were taught to sew and knit while some girls were taught to do laundry for the missionaries.⁶⁰

The Catholic and Dutch Reformed evidence resonates closely with Elizabeth Schmidt's data from Chishawasha (Roman Catholic) and Epworth (Wesleyan Methodist) missions, revealing how much of missionary education for African girls revolved around the creation of Christian wives as suitable companions for the expanding ranks of male school graduates. "Mission agricultural training thus became part of an education that promoted the domestication

⁵⁸ Interview with Vincent Maweni, Masvingo, 8 February 2014. Similar views came from an interview with Cyprian Tarugarira in Gweru, 10 September 2014.

⁵⁹ T.H.Leedy, 'The World the Students Made: Agriculture and Education in Colonial Zimbabwe, 1930-1960', p458. The same sentiments were also echoed in an interview with Constancia Shava in Gweru on 25 June 2013.

⁶⁰ Interview with Constancia Shava, Gweru, 25 June 2013.

of African women in ways that were quite compatible with the needs of colonial capital and the state."⁶¹

A study by Leedy on agriculture and education at American Missions in colonial Zimbabwe revealed that education tended to “emphasize male authority and specific female roles given that boys were taught to be household heads while girls focused on household chores like cooking and cleaning, raising healthy Christian children, in addition to respecting and obeying their husbands”.⁶² However, Leedy also established that while the education provided by mission farms reflected the needs of the mission churches and the colonial state more closely than those of the students, both pupils and their parents utilized mission schools to suit their own needs and recognized the potential investment returns. Pupils also realized that they laboured toward the future, but their vision increasingly led toward ends at odds with missionary expectations.⁶³ As Empire Makamure remarked, ‘We were convinced that education provided the main avenue to European type occupations and ways of living. Our traditional conceptions of social status were being replaced by criteria of occupation, education and the extent to which one had adopted European patterns of living’.⁶⁴

3.2.2 Naming the road to elitism

Through naming, Africans also chose arbitrary words and names in order to master the English language and tap into the resources of its power. In a situation of colonial displacement among a people who treated names as signifiers of hope, desperation, anger and other emotions, it became common practice for Africans to give their children English names to replace their family names. People would also give each other nicknames by selecting English words that expressed certain truths about their lives and situations. Among the Basotho, Mujere found that the names given to farms had specific meanings aimed at articulating important issues in the owner’s life.⁶⁵ From the late 1940s names like ‘Meeting’, ‘Misi’ (Miss), ‘Mission’, ‘Supervisor’, ‘Teacher’, ‘Mudhumeni’ (Agricultural extension officer), just to mention a few became common.

⁶¹ E. Schmidt, *Peasants, Traders and Wives: Shona Women in the History of Zimbabwe, 1870-1939*, Portsmouth: Heinemann, 1992, p.122.

⁶² T.H.Leedy, ‘The World the Students Made: Agriculture and Education in Colonial Zimbabwe, 1930-1960’, *History of Education Quarterly*, Vol 47, No.4, (Nov.2007), pp.447-469.

⁶³ *Ibid*, p.454.

⁶⁴ Interview with Senator E.K.Makamure, Gutu 10 August 2013.

⁶⁵ J. Mujere, *Autochthons, Strangers, Modernizing Educationists and progressive Farmers*, p.58.

Besides substituting their old names with English ones, the other alternative was to shorten one's Shona name so that it would sound English or simply exotic. For example, Garikai could be corrupted or shortened to Gary. It was the western-educated African parent who in turn gave his or her child a European name as a reflection of this newly-acquired knowledge.

The rise of vernacular Christian names is not an accident of history, but rather a product of history.⁶⁶ From a Christian point of view, a new name was seen as an essential indication of the transition from heathenism to a new life. African students who enrolled in mission schools were uprooted from the familiarity of the village into the new world of western tradition by denouncing their culture-bound names in favour of European ones. "For missionaries, naming was a hermeneutical tool in a world they perceived as pervaded by evil and suffering".⁶⁷ African names were unworthy of Christian faith. In the long run, African Christians themselves came to adopt the same mentality and rejected their traditional names as pagan. Chitando similarly shows how African names were deliberately anglicized to show that their bearers were Christian and 'civilized'.⁶⁸ People adopted the practice of naming and renaming as a way of coping with a changing environment which was dominated by forces of colonisation.

In a study on African police and soldiers in colonial Zimbabwe, Timothy Stapleton observed that 'like uniforms, names became an important symbol of prestige and identity for African police and soldiers'.⁶⁹ Many ruralists came to believe that new European names signified civilization hence becoming symbols of prestige. Names came to be associated with status, as it became fashionable to Europeanize indigenous names or take pure European names in preference to indigenous ones.

The prestige value of the teaching profession and the ambition of people of a lowly status to acquire high status were frequently expressed in the parents' wish that their children become teachers. Where people took names to be a child's first gift in life, some pontificated status had to be indicated by the name of the child.⁷⁰ There were instances when a parent would say, 'My

⁶⁶ E. Chitando, 'What's in a name? Naming Practices among African Christians in Zimbabwe' in P. Gundani and K. Fiedler (eds.) *Theology cooked in an African Pot ATISCA BULLETIN no.5/6,1996/1997, Special Volume* pp.106-119.

⁶⁷ I. Mukonyora, *Wandering a Gendered Wilderness: Suffering and Healing in an African Initiated Church*, Oxford, Peter Lang, 2007, p.75.

⁶⁸ E. Chitando, 'What's in a name'? p.117.

⁶⁹ T. Stapleton, *African Police and Soldiers in colonial Zimbabwe 1923-80*, University of Rochester Press, Rochester, 2011, p.160.

⁷⁰ Interview with Gibson Zvotoona Tarugarira, 24 December 2013.

son is so handsome that he looks like an extension officer—and so names like ‘Mudhumeni’ became common. Some people came to believe that as the first name is said, written, used and thought over and over every day, that *dzokororo* (repetition of the name) would affect the formation and expression of a personality, encouraging certain traits and downplaying others’.⁷¹ In some cases, names were recorded inaccurately by semi-literate civil status officers. They usually spelt names as they were pronounced by parents or by themselves. One Hatinei had his name recorded as ‘Heartnear’ but his father Piniel Dumbu celebrated the error because the name now sounded English. Among Dumbu’s other sons were Polite and Beautiful.⁷² Some names were moulded using the English appellative connected with a kind of activity which a person performed, for example Tailor Mupunga, Demonstrator Guni, Carpenter Chorwira, Builder Gono and so on. However, during the 1960s many people discarded their Christian names which were usually European to take up African names, an indication that Shona nomenclature is inextricably intertwined with both political and religious history of the country.⁷³

3.3 Missionaries and African entrepreneurship

Volker Wild observed that almost all pioneer African entrepreneurs in Zimbabwe had very strong Christian backgrounds. Although generally the contempt for worldly goods seemed to be a fundamental and dominant element in the teachings of the Christian missionaries (given commerce’s association with fraud, avarice, luxury and moral corruption), a good number of Gutu’s business pioneers were indeed nurtured by the same missionaries.

Crispen Mandizvidza, a builder and storekeeper, had been helped to start his business by Fr Aloysius Heane, the Vicar Apostolic and the first Bishop of the Diocese of Gwelo. Mandizvidza and his wife remained friends and supporters of the Roman Catholic Church over the years.⁷⁴ Weinrich also noted that besides stressing the pastoral aspect of their work, Catholic, Methodist and Dutch Reformed missionaries immensely contributed to the social development of the people by stimulating their economic enterprises. Catholic missionaries encouraged the formation of credit unions and taught better farming techniques so that people could improve

⁷¹ Interview with Morgen Mabhunu, Makura, Gutu, 19 July 2013

⁷² Interview with Beautiful Dumbu, Gutu, August 2013.

⁷³ The 1960s are associated with the rise of African nationalism. During the time, African nationalists attacked certain signs of European cultural traits like the names and even designs of clothing.

⁷⁴ McLaughlin, *On the Frontline*, p.191.

their living standards.⁷⁵ They claimed that the gospel could not be received unless a person lived in an environment in which Christian morals could be practised.

In a study which traced the connections between membership of a sect and commercial success among the Lala people of Zambia, Norman Long established that a large number of the shopkeepers and progressive farmers were Jehovah's Witnesses. It emerged that Witnesses' specific teachings aided a businessman in realizing the importance of literacy (in order to read the scriptures), the careful use of time, and the notion that to acquire skills was to have them ready for the New Kingdom. To be a Witness was to belong to a solidarity community whose mutual trust gave its members entrepreneurial advantage and in addition it provided an ideological justification for cutting unwanted ties with matrilineal kin who might otherwise eat up the profits of the enterprise.⁷⁶ Among the Lala, then, it was not simply that Jehovah's Witnesses became capitalists, but that aspiring capitalists became Witnesses.⁷⁷

In the Chingombe area of Gutu (which was a DRC stronghold), some families who had strong connections with missionaries had started producing maize for the market provided by the mission school-Alheit. By the 1960s, these families had started to acquire large tracts of land at the expense of the less far-sighted. Using missionary resources they pushed towards their vision of modernity. As the plough increasingly became useful as a technological device those Africans associated with the mission had the capacity and disposition to purchase it. The result was that the neighbouring villagers had to rely on the new 'big men' in the form of plough owners. Ploughing services could be provided in exchange of assistance in land clearance or grain for food in hard times. The missionary and his mission staff again became these 'big men' with valuable resources.⁷⁸ Making reference to the Chingombe area of Gutu, an informant remarked:

These 'accumulators' largely Mashata Maweni, Merkia Makamure, Abernia Hamutyinei and Stephen Chikwiro commonly hired labour and had their land ploughed with tractors provided by missionaries. These became financially successful and managed to send their children to school. This is how some of the people became businessmen. People would also weed their fields in return for money or some groceries like sugar and soap.⁷⁹

⁷⁵ Weinrich, *Black and White Elites in Rural Rhodesia*, p.93.

⁷⁶ N. Long, *Social Change and the Individual*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1968

⁷⁷ J. Iliffe, *The Emergence of African Capitalism*, Macmillan Press, London, 1983, p.46.

⁷⁸ See G. C. Mazarire, *The Dutch Reformed Church in the Victoria Circle: Chibi Circuit, Mashonaland, 1874-1956*; Ian Scoones, 'Landscapes, fields and Soils: Understanding the History of Soil Fertility Management in Southern Zimbabwe', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, vol. 23 no. 4, (1997) pp. 619-20.

⁷⁹ Interview with Cyprian Tarugarira, Gweru, 10 September 2014.

A survey of the social status of saints by Weinrich yielded that among the rural Karanga, the Christians of the Mission Churches formed an upper stratum, the Ethiopian Churches a middle stratum and the Zionists, Apostles and traditionalists a lower stratum.⁸⁰ The implication of Weinrich's classification is that the spirit-type churches mainly recruited members from the poorest layers of society while the better educated ruralists were predominantly members of Mission churches. In a study of the south-eastern Shona districts of Gutu, Bikita and Umtali (Mutare), Daneel also found that the Zionists had a slight advantage over the Apostles in numbers of 'Master Farmers'.⁸¹

In an effort to accurately assess the elite statuses into which the various religious groups might be divided, Daneel correlated denominational affiliation with the nature of individual employment and several agricultural variables for the rural communities. He observed how the image of Samuel Mutendi as a wealthy church administrator contributed towards the tendency among Africans to regard the Zion Church Of Christ as 'a Church of the prosperous' and not as a 'Church of the landless or poor'.⁸² Basing on the correlation between denominational affiliation and subsistence farming against the livestock owned, total crop yields and major sales of agricultural produce by each rural household, Daneel concluded that agricultural data tended to reverse stratification based on educational and employment differentiation. Daneel's findings thus point to the conclusion that religious affiliation contributed towards determining an individual's economic position and social status, hence the creation of the religious-cum-business elite.

To this end, the discussion has concentrated on how religious beliefs and institutions could facilitate the growth of African capitalism. Admittedly, identifiable links between Christianity and capitalism were common in Gutu. It was probably the different levels of capitalist development which prompted the more prosperous villagers to level witchcraft accusations against their poorer neighbours. Ignorant of or simply unaware of benefits accrued by well-to-do families through their close networks with missionaries, some sections of villagers

⁸⁰ A.K.H. Weinrich, *African Farmers in Rhodesia*, Oxford University Press, London, 1975, p.64.

⁸¹ M. L. Daneel, *Old and new in southern Shona independent churches Volume 1: Background and rise of the major movements*, The Hague: Mouton, 1971.

⁸² Ibid.

associated the model of prosperity with the use of magic or charms.⁸³ In a nutshell, religious affiliation had a bearing on the acquisition of elite status.

3.3.1 The making of rural salariables and artisans

The reception of missionary education and the penultimate conventional treatment of the missionary roles have focused on the constructivist capacities of European culture and power to transform Africans. In this framework, European missionaries also created rural salariables. Many informants appeared to remember their agricultural, carpentry and tailoring training with some fondness. In hindsight, Meke Mahwanda had this to say,

We were not aware of the long-term benefits of the practical education. We complained about practical or manual work but we can now look back and say it was that experience which made us what we are today. The skills we gained enabled us to make money and secure goods and livestock as most of us became our own employers.⁸⁴

Admittedly, during the early days of missionary work and with colonialism gaining a strong foothold, a great demand for artisans, carpenters, masons, tailors in addition to clerks was created. Employment, income and social status were closely related to the level of educational achievement. Africans though, were kept out of high income earning jobs through exclusion from apprenticeship and other training opportunities. Many industries raised qualification requirements by demanding 'O' level Science and Mathematics which few African schools offered. In other cases Higher School Certificates (HSC) were required and this disqualified many black applicants as few of them had yet attained that level of education.⁸⁵ In fact, until 1965 only Goromonzi and Fletcher government schools offered HSC courses. The New Education Plan unveiled by the colonial government in 1966 introduced radical changes in the selection process for pupil entry into secondary education.

African primary school graduates considered capable of coping with the rigours of academic secondary education proceeded to F1 education while F2 vocational secondary schools absorbed those of less academic ability. Mutero Roman Catholic School offered vocational

⁸³ The use of charms is discussed in separate chapters on the agriculture and business elites.

⁸⁴ Interview with Meke Mahwanda, Gutu, 14 December 2013.

⁸⁵ By 1945 secondary school work was conducted at three mission centres: St. Augustine's (Church of England), Kutama (Roman Catholic), and Dadaya (Church of Christ). In 1950 two more mission secondary schools opened: Hartzell (American Methodist), and Solusi (Seventh Day Adventists). Tegwani (British Methodist) and Gokomere (Roman Catholic) opened in 1951.

See also R.J.Zvobgo, *Colonialism and Education in Zimbabwe*, Sapes Books, Harare, 1994, p.72-73.

education which people considered inferior to academic education.⁸⁶ In fact, the implicit suggestion by the Judges Commission that the F2 system was intended for the academically weak infuriated pupils, parents and teachers. Attending a F2 school was viewed with dismay and automatically consigned one to an inferior status. According to Zvobgo, “in terms of employment prospects, parents were aware that a child who graduated from an F2 school in agriculture, carpentry, building and basket weaving, was less preferred on the labour market than one who had a good Cambridge School Certificate from an F1 school”.⁸⁷ Of interest however is that some of the graduates from Mutero were able to start their own businesses.

Without wishing to exaggerate its significance, the period around the early 1940s and mid 1950s saw a major move towards what could be called the creation of an artisan layer in Gutu’s African society courtesy of practical training from mission schools. Firios, who had learnt basic carpentry at Mutero mission before going to the city where he perfected his skills, was the first to establish a carpentry shop and furniture manufacturing enterprise at Gutu Business Centre (now Gutu- Mpandawana Growth Point). Other notables were Jerry Makura who had also learnt carpentry at Munyikwa and became the earliest sole provider of carpentry services in the area. Blacksmithing and tailoring also tended to be restricted to some missionary-trained subgroup where skills were regenerated. Mungwari and Chinoona were renowned blacksmiths in the Munyikwa and Mataruse-Gudza areas respectively. To a large measure, these were the first generation of their families to take up a particular trade which through social reproduction continued from father to son. Their sons picked up the thread from where their parents had left. The craftsmen who decided to practice in their home areas were naturally attracted by the idea of being one of the few or often the only such in the village. These became part of the village elite who led lives comparable to those of the rural salarials.

In mission schools, attention was given to practical or vocational training. However practicals did not have the same appeal nor did they confer the same degree of status as academic qualifications. The training was aligned towards emulating the lifestyles of the Europeans who were for the most part involved in academic work. Around the 1930s people tended to view ‘wealth’ in a wider context as other families came to rely on cash-earning jobs and careers, such as teaching, preaching, government service and business. Having sugar, soap, store-bought

⁸⁶ Interview with Ephraim Marwizi, Gutu, 22 August 2013.

⁸⁷ R. J. Zvobgo, *Colonialism and Education in Zimbabwe*, Sapes Books, Harare, 1994, p.72-73

clothes, sending children to school, and ploughs became new indicators of successes along with big families and cattle. People turned the exotic items into necessities and obviously they would have to find a place in their lives for this new type of wealth. As a result, more families began farming with the intention of producing a surplus for sale so that they could also acquire these new store-bought goods.

Clerks and school teachers were relatively well-educated and so were accustomed to exercising a certain amount of personal authority either in the office or in the classroom. Hence, as is going to be considered in later chapters, they were often called upon to provide leadership to the lower ranks of the sub-elite in varied institutionalized settings. The same clerks and school masters were not always wholly divorced from the soil. They would continue to till their plots in addition to drawing salaries. They would often supplement their scanty wages by cultivating crops. Some of them even graduated into being Master Farmers, a development which signified elite interpenetration and interchangeability.

Among the rural salariats were teachers, policemen, demonstrators, storekeepers, tailors, drivers and orderlies. Teaching predominated since it was believed to confer elite status. Many people liked teachers, trusted them and respected them for ‘their knowledge and good morals’ while some professions for example being a policeman aroused fear in the people.⁸⁸ Weinrich observed that teachers occupied key positions in Karangaland. They did not only bring more money into local circulation than any other group, but they were also looked up to socially as leaders, especially in the political sphere, and their ideas and values influenced many peasant farmers.⁸⁹

As mentioned earlier, some teachers like Mutambwi, Merkia Makamure, Assa Gonese, Mufambi, Kutapira and many others became successful businessmen of their time. Merkia Makamure was multi-talented. He was a teacher, agriculture extension officer, qualified builder and later a businessman.⁹⁰ Like Feresu Matambura, Makamure owed his success to support from the DRC’s Alheit Mission and assistance from his brother Joyce Chingombe who had very close contact with Orlandini.⁹¹ Anyone who went further with education was referred to as ‘teacher’. Normally, the little money available went on acquiring as far as possible that form of education

⁸⁸ C. Chinounye, ‘Teachers are responsible’ in *Moto No.19, March 1961*, p.7.

⁸⁹ A. K. H. Weinrich, *Chiefs and Councils in Rhodesia*, Heinemann, London, 1971, p.38.

⁹⁰ Interview with Senator Empire Makamure, Gutu, 10 August 2013.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

associated with the ruling European elite. Educationally advanced children were sometimes even addressed by their parents and other relatives as ‘teacher’.⁹²

In the Mazema (Masema) area of Gutu, Kingfisher marveled at the successes scored by some members among the Basotho community. He wrote; ‘Chief Molebaleng and his brother-in-law motored their children to Morgenster. When we see this, we say ‘Pambele MaAfrika!’ The multi-talented Silas Molebaleng, the chief’s young brother was a black-smith, a miller and a carpenter besides owning a very fine motor car’.⁹³ In as much as the value system of African education was designed to complement socio-economic imperatives of white domination some of the unexpected consequences included the creation of self-employed African elites.

3.4 African Independent Churches and the religious elite

The acronym AICs is a contested terrain that can be defined from multiple ways.⁹⁴ The emergence of African Independent Churches did not happen in a vacuum but was conditioned by a number of factors which range from social, cultural, political, spiritual and circumstantial. Daneel argues that nationalist feelings contributed much in the emergence of AICs, adding that to some varying degree, the churches were characterized by African self-expression and freedom from missionary control and Europeans in general.⁹⁵

In a tape-recorded service of the John Maranke [Johane Marange] Apostolic Church, Sr. Mary Aquina transcribed utterances during spirit possession where a man exclaimed: ‘Brrr.Jesu Diviner, man, Zapu, Christo Jesu, man, Zapu, Amen, Christo Jesu *mweya* [spirit].’⁹⁶ The indication here is that, through church networks, evangelicals talked about their political activism, which both mobilized people to act and maintain political momentum. Barret contends

⁹² M. L. Daneel, *Old and new in southern Shona independent churches Volume 1: Background and rise of the major movements*, Mouton, The Hague, 1971, p.59.

⁹³ Kingfisher, ‘Fort Victoria News’ in *The Bantu Mirror, Saturday October 3, 1936*, p7

⁹⁴ The acronym AIC can stand for African Independent Churches, African Initiated Churches, African Instituted Churches, African Indigenous Churches, African Initiative in Christianity. Despite the multiplicity of definitions, the common thread which joins them is the idea of Africanness and their distinction from mainline churches. See B. Sundkler (1960) *Basic communication in African Churches*, New York, Orbis Book Publishers, p.26; A. Hastings (1979) *A History of African Christianity*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge,

⁹⁵ M. Daneel (1987) *The Quest for Belonging*, Mambo Press, Gweru, p.65.

⁹⁶ Sr. Mary Aquina, ‘The People of the Spirit: An Independent Church in Rhodesia’ in *Africa, Journal of the International African Institute, Volume XXXVII, No.2*, April 1967, p210. ZAPU stands for the largest Rhodesian African nationalist party, the Zimbabwe African People’s Union, which had been declared by the Ian Smith government a prohibited organisation and even mention of its name was considered to be dangerous. Only during possessions could its name be pronounced with safety.

that what also motivated the AIC leaders and their followers to start their own churches was the desire to reform existing mission protestant Christianity and make it more relevant to the needs of daily African life. He argues that aspects such as polygamy and veneration of ancestors were demonized by the European missionaries yet they played a pivotal role in African life.⁹⁷ For Hastings, lack of freedom to exercise gifts of leadership and the rapid social changes born of industrialization and urbanization paved the way for the rise of AICs.

Religious movements which spread in the late 1920s and 1930s for example the Zion Christian Church of Rev. Samuel Mutendi appropriated and transformed Biblical symbolism where the Holy Spirit was conceived to be more powerful than the Europeans' 'scientific' knowledge.⁹⁸ The religious history of Gutu in the 1930s reveals a picture of competing movements with remarkable resemblances in organization and ideology. Having established a school in Gutu in 1927, Samuel Mutendi appealed to the worker-peasants who returned to the district in the 1930s. According to Davis and Dopcke, "the Zionist organisations offered leadership opportunities and the possibility of building up a personal following to relatively poor young men and some women, who could not use the strategies of either peasant or 'mission' accumulation".⁹⁹

Independent churches reorganized the principles of lineage ideology to create new peasant communities under the authority of the Holy Spirit. As a result, each church ended up hatching particular tensions with capitalism as Native Commissioners were unable to control the spread of Zionism. Detentions and warnings did not prevent Mutendi from continuing his work. Some people could have been motivated to join Independent Churches because of their disappointment with the Mission Churches. However, Daneel's random sample surveys in the District brought to light that "less than 50 percent of the adherents of the Shona Independent Churches had previously been full communicant members of a Mission Church".¹⁰⁰

Independent churches had flexible leadership hierarchies which allowed for the majority of capable and adult members to hold office. It was not uncommon to find an independent church congregation composed of a small number of related families living in the same neighbourhood, with virtually all family heads and other adults appointed in some leadership

⁹⁷ D. Barret (1982) *Schism and Renewal*, Oxford University Press, Nairobi,

⁹⁸ Davis and Dopcke, 'Survival and Accumulation', p.82.

⁹⁹ Ibid, p.81.

¹⁰⁰ Daneel, M.L., 'The growth and significance of Shona Independent Churches' in Bourdillon, M.F.C. *Christianity South of the Zambezi, Vol 2*, Mambo Press, Gweru, 1977, p.183.

capacity. In Mauta's ZviHaisi (a name derived from the sounds made by people in a trance) close relatives from within the Mushangwe, Mazuru and Mataruse areas were appointed bishops, prophets, evangelists and pastoral officers.¹⁰¹ As such, a certain status in the in-group often compensated for the lack of prestige or influence elsewhere. Unlike in the mission churches, kinship, natural leadership potential and spiritual maturity, rather than educational standard or theological training were the factors which determined the appointment of independent church office-bearers. It is against this religious and social background that elite formation must be viewed. Sr. Mary Aquina observed that John Maranke's Apostolic church was hierarchically structured and well organized,

At the head of the Church stands its founder ...Local groups are linked to him through Bishops who are distinguished by wearing a star on their white tunics. Below each Bishop stand the Evangelists. They possess the special abilities proper to each lower rank in the church; for example, they can prophecy as Prophets do, but because of their higher rank their prophecies carry more authority than those of men who have only reached the rank of Prophet. Bishops and Evangelists are especially active in exorcising demons and nobody below this rank is believed to have the power to do so. Evangelists are followed in rank by Apostles and below the Apostles stand the Prophets...All these office holders are entitled to preach to the congregation. The lowest rank is occupied by the Doctors...Doctors do not 'heal'; they merely join in the common prayers for the sick. Doctors are usually the new comers to the Church.¹⁰²

The hierarchical structure of the church was given shape as and when the Holy Spirit conferred a new charism on a man who then obtained a higher rank. The powerful preachers exhibited elitist attributes which accorded them positions of prestige in their communities. While Sr. Mary Aquina admitted that she was never present at a promotion, in Chilimanzi [Chirumhanzu], she observed that the Bishop was the son-in-law of a chief. In another area, a young Prophet was a former clerk who lost his job and had to return to the rural area where his relatively high education- he had attended school for eight years – and his former white-collar job gave him prestige among his co-religionists.¹⁰³ Thus, distinguished both in dress and form of religious worship, elite configurations were at play within the religious realm.

Mutendi's image as a rainmaker attracted several chiefs into his church. Chief Mazuru in the Gutu district and several of his people were converted to Zionism, with twenty-eight members being baptized on one Sunday. This brought him into "direct confrontation with the

¹⁰¹ Interview with Dzikamai Mazuru at Dahwa, Gutu, 10 January 2014.

¹⁰² Sr. Mary Aquina, 'The People of the Spirit: An Independent Church in Rhodesia' in *Africa, Journal of the International African Institute, Volume XXXVII, No.2, April 1967*, p.205- 206.

¹⁰³ *Ibid*, p.206.

Marumbi Rain cult which had not only assumed control over rainmaking in Gutu, but also the control of sacred groves, pools and springs around Mt. Rasa where the rain cult was based”.¹⁰⁴

The formation of a religious elite was more dramatically consolidated in 1932 when Luka Jarawani, a preacher of the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AMEC), appeared in Gutu, predicting the coming of ‘American Negroes’ who would end white rule and abolish taxes. Upon promising to provide education for all ‘in a few short months, this man had practically emptied the schools of the Dutch Reformed Church’.¹⁰⁵ According to Davis and Dopcke, “the religious movements which spread in the late 1920s and 1930s for example the Zion Christian Church of Rev. Samuel Mutendi appropriated and transformed Biblical symbolism where the Holy Spirit was conceived to be more powerful than the Europeans’ ‘scientific’ knowledge”.¹⁰⁶

Independent church leaders were directly involved in the quest for good rains and proper crops which brought them in direct confrontation with the white men’s scientific knowledge. The ‘*ungano yembeu*’ which gave Zionists a chance of having the seed soon to be sown, flails and pegs to be used in the fields blessed by their leader undoubtedly affected the attitudes of most ruralists towards the Alvordian enterprise which was closely identified with the colonial administration.¹⁰⁷ Through mutual trust, respect, widespread faith-based obligations, salient and totalizing, religious identity provided strong bonds of networks across sectors. Religion thus conferred an empowering advantage over church leaders whose fellow followers helped each other rise in power.

3.5 Conclusion

The chapter has chronicled the history of Christian missionaries in Gutu, showing how the competition between the Dutch Reformed Church and the Roman Catholic Church witnessed the opening of mission stations. The religious and secular operations of missionaries have been discussed to show how missionary activities transformed African communities in terms of wealth

¹⁰⁴ J.Mujere, ‘The Marumbi Rain cult: Gender and the interface between rainmaking and the politics of water in Gutu’, Paper presented at The Power of Water: Landscape, Water and the State in Southern and Eastern Africa Conference, CAS, University of Edinburgh, Scotland, 28-29 March 2007, p1

¹⁰⁵ S 235/510, Native Commissioner General Annual Report 1932.

¹⁰⁶ Davis and Dopcke, ‘Survival and Accumulation’, p.82.

¹⁰⁷ M. L. Daneel, *Old and New*, Vol.1, p.187.

accumulation strategies and the emergence of new perspectives on the utility of education in fostering the creation of rural salarieds.

Initially, missionary education, as expected, was religious oriented but it was eventually broadened to include academic, industrial and teacher training. An important development which has been highlighted was the opening of boarding schools namely Alheit, Gutu, Mutero and Mukaro as well as the expansion of the Gutu Teachers' Training Centre which charmed both parents and pupils. The attainment of a level of education was one of the ways through which Africans attained respectability as progressive or modernizing. Farmers in purchase areas even made efforts to establish schools in their areas to cater for their children, with very little help from the colonial administration or missionaries.

Education thus created and reinforced inequalities by providing avenues which promoted elite formation. It was the Christian Church that first introduced literacy which was to give birth to nationalists, professionals and businessmen who made a cohort of African elites. From the mid-1960s, most of the highest positions in the social-political system were not transmitted by heredity and so the 'academization' of the elites in nearly all fields enabled people to reach avenues where earlier access was impossible. The reasons behind the rise of AICs and the emergence a new religious elite have been examined. The chapter has also demonstrated the significance of names as markers of aspired status among other issues.

Chapter 4: African Entrepreneurship and the Growth of the Business

Elite 1920s to 1970s.

4.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the history of merchant networks pitting the Indian and Greek communities and African businessmen in the rural areas. In the face of the colonial regime's sweeping discrimination against the African population, business contacts existed between white and black businessmen. The chapter traces how the alien communities particularly the Indians and Greeks with a semi-peripheral status within the European-dominated economy came to prominently feature as intermediaries in transactions in the African market, allowing them to direct and control trading networks in the process.¹ The chapter contends that within the network, the 'secrets of the trade' circulated smoothly and got transmitted from one generation to another. Ultimately, Indians, Greeks and Africans were able to establish family firms which from their inception decades earlier remained in the same hands and adhered to the same traditions. The only change has been the upsurge of a new generation to take over from the founders.

The chapter begins with a discussion on the nature of the commercial activities of the Asian and Greek communities which point to legendary business acumen that Africans also emulated. The chapter further shows how in cahoots with the Indian and Greek merchants, Gutu's African businessmen managed to overcome the problems created by the advent of colonial rule and ultimately found profitable niches within a European-dominated capitalist economy to create a robust business elite. The chapter also discusses how wealth became a mark of status as Africans adopted European values and expressed status in the acquisition of material status enhancement symbols and the accumulation of honorary offices.

¹ I characterize a network as a structure through which goods, credit, capital and men circulated regularly across a given space. The network generally consisted of a cluster of Indian, Greek and African businessmen where capital was raised and dispersed among traders as credit and information also circulated to facilitate business transactions.

5.1 Genesis of Indian, Greek and African business networks

This section traces how merchant traders in Zimbabwean colonial history formed the solid foundation upon which successful African businessmen emerged. The fact that Greeks and Indians came to dominate the commercial sector is not solely due to historic and cultural factors. As Kosmin noted, ‘these trends were reinforced by the immigration policies of the Rhodesian authorities, the social attitudes which impinged upon it and the result of the politically dominant, atavistic imperial outlook’.² Big business in Rhodesia was dominated by Europeans and so Indians and Greeks responded quickly to change as a matter of survival. However, there are certain trades or commercial activities which the Indians would not engage in for example, trade in arms, meat, beer and wine which the Jews and Greeks later dominated. Ali Lambart remarked,

Besides that these trades were forbidden by the Dhamma there were also fears that one risked being deported or arrested if the government detected you. Africans were not allowed to drink clear beer and wines so there was obviously no market for such products. As such the general principle of economic conduct and basic business virtues were carefully, conscientiously and diligently observed.³

With the manufacturing sector dominated by Europeans, Indians quickly moved to distribution and services. This forced Indians to divert their business activities to remote areas of Mutare, Masvingo and Matabeleland regions where there was less competition. Members of Zimbabwe’s African business elite ended up forming co-operatives as a means of ‘racial uplift’ and a vehicle for competition between ‘races’.⁴ The Bantu Trading Co-operative Society (also known as the Rhodesia Bantu Cooperative Company) formed in 1938 was strategically located in Bulawayo where there was a particularly strong predominance of Indian traders. The Africans’ burning desire was to quash the dependency syndrome on Indians by creating sufficient capital from members’ contributions to establish retail businesses. The hierarchical nature of the distributive system in Southern Rhodesia produced three divisions, with hawkers occupying the lowest rank while the upper rank consisted of wholesalers and specialist stores then ordinary retailers who fell in the middle. While the higher status grouping was overwhelmingly British, there was a decline in its proportion of hawkers and general dealers. The majority of the Greeks, with little capital, were among the poorest of whites in the early days of their arrival. However by the

²B. Kosmin, *Majuta: Ethnic and Commercial Relations in Southern Rhodesia. A Socio-Historical Study of Asian, Hellene and Jewish Populations 1898-1943*, Ph.D. dissertation, University of Rhodesia, 1974, p.38.

³ Interview with Ali Lambart, Masvingo, 18 September 2013.

⁴ M. West, *The Rise of an African Middle Class*, p.278-83.

1930s, the Greek demographic, educational and settlement patterns reflected a positive degree of acculturation to the European norm. The Indian population on the other side had fewer educational opportunities, either academic or technically oriented. Though beset by social discrimination and personal prejudice, most of which was taken for granted, the Greeks and Indians managed to raise their status within the system.

In rural areas, retail stores were opened on farms, in rural reserves, in mines, and townships in increasing numbers throughout the first third of the 20th century. According to Burke, “a significant but by no means dominant segment of ‘truck’ salesmen were either ethnic whites held to be ‘inferior’ – Greeks, Central European Jews—or Asians”.⁵ After the 1930s, Asians and non-Anglo-Saxon whites made up an increasingly larger proportion of the active traders. In Gutu, Micho, Vascios, Makierk and Murjuri (all Greeks) with shops dotted within Gutu, exerted tight control over client retailers and often financed new merchants with extensive credit, thus, creating ‘tied’ stores.⁶ Wholesale firms dumped large amounts of goods that they had purchased largely out of price considerations and trusted retailers to dispose of those goods however they could. As Chigome remarked, “I was young but my father who owned a small shop at Chartsworth complained that in some cases, goods were just imposed or forced upon him by Murjuri and if this happened during his absence, it was always difficult even to take stock of what the wholesaler had delivered”.⁷

There were different types of hawkers operating in Gutu but those carrying imported goods of any kind had to be licensed. Some of these licensed hawkers operated as independent, mobile traders, but most were the agents of a large wholesale or retail business, carrying goods to townships and rural homesteads. Unlicensed hawkers sometimes surreptitiously acted as agents of a central organisation. Typically, hawkers were sent out from well-stocked central locations to reach isolated markets. In Gutu, hawkers who were employees of centrally located stores were usually Africans unlike in areas of Mashonaland where until the 1920s many Greek and Asian traders travelled about in wagons or on bicycles.

⁵ Burke, *Lifebouy Men and Lux Women*, p.68.

⁶ Interview with Gibson Zvotoona Tarugarira, 24 December 2013.

⁷ Interview with Mr Chigome at Chartsworth, 15 December 2014.

Hawkers and other itinerant salesmen helped bring consumption of foreign goods into the domestic space of the *musha* (homestead).⁸ In 1931, when the then managing director of Radio Limited, Mr. B. Bloom travelled in the rural areas selling radios direct to the farmers he learnt about businessmen who worked with Indians.⁹ Many of these traders and their hawkers were aware that peasant cultivators had accumulated small reserves of cash which they attached little value to beyond paying annual taxes and state fees.

The circulation of hawkers was not haphazard but a highly regulated process. Although little is known of the exact modalities of the circulation of men, it is certain that, some agreements were entered into. Some 'branches' were entrusted to one or several managing partners who were remunerated by a share of the profits while other branches were put in charge of a salaried manager. Suleiman Cader's uncle was a salaried hawker who eventually established a thriving business in the Nerupiri area of Gutu. The hawkers, most of whom were on contract with a merchant travelled across the entire district in which most of their customers, were teachers and other rural salariats. The existence of these hawkers and the range of their travels testify to an attempt on the part of the merchants to avoid being too dependent on the urban markets which faced competition from the European traders. They succeeded in capturing some market share in a country where there were already many active trading communities.

Merchants dealing in cloth supplied numerous petty dealers, who in turn took the goods to villages. Goods were sold at periodic markets like Kwaira dance gatherings or bazaars (*mabharoni*) which attracted people to coalesce within a village. With the Greek and Indian merchants located far away from the actual consumers, opportunities for craftspeople to participate in marketing directly opened up. These barefoot salesmen also known as *vashambadzi* were in effect the marketers of the Indian textiles they carried. Their tasks involved discovering the kinds of products that were in demand in different areas and attempting to shape consumer choices by addressing cultural values salient to their buyers.

The active role of Indian and Greek mercantile actors spread over the landscape of Gutu from the 1930s as their agents or hawkers travelled around the countryside visiting the village homesteads and shops in the countryside. Part of the purpose of these visits was to collect payments and to have conversations about any upcoming needs. The *vashambadzi* would relay

⁸ Burke, *Lifebouy Men and Lux Women*, p.71.

⁹ *Commercial Rhodesiana*, 'The Magic Box', p.149.

information about changes in local preferences to the merchants. A customer able to convince the visitor of his capacity to repay could ask for more extensive credit and make bigger purchases in the future. A new trader entering into the market, by contrast, would typically have to bring a guarantor to back his credit purchases. In the majority of cases, the guarantors were teachers who also operated businesses.

As already indicated, many of the Indian artisans who came to Southern Rhodesia became businessmen at the first opportunity. Being accustomed to a lower standard of living than the British, the new immigrants were willing to work in the African market since they hailed from societies where trading included haggling with illiterate peasants. No wonder why some of them learnt *chilapalapa* or 'kitchen kaffir' before mastering English.¹⁰ Just like Greeks, Indians particularly from Gujarati, carried with them their caste trades of cobblers, tailors, barbers and laundrymen. Naran's business empire in Bulawayo had Naran commodity services, shoe repairs and leather works. These trades particularly tailoring were to create an artisan society in Gutu. Between 1945 and the mid-1950s, almost every Greek or Indian shop in Gutu had a tailor. Before joining Simbi Stores and later African Stores, Zvotoona Tarugarira had worked in Bulawayo for an Indian named Nagarji where he learnt tailoring.¹¹ What popularized tailoring was that clothing made up a significant part of the consumption activity of the largely agricultural rural communities.

According to Burke the bulk of sales to African customers until the 1930s consisted of clothing and ornaments, followed in descending order by tools and farming implements, soap and other toiletries, foodstuffs, cigarettes, matches and bicycles.¹² Bhati Matombo confirmed the above,

The demand for *saris* was very high among women in the villages. People who needed a *sari* often approached the shopkeeper or 'Green Buyer', who simply entered the cost of the *sari* in his accounts of debt, heightening his claim to the peasant's crop. Much later, the mobile theatre of the 1970s which featured Ticky (a male actor who played female roles putting on attractive *sari* styles) further popularized the *saris*. Most of the shopkeepers ended up establishing their own businesses where they sold cloth. To acquire cloth, the peasants from these marginal areas who often had only limited access to cash had to

¹⁰ Kosmin, *Majuta*, p.189.

¹¹ Interview with Gibson Zvotoona Tarugarira, 24 December 2013. All African Stores had tailors who were dispersed as follows: in the Nerupiri area, there was Rashirai, Chinyika had Mashiringwani, Dahwa-Mataruse had Manyange, and Bhasera had Tarugarira while Baro had Hede. Gibson Zvotoona Tarugarira later joined African Stores at Baro where he worked alongside Mugwambani.

¹² Burke, *Lifebouy Men and Lux Women*, p.66.

pass over most of their maize and groundnuts produce to African middlemen or 'Green Buyers' who in the majority of cases were shopkeepers and tailors.¹³

4. 2 Business coaching

Although as early as 1944 the Native Production and Trade Commission had recommended the inclusion of business subjects in the curriculum of African schools, the racist government did nothing. In the early 1950s, the Chief Native Commissioner's reports from Gutu district showed that there was an increasing demand by Africans to own business and that there were many Africans with stores of their own that due to over-trading, marginal profits were being realized.¹⁴ Given that European trading in reserves and purchase areas was restricted, African general dealers made brisk business. The Chief Native Commissioner remarked, "native reserves represented a colourful scene, with 'hot' money being made and one can understand when the merchant remarks 'business is better now' for the shops are full with these people spending the money for which they have toiled".¹⁵

Many families lacked the basic business skills or resources they needed. Some families did not realize that if they sold too much of their stock on credit, they would not have money to restock until the clients paid their debts. Few families had the cash to stock their stores twice. Similarly, peasant businessmen who failed may not have realized that they needed to take into account bus fares and transportation costs when pricing their goods for sale. It was in 1957 that secondary schools started to offer commercial training among Africans.

A decision was made to use a portion of Native Reserves Trust Funds to finance an experimental course for African businessmen. The Adviser on Technical Education and members of the Native Education Department invited 120 businessmen with not less than a Standard 6 education to attend training courses of 14 days each during the school vacations at Umtali (now Mutare), Gwelo (now Gweru) and Goromonzi. Those who qualified received the Master Businessmen's Badge and Certificate.¹⁶

¹³ Interview with Bhiti Matombo, Chin'ai, Gutu, 20 December 2013.

¹⁴ *The African Parade*, November 1953, p.9.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Native Affairs Annual Report 1961 in *NADA Vol.40*, 1963, p.100.

The criteria for selecting people eligible for training as businessmen were outrightly in favour of teachers. Teachers who attended the course were Mashatise, Musimudziwa, Mutambwi, Assa Gonese, Crispin Mandizvidza, Marikanosi, Nyimo, Kutapira, Munosunama, Mufambi, Feresu Matambura and Ben Rogers Mabaya among others.¹⁷ These were among the first to establish businesses. As teachers, they received regular salaries with which to restock their shops. They were literate and probably better administrators.

The overwhelming response by teachers explains why in 1965, the Department of Education issued a warning that according to Section 37(1) (q) (iv) of the United Teaching Service, it was an offence for a teacher to own a trade or business for personal profits unless the teacher had the written approval of the Secretary for African Education.¹⁸ Teachers already trading for their own profit without approval were advised to make a written application through their managers for the necessary permission. Before this permission was granted, the teacher was supposed to show that his trading activities would not interfere with his normal duties and efficiency. Arrangements were also made for the Central African Correspondence College (CACC) to provide such training for all businessmen. The institution which purported to control business activity in the reserve was the Council whose meetings were designed to limit direct popular participation in business. The presence of the Native Commissioner, who served as *ex officio* chair, meant that the meetings would be conducted according to the assumptions of the colonial system.

The business pioneers argued that they deserved council protection from competition which might drive down their profits. In 1966 the African Businessmen's Association complained that there was 'overtrading' in the reserve which reduced all business profits. The businessmen knew that Indian merchants were behind the success of the petty traders in the rural areas. They could not report them to the authorities because doing so was tantamount to cutting off the hand that fed them. Instead, they asked the Council to control the number of businesses in the reserves. The Council resolved to limit the number and types of some business which could be started at each village's business center. The council also agreed that anyone who wanted to start a business had to buy an existing shop building rather than building a new store. This was a

¹⁷ Interview with Senator E. K. Makamure in Gutu, 10 August 2013.

¹⁸ *Moto* Vol.7, No.7, July 1965, p.7.

new departure for the Council meant to protect white traders because, in 1948, the council had voted not to limit the number of store leases and licenses granted to Gutu residents.

The only limits were those placed on the number of white traders who could be granted licenses. Land-use legislation provided that Africans could not do business in European or white areas and whites could not do business in African townships. This effectively prevented competition between black and white traders and limited an African businessman's market to his fellow Africans. According to Wild, separation gave the African traders a wonderful opportunity of learning and growing. It gave them a sheltered opportunity through which they could learn and grow without competition from people who had more experience and capital. Wild attributed the success of Salisbury traders such as Samuriwo, Aiden Mwamuka and Enock Mwayera to protection from European and Indian competition in the 1950s.¹⁹

The business coaching provided by the Greek and Indian merchants emphasized right conduct characterized by shrewdness, capability and the power to inspire confidence among one's customers as qualities required for success by the shopkeeper. Shrewd conduct required close knowledge of the market. Guvava who served as a shopkeeper with African Stores remarked,

The shopkeeper had to know his goods that if this article was bought for so much and sold for so much then it would bring in this much as profit. This was necessary because if you were to enter into some negotiations with the customer and you reduce the price, then you would peg the price at a reduced profit margin not at a loss. That is how one was shrewd. *Huya tinapangana* (Come lets negotiate) provided room for negotiation or bargaining over commodity prices. Through the technique, Greeks and Indians found a profitable niche in the rural market especially among teachers.²⁰

Mutambwi, then a headmaster and rural businessman, had the practice of introducing new customers (largely teachers from Munyikwa area) so that he would be given some discount on goods purchased or related rewards from the shop owner. Many school heads introduced their entire staff and received some tokens of appreciation at the end of every year. This is how they cultivated networks and goodwill which made them credit-worthy. That the Indian and Greek merchants commanded confidence was evident from the willingness of people, especially the general dealers to make bulk orders from their shops. Early businessmen from Chin'ai business

¹⁹ V. Wild, *Profit not for Profit's Sake*, p.73.

²⁰ Interview with Mr. Guvava, Gutu, 10 December 2014.

centre namely Munosunama, Mahembe Mafuratidze and Mutambwi ordered from Makaki and Murjuris. Mahembe Mafuratidze recalled,

They would then make offers that you take goods and trade with them and pay back from time to time. The general criteria of right conduct which applied to all shop owners included the ability to acquire wealth by lawful and honourable means. Those who did not go bankrupt or fall heavily into debt were highly recommended for assistance. The trader who wanted business favour and connection had to exhibit the zeal to invest in business.²¹

Fanyana Javangwe, one of the first successful business people in the Munyikwa area had strong networks with Murjuris. His son Joseph remarked,

One was expected to practise thrift to the tune of saving more than half of one's income which had to be re-invested into business. You would be taught that idleness and gambling would lead to loss of income while consuming intoxicating beverages invited an increase in expenditures. My father would stop drinking beer almost four days before going to collect stock to conceal any smell of alcohol. He was afraid that he would be spotted and lose out. It was this business coaching on secrets of the trade that tied the businessmen to the wholesalers for sustainable operations.²²

Volker Wild offers a multi-faceted and relatively realistic picture of indigenous business, particularly the ostentatious quest for status which some of them fancied. At the same time, he refutes the myth that colonial authorities stalled African business advances in order to protect white enterprise from black competition. He assumes an eclectic position to show the novel opportunities and incentives which the discriminative practices of colonialism offered.²³ This view should be carefully applied because entrepreneurs came from different backgrounds. Weinrich observed that out of a group of seven rural businessmen, three had been teachers.²⁴ Such observations are further developed in this study to show how children from relatively well-to-do families in Gutu used the advantages of their parents' overlapping indicators of status mainly property, prestige and stratum to obtain the education, training, experience, concessions and capital to become disproportionately successful in varied socio-economic activities.

²¹ Interview with Mahembe Mafuratidze (Jr), Chin'ai, Gutu, 20 December 2013.

²² Interview with Joseph Javangwe, Chin'ai, Gutu, 20 December 2013.

²³ V. Wild, *Profit not for Profit's Sake*, p.158.

²⁴ A. K. H. Weinrich, *Black and white elites in Rural Rhodesia*, p.194.

4.2.1 Business Pioneers: Recruitment and case histories

It is worth noting that the business pioneers considered here were not the first businessmen in Gutu. We have already seen that in the 1930s and 1940s active African traders in Gutu were largely teachers who turned businessmen and those who had migrated to towns in search of employment who then started their own stores. It has been mentioned earlier on that some teachers who maintained friendly relations with missionaries established successful business enterprises. Rather, “the ‘business pioneers’ considered in this section were the first Gutu men to define themselves and their families as business-owners first and peasants second. They relied first on their business enterprises for most of their income, and only secondarily on farming”.²⁵ In fact, most business pioneers began farming for the market only after they had established their businesses in Gutu. The business pioneers the most prominent of whom were Elias Madondo, Crispen Mandizvidza, George Ndiripo Simbi and Piniel Mkushi, began to emerge in Gutu in the early 1950s.

The budding African entrepreneurs were not privy to credit provisions which would have enabled them to operate like sideline business for the big firms. In the majority of cases capital was gained by gradual accumulation, having business connections with Greek or Indian traders and lucky breaks. Clive Kileff cites Mr. Dunzu in Harare who received his first truck as a gift from someone who was going out of business, while another businessman had won a lottery; and still some accused of being funded by whites who were not allowed to own businesses in the African areas.²⁶ Wild quoted Paul Matambanadzo, the leading African bus entrepreneur who described the relationships between black and white businessmen as ‘always good’ while for Mwayera, the conduct of non-African wholesalers was ‘fair’. Marechera even thought of the Indian wholesalers as ‘friends’.²⁷

The social distance between the white businessmen and the blacks did not prevent close co-operation between African and non-African business partners. A number of wholesalers and suppliers tried hard to improve their position on the African market by working closely with

²⁵ L.Bessant, ‘Peasants, businessmen and the moral economy in the Chiweshe reserve, colonial Zimbabwe, 1930-1968’, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 12/1993.

²⁶ C.Kileff, ‘Black Suburbanites: An African elite in Salisbury, Rhodesia’ in C.Kileff and Wade C.Pendleton, *Urban Man in Southern Africa*, Mambo Press, Gweru 1975, p.91.

²⁷ Wild, *Profit not for Profit's Sake*, p.38.

African businessmen.²⁸ One example was the Indian firm of Bhadella which, by pursuing a policy of co-operation, developed into the leading wholesale enterprise in Umtali (Mutare) in the 1960s. Bhadella advised African traders on almost all business matters, from buying to book-keeping, and in addition, gave credit to African traders at a time when this was something of a rarity.²⁹ Credit was the best means of establishing a lasting relationship. According to Bhadella,

Credit was an important issue. Because in order to increase their trade African traders had to increase the variety of goods they were stocking and therefore they needed credit. Because they had no collateral they could not get bank overdrafts. So we extended credit to these businessmen and gave them a mix of goods. In certain instances we extended credit up to two months which was unheard of in those days. But we felt this is where the potential was and we developed on these lines. In the mid-1960s we became the prime wholesaler in Mutare. No one superseded us.³⁰

From the end of the 1940s, there was a persistent rumour that European and Asian businessmen were financing African shops in townships to which they themselves had no access. The Chief Native Commissioner referred in 1952 to the superstition ‘bordering on certainty, that the more successful stores and bus services were surreptitiously financed by European and Asiatic traders who would have been unable to obtain sites in the native areas under their own names.’³¹

Although this was risky business from the end of the 1940s, wholesalers increasingly extended credit to Africans. It is generally assumed that merchant networks operated largely on the basis of trust. According to Markovits “preferential rates and the absence of collateral were explained by the existence of a bond of trust between the lender and the borrower”.³²

Mutubuki also confirmed,

As soon as the wholesaler got to know and he felt you had good business acumen, a good turnover and would buy reasonable quantities, and had confidence in you, he would financially and materially start you off. Naran fully stocked Madondo’s first shop on credit. By then business was in the hands of settlers and expatriates and so to get into big business you somehow had to partner them. The problem was that in big business none of British settlers accepted Africans as partners. Indians and Greeks were more open and accommodating.³³

Elias Dzimba Madondo who worked at Midlands Hotel in Gweru in the late 1940s moved to Bulawayo where he worked as a hairdresser and part-time hawker between 1953 and 1955. In

²⁸ See P. Bond, *Uneven Zimbabwe. A study of Finance, Development and Underdevelopment*, African World Press, Asmara, 1998, p.105; M. West, *The Rise of an African Middle Class: Colonial Zimbabwe, 1898-1965*, p.290.

²⁹ V. Wild, *Profit not for Profit’s sake*, p.38.

³⁰ Bhadella quoted in V. Wild, *Profit not for profit’s sake*, p.40.

³¹ Southern Rhodesia, Department of National Affairs, Annual Report 1952, p.27.

³² C. Markovits, *The Global World of Indian Merchants, 1750-1947*, p. 25.

³³ Interview with Henry Mutubuki, Gweru, 20 May 2014.

Bulawayo, retail trade for an African clientele was largely controlled by Indians until the Town Council opened up for the African businessmen in 1949.³⁴ In the African township of Mpopoma with 2000 households, there were only three shopkeepers owned by W. T. Ngwenya, A. Mazibiza and G. Bango who according to *The Bantu Mirror*, made ‘fantastic sums of money’.³⁵ Madondo was privileged to get into contact with the Indian businessmen Naran from whose shop he ordered stock for sale. Naran advised his taxi driver Mangisi (popularly known as Musopero) and Madondo on almost all business matters, from buying to book-keeping.

Upon recognizing Madondo’s evident entrepreneurial potential, Naran recommended to Menzies the Native Commissioner of Gutu, that he grants Madondo permission to scout business opportunities in his rural home. He was offered a business stand on which to build his own shop by Piniel Mkushi. Upon the completion of the structure, Naran, who had been impressed by Madondo’s business acumen, fully stocked the shop on credit.³⁶ Between 1960 and 1974, Madondo was running multiple business units, having opened a bakery (1960), Madondo Gutu Modern Stores (1964), Madondo Family Store, Grinding Mill and Butchery (1966), Madondo Zvavahera and Chiguhune stores (1968), Mutubuki Store in Chinyika (1974) and Madondo Hotel (1974).

George Ndiripo Simbi was also introduced into business by Murjuri (a Greek) who was operating a wholesale business at Chartsworth. Upon acquiring a driver’s license Simbi who had been an Assistant Manager at Murjuri African Stores left to work as a driver for different companies between 1953 and 1956. In 1957, he opened a general dealer store at Bhasera and later bought a 2 ton truck with which he expanded his business empire to Makudo, Magombedze and Chitsa. Murjuri would also stock his shops on credit.

Simbi would frequently visit his former employer for business advice. George Ndiripo Simbi’s entrepreneurship, capacity to work with and gain the trust and admiration of Murjuri, and even his concern for keeping accurate records enhanced his credit-worthiness in business. Simbi extended his Bhasera store and opened a café. In 1973, he opened additional business units at Gonye, Bhasera Simbi Hotel, Chinyika and Manyene, moving on to Mataruse and Ruti Dam in 1974. He also opened a filling station and ran a fleet of taxis at Bhasera. As Bessant and

³⁴ NAZ, PA, S 235/477, Native Affairs Commission Enquiry into Bulawayo Location.

³⁵ *The Bantu Mirror*, 6 December, 1958.

³⁶ Interview with Henry Mutubuki, Gweru, 20 May 2014.

Muringai observed in Chiweshe, one business pioneer Peter Nyangoni established businesses to make a profit and help his neighbours.³⁷ Simbi equally saw businesses as a way of uplifting family members. As his business empire continued to expand, he gave the Makudo shop to his brother.³⁸

Madondo and Simbi would always recommend that their friend Crispen Mandizvidza be given goods on credit by their Indian or Greek financiers but somehow, he did not to honour the credit. When he went to join the war of liberation, Mandizvidza was notorious among wholesalers for not paying credit extended to him.³⁹ His argument was that the relations between the wholesalers and the retailers from delivery credit to financing a business, from profit sharing to sale on commission were lamentably exploitative.⁴⁰

Being a qualified book-keeper, Mandizvidza was financially literate and could tell where and when he was being shortchanged. As the Acting Secretary of the Zimbabwe African Businessmen Association (ZABA) he mounted country-wide tours to assist African Businessmen.⁴¹ Even during the liberation struggle, Mhanda confirmed that all freedom fighters at Balama camp gained an appreciation of elementary accounting practice and procedures such as maintaining a cashbook, a ledger, a journal and conducting a trial balance through lessons offered by Mandizvidza.⁴²

In situations where Europeans extended loans to African entrepreneurs they were notorious for charging exorbitant interest on money lent. A member of Ian Smith's Rhodesia Front used Isaac Samuriwo as his middleman in fleecing African entrepreneurs.⁴³ This is not to say that there were no Indian tricksters. Paul Matambanadzo lost £2500 to an Indian who had promised to assist him to buy a bus.⁴⁴

Crispen Mandizvidza who had taught at Chinyika and Goromonzi schools, took building and carpentry jobs on the sidelines throughout his teaching career until he began to work as a building contractor. In 1954, he started BB Builders Contracting Company which established

³⁷ L. Bessant and E.Muringai, 'Peasants, Businessmen, and Moral Economy in the Chiweshe Reserve, Colonial Zimbabwe, 1930-1968', p.577.

³⁸ Interview with Gibson Zvotoona Tarugarira, Gutu, 24 December 2013.

³⁹ Interview with Henry Mutubuki, Gweru, 20 May 2014.

⁴⁰ Interview with F.F. Shava, Gweru, 25 June 2013.

⁴¹ *Moto*, Vol 5 No.12, December 1963, p.1.

⁴² W. Mhanda, *Dzino: Memoirs of a freedom fighter*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2011, pp192-193.

⁴³ Wild, *Profit not for profit's sake*, p.51.

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, p.226.

branches in Salisbury (Harare), Gwelo (Gweru), Umtali (Mutare) and QueQue (Kwekwe). He moved into the transport business in 1958 and opened a general dealer's shop at Bhasera the same year. He owned motor vehicles which he used for personal and business needs.⁴⁵ The claim by McLaughlin⁴⁶ that Mandizvidza was assisted to start his business by the Catholic Bishop Alois Heane should not be taken to imply that he was given financial assistance. Instead, Mandizvidza and his wife were friends and supporters of the church and the assistance given did not go beyond moral support.⁴⁷

In 1959, Mandizvidza extended his General Dealer shop at Bhasera to a restaurant and Postal Agency and went on to establish a string of Mandizvidza stores in Mutombwa, Ruti Dam and Buhera. Mandizvidza encouraged his business friends, to enter the world of business by investing small savings in large enterprises and forming business partnerships with some friends. Leading by example and walking the talk, in 1971, he formed the Gutu Construction Company in association with Jethro Dhauramanzi. Already with an immense social capital, he used it wisely and astutely when mobilizing partnerships and forming companies in which fellow board members like Femias Chakabuda recognized him as having a feel for detail and being well informed. Chakabuda added,

The partnership included the largest building materials supplier in the district where both partners came from. The business venture was path breaking and the first of its kind, a triumph over social and cultural hurdles towards business partnerships among Africans. This case revealed the positive dynamic between intra-ethnic trust or the *vana vokumusha* (home-boyism) dictum. In other words the trust the two elites had for one another was considered the wellspring enabling them to extend trust to others beyond the geographical confines of Gutu. In a way ZABA encouraged African businessmen to come together to establish companies the way the whites were doing.⁴⁸

Considerable opportunities opened up for local business elites to actively map their penetration of the African market after 1965. The shift to local production became necessary after Ian Smith's Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) because sanctions blocked the flow of imports into the country. The idea of retailers establishing direct relationships with manufacturers which had already gained popularity among some 'truck' retailers before 1945

⁴⁵ Interview with F. F. Shava, 25 June 2013.

⁴⁶ J. McLaughlin, *On the Frontline: Catholic Missions in Zimbabwe's Liberation War*, Harare, Baobab Books, 1996, p.191.

⁴⁷ Interview with Albert Mandizvidza, Gweru, 30 June 2013. He was responding to the claim which was made by McLaughlin, *On the Frontline*, p.191, that Mandizvidza was helped to start his business by Bishop Alois Heane.

⁴⁸ Interview with Femias Chakabuda, Masvingo, 17 September 2013.

continued. The storekeepers who hired hawkers had long turned directly to local manufacturers when the supplies from the world market became difficult to obtain.

By the mid to late 1960s more developments were underway that would complete the eclipse of the old ‘truck’ networks. Many wholesalers like Jagers and African Marketing Services (AMS) began to operate on a ‘cash and carry’ basis moving decisively away from client-patron relationships that had marked such trading in the past. Some retail shops were established by hawkers who reinvented themselves and their businesses to meet what they perceived as unmet needs in the rural areas. While the ‘cash and carry’ was becoming popular, the transport problems which the rural business people always faced had not improved. This made it imperative for businessmen in remote areas to cultivate sound business relations with truckers like Toriro Wholesalers operating from Mvuma. The African businessmen capitalized on the political environment to deal directly with manufacturers thus circumventing the Greek and Indian middlemen. The period between 1965 and 1974 was indeed the golden age of African business development in Gutu as prominent businessmen expanded their business empires to dizzy heights.

Although the law did not allow, Africans afford to deal directly with manufacturers but at the same time not severing their relationships with the Greeks and Indians. The Rhodesia Milling and Manufacturing Company had trucks which travelled exhibiting the Company’s products like flour, soap, candles, flour polish and perfume among other items. According to Chakabuda, “Bulk supplies at doorsteps of businessmen relatively increased their profit margins which enabled them to make further investments. They could now compete favourably with the Greeks and Indians”.⁴⁹

In almost all societies, wealth is a mark of status and business is considered as a means of acquiring both. Gutu’s businessmen adopted white values, norms and standards. J.F.Holleman, writing about the Shona, had this to say,

...the display of material wealth, the ability to entertain, and in other ways disseminate the knowledge that one is wealthy, can be and is often a powerful contributory factor towards gaining social status and prestige; and provided the means are large enough and ambitions are led into the right channels, wealth can also play an important role in the manipulation and acquisition of political power.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ Interview with Femias Chakabuda, Masvingo, 17 September 2013.

⁵⁰ J. F. Holleman, *Cash, cattle or women: A conflict of concepts in a dual economy*, 1974,p.136.

The African businessman's desire for status found expression in esoteric socialization and conspicuous consumption as discussed in the section that follows.

4.3 Crafting selves and keeping up appearances

In an analysis of class characteristics (which I consider to be synonymous with elite attributes), Nkrumah opined that certain social habits, dress, institutions and organizations were associated with different classes or elite statuses. He observed the possibility of placing a person in a particular class or elite category by “simply observing his general appearance, his dress and the way he behaves”.⁵¹ In looking at why Africans joined the police and army in Southern Rhodesia, Stapleton observed that “the distinctive appearance of uniformed African police and soldiers seemed to hold out the promise of a bright future, full of excitement, prestige, adventure, and purpose”.⁵² Joshua Meyrowitz, also noted that the changes in status that come with physical relations are indeed given physical reality by new forms of dress, new names, new activities and games, new appropriate gestures and postures. Timothy Burke relishes on the role played by commodity culture and changing patterns of consumption in marking the distinction between groups and reinforcing identity within a group.

Within this framework, Burke has explored the intricate relations between the history of commodification and the embodied aspects of aesthetics for the African elite in a colonial society.⁵³ He shows that although goods are neutral, their uses are social and so they can be used as fences or bridges. Simmel on fashion argues that subordinate groups seek to improve their social status by imitating the dress codes and forms of behaviour of their immediate super ordinate groups. He saw fashion helping “to reproduce social power and privilege by marking and maintaining social differences and distinctions upon which it in part depends”.⁵⁴ In this section my emphasis does not so much rest in the actual differences in patterns of consumption, but the extent to which arbitrary tastes and ways of living were continually transmitted into hegemonic precepts by the elite.

⁵¹ K. Nkrumah, *Class Struggle in Africa*, International Publishers, New York, 1970, p.23.

⁵² T. Stapleton, *African Police and Soldiers in Colonial Zimbabwe 1923-80*, University of Rochester Press, Rochester, p.44.

⁵³ Burke, *Lifebouy men and Lux Women*, pp.155-158.

⁵⁴ G. Simmel, 'Fashion' *American Journal of Sociology* 62.6, pp.543-544.

In his review of the discursive making of colonial bodies (the institutionalization of hygiene, manners and appearance) in Zimbabwe, Burke examined the characteristic strategies pursued by Jeanes teaching (1920s to 1940s), 'home craft' movement and women's clubs from the 1940s to the early 1970s, for surveillance, control and representation of African cleanliness. As Burke noted, "western ideals of cleanliness, appearance and bodily behaviour became signs of the struggle between 'traditional' and 'modern life'; 'African' and 'European' ways, 'heathenism' and 'Christianity'".⁵⁵ The aggressive clashes between the Department of Native Agriculture which had its own cadre of African agricultural demonstrators and the missionary backed Jeans teachers defined a new field of power. Here, new styles of public life and new forms of social expectations for both men and women triggered new kinds of buying patterns.

According to Cohen, the way people dress, eat, behave, and think are conditioned by their wealth and status, and are in that sense expressive. He goes on to argue that "in hierarchical systems, most elite positions are given to members of groups who claim a monopoly on qualities of excellence where a man aspiring to identify with the elite may succeed in acquiring such external markers as accent, housing, clothing and other items of conspicuous consumption".⁵⁶ To be affiliated within the power elite and partake in their privileges one had to achieve the much more difficult task of 'grafting' himself or herself onto the inner network of primary relationships which linked the members of the group together. This inner, highly exclusive, network provided the real basis of identity and served as a system of channels for collaboration in developing and maintaining the interests of its members.

For Burke, "things have no meanings apart from those that human transactions, attributions and motivations endow them with".⁵⁷ Commodities as Kopytoff also argues, carry biographical histories which are culturally regulated and whose interpretation is subject to open manipulation by individuals. As such, "the growing hegemony of a commodity is more deeply a matter for social contest and individual taste where individuals go for that which suits their interests or matches their sense of moral appropriateness".⁵⁸ We have already seen that even the chiefs reserved to themselves the right to certain animal products as a way of expanding the

⁵⁵ Ibid, p.48.

⁵⁶ A. Cohen, *The Politics of Elite Culture. Explorations in Dramaturgy of Power in a Modern African Society*, University of California, London 1981, p.10.

⁵⁷ T. Burke, *Lifebouy Men and Lux Women*, p.48.

⁵⁸ I. Kopytoff, *The Cultural biography of things: Commoditization as process*, p.72.

visible reach of sacred power by projecting it onto additional sacralized objects. The royal demand set parameters for both taste and production.

Making reference to Gutu's business elite, I advance that the moment products were attached to personal referents, they ceased to be neutral products which could be consumed by anybody and identified with anybody, but became attributes of some individual personality, badges of identity and signifiers of specific obligations. By virtue of the prestige the goods conferred, ownership offered access to social networks and to other resources that could be closed to those lacking such prestige.

According to Kopytoff, commodities or objects of economic value, like persons, have social lives.⁵⁹ Alfred Gell observed that "among the Muria of the north-central part of Bastar district, Madhya Pradesh consumer goods were more than mere packets of neutral utility which were desirable by the role they played in a symbolic system".⁶⁰ Andrea Scheibler has also illustrated how "in the 1950s members of Nairobi's so-called Tai Tai class defined themselves mainly by consumption".⁶¹ Similarly, some members of Gutu's business community could just purchase items associated with high-status European etiquette which were normally unavailable in local markets. The ownership of rich objects reflecting and conferring prestige was regarded as a wealth-signifier. Such was the tendency of people like Chigome, Marikanosi, Mhaka Mandava and Ketchy Mandishaya who sought authenticity in the exotic.⁶² Marikanosi and Mandishaya boasted about their clothes having tags showing that they were made in England or Germany. Clothes became a marker of distinction, identity and self-expression. Mhaka Mandava bragged about driving a Chevrolet (referred to their circle as *dziva* or pool) which he had secured from America in the mid-1970s.⁶³

Drinking clear beer, lots of whisky and hot stuff was a status symbol. European beer, ale, stout and wine were only made available to Africans as 'specified liquor' under an authority issued by the Ministry of Native Affairs in 1957. Before then, clear beer and alcoholic spirits were consumed by those who had permits. Matambura Feresu was among the first to get such a permit in Gutu. He vividly recalled,

⁵⁹ A. Appadurai, *The Social Life of Things; Commodities in cultural perspective*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1986, p.3.

⁶⁰ A. Gell, 'Newcomers to the world of goods: Consumption among the Muria Gonds', in Arjun Appadurai, *The Social Life of Things; Commodities in cultural perspective*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1986, p.110.

⁶¹ A. Scheibler, 'Materiality and sociality in late colonial Nairobi: Consumption, contestation and the Tai Tai class'

⁶² Interview with Ransome Makamure, Masvingo, 17 August 2013.

⁶³ Ibid.

I was and am still not cheap. In Gutu, I was the first *murungutema* to get a permit to drink clear beer. Indeed in African elite circles, I was a white man in a black mask. People saluted me and admired me. Many people among them prominent businessmen would come to me seeking advice on how they could also climb to the top as I had done.⁶⁴

Murungutema is a term which was used to refer to the blacks who had adopted some European ways of life. The restriction on the consumption of clear beer by Africans as the government alleged, was meant to “allow a little time for a widespread responsible leadership to emerge in the drinking of hard spirits which could pass on experience and guidance to the masses for whom it was a novelty”.⁶⁵ *Gumba Gumba* music was so popular especially with people like Madondo and Machinya who had had stints in Bulawayo. Other music genres like *jazz* and *country* became popular much later in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

What becomes clear is that the illusions of success were measured by the kind of car one drove, the music listened to, the type of dance and the kinds of drinks people took. According to Mukaro, “the stereotypical innocence and hedonistic practice that ‘eat, drink, and be merry for tomorrow we die attitude’ loomed large”.⁶⁶ The small businessmen had to maintain a precarious balance between lavish spending in response to heavy kinship obligations and saving to sustain business operations. Teachers, policemen, agricultural extension officers, prominent ‘urban villagers’ (those who worked in towns but regularly visited their rural homes) were under constant pressure to sponsor or patronize the lavish events. The higher the status, the stronger the pressure. Failure to attend ‘tea parties’ and similar events would result in one being cut out of circulation and lose contact with friends and acquaintances. Inevitably expenditure on ceremonials depended on social status.

Lovemore Matuke (Senior) became prominent throughout the Mushayavanhu, Dewure, Gonye and Chitsa areas for providing catering services and entertainment at such parties.⁶⁷ A number of eminent men who would never miss a party ended up in financial difficulties. Matambura Feresu’s reflections on such gatherings were quite revealing,

It was not surprising to find one selling off capital assets in order to finance immediate consumption on a gradiose scale usually in a contest of some kind. The most important development though is that such

⁶⁴ Interview with Matambura Feresu, Mount Pleasant, Harare, 16 March 2013.

⁶⁵ Native Affairs Annual Report 1961 in *NADA Vol.40*, 1963, p.93.

⁶⁶ Interview with Francis Mukaro, Gutu, 26 July 2013.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

contacts became the core of a supportive network of the coterie of highly successful businessmen within Gutu. To a greater extent, the businessmen were well known in the townships than the professionals who were largely teachers, clerks, drivers and policemen. Some of the professionals had a predictable steady income, but on average, a smaller income than that of businessmen or teachers-cum-businessmen. The professionals would buy goods on credit and pay up their bills at the end of the month. Such bills would almost swallow the entire salary.⁶⁸

There are people who worked in towns but regularly visited their rural homes. These were recognized by their efforts to present a dignified demeanor through the furnishings of their homes. The village stores had varieties of articles for example German prints (*Jerimani*), English Khaki (*Kaki*), hair combs; ladies' dresses, cloth (*machira*), tea (*tii*) and looking glasses (*maringiro* or *magirazi*) whose possession changed the people's perception and perspective beyond belief.⁶⁹

Dress material once tailored to their tastes, made them look pretty and different from the rest of the community. In Chakaipa's novel *Garandichauya*, one character Muchaneta made use of the mirror until she was vain and egotistic. She acquired a taste for tea and was unable to do without it.⁷⁰ Generally, the money economy which was gradually replacing subsistence farming and the accompanying economic changes brought in their wake social changes which brought a completely new vocabulary affecting a people's idiom.

Families often placed a premium on forms of consumption that represented modernity. Dress was a powerful way of projecting these values. Women adopted items of clothing – the blouse, the *sari*, the petticoat, and simple footwear (*mariposa*) – that could convey new forms of women's clothing suggesting modesty and respectability. This change in female attire was taking place in the direction of more Indian styles. According to Mrs Marwizi,

The *sari* became the dominant form of women's dress. Women in some low-status groups had not used a breast covering yet changing notions of modesty eventually encouraged the spread of new forms of blouse piece. Some people did wear printed cloth ornamented with *jari* patterns while others purchased calico prints. There were different kinds of cloth destined for different sorts of consumers. In the majority of cases teachers afforded the whole array of latest fabrics on the market.⁷¹

⁶⁸ Interview with Matambura Feresu, Mount Pleasant, Harare, 16 March 2013.

⁶⁹ G. P. Kahari, *The Rise of the Shona Novel*, p.179.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Interview with Crescencia Marwizi, Makura, Gutu, July 2013.

4.3.1 Feminine factors in the socialization of eliteness

This section examines how elite men and women imagined and negotiated the sentiments of attachment that bound people to one another. Of particular interest is the extent to which passion and individual choice served as a basis for spouse selection and marriage. I also show how marriage patterns might have disrupted older social formations and facilitated claims to ‘modernity’. One informant reported the following story of how he met his wife,

I had just finished my standard six and had gone to visit a relative in Buhera when I saw a young woman who passed by enroute to a shopping centre. I was so attracted to this girl but I could not reveal my desires. I told my uncle that I loved the girl. The girl was very beautiful. My uncle told me that she was a resident of their village but had been away to school for Standard Six. Upon describing her as a disciplined, hardworking and educated girl, he recommended her highly marriageable. My uncle somehow got her address which he gave me. Our communication was largely through letters. Our marriage was envied by many because we were teachers. Friends and relatives who married after us tended to follow the same pattern...getting married to professionals and paying lots of *lobola*.⁷²

In a letter to Jane Goodheart, Gilbert S.B.M of Gokwe complained over *lobola*:

Almost 95% of the living Africans of Rhodesia, especially of the race of Fort Victoria Makaranga, have forgotten what marriage is. Instead of getting daughters married, they sell them. Education has completely nothing to do with love affairs. Many of the girls have become qualified bad girls and this is not their fault. They charge £300 just for only one girl who did Standard 6 or any Standard that can be obtained in Rhodesia. Does this mean that parents sent their girls to school because they want to sell them at a costly price?⁷³

Even though the practice of *lobola* was there before the introduction of formal education, there was a tendency among parents to cash-in on their educated daughters. Possession of and need for goods and money precipitated homogamy⁷⁴ and hypergamy.⁷⁵ Such marriage patterns ultimately forged the creation of networks of amity among families. Gamuchirai Tarugarira gave a narration of how she met her future husband Gibson Zvotoona Tarugarira,

When your father proposed love, I laughed off his advances. I would always say that the short but very handsome man was not serious. Every time he came from Bulawayo, he would secretly visit us at the farm in the Dewure Purchase Area. My young sisters and I were keen to know more about his background. We discovered that he was a nephew to Abenia Hamutyinei of the Chingombe chieftainship lineage. The

⁷² Interview with M M, Gutu, 7 August 2013.

⁷³ ‘Gilbert S.B.M to Jane Goodheart’ in *The African Times, Vol 4, No.10*, August 3, 1969, p. 10.

⁷⁴ This is marriage between equals particularly those from wealthy families.

⁷⁵ The movement of women in marriage from lower to upper strata.

Hamutyinei family had worked closely with my father (Heskias Dumbu) and Reverend Orlandini of the Dutch Reformed Church in the Sengai, Dewende and Masema areas. Your father was also a tailor by profession and started bringing me some *sari* and *jari* fabrics which I either refused to accept or if I did accept, just gave my sisters. He continued to communicate with my sisters who later learnt that he already had enough wealth to pay *lobola*. I was convinced that they broke the rumour to our parents. When I said to your father that I loved him, it was after a long time of testing his seriousness and finding out whether he was not married already. Today, love does not always precede marriage but in our case, it was a love affair which blossomed into a marriage. My father was happy because the *lobola* was paid in full (even though the church did not like the *lobola* practice) and we became the first couple in the Tarugarira and Dumbu families to have a white wedding. Ten years down the line my sister Vongai also got married to your father's cousin brother Augustine. I do not know much about what attracted one to the other but I cannot rule out *kutamba chiramu*.⁷⁶

What I deduced from the above narrative was that marriage patterns were transitional — somewhere between older patterns of African kinship and those expected to emerge with modernization. Gamuchirai's narrative is iconic, given the role of gifts in form of clothes, in creating and expressing love between men and women. My informants constantly wrestled with ambiguities associated with money and status having important and similar transformative effects on how people negotiated relations. Marriage was however found intimately interconnected with social hierarchy.

A teacher Simon Jeffa Mutero married at an advanced age because by virtue of coming from a 'civilized' family he had to take his time searching for a suitable partner. He hit the headlines in the *Moto* newspaper after he got married to Margaritte Chikwende who had also made history for being the first lady teacher at Mukaro Mission. Simon's father was the headman of Mutero village, his brother Phillip was a policeman and the other two brothers were into building and driving.⁷⁷ The elitist status of the family dictated that he had to look for a suitable spouse from an equally 'civilized' family. Joyce Chingombe was also particular about the backgrounds of his-would-be sons or daughters-in-law. Mutubuki recalled,

⁷⁶ Interview with Munorwei Gamuchirai Tarugarira, Makura, Gutu, 26 December 2013. Over the course of the colonial period, it became fashionable for rural salarieds and urbanites to display their social status by hosting white weddings in their rural homes. In addition to the traditional ceremony between kin groups, couples also married at church and in a civil marriage recognized by the colonial state. Christian missionaries and their converts attempted to define love according to a Christian conception which downplayed the material dimensions. This also explains why they attacked the institution of *lobola*. See C.J.M. Zvobgo, *A history of Christian missions in Zimbabwe*. Gweru: Mambo Press, 1996.

Kutamba chiramu was a practice where the husband or his brothers had 'touching rights' over the wife's young sisters. In some cases intimate relations transcended into planned or unplanned marriages.

⁷⁷ *Moto*, No. 37, September 1962.

Advances by Crispen Mandizvidza to marry Joyce Chingombe's daughter Auxilia were halted upon the request by Joyce Chingombe that the *munyai* (mediator) be sent to Crispen's home area in Ndawi to 'spy' on how many beasts he had and how well-up his family was. Joyce did not like his daughter to get married to a vagabond. His policy was *ngadzinanzvane dzakakora* or let equals marry.⁷⁸

Joyce Chingombe's approach was a little different from patterns of selective dating where boys and girls from well-to-do families were thrown together for chaperoned occasions to fish out marriage partners. Viewed from a slightly different angle, for both men and women to be seen as marriageable they had to demonstrate the attributes of hard work, sacrifice and commitment to family life. However, upon marriage, the occasion of a wedding afforded the elite an immediate benefit in that it enabled the kin to display their wealth and assert their social prominence before an assemblage.

Empire Makamure who was part of the procession at Matambura Feresu's wedding in the Dandavare area in 1946 observed how 'the bridal procession with the bride in a jewel-bedecked gown could communicate a family's reputation before an even greater audience.'⁷⁹ According to West, while lavish weddings symbolized preservation of power, so too did the conduct of elaborate funeral ceremonies achieve the passage of family status, prestige and transmission of power to the next generation.

Wives with better education would also socialize men in the manners, etiquette and comportment which identified and inspired the elite with confidence in themselves. The women of status particularly teachers, nurses and businessmen's wives used skin lightening creams, spotted wigs and plaited hair styles. Women also ran a wide variety of societies and clubs, and activities for the wider public and through inviting the Jeanes teachers who offered hygienic services at their club meetings, Mrs Simbi and Mrs Mandizvidza developed and sustained the universalistic image of the elite group as leaders. Many of the women who were members of the sewing clubs coupled as teachers, for example, Tendai Makura, Sharai Mukonoweshuro, Mrs Feresu, Cecilia Madombi, Mrs Kwenzani Wekwete and Mrs Crescencia Marwizi among others.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ Interview with Henry Mutubuki, Gweru 20 May 2014.

⁷⁹ Interview with Senator E.K. Makamure, Gutu 10 August 2013.

⁸⁰ Interview with Mrs. Marwizi, Makura, 22 December 2013.

However, mixed feelings were expressed over the role played by African businessmen's wives in the running of family businesses. There were some women who could have a say in business matters but in the majority of cases, men monopolized all decisions out of patriarchal presumptions. Auxilia Mandizvidza held a strong position in her husband's business. After her husband had left to join the liberation struggle, she acquitted herself successfully as a shrewd businesswoman.⁸¹ She continued to operate the Chivaraidze Restaurant at Bhasera and accumulated a lot of money which saw the expansion of the family's business empire after independence. From the wife's business savings, the family acquired Masimba Import and Export and Binga Estates then also bought shares in a company called Guthrie Overseas.⁸² Many businessmen however tried to keep their wives away for fear they might line their own pockets. Generally both marriage partners would work hard at the beginning in order to build up the business, but with time, men would become careless and spend money on girlfriends.

From the mid-1960s, a few marriages were polygamous, a development that was also in tune with the deepening penetration of Christian ideas of monogamous marriages. Of course, the rich men could have more wives and girlfriends than poor men, because with well-stocked cattle kraals and money for *lobola*, they had a greater ability to marry. According to Vengai Guni, men's extramarital sexual behaviour was socially produced and organized. Work-related migration largely facilitated men's participation in extramarital sexual relationships.⁸³

Most men who admitted to having had extramarital relations expressed the importance of keeping such relationships secret from their wives and their local communities to maintain peace in the families and not damage their own social reputations. Hence, most prominent businessmen in Gutu had histories of multiple concubines, polygamous marriages, divorces or siring children out of wedlock.⁸⁴ Men frequently viewed extramarital relationships as arenas for the expression of economic and masculine status which were not a threat to their marriages so long as they were kept secret from their wives and so long as men did not waste so many resources on girlfriends

⁸¹ Interview with F. F. Shava, Gweru, 25 June 2013.

⁸² Interview with F. Chakabuda, Masvingo, 17 September 2013. Through a solid financial foundation provided by Auxilia, the Mandizvidza family was able to buy shares in the Kentyre Estates, Associate Textiles in Kadoma, Swissete (a garment manufacturing company in Gweru) and E. M Engineering in Masvingo. Chakabuda was convinced that the construction of Manyuchi dam and the establishment of the Mwenezana Estates palm oil project were partially financed from the same coffers.

⁸³ Interview with Vengai Guni, Harare, 24 June 2014.

⁸⁴ Interview with Vengai Guni, Harare, 24 June 2013. Guni recounted his experiences in Bulawayo when as a shunter with the National Railways of Rhodesia and amongst the highest paid, he frequented the Railways Club.

that they neglected their obligations to their wives and families. Generally, women's positions in business could vary depending on the relationship between the partners. Fragmentary evidence suggested that many women were able to shield some resources from appropriation by male household heads. As Wild put it, relations between marriage partners remained highly charged, their roles in business frequently unclear, and their aims antagonistic.⁸⁵

4.3.2 The power behind esoteric socialization

According to Volker Wild, the African businessman's desire for status also found expression in the accumulation of honorary offices. A classic example was Zacharia Chigumira who could no longer remember all the organisations of which he had been a member or what posts he had held.⁸⁶ Some of Gutu's prominent businessmen-cum-politicians also found it quite fashionable to hold numerous posts in varied institutions. Michael Mawema held many posts, both political and non-political. He was a founder member of the Jairos Jiri Association and at some point in time, President of the Midlands African Football Association. Besides being in business, Madondo also held different portfolios in the social circles. Between 1959 and 1964, he chaired United Football Club. In 1974, he became President of the Gutu Football Association, a Councillor and Chairman of the Gutu Health Committee. George Simbi founded Simbi Soccer Stars in 1973.

Like other business people of the time, Mandizvidza held numerous positions. In 1962, he was the Chairman of Gutu Joint Shows, a Member of the Rhodesia Artisans' Union, Secretary of the African National Congress –Gwelo Branch, Secretary of the Zimbabwe African Business Association (ZABA), Chairman of the Gwelo Roman Catholic Diocese Council, Chairman of the Catholic Association, Gwelo and also an Executive Member of Laity Roman Catholic in Rhodesia.⁸⁷

Nelson Mawema joined football between 1965 and 1967. From 1967, he concentrated on national football and was elected President of the Federation of Amateur Footballers. When the football associations merged to form the National Football Association of Rhodesia (RNFL),

⁸⁵ V. Wild, *Profit not for profit's sake*, p.116.

⁸⁶ *Ibid*, p.165.

⁸⁷ Interview with Albert Mandizvidza, Gweru, 30 June 2013.

Nelson Mawema became Vice President of the Association. According to Mawema, soccer was the game he loved most and was the major recreational activity in the urban centres. Holding administrative posts enabled him to command respect and create many friends from all walks of life.⁸⁸ Piniel Mkushi, a prominent businessman was the Vice Chairperson of the Gutu Football Association, a Ward Councilor and sat on several business and social committees.

During his stay in Bulawayo, Simon Muzenda led the Shona Cultural Society while John Machinya was the organizing secretary of the Eastern Brothers Football Club, largely made up of people from Masvingo. The Eastern Brothers Football Club worked closely with Mashonaland United Football Club where Nelson Mawema had served as Secretary from 1967 to 1968. Machinya closely associated with people from his home area like Elias Madondo who like him, had also gone to Mukoroverwa School for his primary education. What is striking is the importance of football in the multiple offices people held. This confirms that football was the most popular African sport in colonial times just as it has continued to be after independence.

The networks these people established in business and social circles brought them closer to influential people like District Administrators who would seek their assistance in organizing important functions like the installation of chiefs. Chief Pasvani Makumbe Gutu's installation in 1974 was organized by Madondo, Machinya, Mkushi, Sithole and Mandava. A few teachers Maravanyika, Magodoro, Gurajena and Makasi were only brought in "to inject order, speech eloquence and intellect".⁸⁹ Tafirenyika, a bus inspector with Kugara Kunzwana looked into the transportation of invited people to the venue. Madondo's Tafara Sounds provided pop music to entertain guests. The V.I.Ps had their meals and accommodation at Madondo's Tafara Hotel.⁹⁰

4.4 The family modes of social reproduction

There are grand motives behind people's pursuance for enlistment into any given elite typology. Among other factors are attractive material benefits, following the footsteps of the father (family ties), gaining prestige and reputation. Stapleton established that between the 1950s

⁸⁸ Interview with Nelson Mawema, Harare, 25 June 2014.

⁸⁹ PER 5/GUTU, Chief Gutu's Installation, August 1974.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

and 1960s the reliable source of security force recruits was Gutu-Masvingo where some families had developed traditions of uniformed service.⁹¹

This section focuses on how African businessmen sought to perpetuate elite statuses within their households. The African entrepreneurs' desire for a town house was quite in keeping with modern entrepreneurship of having some immovable asset. Having a farm in the country might have been in line with traditional African ways of owning a piece of land to till. Prominent African businessmen in Gutu invested their money in land as well as urban real estate. Crispen Mandizvidza bought himself a farm in Mvuma, about one hundred and ten kilometers from Gweru town where he had established some businesses. He financed the purchase out of his business profits. The account of his former farm manager Albert Mandizvidza demonstrates how intimately traditional values, entrepreneurial ambitions and sentimental feelings intertwined in the life of a businessman,

I managed the farm with the help of six other workers. These workers would alternate with those who were storekeepers or bar attendants in his other businesses. The farm was considered as the rehabilitation centre for recalcitrant workers. He had built accommodation for the workers and his own spacious house. The farm was called *Binga* that means 'the ancestral residence'. Somehow the farm was important for purposes of retaining links with a home in the country. The farm was now like a centre for extended family gatherings. He would visit the farm at least once a fortnight but he made sure that his driver Bere came to the farm almost twice a week either with some delivery of stock feed or to collect meat, vegetables and farm produce to sell in Harare. He had over a hundred cattle in addition to piggery and poultry projects. His aim was to supply all restaurants with the required meat and vegetable supplies from the farm.⁹²

Crispen Mandizvidza had a strong attachment to the land but did not consider it as a retirement place at old age. He owned a mansion in the posh suburb of Mount Pleasant where he stayed with his family until his death.

Piniel Mkushi acquired land and farm property for sound business reasons. A proud owner of urban real estate at Mupandawana growth point, he was motivated by a desire to avoid the risks associated with the expansion of the parent general dealer business. He found

⁹¹ T. Stapleton, *African Police and Soldiers in Colonial Zimbabwe 1923-80*, University of Rochester Press, Rochester, 2011, p.43. See also Peter Godwin, *Mukiwa: A White Boy in Africa*, Harper Collins, New York, 1996, p.283.

⁹² Interview with Albert Mandizvidza, Gweru, 30 June 2013.

diversification quite sensible and through advice from his sons, he chose the more manageable option of urban real estate.⁹³

Whenever a family has complete control over an estate consisting of an agricultural, industrial or commercial enterprise, it employs strategies with which to ensure its own social reproduction. For family businesses, the strictly economic strategies aimed at ensuring the development of the business are almost inseparable from the strategies aimed at ensuring reproduction of the family and its integration. Although business ownership in Gutu had combinations of partners and sole proprietors, the most popular was the teaming up of the father and his sons followed by the coming together of brothers. From the early 1950s the business pioneers beamed labels in front of their shops like Mandizvidza and Sons, Simbi and Sons, Mkushi and Sons, Machinya and Sons, Madondo and Sons. Even in remote rural business centres like Bhasera, Mataruse, Chin'ai, Chiwara, Nerupiri and many others, it was also fashionable to spot labels like Mafuratidze and Sons, Merkia and Sons, Chigome and Sons. Ransome Makamure recalled,

The 'and Sons' label was just fashionable and one would not doubt the possibility of someone with daughters only, labeling the business premises that way. Many businessmen did not think it worthwhile to incorporate daughters into business matters because they were bound to marry. Thus the naming pattern was a departure from that of the late 1940s when trading names sounded proverbial like *Chaitemura chava kuseva* or *Kufuma Ishungu* (those who were poor had turned rich or for one to be rich you need perseverance).⁹⁴

Family identities meant that members had common descent, reciprocal duties and behaviour patterns and a strong sense of solidarity. There were times when the family decided what goods the store would carry. Among the small businessmen, stores were run the same way they farmed without hired help. Through hard work and the wealth accumulated, a family maintained a prominent status in the area. Francis Shava recounted,

Upon establishing a business empire and you would like your children to inherit and perpetuate it (thus perpetuating your name as well), you induct them into the empire, familiarizing them with all the ins and outs so that ultimately they know all the intricacies of the art of business. They think business, breathe business, sleep business and talk business.⁹⁵

⁹³ A physical count established that Mkushi and Sons have 13 developed business stands with structures which are being rented out to multiple business operators at Mupandawana growth point. These premises are managed by the Mkushi Trust.

⁹⁴ Interview with Ransome Makamure, Masvingo, 17 August 2013.

⁹⁵ Interview with F.F.Shava, Gweru, 25 June 2013.

The idea was to ensure expansion and continuity of the business concern via the social networks of the family. Operating a general dealer's store took time and organization. The major difficulty was getting the goods from town to the country store. There were no deliveries by then until the mid-1960s when wholesalers like Chitrin and Toriro started to deliver orders to the doorsteps.⁹⁶ Running such a business would require keeping close watch on what stocks were on demand, so that orders and transportation could be arranged. Business required careful ordering and frequent trips by public transport which was very unreliable.

Considerations of prestige also led Gutu businessmen to spend fortunes on the education of their children both at home and abroad. Education became the major form of investment, since it was the channel leading to secure, well-paid jobs in the civil service and the professions. George Simbi illustrates the importance which the affluent blacks attached to educating their children. He sent his children to church boarding schools where they received a good education. He sent his son Julius to study in America.⁹⁷ Upon his return, he dismally failed to breathe life into his father's business empire. His siblings' involvement in business was equally slight. The business empire showed signs of decline soon after Simbi's death during the war of liberation. After independence, the business empire could not be revived. The buildings which were gutted by fire during the war were never renovated.

Similarly, Crispen Mandizvidza was keen that his sons Emmanuel and Oswald should get to know the business at an early age. He believed in giving them a solid grounding for them to seriously take up entrepreneurship. When Crispen Mandizvidza left for the liberation struggle in the mid-1970s, he left the business in the hands of his wife and sons. Although these went into business upon completing secondary school, they resorted to excessive drinking and perished in car accidents.⁹⁸ Although Mandizvidza had daughters, their interest in business was peripheral.

⁹⁶ Interview with E.D.Marwizi, Gutu, 22 August 2013.

⁹⁷ Upon his return from America, Julius who is believed to have studied Commerce could not secure a job. For some ten years he was into temporary teaching. He was later persuaded by relatives to undergo training at Morgen Zintec where he graduated as a primary school teacher in 1999. He is a teacher at Batanai School, Bhasera Township. The other members of the family Farirai and Takunda are in the UK. The late Tracy later moved to South Africa where she had bought a farm. Munyaradzi is in Nigeria. None of them seems to have the stamina to revive their father's business empire.

⁹⁸ Interview with F .F. Shava, Gweru, 25 June 2013.

They seemed not to have the desire to take over the shops and farm. His wife had to go it alone until he came back home from the liberation struggle in 1980.⁹⁹

Runesu Piniel Mkushi also exemplifies the determination of many rich African businessmen that their children should succeed. He sent his children to boarding schools where they not only received a good education, but to a considerable extent lost contact with the parental business to concentrate on their studies. His sons Honour and John went to secondary schools and later earned university degrees.

Honour went to Bernard Mizeki College, a highly fancied elite school and later studied law at the University of Zimbabwe.¹⁰⁰ Honour has been in private legal practice since 1971 and has an immaculate professional record with the Law Society of Zimbabwe. A senior partner of Sawyer and Mkushi Legal Practitioners, Attorneys, Notaries and Conveyancers, his experience in Constitutional Law included attending the Geneva and Lancaster House Conferences as part of the legal advisory team to negotiate independence for Zimbabwe and draft the independence constitution. In 1999, he was the commissioner for the drafting of the new constitution for Zimbabwe. He served as Chairman of Boards of Directors for the Standard Chartered Bank of Zimbabwe Limited, Windmill Private Limited, Marsh Insurance Brokers, Nissan Clover Leaf Motors, Central African Cables Limited, Lindsay Pharmaceuticals Limited, Harley Reed Zimbabwe and Trinidad Industries, among others.¹⁰¹ Honour attributed his success to his father Runesu Piniel who was his model. In summarizing his road to success, he exclaimed, '*Nzombe huru yakabva mukurerwa*' meaning that he is a product of good upbringing.

His brother, John, had the dream of being a veterinarian but because of racial discrimination in the education system (during the colonial period), he could not get sponsorship to pursue the career of his choice. He later studied agriculture and completed a masters' degree in Britain on a scholarship. He was hired by a South African owned brewery as a junior manager and as the war of liberation which led to Zimbabwe's independence heated up in the mid-1970s, the senior manager was called up by the Rhodesian Army. The manager's departure created a vacuum which John filled. When the war ended, he had gained enough experience to become a substantive general manager. The exposure which he gained gave him confidence to try bigger

⁹⁹ Following the death of Mr and Mrs Mandizvidza, the daughters took over the businesses and farm.

¹⁰⁰ In 2011, Honour Mkushi was appointed to the Bernard Mizeki College Board of Trustees and is the Chairperson of the Board.

¹⁰¹ Telephone interview with Honour Mkushi, 25 June 2014.

things. He rose from being an employee of Shabani and Mashava Mines (SMM) Holdings' subsidiary, Turnall Fibre Zimbabwe and became the first black Chief Executive Officer of (SMM), a major mining concern in Zimbabwe. He has chaired the Independent Gold Mine Company's board and assumed the Directorship of Litho International among other numerous portfolios in the business sector. The nature of his job enabled him to establish networks with white businessmen and thus had to adapt to their golf games, dining clubs and cocktail parties. He explained his position,

When I grew up, one thing I learnt from my father was that whatever I was going to do in life, I was not supposed to take up a profession where I would work for someone. I took his advice seriously and could observe how hardworking he was in establishing his business empire...I am not trying to be a black person who is effectively white in behaviour. I just want to make a contribution. The political revolution is over and it is now up to us to make a social revolution.¹⁰²

The Mkushi brothers' success story is a classic case where the desire to integrate the reproductive strategies of the family group and those of the family business are inseparable in affirming the family status. The contribution that the education system made to the reproduction of social structure in sanctioning the hereditary transfer of both social and cultural capital is quite convincing. With the progress in women's access to higher education, socially homogenous academic groups tended to ensure homogamy without family interventionism.

The Mkushi brothers admitted that although the academic mechanisms of aggregation and segregation have become one of the hidden mediations through which social homogamy is achieved they indicated that the educational strategy was not paramount when they met their spouses and that there were no family efforts at organising controlled occasions of meeting mates. No clear cases though were found where marriage and economic strategies were interwoven to augment and guarantee the continued success or expansion of business even though there was a celebrated claim that homogamy for safeguarding the ethical dispositions was the prerequisite for the economic success of the business. Even the marriage of Mapisi Madzima to Josephine Madondo whose parents were prominent business people at Mupandawana growth point had little to do with ensuring the reproduction of any one of the families' economic capital. As Madzima retorted,

¹⁰² Lynda Schuster, 'In Zimbabwe, some dreams come true. Post-independence bottom line is bright for many blacks' in *The Christian Science Monitor*, April 28, 1988.

In as much as people could talk about *dzinonanzvana dzakakora*(letting equals marry), in my case it was sheer love which went along with *kuroorana vamatongo*(getting married to someone within the neighbourhood) .Of course that our parents were prominent business people is undeniable but in our marriage that was secondary. My wife and I were just peers who naturally fell in love and got married.¹⁰³

Madzima however went on to receive assistance from his father-in-law Elias Madondo to invigorate his businesses.

The quest for wealth and prosperity in some cases motivated people to indulge in the use of charms in business. The success and failure of early businesses had a lot to do with the belief in the use of charms. Weinrich observed that among rural Africans in Zimbabwe, the belief that if a trader became exceptionally successful in business, he must have killed a close relative and buried his heart under the counter in order to attract customers reigned supreme.¹⁰⁴ The belief that magic was indispensable in successful business is the starting point in the play *Ndakambokuyambira* by Paul Chidyausiku where on reflecting that human flesh is required for the medicine, Dzikamai, tells his uncle, ‘the corpse of a human being is terrifying, and is not played with. But undertaking business without medicine means impaling yourself on the horns of a buffalo.’¹⁰⁵

It was customary to consult parents and ancestors prior to setting up a business. Beer would be brewed and the *n’anga* would perform a purification ceremony and go ahead to bless the business. This explains why if business did badly, the businessmen went to the traditional healer for advice. The cases of using *muti* in business though, might be regarded as rare incidents of witchcraft which are not representative of African business in general. However the popular talk about the use of good luck charms gave an impression that the number of unreported cases was probably high. The general belief was that, if an individual wished to ensure success some opposite or anti-social act should be carried out by him. Monica Wilson recorded in the 1930s that the most successful trader in the Selya area of Tanzania was believed to owe his prosperity to a powerful medicine which was only used by chiefs while the Sukuma people of northern Tanzania long ascribed the success of pioneer cotton farmers to the use of zombies to work for

¹⁰³ Interview with Mapisi Madzima, Mushayavanhu Business Centre, Gutu, 31 December 2013. The term *dzinonanzvana dzakakora* in this instance refers to marriage between people from equally well-to-do families while *kuroorana vamatongo* is marriage between people from the same neighbourhood.

¹⁰⁴ Weinrich, *Black and white elites in rural Rhodesia*, p.202.

¹⁰⁵ P. Chidyausiku, *Ndakambokuyambira*, Mambo Press, Gweru, 1969, p.13.

them.¹⁰⁶ Charms to make a business prosper largely involved the use of human flesh. The barrier between businessmen and villagers was the belief that successful traders were witches. The Zimbabwean press and courts have disclosed a number of cases where people had killed or mutilated their victims to enhance their business. In a case of the State vs Naison, Eliot and Julius,

Magadzo, a businessman and owner of two grinding mills consulted a *n'anga*, Julius, who gave him a medicine which would increase his business, the advice by the *n'anga* was that Magadzo should find certain parts of a female child from which he has to prepare a medicine that was to be planted in his business premises. Magadzo sought the help of Naison who undertook to find a child. Naison knew another man Eliot, who was friendly with Lawrence who had a young daughter, Chipo, aged 21 months. Eliot seized her and concealed her in one of his granaries. That night, Naison and Julius removed her to a river, killed her and removed her brain, navel and vagina. To these parts medicines were added and then used by Julius at the grinding mill of Magadzo. All the accused were sentenced to death.¹⁰⁷

Many unreported cases are believed to have happened in Gutu where murder for business would only become known when the relatives of the perpetrator were haunted by the avenging spirit of the dead person until they went mad. Those who ran businesses were accused of *kuchekeresha* (spill blood as a way of enhancing their businesses). Some had to hire the services of assassins or murderers (*madusvura* or *mabhinya*) to kill people and remove body parts to be mixed with herbs. According to Wild, 'the sexual organs of sexually immature children signify the prolonged fertility and therefore great business successes'¹⁰⁸.

From the early 1960s to around 1974, bizarre cases were reported in Gutu of businessmen who had performed ritual incest (sleeping with the mother, grandmother or daughter) or had participated in the murder of some people on the instructions of traditional healers. At Bhasera business centre, Mr. M who had a general dealer shop murdered his herdboyc in cold blood and prepared a magic potion from his genitals. The issue came to the open when the businessmen's child got possessed by the spirit of the dead and narrated what had happened. An informant narrated a situation where Mr. M was apprehended by some villagers,

Mr. M was notorious for abducting and murdering young children to enhance his businesses. His grinding mills produced audible sounds of a child's voice pleading to be given some time to rest after a busy day's work. On one fateful day, in August 1972, an assassin hired by Mr. M waylaid a girl child who was coming from school. The girl was murdered in cold blood. The little girl's private parts had been cut off, the

¹⁰⁶ M. Wilson, *Communal Rituals of the Nyakyusa*, London, Oxford, 1959, p.59.

¹⁰⁷ Zimbabwe, Appellate Division of the High Court Records or Appeal 1971, II,205.

¹⁰⁸ Wild, *Profit not for profit's sake*, p.141.

stomach had been ripped open and the tongue removed. Some of the fingers were also missing. Mr. M remained a free man when everyone thought that he was going to be arrested and thrown into prison.¹⁰⁹

While informants were not so keen to narrate stories relating to business charms, nine prominent businessmen at Gutu-Mpandawana, had children who were or are either mentally challenged or have a down syndrome. Informants attributed this to *mhinganhidzo* or business covenants mediated by *n'angas*.

4.5 Conclusion

The chapter has shown that even though Indians and Greeks experienced racial discrimination in various sectors such as health, education, civil service and public places and were not included in the economic structure of colonial Zimbabwe, they still managed to organize themselves effectively and worked closely with enterprising Africans whom they nurtured to be prominent business people. The overwhelmingly important desire for elite status among African entrepreneurs was emphasized.

The chapter has underlined the urge among Africans to get into business and acquire symbols of wealth and prestige. Although the family was initially the structural nucleus of the business concerns it has been noted that among Gutu's business pioneers, some families managed while others did not manage to register impressive levels of business continuity. In some cases, family networks did not help expand the business and did not guarantee continuity from generation to generation. Literally, the business would die with the businessman. African business people though, were also anxious as other African parents to give their children a good education. The chapter has also revealed hegemonic masculinity in relation to the subordination of daughters and women's participation in the running and control of business enterprises. Generally, the chapter has highlighted that conspicuous consumption, accumulation of official positions, the career of their offspring and social networking among African businessmen were associated with elite status.

¹⁰⁹ Interview with PM, Bhasera, Gutu, 20 December 2013.

Chapter 5: Town-Country interface and Networked urbanism

5.0 Introduction

The chapter traces how networks within the town-country interface in the transfer of information and insights impacted upon the socio-economic and political rhythms of the people of Gutu. The sharing and transmission of resources and also mutual expressions of care and regard are central in the analysis of relations between the two settings. I show how cosmopolitan autochthony is urban yet rural. While autochthony is a contested and negotiated notion which is open to various interpretations, it is considered in this study as synonymous with the concept of rootedness which entails an attachment to a place where one is an indigene, the first comer as opposed to strangers or late comers.

The fulcrum of the argument is that “being a cosmopolitan does not mean turning one’s back on the countryside, abandoning rural allies or rejecting ethnic bonds”.¹The thrust is showing that social networks were used as socio-economic and political resources among the migrants from Gutu in the quest for hegemony in the city of Gwelo (Gweru). Gweru was used to show how the city has never been a neutral place where all were equally strangers or immigrants but an arena where some citizens asserted themselves, politically and morally, as the hosts. Selected cases are used to illustrate how the complex cosmopolitan social networks were a form of social capital that could be converted into cultural, human and political capital. In this chapter, I argue that among Gutu’s migrants multiple networks were used even within mainstream political institutions.

5.1 Migrant labour and the development of rural-urban networks

Although within the reserves, people earned money through labour services as Land Development Officers, dip tank attendants, scotch cart drivers and herd boys, the colonial government through its land policy had created a condition whereby landless Africans had to work not just to pay tax but to survive. Africans sought to raise money through other means

¹ R. Werbner, *Reasonable Radicals and Citizenship in Botswana*, p.63.

besides working in farms. The practice of rural households sending their male members to the labour market became a common and regular one. In 1923, the NC Gutu reported that there were people in Gutu who were making a lot of money by ploughing for those who did not have ploughs, making an average of £5 to £6 per month which far exceeded the earnings on the farms.² It should not go without saying that when threatened with drought, Africans also flocked to mine centres and settler farms to seek employment. In February 1947 the NC Gutu observed that;

Pressed by food shortages, natives are seeking work in growing numbers. Farmers report that they are turning away natives daily who are trying to find employment. During the month, Chiefs Gutu, Chingombe and Munyaradzi sent emissaries to the 'Mlimo' in the Matopo District with tribute.³

From the 1920s, wage employment increasingly became an important means of subsistence for many Africans and there were multiple reasons for the migrant workers to remain attached to their 'villages'. Urban dwellers considered themselves 'strangers to the city' since they could all point to the rural place they called 'home' where they intended to retire or at least be buried there. The Cousin and Uncle Burial Society which had branches in Harare, Bulawayo and Gweru had a song to that effect:

Torai hama muende nadzo kumataundi asi Kambuzuma handidi!

Unondovigwepi?

Ini Kambuzuma handidi!

Wondovigwepi?

Ndinondovigwa kwaGutu!

Translation:

Take your relatives to towns but not Kambuzuma!

So where are you going to be buried?

Not in Kambuzuma!

I will be buried in Gutu!

The song meant that while relatives should be taken to town, upon death they should not be buried at the Kambuzuma cemetery in Harare but in Gutu. In Botswana, Werbner observed that "the 'urban villagers' both elites and non-elites alike were proud of their origin in a village

² NVG 2/1/11 NC Gutu's Reports 1923.

³ S1862 NC Gutu's Miscellaneous Reports to 1950.

as the homes where they truly belonged, and felt obliged to care for fellow villagers, at the very least by attending their funerals”.⁴ Burial societies were also instrumental in transmitting job information and helping members meet funeral expenses in addition to aiding destitute members to return to their ‘original’ homes and paying fines for trivial offenses. Urbanization promoted the development of self-help organisations, cooperative societies and hometown associations, formed by migrants and non-elite members of the city. These associational activities were perceived to be meeting people’s need for urban affiliation.

Nyamnjoh and Rowlands also observed that for many Cameroonians burial location was the crucial criterion for belonging.⁵ The village remained a more reliable source of social security than the provisions in the modern sectors of society, and nearly all elites felt that the link with the village remained crucial as a source of belonging and identification.⁶ The pendulum’s swing by urbanites to and fro between town and country characterized many parts of Gutu. Reminiscent to Geschiere’s observations in the Cameroonian forest area, the Gutu villagers would try to involve their ‘brothers in the city’ in all sorts of ways in village affairs and would often confess to being very proud of the ‘sons of the village who now live in the city’.⁷

Stuart also observed that in Bulawayo, the rise in popularity and importance of culturally distinct social and recreational African organizations was central to the development of social status and cohesion in the town and later in rural areas.⁸ Cultural dancing groups which largely featured in the Kudzanai and Mutapa beer halls of Gweru popularized dances like *mbakumba* and *ngororombe* through which a degree of unity, largely among people from the same rural areas of Gutu was achieved. Simukai Mupunga recalled;

Dzvuke Muteiwa and his team of dancers from Munyikwa were hired to perform at special functions within greater Gweru and they made us proud. At times they would stage some shows in the beer halls and collect a lot of money from patrons. Besides making use of the money to meet their groups’ needs, they usually

⁴ Werbner, *Reasonable Radicals and Citizenship in Botswana*, p.31.

⁵ N Nyamnjoh, F and Rowlands, M. ‘Elite associations and the politics of belonging in Cameroon’, *Africa: The Journal of the International African Institute*, Vol. 68, No. 3, 1998, p.435.

⁶ P. Geschiere, *The Perils Of Belonging: Autochthony, Citizenship and Exclusion in Africa and Europe*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, p43. See also C.Lentz, ‘Land and the politics of belonging in Africa’ in P. Chabal, U. Engel and L.de Haan (eds.) *African Alternatives* (Leiden:Brill, 2007) Lentz argues that land and land rights play an important role in the politics of belonging in Africa because rights to land are tied to membership in specific communities.

⁷ Ibid, p.99.

⁸ O. W. Stuart, “Good Boys” Footballers and strikers: African Social Change in Bulawayo 1933-1953, Doctor of Philosophy Thesis, School of Oriental African Studies, University of London, 1989, p.98

hosted parties for *vana vokumusha* where people ate, drank and enjoyed themselves. New arrivals from 'home' were introduced at such gatherings.⁹

While Football and Boxing Associations were vehicles for African status and prestige in white dominated towns, their popularity in the rural areas also grew tremendously.

The medicine called *mangoromera* believed to have been introduced into Southern Rhodesia around 1924 by the Portuguese from Sena popularized pugilism in the Munyikwa and Chingombe areas of Gutu in the late 1940s. The medicine was believed to develop unusual strength and fearlessness within its possessors who ultimately became arrogant bullies, successful boxers, footballers and gamblers.¹⁰ The practice had a pernicious influence over the youths and adults alike given that its effects were believed to bring about fearless disrespect for law and order and bravado.

In the Victoria Circle, there was Vumburayi, dubbed *Ishe wevaKaranga* (the chief of the Karanga people) who lived near Mashava. Ndaroiwa Mabhunu Makura who plied his boxing career in Kwekwe was an arrogant bully who ended up having some veins surgically severed to incapacitate him.¹¹ Chakaoneni Chakaoneni who also worked in Kwekwe but frequently visited South Africa sent shockwaves when he hit an errand bull with his fist at the Baro dip tank. The beast died on the spot but the meat was declared by *vautsanana* (the health assistant) to be unfit for human consumption.¹² Those who possessed *mangoromera* thus, became the envy of many with the result that they ended up having exaggerated opinions of themselves.¹³ Along similar lines, Manganga found that the Shona had monopoly over *mangoromera* and used the magic to challenge Ndebele dominance. It helped them to ward off their assumed inferiority complex now that they became fearless fighters. *Mangoromera* allegedly made the Shona 'needlessly provocative and insolent'.¹⁴ In most boxing matches; the *mangoromera* using-Shona often

⁹ Interview with Simukai Mupunga, Makura, Gutu 17 December 2013.

¹⁰ D.C.H.P. 'Mangoromera' in NADA 1933, p.59.

¹¹ Interview with Morgen Mabhunu, Makura, Gutu, 19 July 2013.

¹² Interview with Peter Chakaoneni at Fairfields, Mvuma, October 2013.

¹³ Interview with Gibson Zvotoona Tarugarira, Gutu, Makura 24 December 2013. The informant narrated that at beer parties, James Makura and Gwatidzo were known in the Munyikwa area for bullying guzzlers. One Mashiriapokana from Buhera had the practice of leaning his bicycle against the person he was challenging whereupon any complaints invited a thorough beating. He was later whipped to submission by Manyada who had sourced some *mangoromera* from South Africa.

¹⁴ K. Manganga, A historical study of industrial ethnicity in urban colonial Zimbabwe and its contemporary transitions: The case of African Harare, c.1890-1980, Unpublished PhD Thesis, Stellenbosch University, 2014, p.143.

defeated the Ndebele and denigrated them for the loss.¹⁵ Possession of *mangoromera* was thus a status symbol.

Those who migrated to towns also relied on personal contacts to obtain job intelligence. Job information could be secured and transmitted through a network of friends, friends of friends, relatives, home-boys/girls and other acquaintances. For instance, when Ransome Makamure went to Gweru, he resided at Mutubuki's place. Mutubuki was a teacher and provided Ransome with almost all the basic necessities like food, accommodation and information about jobs. According to Makamure, Mutubuki assisted quite a number of people from the Chingombe area to get jobs in Gweru. He was however particular in that he wanted those who had been to school and had some academic or professional certificates. He remembered;

In my case, I already had a diploma in marketing and Mordekai Hamutyinei was qualified to get into teaching even though he later on got a job with Mambo Press. From the Mudyamadzo family, I remember two people who secured jobs through his efforts. As a respected educationist, he had contacts with people who had high positions in some companies. These could have secluded places where they would meet but of course he still maintained contact with relatives or those belonging to the extended social networks of Gutu indigenes.¹⁶

The above confirms Manganga's observation that the use of social networks was affected by structural and institutional factors as well as other sociological variables given that not everyone in a given social network got reliable job intelligence. The structure and dynamics of social networks determined the nature of the job intelligence circulated within that particular network.¹⁷ Manganga has added that relatives or home-boys/girls introduced new immigrants to the wider urban society and provided essential socio-economic support including food, shelter, companionship and job information. Close-knit kinship ties were 'at the core of the migrants' associational life, including ethnic and mutual aid associations.¹⁸ Simukai and Simoen Mupunga's experience is a classic example;

In 1963, during the Christmas Holiday, we went to see our uncle Jimu in the Chin'ai village of Munyikwa. We met Mbangana who was employed at Bata Shoe Company in Gweru. We enquired how we could get some jobs. Mbangana told us to come to Gweru in early January 1964. Together with my brother we did as he had told us. We arrived in Gweru on a Sunday and met Mbangana who was waiting for us. When he left

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Interview with Ransome Makamure, Masvingo, 17 August 2013.

¹⁷ K. Manganga, *A historical study of industrial ethnicity in urban colonial Zimbabwe and its contemporary transitions: The case of African Harare, c.1890-1980*, p.102.

¹⁸ Ibid, p.104.

for work, he took our registration certificates with him. When he came back in the evening, he told us that we had already got jobs at Bata and were to resume work the following Monday. We neither attended any interviews nor knew how the labour recruitment process was done. When we got to Bata, it was like we were among our own friends and relatives from home. Most of the employees were from the Munyikwa area of Gutu. Mbangana was a foreman in the Tanning Department and almost all the people in this department came from Munyikwa. Ripai Ndisenge also from Munyikwa managed the stores section. Shiri Gono who headed another section recruited many people from the Gomba, Mudzamiri and Mataruse areas. Dzavamwe Mushangwe who had a high position at Rhodesia Railways also recruited people from Mushangwe and Mataruse areas. After work, we usually gathered at Kudzanai and Mutapa beer halls. During week-ends, we coalesced with those employed in other companies like Rhodesia Castings and Rhodesia Alloys. Most of us stayed in the Mkoba suburb and those from Gutu outnumbered any other labour immigrants. Gweru was truly *guta rava*Gutu.¹⁹

Similarly, studies on Korekore labour migrants in Salisbury by Michael Bourdillon, in the 1970s, indicated a similar pattern that kinship and ethnic relations played pivotal roles in fomenting industrial ethnicity. When he asked why some people chose to work in particular places, the responses showed that most migrants had followed a relative, replaced a relative, or followed or replaced a friend from home or another town.²⁰

In a study on industrial ethnicity in Harare, Kudakwashe Manganga found that if a migrant belonging to a dominant ethnic group at a particular workplace came in search of employment, he would be immediately recommended to the employer and subsequently get the job. It was common practice that one had to verify the place of origin of the job seeker first before releasing job intelligence as “it was important to help *mwana wekumusha* (a home-boy) than *mutorwa* (a stranger). If *mwana wekumusha* came looking for work one would quickly recommend him to the employer.”²¹ According to Brand, even mission churches had to follow their members into town where different denominations co-existed and in some cases members “developed a fierce and defensive loyalty to their home denomination in the insecure and alien urban environment”.²²

¹⁹ Interview with Simukai Mupunga, Makura, Gutu, 17 December 2013.

²⁰ M. F. C. Bourdillon, “Korekore Labour Migrants,” Southern African Congress, Lesotho, South Africa, 1973, p.8.

²¹ K. Manganga, A historical study of industrial ethnicity in urban colonial Zimbabwe and its contemporary transitions: The case of African Harare, c.1890-1980, p.104. See also Coenraad Brand, ‘The Autonomy of an Unequal Society’ in C. Stoneman (ed.), *Zimbabwe’s Inheritance*, Macmillan Press, London, 1981, p.42. Here, Brand notes that while ‘home-boyism’ might have been a device to avoid difficulties associated with the process of selection in a market flooded by job seekers, it was probably a strategy to tie workers more closely to the firm through a network of patronage and dependency relations.

²² C. Brand, ‘The Autonomy of an Unequal Society’ in C. Stoneman (ed.), *Zimbabwe’s Inheritance*, Macmillan Press, London, 1981, p.41.

5.2 The Gweru-Gutu dichotomy in networked urbanism

This section attempts to provide some pointers to the nature of social networks linking rustic Gutu and the city of Gweru. Admittedly, migration from rural communities resulted in the development of new social networks increasingly intended to maximize livelihood income-earning opportunities. Often relatives in the city would mediate on behalf of migrants for their first employment, thus the social networks became important for accommodation and employment. People lived in a system of economic relationships that combined both rural and urban and acted as conduits of ideas. Mitchell has argued that towns ‘are not simply extensions or modifications of tribal institutions but new institutions developed by urban dwellers to meet their needs in town’.²³ However, as already indicated, those who migrated into towns were partly responsible for transmitting a positive account of their urban experiences back to their rural counterparts. As such, the rural communities continued to maintain and strengthen social ties through the practice of ritual and other ceremonies which reminded urban –based relatives of their roots and responsibilities. The Gutu-Gweru experience is illustrative.

Founded in colonial times, Gweru the capital of Zimbabwe’s Midlands Province, has often been referred to as *guta rava*Gutu (the town largely inhabited by the people from Gutu). The population of Gweru was and is heterogeneous but the two groups which tend to dominate are the Shona (largely the Karanga) and Ndebele. As a product of successive migrations these populations came from the interior to seek employment. Arguably, the Karanga from Gutu were considered to constitute the demographic foundation of the city.

According to oral traditions and toponymy, the first settlements belonged to people who lived under Chief Gwelo whose eldest son married Chief Chaurura Gutu’s daughter Machivetama. Relations were therefore hatched between Chief Gwelo and Chief Chaurura Gutu’s people.²⁴ In the subsequent peopling of Gweru, totemism remained the most powerful weapon which largely drew people of the Gumbo -Madyirapazhe totem from Gutu to Gweru.²⁵

²³ J. C. Mitchell, ‘Theoretical orientations in African urban studies’ in Michael Banton (ed.) *The Social Anthropology of Complex Societies*, London: Tavistock, 1966, p 47-48.

See also Mayer, P. (1961) *Townsmen or Tribesmen: Conservatism and the Process of Urbanization in a South African City*, Cape Town: Oxford University Press. Mayer distinguishes between the close-knittedness of rural networks as compared with urban ones and suggests that rural networks recruit from a limited group through kinship and neighbourhood and yet in town a larger number of criteria like employment, common sports and other interests come into play.

²⁴ Interview Chief Chingombe, Gutu, Chingombe, 28 December 2013.

²⁵ Interview with Henry Mutubuki, Gweru, 20 May 2014.

According to Comarrof and Comarrof, totemism is indeed a primordial fact of social classification which carries with it the consciousness of identity and distinction. They argue that with the emergence of class formations in which positions in the division of labour were signified by the labels of ascribed status and cultural distinction, totemism became a dominant medium through which the social order was interpreted and navigated.²⁶

Levi-Strauss similarly observed that totemic consciousness, though primordial, transcended into industrial societies.²⁷ Thus totemic identities and affiliations were sustained in the construction and transformation of Gweru's economy and society. Other migrants from Gutu (not specifically of the Gumbo totem) progressively followed in search of work and brought about considerable internal diversification. Generally, migrant labour, urbanization and the growth of the colonial capitalist economy brought together people of diverse historical, cultural, linguistic and ethnic backgrounds in competitive environments. This contradicted development theories of ethnic mobilization, which assumed that ethnicity would decline as modernization replaced sentiments based on ethnic and kinship identities. Instead, 'tribal' affiliations "were activated to a significant extent as newly urbanized populations competed for resources and sought to create supportive social structures to which they could belong".²⁸

This thesis sustains the argument that the autochthonous dynamics and formations which stirred the direction of politics and governance in Gweru (before and after Zimbabwe's independence) were critical for a number of economic, social and political reasons, hence the battle for hegemony. The conceptualization of the city as a site of power builds on earlier works by Epstein and also Potts and Schatz. Epstein has shown how Africans on the Zambian Copperbelt rejected a 'tribal' system of representation for dealing with white management on the mines in favour of a trade union; while on the other hand, the struggle for power within the union was cast in tribal terms.²⁹

Potts and Schatz's studies on Lilongwe in Malawi, established that in order to undermine [the] rival [ethnic] patronage network and bolster one's own, President Kamuzu Hastings Banda

²⁶ J. Comarrof and J. Comarrof, *Ethnography and the Historical Imagination*, Westview Press, Oxford, 1992, p.53,55.

²⁷ Levi-Strauss, *Totemism*, Beacon, Boston, 1963b, pp.7-8.

²⁸ K. Manganga, A historical study of industrial ethnicity in urban colonial Zimbabwe and its contemporary transitions: The case of African Harare, c.1890-1980, p.104. See also Coenraad Brand, 'The Autonomy of an Unequal Society' in C. Stoneman (ed), *Zimbabwe's Inheritance*, Macmillan Press, 1981, pp.42-44.

²⁹ L.A. Epstein, *Politics in an Urban African Community*, Manchester, University Press, 1958, pp.229-40

suggested that the country's capital city be relocated near his birthplace where his ethnic group, the Chewa, were concentrated. In this Malawian case, the capital's relocation was used partly to 'consolidate power against rival ethnic groups'.³⁰ Inevitably, the Chewa had the opportunity to staff the new administration. Another example is Ivory Coast, where President Houphouët-Boigny moved the capital from Abidjan to Yanoussoukro, his birthplace.³¹ The contributions by Schatz and Potts point to the conclusion that whoever controlled the city had power over all resources. A minute group might rise to prominence simply because it has produced the country's principal leader, and because that person happens to prefer the staffing of more sensitive offices with members of his own group.

This thesis grapples with the contestations of the urban symbolic legitimation of power and the political dramas waged by the elites from Gutu in Gweru city. I trace how Gweru as a centre of formal political power and administrative authority often became the main conduit to political eminence, economic wealth and privilege for Gutu's elites. An effort is made in this section to establish whether political notables like the late Vice President of Zimbabwe Simon Muzenda who originated from Gutu might or might not have appealed to self-serving discrimination and clientelism which favoured his kith and kin in the dispensation of his duties.

Gutu's urbanized communities the thesis argues, continued to share common interests as the new settings revealed not only concentration and spatial separation but also a broader set of social fears associated with the perceived dangers of the city, desires for status and common identities. These attributes were not 'left at home' but formed the bases of a portable lifestyle where some kind of flocking together affected network formations.

Simon Muzenda had gone to Nyamande Primary School, proceeded to Gokomere and later moved to Domboshawa in 1944 where he trained as a teacher. In 1953, Muzenda came to national prominence when he was elected Secretary General of the British African National Voice Association, better known as the 'African Voice' led by Benjamin Burombo. Muzenda later moved to the town of Midlands mining town of Mvuma in 1955 where he started carpentry business. Whilst in Mvuma, he was one of the guiding personalities who were instrumental in the

³⁰ E.Schatz, 'What capital cities say about state and nation building' *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 9: 111–140, 2004, p. 120.

³¹ Ibid.

See also D.Potts, 'Capital relocation in Africa: The case of Lilongwe in Malawi' in *The Geographical Journal* 151(2), 1985, pp.182–196.

formation of the NDP in 1960. He chaired the Umvuma Branch of the NDP in 1961. Within the NDP, he continued to interact with other prominent nationalists from Gutu, the likes of Michael and Nelson Mawema, Crispin Mandizvidza and George Ndiripo Simbi among others.³² In 1962, Muzenda was arrested in Zvishavane (then Shabani) for what the colonial authorities alleged had been a seditious speech which ignited riots in the small mining town. He was sentenced to 12 years in prison but served only two years at Salisbury Prison. After his release, he attended ZANU's first congress in Gwelo in 1964 where he was elected Deputy Organising Secretary. After the Congress, Simukai Mupunga remembered;

Muzenda was mobbed by many people from Gutu who escorted him as he came to address *vana vevhu* (sons and daughters of the soil) who had gathered in Mkoba where most of us resided. In fact, when he was arrested for possessing a pistol, he had just finished addressing us. The next thing we heard was that he had been taken to WhaWha prison.³³

When ZANU was outlawed, Muzenda was placed under detention and restricted to within a ten mile radius from Mvuma Post Office. He however got the better of the colonial regime by arguing that as a carpenter, he needed free movement to secure timber. He was allowed a radius of 62 miles and used the concession to mobilize the people in Masvingo, Kwekwe and Gweru. In 1971, Muzenda was elected as the secretary for law and order for the African National Council (ANC). He was to be posted to Zambia in 1972 as Deputy Administrative Secretary of the ANC on a mission to unify the liberation forces under the Zimbabwe Liberation Council (ZLC). His movement to Zambia did not sever links with other political figures at home particularly those he had met during spells of detention at WhaWha, such as George Simbi, Crispin Mandizvidza and Solomon Marembo.

According to Femias Chakabuda (who was Muzenda's personal secretary in Zambia), contacts were maintained with those who had gained tremendous social capital within the city of Gwelo. Mandizvidza for example, besides being a businessman, had been Chairman of the Gwelo Roman Catholic Diocese Council and also the Catholic Association. These were popular associations where Africans interacted. The next section considers the socio-political developments surrounding Muzenda's arrival in Gweru as a parliamentarian and his continued identification with his rural home area of Gutu.

³² Michael Mawema had been appointed interim President of the NDP when it was founded in January 1960. His brother Nelson became the Secretary of the Senga Branch of the NDP in Gweru.

³³ Interview with Simukai Mupunga, Gutu, 17 December 2013.

5.3 Acquired power and inherited status

When ZANU candidates were fielded for elections leading to Zimbabwe's independence in 1980, Muzenda opted for the Gweru Central constituency where he featured until the Third Parliament. Arguably, Muzenda's choice to stand in the Gweru constituency hinged on identifying oneself with kin and affines in the region of origin-Gutu. The ties between urban elites and their rural origins changed from being informal to becoming one of the main vehicles of political mobilization. The drive to emphasize autochthony and origins was closely linked to the legitimation for electoral appeals. Admittedly, within Gweru, the pre-independence social capital enjoyed by business and political elites from Gutu had not waned.

We have already established that as people came to town to earn a wage and escape rural life, interpersonal ties that connected migrants through bonds of kinship, shared community of origin and friendship developed. It has been noted as well that these bonds acted as forms of social capital whose migration networks were in turn translated to human, cultural and economic capital that was critical for the migrants' settlement process and the subsequent acquisition of jobs. The city of Gweru attracted people from Masvingo, Midlands and beyond.

Before and after independence, Gweru was and continued to be governed by Gweru City Council, which, like all other local authorities was composed of councillors (elected and nominated), technical and support staff. The councillors are the policy-makers, whereas the executive arm, headed by the town clerk, would oversee the operations of the council. The political leaders of the city or municipal council were the mayor and his or her deputy, who were elected by the councillors.

From the time Muzenda assumed his position as the Member of Parliament for the Gweru Central constituency, there were murmurs that the city council was flooded by people from Gutu. It was alleged that Muzenda had a hand in roping people from Gutu to garner influential positions in the council. These included Godfrey Nhemachena who was the town clerk, J. Chitambira who was the Director of Housing and also Ben Mavesere who was also in the housing section. According to Simukai Mupunga, the struggle for hegemony was of central importance in the occupation of suburbs and accommodation waged by the Karanga from Masvingo and the Midlanders from the Shurugwi-Nhema, Zvishavane, Chiwundura and Mvuma areas.

The struggle revealed itself after independence as people jostled for the Mayoral post and made efforts to dictate the tone and tenor of every major local issue. Those who landed mayoral posts since independence include Patrick Kombayi (from Mvuma), Ernest Tongogara (Shurugwi), Tranos Makombe (Zaka, Masvingo), Manikidza Nyoni (Zvishavane) then James Bwerazuva from Zaka, Masvingo. The fact that none of Gweru's mayors hailed from Gutu, does not quash the claim that Gweru was indeed a city dominated by people from Gutu. If anything, the candidates from Masvingo were given tremendous leverage by people from Gutu in their claims to high positions. According to Simukai Mupunga, there is no way Muzenda could have failed to reward people from Gutu because among other factors, his victory as Member of Parliament was hinged upon the Gutu linkage.³⁴

The claim that Muzenda used his position to recruit people from Gutu into the council was dismissed by James Bwerazuva who argued that within council, people were appointed on merit and the fact that those from Gutu had positions of influence could be mere coincidence. He further asserted that Muzenda's long stay in Mvuma should indeed have seen him identifying more with Mvuma and the Midlands than Gutu.³⁵

In the 1995 Gweru Parliamentary election, Muzenda's security men shot and seriously wounded Patrick Kombayi of the Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM) who was also vying for the seat. The challenge by Patrick Kombayi, Gweru's first black mayor to Muzenda's hegemony in Gweru, is ultimately considered as the reason for his 'great trek' to contest in the Gutu North constituency where he became the Member of Parliament from 1996 until his death in 2003.

That Muzenda feared an embarrassing defeat at the hands of Kombayi for the Gweru Central Parliamentary seat was a possibility and a guess which Bhebe skirted.³⁶ Apart from the political issue, Guni argues that Muzenda's going back home was also necessitated by the need for him to move closer to his ageing mother who had multiple agro-ventures in need of attention.³⁷ However, Jotham Mushangwe held that Muzenda's move to Gutu was a political ploy by President Robert Mugabe to silence Eddison Zvobgo who held presidential ambitions. Muzenda's presence in Masvingo was going to sterilize Zvobgo's efforts in entering the race for the presidential post.

³⁴ Interview with Simukai Mupunga, Gutu, 17 December 2013.

³⁵ Interview with James Chizhande Bwerazuva, Gweru, 24 May 2014. The same view was shared by Henry Mutubuki in an interview in Gweru.

³⁶ N. Bhebe, *Simon Vengayi Muzenda and the Struggle for and Liberation of Zimbabwe*.

³⁷ Interview with Vengai Guni, 24 June 2014.

In her study of the Akan elite in Ghana, Oppong found out that though some of the elite break links with their relatives and communities back home, most of them try to retain these links usually as a function of a number of factors including the financial position of the elite and the kind of public image he wants to portray.³⁸ In Gutu, the question of belonging in politics became a hotbed of confrontations about autochthony and exclusion in direct relation to national politics where the defense of autochthony seemed to offer some sort of second chance to politicians who failed to consolidate their position in national politics.³⁹

Some six years after Muzenda had left for Gutu, his daughter Tsitsi unsuccessfully contested for the Gweru mayoral post in 2004. Simukai Mupunga argues that Tsitsi gained the courage to contest and looked forward to win largely because the umbilical cord linking the Muzenda family and its Gutu roots had not been severed. To buttress his argument, he added that Tsitsi's campaign team was largely made up of people from Masvingo, such as Eddison Huruba and Munangwa from Chibi then Rice and Ndisengei from Gutu among others. Although it would sound more appropriate that Tsitsi was trying to lean on the strength and legacy of her father to land a top post, the link with Gutu could still not be obliterated. Thus, while the hereditary transmission of wealth has its own logic and justification within any given society, the transmission of political positions by direct inheritance would be impossible in a democracy based on universal suffrage. Of interest then would be the modalities of recruitment to elite status where the inheritance of a name could still be manipulated to realize the automatic transmission of the political mandate with constituencies almost translating to family fiefdoms. An illustrative case of the Muzenda family is revisited in chapter seven.

5.4 Conclusion

The chapter explored how resources were organized and deployed within networks. The chapter has demonstrated that social capital was an asset in webs of relations of people in which interaction created multiple advantages. Social networks including kinship ties for example, constituted important conduits for the transmission of job information. The chapter also stressed the mechanisms through which social capital operated. People formed and maintained borders of

³⁸ C. Oppong., *Middle Class African Marriage*, George Allen and Unwin, London, 1981, p.62.

³⁹ P. Geschiere and F. Nyamnjoh, 'Capitalism and Autochthony: The Seesaw of Mobility and Belonging' in *Public Culture* 12 (2): 423-452.

social inclusion and exclusion as complex networks of relatives and home-boys and friends provided accommodation and logistical support to new immigrants. The difficulties of appealing to old communal identities in new forms of networked urbanism were also covered. Overall, the chapter revealed that social networks constituted important social capital that was key to the emergence, growth and social reproduction of varied elite typologies.

Chapter 6: The Liberation Struggle and the Fluidity of the social structure: 1970-1980.

6.0 Introduction

The chapter discusses the rise of African nationalism and briefly traces the penultimate elite nationalist cleavages within the context of inter and intra- ethnic struggles for hegemony in the political history of Zimbabwe. With particular focus on Gutu, an attempt is made to reveal the divisive and exclusionary nature of the politics of belonging within elite political networks. The purpose is to show how autochthony and belonging as social constructs were manipulated by elites for political expedience as they navigated their way within the nationalist web.

The escalation of the guerilla war in the early 1970s, as Nyambara has noted, “was accompanied by a general breakdown in traditional leadership structures, and that chiefs and headmen generally came under considerable physical threat from the guerrilla fighters and their sympathizers who identified them as 'collaborators’”.¹ In the place of the old matrix of social bonds, new structures were created by individuals in response to the stimuli of forces not entirely under their control. Within the war zones efforts were made to create structures entirely different from those of the colonial system. These structures were indeed a product of the revolutionary deconstruction of the colonial system. Some sections of the chapter are devoted to recording the life histories of individuals whose experiences further concretize and deepen our understanding of hegemonic precepts of elite formation in a war environment.

6.1 Nationalism and the politics of belonging

Both historians and political scientists have been at pains to identify the actual point in time at which African nationalism in colonial Zimbabwe surfaced and began to assert itself as a discernible political force. Some have argued that African nationalism in colonial Zimbabwe

¹ P. S. Nyambara, *Immigrants, Traditional Leaders and the Rhodesian State: The Power of 'Communal' Land Tenure and the Politics of Land Acquisition in Gokwe, Zimbabwe, 1963-1979*, p.787.

continuously manifested itself in various forms ever since the Union Jack was unfurled on the Harare Kopje on 13 September 1890. This view contends that the various protest and reform movements which arose during Zimbabwe's colonial history have all been an outward expression of African nationalism.

The ideology of nationalism has been defined in many ways, but most of the definitions overlap and reveal common themes. According to Antony Smith, nationalism is an ideology that places the nation at the centre of its concerns and seeks to promote its well-being. He has identified "national autonomy, national unity and national identity as the main goals under whose headings nationalism seeks to promote the nation's well-being".² For Ndabaningi Sithole, African nationalism was "a political feeling seeking relentlessly to eliminate Eurocracy by supplanting it with Afrocracy... an effective instrument of establishing African rule".³ In this thesis, I subscribe to the definition of nationalism as "self-identity and self-assertion by a people living within a defined territorial framework, combined with their desire for self-rule as a group".⁴

In colonial Zimbabwe, mass nationalism which manifested itself through the formation of national political parties that sought to dislodge white minority rule and replace it with African majority rule can generally be traced to the period from the 1950s with the revamping of the African National Congress (ANC). The ANC brought together people like Joshua Nkomo, James Chikerema, Joseph Msika, George Nyandoro, Henry Hamadziripi and Jason Ziyapapa Moyo among others. In 1960, the National Democratic Party (NDP) was launched to succeed the ANC which had been banned in 1959. Among its prominent members were Leopold Takawira, Enos Nkala, Michael Mawema, Morton Malianga, Tarcicius George Silundika, Hebert Chitepo and Willie Musarurwa. The political party's rejection of the Whiteman's government and its elimination and substitution by an African government was a drastically different political stance from that which had been adopted and pursued by all previous African organisations. Urban areas were important political theatres during the embryonic years of African nationalism given

² Antony Smith, *Nationalism: Theory, Ideology, History*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 2001, p.9.

³ N. Sithole, *African Nationalism*, London: Oxford University Press, 1968, p.57.

⁴ Antony Smith, *Nationalism: Theory, Ideology, History*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 2001, p.9, defined nationalism as an ideological movement for attaining and maintaining autonomy, unity and identity for a population which some of its members deem to constitute an actual or potential 'nation'.

Benedict Anderson (1999): *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, Verso, London, p6, defined the nation as 'an imagined political community- and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign'.

that trade unionism was a precursor to the emergence of a political elite which spearheaded the call for the establishment of a Zimbabwean state.

The British African National Voice Association (BANVA) founded by Benjamin Burombo was a trade union organisation with political overtones. Burombo bitterly opposed the proposed Native Land Husbandry Bill. He successfully challenged a number of cases where the Act had been wrongly implemented by native commissioners. The important issue to note here is that his successes in this direction provided the inspiration for people in Gutu to mount a full-scale campaign against the colonial government. Burombo's efforts bridged the rural-urban political divide. Gutu chiefs and headmen, Nyamande and Makwasa, both sons of Chief Gutu; a representative of Chief Makore; Makwaware, the son of Chimombe; Mutonga, the son of Chief Mutema among others were detained after they complained bitterly about the pillaging of their cattle.

In 1949, some chiefs asked for permission to send representatives to Burombo's meeting in Bulawayo. Several Council members who went without permission and in their private capacity were rebuked. In an effort to discourage people from attending Burombo's meetings, the Native Commissioner remarked:

I told those who sought my advice before going that Burombo was not likely to produce a solution to any of the problems in the agenda and the meeting would amount to nothing more than 'hot air' with the idea of making Burombo appear a big man at their expense, so I do not think that on the whole they were impressed.⁵

What is of interest here is that, the rural elite's grasp of the political wave of Burombo's time provided a stimulus for a political vision which characterized the post- Second World War nationalist environment. The war acted as a catalyst, producing two processes: the emergence of a new radical leadership, and the creation of a larger group of supporters for the new African leadership.

Simon Muzenda's stay in South Africa between 1945 and 1949 turned out to be a politically enriching experience because his membership of the Unity Movement in South Africa brought him into contact with James Chikerema, Charles Mzingeli, and Maurice Nyagumbo who galvanized the formation of nationalist movements in Zimbabwe. Upon his return from South Africa, in addition to his influential position of Secretary General of the British African National Voice Association which was one of the biggest African organisations in the country, he was

⁵ Report of the NC Gutu for Quarter ended 30/06/49.

elected to the Bulawayo Advisory Board on 1 August 1950. He also spearheaded the launch of the Rent Payers Association in Bulawayo.⁶ Those whom Muzenda politically nurtured, the likes of Crispen Mandizvidza and George Simbi were both proverbial entrepreneurial farmers with Christian education who had chosen to stay within the Gutu reserves.

By locating themselves beyond the borders of the town, they retained a degree of autonomy in their lives, had access to land at a lower cost, and enhanced their earning capacity through operating small businesses. These would participate simultaneously in wage employment in town and peasant agriculture in the country and operate within the orbit of African elite politics. The intimate nexus of the British African National Voice Association of Benjamin Burombo and entrepreneurial worker-peasants and therefore the suburban origins of African modern politics were important in the political history of Gutu from the 1950s.

When Muzenda came back from South Africa and settled in Bulawayo, he came into contact with people from his home area of Gutu. The people ‘were already politically active’.⁷ When he later settled in Mvuma, local businessmen like Crispen Mandizvidza and George Simbi had already provided a populist political leadership in the purchase areas and the reserves. A study by Weinrich on the influence of chiefs, teachers and businessmen in the rural areas in the 1960s established that businessmen were in many ways the most influential. However, Weinrich’s picture of nationalist meetings organized by businessmen but addressed by teachers again brings to light the educational leverage which catapulted the teachers into a more powerful body influencing public opinion. In any case, most of Gutu’s peasant businessmen had been or were teachers. It is therefore beyond doubt that while teachers represented the largest and most powerful group of the modern elite in the rural areas, purchase area farmers, businessmen and other educated salarieds were equally important in the politics of Gutu.

Notable among the early nationalists from Gutu was Michael Mawema, “a member of the VaGarwe clan originating from Mutambara”⁸. A teacher by profession, he taught at Chesvingo School in Gutu before “moving to Mzilikazi Government School in Bulawayo where he remained until the end of 1951 when he became private secretary to Benjamin Burombo, then

⁶ N. Bhebe, *Simon Muzenda*, p.80.

⁷ Interview with F. F. Shava, Gweru, 25 June 2013.

⁸ R. Cary and D. Mitchell, *African Nationalist Leaders in Rhodesia: Who is Who*, Books of Rhodesia Publishing Co, Bulawayo, 1977, p.50.

leader of the British African National Voice Association”.⁹ He then became regional secretary of the Railway African Workers’ Union. In 1954, he joined the old ANC and served as an executive member of the Bulawayo branch until the merger with the Youth League in September 1957. He was appointed interim President of the National Democratic Party (NDP) when it was founded in January 1960.¹⁰

When the NDP was inaugurated in October 1960, Joshua Nkomo was elected the leader. When the National Democratic Party (NDP) held a meeting in 1961 in Gutu at Chomungai (next to the Dewure river which demarcates the boundary of Chief Chingombe’s area and the Dewure Purchase Area), in attendance were Joshua Nkomo, Ndabaningi Sithole, Morton Malianga, Simon Muzenda, Crispin Mandizvidza, George Simbi, Enos Nkala, Michael Mawema, Masiyandima and Nolan Makombe.¹¹ This was the first and last meeting to be sanctioned by the Native Commissioner. Thereafter, several meetings were secretly held in Mandizvidza’s restaurant at Bhasera Township. The only people who were from outside Gutu who attended the meetings were Enos Nkala, Nolan Makombe and Morton Malianga.¹² The NDP was later rocked by ethnic divisions which according to Ndlovu-Gatsheni even touched on the suitability of the name ‘Zimbabwe’ for the country. Both Ndebele and Kalanga nationalist activists pushed for the name ‘Matopos’ for the imagined post-colonial nation.¹³ A group of Karanga nationalists broke away from the NDP to form the Zimbabwe National Party (ZNP) led by Michael Mawema, who is credited for coming up with the name Zimbabwe.¹⁴

Thompson Gonese (from Gutu) who teamed up with Michael Mawema in the ZNP complained that they were tired of being led by the directionless Ndebeles.¹⁵ Msindo has also attributed issues of regional identities as having contributed to a split within the NDP to form the

⁹ R. Cary and D. Mitchell, *African Nationalist Leaders in Rhodesia: Who is Who*, Books of Rhodesia Publishing Co, Bulawayo, 1977, p.50.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Interview with F.F Shava, Gweru, 25 June 2013.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ S.J.Ndlovu-Gatsheni, *Coloniality of Power in Postcolonial Africa. Myths of Decolonization and Illusions of Freedom*, Unpublished manuscript, p.176.

¹⁴ M. Mawema, “Why I Resigned from the NDP to Join the Zimbabwe National Party, September 1961”, in C. Nyangoni and G. Nyandoro, eds., *Zimbabwe Independence Movements, Selected Documents*, London: Rex Collings, 1979, p.48. Mawema is credited for giving the country the name ‘Zimbabwe’ during his brief tenure as NDP president in the early 1960s. The name was derived from Great Zimbabwe Monuments, which were an important symbol of African civilization, creativeness and innovation. See J. Fontein, *The Silences of Great Zimbabwe: Contested Landscapes and the Power of Heritage*, London: University College of London Press, 2006, pp.119-120. Joost Fontein, *The Silence of Great Zimbabwe: Contested Landscapes and the Power of Heritage*. Thesis submitted for Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The University of Edinburgh, May 2003, p.192.

¹⁵ *Moto No.23*, July 1961, p.3.

short-lived Zimbabwe National Party (ZNP).¹⁶ When the NDP was subsequently banned in December 1961, hardly 10 days later, the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) was formed to replace the banned NDP. Events leading to the split of ZAPU in 1963 witnessed the formation of the Pan-African Socialist Union which again had Thompson Gonese in its leading committee. Gonese made an unsuccessful bid to win the support of a longstanding political fore Michael Mawema in what could have been a blatant manifestation of personal ties of 'homeboyism' being built into nationalist politics. The ZAPU split, which Sibanda has termed 'the Mother of all Divisions,'¹⁷ gave birth to ZANU as a splinter movement. Following the split of ZAPU, Mawema joined the newly-formed ZANU in August 1963, becoming its Organising Secretary in 1964. The appointment was however quickly followed by his arrest and detention – first at WhaWha, later at Sikombela and finally at Salisbury Prison. The political violence that followed the split of ZANU from ZAPU increased the justification for the Rhodesian government to embark on a massive clampdown on political activity between 1963 and 1964. The result was that nearly all nationalists across the country were in some form of confinement.

Most political activists from Gutu who included Michael and Nelson Mawema, George Simbi, Jotham Mushangwe, Solomon Marembo, Munosunama, Mudyanadzo, Mordekai Hamutyinei, Leonard Nyemba¹⁸ were detained at WhaWha restriction center which had been established near Gweru in February 1964 while those belonging to ZAPU like Samuel Munodawafa were sent to Gonakudzingwa.¹⁹ Later in June 1965, Hamutyinei, Mandizvidza, Michael Mawema were moved to Sikombela near Kwekwe while others like Nelson Mawema were released. Upon his release in 1968, Michael Mawema was restricted to the Gutu area for two years²⁰ where he inspired many political adherents through his narrations of political experiences like having addressed the OAU liberation Committee in 1964.²¹

¹⁶ E. Msindo, *Ethnicity in Zimbabwe. Transformations in Kalanga and Ndebele Societies, 1860-1990*, University of Rochester Press: Rochester, 2012, p.234.

¹⁷ E.Sibanda, *The Zimbabwe African People's Union 1961-1987: A Political History of Insurgency in Southern Rhodesia*. Africa World Press, Asmara, 2005, p.90.

¹⁸ Leonard Nyemba deputized Ndabaningi Sithole as President of ZANU-Ndonga. He took over the presidency after Ndabaningi Sithole's death, a position he also held until his death.

¹⁹ Interview with Ransome Makamure, Masvingo, 17 August 2013.

²⁰ R. Cary and D.Mitchell, *African Nationalist Leaders*, p.52.

²¹ Interview with F.F.Shava, Gweru, 25 June 2013.

It has to be noted that between 1969 and 1976 political detainees were always being transferred from one detention camp to another. These shifts not only strengthened existing networks but widened the web of political networks. As Jotham Mushangwe put it;

We knew each other very well and would always be in touch. The fact that we came from Gutu was on its own a source of strength for us. We encouraged each other not to quit. We were part of the coterie of heroes from Gutu who were sacrificing to liberate the country. As we shared jokes among ourselves in the restriction camps, our common denominator was our rootedness in Gutu. This was beyond doubt.²²

Indeed Bender argues that ‘by moving along familiar paths, winding memories and stories around places, people create a sense of self and belonging.’²³ WhaWha, Gonakudzingwa and Sikombela detention camps were meant to kill and arrest the development of nationalism. In her study of the effects of particular confinement on nationalism and the agitation for self-government in Rhodesia, Jocelyn Alexander has captured the multiple challenges which made life in detention a veritable nightmare.²⁴ According to Munochiveyi, political imprisonment curtailed freedoms and heightened repression.²⁵ It is crucial though to note that it was in these camps that political networks were hatched.²⁶ Upon release the former detainees formed underground movements which facilitated the recruitment of young people for military training. Prominent in the recruitment processes were Simon Muzenda, Nolan Makombe, Femias Chakabuda, Nelson Mawema, Francis Fanny Shava Mutyavaviri and George Simbi, who worked closely with nationalists in Mozambique, keeping a powerful network going throughout the dangerous years of the war. Nelson Takawira Mawema, a brother to Michael who in 1965 had found a job as a sales representative of Salisbury’s Book Centre remarked;

We laid all the strategies. Because of my position in the company I travelled all the time, using it well for selling books and politics at the same time. I kept the people in touch and formed part of the information network. I would be briefed from the prison and take the message to the people. At that stage mobilization of the people towards our policy of confrontation included directing them towards hitting communication targets such as power lines, railway engines and so on.²⁷

²² Interview with Jotham Mushangwe, Gutu, Mushangwe, 10 January 2014.

²³ B. Bender, ‘Introduction’ in B.Bender and M. Winer (eds.) *Contested landscapes: Movement, exile and place* New York: Oxford University Press, 2001, p.4.

²⁴ J. Alexander, *Nationalism and Self-Government in Rhodesian Detention: Gonakudzingwa, 1964-1974*, University of Oxford, Oxford, 2009, p3.

²⁵ M. B. Munochiveyi, ‘It was a difficult time in Zimbabwe’: A history of imprisonment, detention and liberation struggle, 1960 to 1980 PhD Thesis, University of Minnesota, 2008, p23.

²⁶ Interview with Nelson Mawema, Harare, 25 June 2014.

²⁷ D, Mitchell, *Makers of History Who’s Who, Nationalist Leaders in Zimbabwe*, Diana Mitchell Publishers, Salisbury, 1981/2, p.133.

Nelson Mawema was arrested and detained at Salisbury Prison where he stayed amongst UANC members and ZAPU people until 1978 when he was moved to WhaWha Detention Camp. In WhaWha, he joined Mordekai Hamutyinei and many others from his home area-Gutu. He continued to keep in touch with the movement in Maputo through visitors who came in the guise of relatives.

6.2 Political elite networks: ZANU's Mozambican experience

While in Mozambique, the 1973 elections to the *Dare reChimurenga* had big changes which later bred other problems for ZANU. The Karanga-Manyika division and suspicions simmered as the Manyika felt that the Karanga dominated the High Command of the military wing of the party. The division even deepened following the assassination of Chitepo in early 1975 when at the funeral vigil two fires were made, one for the Karanga and the other for the Manyika. The Manyika according to Gumbo felt aggrieved because they felt that they had lost key positions to the Karanga.²⁸ According to Mayowe, *ndwiraukuru* or the tussle for positions dragged on from 1977 to 1979.²⁹ The Karanga factor again dominated ZANU's Central and National Executives which emerged at the Chimoio meeting of 1977. For Tekere, the ethnic conflict which characterized ZANU politics in exile was largely a reflection or expression of contending personal ambitions on the part of leaders who sought to maximize and justify their claims by mobilizing their "homeboys" in the [political] enterprise.³⁰

The ZANU conspiracy of 1978 which Tekere unwaveringly believed was orchestrated by a Karanga grouping from Masvingo Province witnessed the arrest of Mandizvidza, Hamadziripi, Gumbo and Mudzi.³¹ Bhebe also makes reference to the contentious issue of the Karanga dominance in Zimbabwe nationalist politics. Writing about Muzenda's relationship with the other Karanga leaders, namely Henry Hamadziripi, Rugare Gumbo and Crispin Mandizvidza, and how these persons failed in their attempted coup in ZANU in Mozambique in 1978, Bhebe states that;

²⁸ N.Bhebe, Interview with Rugare Gumbo cited in N.Bhebe, *Simon Vengesayi Muzenda*,

²⁹ J. G. Mayowe, *Rega Zvipore*, Midlands State University Press, Gweru, 2015, p.144.

³⁰ E. Tekere, *A Lifetime of Struggle*, Sapes Trust, Harare p.102. See also J.G. Mayowe, *Rega Zvipore*, p.144 who notes that Hamadziripi, Mukudzei Mudzi, Rugare Gumbo Mandizvidza and Dhauramanzi were all believed to come from Gutu.

³¹ E. Tekere, *Tekere: A Lifetime of Struggle*, Sapes Trust, Harare, p.102.

The arrest and subsequent trial of the Hamadziripi group however represented one of the most painful experiences in Muzenda's political career. He had brought up Rugare Gumbo and Crispin Mandizvidza politically during the NDP and ZAPU days. He had worked with Hamadziripi and he considered these three not only his political allies, but also proudly homeboys as well. Their presence in ZANU always epitomized to him the dominant contribution of the Karanga to the liberation of Zimbabwe.³²

The process of 'othering' in this instance signifies the innate human propensity to divide 'strangers' or 'non-selves' into friends and enemies. As Manganga put it, "exclusionary othering utilizes the power within relationships for domination and subordination, while inclusionary othering attempts to utilize power within relationships for transformation and coalition building".³³ Consequently, it can be argued that negative othering not only shaped the evolution of political identities during the colonial period but significantly shaped the post-colonial context with its marked differential access to social, economic and political resources.³⁴ As political parties prepared for the 1980 elections, ZANU decided that the party would place in each province somebody who was recognized as the most senior member of the party and that such senior people should not be placed according to the provinces of their birth or origins, so that they would be truly national leaders. However, when it was noted that ZANU might lose the election to ZAPU and Muzorewa's party, which would distribute their candidates according to their places of birth ZANU adopted a similar approach. According to Jotham Mushangwe;

When ZANU candidates were fielded for the elections leading to Zimbabwe's independence in 1980, those who hailed from Masvingo for example Eddison Zvobgo, Mayor Urimbo and Nelson Mawema stood for elections in their home constituencies while Muzenda opted for the Midlands' Gweru seat. The pull factor behind Muzenda's contest in the Midlands town was an indication of how autochthony became an indispensable tool for political mobilization. Gwelo was popularly referred to as *guta ravaGutu* (the town largely inhabited by people from Gutu) and obviously this was a factor to capitalize upon given that he was a 'Guturian'.³⁵

In a study of the social relationships of the 'red Xhosa' elite in East London, South Africa, Mayer found that people associated with those from their home areas in the city and became 'encapsulated' within 'homeboy groups' which insulated them from the influences of the

³² N. Bhebe, Simon Vengayi Muzenda, and p.215. During the liberation struggle, Muzenda was acknowledged as head of the Karanga.

³³ K. Manganga, A historical study of industrial ethnicity in urban colonial Zimbabwe and its contemporary transitions: The case of African Harare, c. 1890-1980, Unpublished DPhil. Thesis, Stellenbosch University, 2014, p.161.

³⁴ Ibid, p.162.

³⁵ Interview with Jotham Mushangwe, Gutu, Mushangwe, 10 January 2014.

city. In Cameroon, Konings observed that ‘the autochtony-allochtony discourse has not only become an important ploy for political entrepreneurs in their struggles for power. It appears also to have become part and parcel of the people’s daily lives in the south west Province [of Cameroon].’³⁶

6.3 The Gun and the manufacture of the war elite

The Zimbabwean war novels demonstrate the crucial interplay and interlink between the two phenomena of family and nation in the Zimbabwean liberation struggle. According to Choto, during the war, the elderly village men and women were called “*vabereki*” (parents). The elderly men were “*vanababa*” (fathers) or singular “*baba*” (father), while the elderly women were called “*vanamai*” (mothers) or singular “*mai*” (mother).³⁷ Chinodya notes that “parents” addressed the combatants as “*vana*” (children) or singular “*mwana*” (child), while the elderly could also simply call combatants “*vakomana*” (boys)³⁸. All village people could also address the freedom fighters as either “comrades” or “guerrillas”.³⁹ The titles “*chimbwido*”, “comrade” and “guerrilla” had the potential to either regulate or neutralize the prescribed contact distance between the so-called “brother” and “sister”. However, these terms of address, were subverted, abused and at times demonized by the combatants and some unscrupulous “parents” alike.

A similar view is shared by A. S. Mlambo who reveals how the war influenced generational tensions in the rural areas as the young male and female messengers (*mujibhas* and *chimbwidos*) who had direct dealings with the guerrillas exercised an unprecedented measure of power over their elders. The elder brother (*mukoma*) was the one who had the gun whether he was younger than the *mujibha* he dealt with. The armed ‘sons’ and ‘daughters’ could bypass traditional myths and taboos with impunity. Village elders were sent on errands as and when the platoon commander ordered. The “fathers’ and ‘mothers’ had to bow to the prescriptions and proscriptions of the “son’ who learnt to kill and maim them. The father was emasculated since

³⁶ Konings, ‘Mobility and exclusion: Conflicts between autochthons and allochthons during political liberalization in Cameroon’, p.188.

³⁷ R. Choto, *Vavairo*, College Press, Harare, 1990, p.29.

See also S.Chinodya, *Harvest of Thorns*, Baobab Books, Harare, 1989 and A. Kanengoni, *Echoing Silences*, 1997.

³⁸ S. Chinodya, *Harvest of Thorns*, p.203. See also R. Choto, *Vavairo*, p.9.

³⁹ S. Chinodya, *Harvest of Thorns*, p.116, 122.

his authority was undermined and the mother was de-womanised since the myths that shrouded motherhood in a traditional setting were deconstructed and ignored. An informant narrated;

We were made to lie prostate, kicked and slapped by Comrades Bonde and Chiororo for refusing to release our daughters to attend a *pungwe*. We knew it too well that some of the comrades were sexually abusing the *chimbwidos*. We pleaded for mercy but we could not be pardoned. During the war, you had to go by their word otherwise you risked being shot.⁴⁰

There are situations where the combatants would indulge in sexual encounters with *chimbwidos*. Mazarire's observation is very apt that when *vabereki* (parents) were asked to dismiss (from *pungwe*) and return to their homesteads, as one *ex-mujibha* recalled,

...there was often an instruction for us to assume the role of sentinels. We were told that it was part of our training to become guerrillas in our own right and that it needed such resilience and the ability to keep secrets. We knew however that some of the girls would have moved into the *poshtos* (sleeping areas) already to spend the night and have *svuto* [sex] with them.⁴¹

The *chimbwidos* would not say "No" since the one who wielded unquestionable power and authority was the one who was armed with a gun. The child-centred authoritarian family of the war favoured 'children' more than the 'parents'. Many instances of indiscipline by the freedom fighters went unchecked and civilians were at the receiving end. Gun-justice prevailed and that is how the war manufactured its own elite.

Sexual offenses against women were difficult to bring to light because the victims could easily be intimidated into silence. In a case heard on 26 April 1979, Sub Shumba, a field Commander in Masvingo Sector in Manica Province admitted that he had forced girls into sexual relationships and afterwards he had beaten one of his comrades to death for similar crimes.⁴² In some detachments of Musikavanhu Sector in Manica Province, fighters were reported to have deteriorated into what were described as 'roving rebels'.⁴³ Detachment commander Simukai Tivapedze who operated in the Serima area had nothing against teachers and businessmen, unlike Seperai who was known for beating up and ridiculing teachers and businessmen at his *pungwes*.

⁴⁰ Interview with Garai Hamutyinei, Gutu, 27 December 2013.

⁴¹ G. C. Mazarire, A Social and Political History of Chishanga: South-Central Zimbabwe c. 1750 -2000. Unpublished DPhil Thesis, University of Zimbabwe, 2009, p.314.

⁴² ZANU (PF) Archives, File: Minutes HC & CC, Doc: 'Meeting Held at Operations' Chaminuka HQ of Security and Intelligence, 26 April 1979 cited by J.Nhongo-Simbanegavi, *For Better or Worse? Women and ZANLA in Zimbabwe's Liberation Struggle*, Weaver, Harare, 2000.

⁴³ The Musikavanhu Sector operated in the Bikita, Gutu, Bhasera, Chikwanda and Zimuto areas of the Manica Province.

Seperai's detachment is alleged to have been notorious for bus robberies, making abnormal material demands from businessmen and effecting the closure of schools.

Thus, during the war, a sense of social promotion could also develop on the basis of the power of the gun to obtain coveted goods without paying for them. Ranger however argues that only in 1978 and 1979 did most groups' behaviour deteriorate and pose a general 'crisis of guerilla legitimacy'.⁴⁴ Peasants however stood in fear particularly after witnessing the deaths of the alleged 'sell-outs' and witches by guerillas at the *pungwes*. In this case, the claim by Kriger that mobilization was achieved through guerilla coercion rather than guerilla ideology holds water. War manufactured institutions and norms of participation provided some room for manoeuvre to social groups which were hitherto powerless to successfully achieve incorporation into local elite groups in the face of stiff resistance from members of the old guard.

Emmanuel Makadho gave another narrative where the unruly behaviour of the armed at Nerupiri business centre resulted in the death of civilians;

Sometime in 1978, the freedom fighters led by Comrade Weeds and Sub-Shumba came to Nerupiri township. They found two buses parked. They seized keys from drivers and went into a race. They became a centre of attraction thereby compromising vigilance. Rhodesian security forces invaded the area and opened fire from close range killing 38 people. In another incident, a freedom fighter Jimmy Japan was captured by the Rhodesian forces whilst in a drunken state.⁴⁵

In June of 1979, owing to increasing reports of indiscipline amongst ZANLA forces reaching him in Salisbury Prison, Maurice Nyagumbo wrote to Robert Mugabe and the ZANU Central Committee, appealing to them to make sure that the *vakomana* (the 'boys' or guerrillas) stick to the object of the struggle. Nyagumbo wrote,

Please investigate reports of *vakomana* who are said to take liberties with women and being high handed and arrogant towards the masses. Some are said to have resorted to pleasure seeking pursuits – beer drinking orgies, open terror and torture of suspects prior to a thorough and impartial investigation and proper analysis of individual incidents.⁴⁶

In a reassessment of war-time coercion of civilians from a military perspective, Mazarire observed that by and large civilian casualties outnumbered those of the military. This left the

⁴⁴ T. Ranger, 'Bandits and guerrillas: the case of Zimbabwe', in D. Crummey (ed.), *Banditry, Rebellion and Social Protest in Africa*. London: James Currey 1986 p.381.

⁴⁵ Interview with Emmanuel Makadho, Gweru, 10 February 2014.

⁴⁶ Ranger Papers, Doc. Ranger 00103, Maurice Nyagumbo, Salisbury Central Prison, to Robert Mugabe and the ZANU Central Committee, c. June 1979, available at www.aluka.org.

civilians at the mercy of both Rhodesian Forces and freedom fighters. Thus the deliberate use of arms to intimidate or coerce civilians to achieve the desired ends of the military was common.⁴⁷ In this light therefore guerilla warfare ideally required a large area of operation and a generally supportive population for it to be carried out successfully. Mazarire argues that in as much as the Maoist doctrine followed by ZANLA saw the guerillas as the ‘fish’ and the civilian population as ‘water’, the assumption that civilians always constituted good ‘water’ for the so-called ‘fish’ meant in effect that the hosts were subordinated to the demands of the defended. In addition, ZANLA’s crude conception of the ‘masses’ as a homogenous group exposed them to a number of technical problems regarding loyalty. As such the term ‘sell-out’ became an integral part of guerilla propaganda much as it became increasingly difficult on the part of the guerillas to dissociate an enemy attack from ‘sell-out’ influence.

In the bush, edible fruits were poisoned, as were water holes and wells. Special counter-insurgent units as Selous Scouts also perpetrated massacres and atrocities and some of these exploits were blamed on the guerillas. This prompted ZANLA guerillas to sacrifice a few people as examples of an intimidatory measure both to ensure their security and establish loyalty. In this culture of fear that both the guerillas and the Rhodesian forces cultivated and thrived upon, they could requisition resources of any kind at a time that suited them. The war situation thus, manufactured its own elite which exercised hegemony upon the civilian population.

Much of the literature on the guerrilla war has argued that chiefs were discredited because of their close association with the Rhodesian state. Some chiefs supported the government and faced the wrath of the guerrilla forces. Following the convictions for assisting ‘terrorists’ and like offences, some Chiefs and Headmen were removed from office and had benefits withdrawn. The District Commissioners were instructed to act timeously on the dismissal of chiefs and headmen and not take more than 11 months to finalize cases.⁴⁸ The murder of Chief Gutu Amos Makumbe by freedom fighters prompted the government to design ways of providing maximum security to the chiefs. To show that the chiefs’ position was revered, Minister Francis Zindoga and Zimuto had to attend the chief’s funeral. Admittedly, chiefs were prime targets for the freedom fighters and so precautions were to be taken by District Commissioners to ensure as much as possible the safety of their chiefs. If a chief was not already

⁴⁷ G. C. Mazarire; *Where Civil Blood Made Soldiers Hands Unclean’ Rethinking War time Coercion in Rural Rhodesia. Reflections on the Chivi Experience 1976-1980*, p. 47.

⁴⁸ PER 5/GEN/4/77 Correspondence from R. L. Westcott (PC-Fort Victoria) to DC-Gutu.

in a Protected Village or a Senator Chief, he was to have his homestead fenced and guarded or be moved to the nearest Station Headquarters.⁴⁹

If there was no accommodation for the chief, it was suggested that the local population be drafted to erect superior pole and dagga huts as a temporary measure. Under no circumstances was the chief permitted or expected to travel on public transport or in any other than that provided by the District Commissioner or the security forces. If required to travel, the chief was to be included in a properly formed and European led patrol or convoy. Chiefs were to continue carrying out their duties by being included in INTAF/Security Force patrols as often as possible.⁵⁰ Thereafter, firearms were to be issued to Chiefs and their Deputies. G.A. Leggett in his capacity as the Victoria Provincial Commissioner advised the District Commissioner of Gutu to collect firearms held in his safe for issue to Deputy Chief Chitsa and Chief Mabika. Firearms were issued for protection against ‘terrorists’ at the height of the war. However, Kiripo Chitsa’s application for a firearm was turned down by Menzies on the grounds of his rowdy behaviour and his numerous unprofessional requests to the DC.⁵¹ What is crucial here is to note that the chiefs were within an elite category where their status afforded them access to protection and weapons.

However, in as much as the institution of Chieftainship was discredited by its collaboration with the colonial administration resulting in many chiefs and headmen being killed during the war, Alexander queries the simplicity of the contention that chiefs automatically lost legitimacy by accepting government-recognized offices. Chiefs’ responses to the war situation varied depending on local circumstances and in some instances, the Rhodesian government could not effectively control them. Both nationalists and guerrillas preferred to use chiefs rather than to attack them. As Nyambara puts it, ‘guerrillas were not opposed to chieftaincy *per se* but to its use in the service of government’.⁵² Thus, the history of chiefly politics during the war was therefore much more complex than simply that of collaboration with the Rhodesian government. Chief Chingombe’s memory of this episode, tracing nuances of authority, reflected the wariness about mixing politics and civil service administration;

⁴⁹ PER 5/CHIEFS/GEN/6/77 Protection of Chiefs, R.L. Westcott (PC) to DCs Gutu.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Kiripo Chitsa had also written letters to Menzies, requesting that the NC facilitates the issuing of a driver’s licence to him and also organise a position for his wife as a woman adviser.

⁵² P. S. Nyambara., ‘Immigrants, “Traditional” Leaders and the Rhodesian State: The Power of “Communal” Land Tenure and the Politics of Land Acquisition in Gokwe, Zimbabwe, 1963–1979’, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 27, 4 (2001), p.787.

The chiefs were caught in a dilemma because on one side they received pay from the government for maintaining law and order while on the other; they were supposed to represent the people. Either way, they were unreliable but such a position should not be overemphasized because before they started operating in an area, freedom fighters knew that they needed the spiritual blessings which chiefs dispensed.⁵³

Chief Chingombe's observation complements Kriger's argument that the chiefs derived reassurance that they were still important and respected through the guerilla practice of offering prayers to the tribal spirits. Ransome Makamure refuted the claim that all chiefs were 'sell-outs', citing that Chief Chimwana Chingombe's sons Chasara, Mudiwa, Muzvare and Tatenda joined the liberation struggle while his fifth son Chakanaka who was a war collaborator died at the Kamungoma massacre.⁵⁴

The escalating guerrilla war thus led to shifts among local power structures in Gutu. Youths who felt structurally disadvantaged saw possible allies in the arrival of the guerillas. The guerillas in turn applauded the youth for their bravery through executing dicey military errands unarmed. Some youths for example, Cosmas Gonese and Muchineripi Muchineripi, among others, received military training under the tutelage of these guerillas and were deployed into the war front. Many elders therefore resented the youths for their brutal behaviour during the war and the alleged responsibility for much unnecessary killing of alleged 'informers'. Included in the potpourri of the motives behind youths' behaviour, was the desire to impress their new masters and peers with their zeal to assert themselves over their elders. A study by Ranger in Makoni insinuates that since the guerillas were young, they were closer to teenagers than they were to resident elders. As a result, the young men with guns were able to exercise a great deal of power, calling upon the teenagers to act as their cooks, informants and messengers.⁵⁵

6.4 Hegemonic precepts of the *Pungwe*

The *Pungwe* meetings are a salient feature of the liberation war showing the coercive nature of the liberation war. In this section, I advance the argument that these meetings reproduced new forces of hegemonic discourses in which there were unequal relations of power among the guerrillas, the masses (*povho*) and among the masses themselves. While the *pungwe* created conditions where the *povho* had to make choices, the choices were not consensual but

⁵³ Interview with Chief Chingombe, Gutu, 28 December 2013.

⁵⁴ Interview with Ransome Makamure, Masvingo, 17 August 2013.

⁵⁵ Ranger, *Peasant Consciousness*, p.207.

were largely tied to differences that were tolerated by those who wielded the gun. To this end, Mlambo has dismissed Kriger's *Zimbabwe's Guerrilla War: Peasant Voices* for its "gross distortion of the Zimbabwe reality". Similar sentiments have also been pronounced by Cheater that Kriger's book is a badly flawed contribution to the literature on Zimbabwe's liberation struggle.

The bone of contention has been Kriger's unwavering stance that the war of national liberation was a revolution in which peasants did not voluntarily support the guerrillas. In as much as the idea that mobilization of masses at *Pungwe* was achieved only through coercion is fallacious and misguided, it is simplistic and not an outright truism that the political mobilization was voluntaristic. In marked contrast to Kriger's argument that the relationship was from the start characterized by hostilities, Manungo has painted a simplistic picture that suggests that the relationship between the freedom fighters and the masses was harmonious spontaneously.⁵⁶ However, Manungo's romanticized and idealized characterization of the peasant-guerrilla relationships as always smooth and without any potential conflicts is significantly contradicted in Makari's *Zvaida Kushinga*. Makari notes that the initial contact between the freedom fighters and the villagers was marked by fear, trepidation, and uncertainty on the part of the villagers.⁵⁷

According to Viriri, ordinary people and the freedom fighters represented two fields and two totally distinct units of actions, irreducibly opposed and perfectly contradictory to begin with.⁵⁸ The complexity of *pungwe* therefore emanates from its implied production of hegemonic and counter hegemonic tendencies that developed between the freedom fighters' forces and masses and amongst the masses themselves. As Mazarire aptly put it '...the base was a site of all the struggles about the struggle and those struggles within it'.⁵⁹

It is quite clear from the foregoing discussion that the relationship between the freedom fighters and the masses was not automatically cordial. The themes that emerge are that both coercion and persuasion were employed during the struggle. Even though these coercive and

⁵⁶ K.D.Manungo, *The Role Peasants played in the Zimbabwe War of Liberation, with Special Emphasis on Chiweshe*. Unpublished PhD Thesis, Ohio University, 1991.

⁵⁷ C.S. Makari, *Zvaida Kushinga*, Mambo Press, Gweru, 1984.

⁵⁸ A.Viriri, 'Seiko Musina Morari?': *The Carnavalesque Modes of the Pungwe Institution in Selected Shona Novels*, Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of South Africa, 2013.' p.14.

⁵⁹ G. C. Mazarire 'Where Civil Blood Made Soldiers Hands Unclean; Rethinking, War-time coercion in Rural Rhodesia: Reflections on the Chivi Experience 1976-1980' *Journal of African Conflict and Development*, Vol.1, No. 1, (2000), p.311.

persuasive techniques might not have been used as a way of forcing people into doing something they did not want, the guerillas' decisions as the military elite ultimately prevailed. As one informant testified;

The comrades were the lawmakers and the judges. Their word was final. Even if you came up with a very constructive idea particularly when it was clear that *mujibhas* had used personal hatred to identify sell-outs you also risked being labeled as one. People just listened and obeyed. It was rare for the freedom fighters to follow a certain protocol that was meant to show respect to the village leadership. Even though *pungwe* meetings were not always violent, the mere sight of the gun was intimidating. It was even worse if you conjured memories of people who were beaten or shot in your presence.⁶⁰

Although punishment was not always in the form of death, that there was punishment at the *Pungwe* cannot be denied. Mazarire also established that the normal indicator of a thorough beating and a signal to stop the beating was when one soiled himself. After the beating, one would have to display the soiled pants to the public, if he could still manage.⁶¹ That *mujibhas* or guerrillas slept with the girls against the liberation code of conduct is also shown in Choto's *Vavariro*. In Samupindi's *Pawns* the taboos that imposed no sex between guerrillas were traversed with impunity.⁶² Many women also used guerillas to try to bolster their influence, in relation to their husbands. They called on the guerillas to get their husbands to stop beating them or divorcing them, and the guerillas desperate for local supporters, often intervened on their behalf, sometimes publicly beating errant husbands.⁶³ Equally so, those accused of witchcraft were flogged and in extreme cases killed. In the Munyikwa area of Gutu, Manyemba Chipuru, a *n'anga*, escaped death by a whisker after a thorough beating by freedom fighters who had been told that he was a witch.

While the elderly possessed knowledge of cultural and religious traditions that placed them in a position of power in relation to the younger generation, the war shifted the power imbalance in favour of the young. Experiences, knowledge and social roles of the old were

⁶⁰ Interview with Garai Hamutyinei, Gutu, 27 December 2013.

See also David Maxwell, *Christians and Chiefs in Zimbabwe. A Social History of the Hwesa People c.1870s -1990s*, p.122. He notes that the comrades replaced the local political structures, killed state-imposed headmen and in some cases relieved traditional leaders of their official badges and replaced them with local committees.

⁶¹ G. C. Mazarire; 'Discipline and Punishment in ZANLA:1964-1979' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 37:3, 571-591

⁶² C. Samupindi, *Pawns*, Baobab Books, Harare, 1992.

⁶³ N. Kriger, *The Zimbabwean War of Liberation*, p.319.

undermined. The prevailing situation threatened to destroy the ideal that age was the prerequisite of authority where privileges were accorded progressively by age-grade. The war-manufactured settings and social discourses presented different challenges and conflicts to different positions in the intergenerational matrix. The elderly came to believe that they had lost their authority and that they have to listen to their children and grandchildren who sometimes enforced their will and needs by perpetrating violence or abuse upon the elderly. A former *mujibha* remarked;

To some extent, younger people viewed the elderly as symbols of oppression particularly those who had been employed in towns and had managed to build some good homes and owned bicycles. In the majority of cases, these are the people who were labeled as sell-outs and you cannot rule out petty jealousies having taken centre stage.⁶⁴

The political environment played a role in reconfiguring and redefining hierarchies. The fragile and vindictive political environment gave young people the opportunity to bypass seniority and escape the dilemmas of dependency and autonomy. That the undemocratic nature of the whole political apparatus gave rise to new elite configurations cannot be denied. The whole scenario was indicative of elite interchangeability.

6.5 The rural salariats and the war

As already indicated, the war had overturned the political hierarchies of the villages and district. That there were differences in how the freedom fighters viewed the ‘rural salariats’⁶⁵ is quite plausible. As Sadomba observed, different periods of recruitment and the quality of recruits of freedom fighters continued to change in terms of geography, age and literacy level. As a result, upon interacting with peasants and workers, relations were also shaped by the background character of the guerilla, the depth of the political education the guerilla had received and the nature of the people he had interacted with.⁶⁶

On the aspect of whether the guerillas identified any group as class enemies, Ranger established that class tensions were apparent between peasants and Purchase area farmers, rural

⁶⁴ Interview with Kuvarega Ruzive, Gutu, 6 August 2013.

⁶⁵ The term ‘rural salariats’ refers to white collar workers, bureaucrats and lower executives who worked in the rural areas. I included the rural businessmen in this category. The phrase is almost synonymous with ‘sarari man’ which was imported into Korea from Japan, where it became popular in the 1930s.

⁶⁶ Z. W. Sabomba, *War Veterans in Zimbabwe's Revolution. Challenging Neo-colonialism and Settler and International Capital*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2011,, p.62.

businessmen and foreign migrants. Both the peasants and the local elite expressed a symbolic status distance and lack of trust. Stratification-related conflicts arising from a differentiated peasantry were expressed as envy and grievance held by the less well-off peasants against better-off peasants and the rural elite. Such envy found legitimate expression in the guise of aiding guerilla security in the identification of sell-outs. Teachers, missionaries, shopkeepers, nurses, agricultural extension workers and migrant workers in towns were all potential targets. According to Makadho, many teachers went to live in their home areas when schools closed because 'it was better to be among people whom you knew.'⁶⁷

As Sadomba puts it, 'allegations that elite members were government informers meshed with guerilla suspicions about the loyalty of the petty bourgeoisie'.⁶⁸ The claim that war committees further entrenched divisions however seems to have been exaggerated. Although not all teachers, businessmen, storekeepers and purchase area farmers were not part of the war committee structure; their relations with the freedom fighters were not always tense. That the village committees saw rural power shifting from the chiefs, teachers, and businessmen through guerillas to *mujibhas*, *chimbwidos* and the village committees has a grain of truth. However, as Ephraim Marwizi put it, 'the freedom fighters worked closely with teachers and businessmen because these are the same people who supplied them with food and clothes.

People who were not trusted by the guerillas were the agricultural demonstrators (*madhumeni*) and health assistants (*vanaUtsanana*').⁶⁹ In his study of the Makoni District, Ranger also alluded to the gender and generational tensions that the young guerillas initially provoked;

...there were some substantial discontinuities also which made it difficult for there to be immediate or total collaboration between the peasant elders and the young guerillas. To begin with the guerillas were young and they were closer to the teenagers...Men in their fifties who had hitherto dominated Makoni peasant radicalism and who were used to controlling a flock of dependent women...now found that the initiative had passed to young men with guns. These young men called upon the unmarried women of Makoni to act as their cooks, informants, and messengers and in these latter two roles teenage girls were able to exercise a good deal of power, for the first time in Makoni history.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ N. Kriger, *The Zimbabwean War*. p.258.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Interview with Ephraim Marwizi, Gutu 22 August 2013.

⁷⁰ Ranger, *Peasant Consciousness*.pp206-207

Even after the war, Ranger found ‘a good deal of remembered resentment among elders and parents directed against the power exercised by the *mujibhas* during the war.’⁷¹ Liberation war networks between the freedom fighters and the *mujibhas* and *chimbwidos* were tainted with jealous and mistaken identity which also accounted for the death of many innocent people. What made the position of the businessmen and rural salarials precarious was that besides their potential to sell-out in order to protect their interests, they were obligated to contribute food and money to the guerillas whose numbers continued to multiply. Any hesitation was read as a potential defection and dealt with as such, closing the flow of rewards for the culprit and his or her loyal following. These people suffered molestation and some of them had their property destroyed.

From the mid-1970s, most businesses in Gutu suffered a severe knock as a result of the war of liberation. Nhongo-Simbanegavi notes that without appropriate political training to confront the complexities of the operational zones, some freedom fighters had little ability to put civilian definitions of ‘sell-outs’ into their proper perspectives.⁷² Rural teachers who made the greater proportion of businessmen and from whom huge sums of money and goods were demanded were branded sell-outs and had their shops destroyed. Chandimhara Makamure had his business at Mutambwi-Chingombe business centre gutted by fire when some *mujibhas* had ‘mistakenly’ taken his calculator for a communication device. In 1975, George Simbi was shot dead by Rhodesian security forces for supporting the liberation struggle through recruiting people and transporting them to the Mozambican border, providing food, clothing and transport to the freedom fighters. His taxis and a restaurant at Bhasera were burnt.⁷³ Auxilia Mandizvidza a leading businesswoman and an active ZANU supporter provided food and clothing to the guerrillas from the family stores and restaurants at Bhasera and Ruti Dam.⁷⁴

By early 1979, almost all African stores owned by Greeks had been ransacked, roofing sheets and window frames stolen by villagers who went on to construct their own dwellings. Business in liberated zones ground to a halt because no fresh stocks were brought into the shops.

⁷¹ Ibid, p.292.

⁷² J.Nhongo-Simbanegavi, *For Better or For Worse? Women and ZANLA in Zimbabwe’s liberation Struggle*, Harare: Weaver, 2000.p.102.

⁷³ Interview with Julius Simbi, Gutu, 18 July 2013.

⁷⁴ Interview with F. F. Shava, Gweru, 25 June 2013. This was also confirmed by Ephraim Marwizi in an interview at Gutu, 22 August 2013.

Established businessmen like Elias Madondo and Piniel Mkushi were the few who weathered the storm into independence because some of their businesses at Gutu-Mpandawana growth point never ceased to operate even at the height of the war while the small rural businessmen closed shop.

The business community, like the other rural salarieds found itself trapped between the violence and demands of both the Rhodesian security forces and guerillas. Such a politically fragile environment created fertile ground for the emergence of criminal networks which facilitated the rise of elites. Some people gained from the war through dishonest means as spaces of action and recognition were opened to wider sets of individuals. Some eminent members of the community created for themselves a profile of entrepreneurs solidly buttressed by supporting the freedom fighters. Observations were made that illegal or extralegal means also sustained economic mobility, whether upward or downward. Thus politics, theft and the war converged frequently in the manufacturing of elites. Although he could neither confirm nor dismiss the claim that his brothers made money during the war by faking robberies, Ransome Makamure recounted incidences where his brothers Onai, Kurungama and Peacemaker who were bus drivers would report having lost money to the guerillas.

During the war, bus robberies were a common occurrence and I remember my brothers reporting that they had lost money to the freedom fighters. Buses were also burnt and being a driver was risky business. I would even persuade them to resign because driving in the rural areas was risky. Many buses were blown by landmines. Whether they made money out of it besides the salaries they received remained their secret. Of course, one would not rule out possibilities of wartime profit.⁷⁵

Matambanadzo, one of Zimbabwe's prominent transport entrepreneurs, lost 63 buses- 15 in a single day to guerilla attacks in July 1979.⁷⁶ While the war drove some people out of business, that 'wartime pickings'⁷⁷ ushered some people into business could not be doubted. As Emmanuel Makadho stated;

One of my relatives E. M, then transport manager of Kugara Kunzwana who was stationed at Gutu-Mpandawana growth point is a classic example of the beneficiaries of wartime profit. Taking a bullet to the employer was enough evidence that the bus had been robbed of all takings. He

⁷⁵ Interview with Ransome Makamure, Masvingo 17 August 2013.

⁷⁶ V.Wild, *Profit Not for Profit's Sake*, p.228.

⁷⁷ The phrase is used to refer to any financial or material gains made through taking advantage of the war situation.

would fake robberies on numerous occasions. E.M went on to establish businesses and operate a fleet of buses in Gweru soon after independence.⁷⁸

Muchemwa Mawere of the Zvichemo Enterprises at Gutu-Mpandawana was employed as a driver by the Shu-Shine bus company during the war. He is also believed to have made substantial ‘wartime pickings’. In the face of such claims and allegations, it is crucial to note that some conclusions may be products of ignorance on how drivers’ meteoric transformation from rags to riches might have come about. P. Hall the proprietor of Shu-Shine Bus Company gave his workers buses as retirement packages. Maziriri (a long serving driver) and Matapura (an inspector) were given a bus each and such could have been the beginnings of wealth accumulation by others.⁷⁹

6.6 Conclusion

The chapter discussed how the guerilla war affected rural society through tracing the war-induced breakdown of traditional structures and modes of thought in the manufacturing of new elites. The political strife, suspicions and tensions within ZANU during the liberation struggle were used to illustrate how politicians appealed to regional identifications in their complex power games as they mobilized support. The chapter also explored war experiences in Gutu district as a backdrop to understanding how the war environment manufactured its own elite as some people took advantage of the war to enrich themselves. The next chapter explores elite manufacture in the post-colonial era.

⁷⁸ Interview with Emmanuel Makadho, Gweru, 10 February 2014.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

Chapter 7: Diversity of Elite Configurations and Clusters of power in the post-colonial Gutu: 1980-2013

7.0 Introduction

Zimbabwe's independence ushered changes in the local political arena which witnessed the induction of new elites and the accretion of power into the hands of new elites. The availability of vast amounts of patronage gave impetus to localized struggle for power. As the existing elite tried to retain their positions in the face of competition from others, political competition was heightened.

This chapter dwells on the factors that were helpful for the acquisition of elite status and the several paths available for the establishment of strong bases of social capital. As new institutions opened up, the elites tended to spread their political influence further through social networks. Given the violent war for independence and the avowedly socialist objectives of the new government, one expectation might have been that the new black elite would seek to distinguish their lifestyles from those of the former colonialists. On the other hand, it could be argued that taking over the privileges of the former colonialists would be regarded as an authenticating mark of status for these black elites.¹ Since the new government was drawn from several sources for example, war veterans who were active in the battlefield, exiled politicians and ex-detainees, the chapter traces the diversity of elite configurations in an environment where the wartime devolution of power altered the structural fabric of post-war society.

¹ R. Belk, Consumption Patterns of the New elite in Zimbabwe, Working Paper Number 288 University of Utah, February 2000.

7.1 Seizing opportunities and crafting selves

Zimbabwe's independence was a product of a bitter armed struggle. In the post war period, some of the war veterans testified to a sense of social demotion rather than promotion, because their wartime gains had not permitted them to accumulate wealth or invest in production. Some felt ashamed to go home empty-handed or to ask family members for help.² As Sadomba noted, unlike the Rhodesian soldiers who were salaried, the guerillas had nothing. They had been unpaid in the bush, and lacked savings, pension plan, health schemes or any other benefits of employment. They possessed nothing in terms of shelter or sources of food. They even lacked clothes.³

The crucial elements which could have enabled them to counteract pre-war inequalities, , transform their soldier status into civilian were opportunities to further education and their life plans according to their own expectations and wishes. With the integration of ZANLA, ZIPRA and the Rhodesian Forces into the Zimbabwe National Army, joining the National Army provided ex-combatants with a sense of social promotion, a status elevated above other civilians. Serving in the army lent prestige or provided opportunities to profit from power and status.

The demobilization process which started in 1982, with a one off \$50 000 payment and \$185 per month allowance for two years brought temporary relief but again proved inefficient and untimely. Demobilization money was also paid to undeserving relatives and friends of senior commanders who amassed financial wealth at unprecedented levels, many becoming millionaires.⁴ According to Kriger, demobilization was corruptly and unfairly handled as groups of relatives and concubines of senior commanders and politicians benefitted at the expense of the deserving ex-combatants.⁵ As early as the first two years after independence, General Mujuru had amassed such wealth that he is said to have literally bought Shamva and Bindura towns,⁶ so did Phebiion Shonhiwa at Gutu.⁷ A few war veterans went into trade and small business; some of

² Interview with Phainos Ziyema at Baro Township, Gutu, 8 August 2013.

³ Z. W. Sadomba, *War Veterans in Zimbabwe's Revolution. Challenging Neo-colonialism and Settler and International Capital*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2011, p.58.

⁴ Ibid, p.69.

⁵ N. Kriger, *Guerrilla Veterans in Post War Zimbabwe: Symbolic and Violent Politics, 1980-1987*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003, p.70.

⁶ Z. W. Sadomba, *War Veterans in Zimbabwe's Revolution*, p.69.

⁷ Interview with S.K at Gutu, 10 August 2013. Shonhiwa secured several business stands at Mupandawana Growth Point.

them were employed by state organisations, parastatals and local authorities while others formed producer and service cooperatives, mainly in agriculture. To a large measure though, the demobilization funds were recklessly spent. One ex-combatant had to buy vegetables to feed stray cattle and hired three Madondo taxis to separately ferry his jacket, groceries and himself from Gutu-Mpandawana to Nerupiri, a distance of almost 62 kilometres.⁸

What was evident was that possession of unique political knowledge as a result of their war service also accounted for the veterans' expression of superiority over civilians. This sense of superiority influenced veterans' involvement in political activity at various levels and the measure of political autonomy that they enjoyed cushioned them from external interference from WADCOs and VIDCOs.⁹

A few who had received education before, during and after the war followed specialist training despite a low level of formal education. Unemployed war veterans also attempted to solve their problems and meet their ambitions in a more specific or localized form, for example by forming non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and agricultural co-operatives for the purposes of self-rehabilitation. In 1985, war veterans, chiefs and spirit mediums in Masvingo formed the Association of Zimbabwe Traditional Ecologists (AZTREC) later renamed the Association of Zimbabwe Traditional Environmental Conservationists headed by Cosmas Gonese from Gutu.¹⁰

Fidelis Chimombe a veteran of the liberation struggle also introduced the Youth Brigade organization which culminated in the establishment of skills training centres to train mostly *mujibhas* and *chimbwidos* of the war to qualify as artisans in the construction industry, mechanical engineering, agriculture and so forth.¹¹ With the help of war veterans, people organized themselves into groups in order to pool labour and equipment, attract extension services and credit, and ensure input supplies and access to market. These organizations were largely spontaneous, self-managed and took the form of savings clubs, *mushandirapamwe* (working together) groups, or master-farmer clubs. Their leadership was selected according to achievement in agriculture rather than by any ascriptive party tie. The fact that some of the

⁸ Interview with Francis Mukaro, Gutu, 26 July 2013.

⁹ Michael Bratton, 'The Comrades and the Countryside: The Politics of Agricultural Policy in Zimbabwe' *World Politics*, Vol. 39, No. 2 (Jan., 1987), p.194.

¹⁰ Z. W. Sadomba, *War Veterans in Zimbabwe's Revolution*, p.85. Cosmas Gonese was trained by the Musikavanhu guerrilla sector inside the country between 1976 and 1977.

¹¹ *Ibid*, p.87.

groups were not registered as cooperatives meant that they were not subject to the regulations and direction of the Department of Cooperatives. Most importantly though is the fact that the war veterans popularized cooperatives and soon many of them mushroomed. According to Francis Mukaro, many of the cooperatives created village artisans.¹²

War veterans, local chiefs, councilors, school heads and VIDCOs and WADCOs were active in promoting the interests of the projects. A serious mistake made by the advocates of community development was the assumption that a village constituted a group of people with common interests. The power structure on a rural level was ignored and yet in every community there are people who wield power. Although in principle membership was open to all, in reality the moderate and prosperous villagers controlled and managed the cooperatives. Levels of literacy were very low among women who incidentally constituted the majority of members of these cooperatives.

There was also little cooperation among the women stemming from different levels of commitment to cooperative activities. This led to confrontation and bad feelings among them rather than collaboration. As a result, these cooperative societies mostly benefited the prosperous given that they tended to look after only their members, while a much broader section of the community remained in need. The different positions that men and women occupied had far – reaching implications. The nature of projects was associated with women’s day-to-day household chores, a move which further domesticated women. Men perceived cooperatives as women’s organisations but in some cases few male volunteers known to the women were recruited for filling out forms and keeping accounts.

Generally, people were unable to maintain cooperatives for lack of money and also because the local leaders who acted as effective gatekeepers to government–provided assistance, either diverted resources to their use or further deepened their power over the poor by becoming the resource distributors. The cooperative movement in its entirety also became highly politicized and identified with the ruling party ZANU-PF. It turned out that while purporting to serve the general interests of society, the political elites developed mechanism to advance their sectional interests.

¹² The Domborembizi Precoop at Majada Business Centre started in 1984, Zanoredu Uniform Making was formed in 1986 in the Chagwiza area, Tashinga Soap Making at Dewure Business Centre (1987), Zvavaregere Bakery (1989) located at Muchekayaora, Chinyika Handicraft at Chinyika Skills learnt included sewing, dressmaking, pottery, crocheting, gardening, poultry, piggery, knitting, cutting and designing. CADEC organized skill enhancement courses. Companies like David Whitehead organised courses in dressmaking.

Bad blood between VIDCOs and WADCOs on one hand and Chiefs on the other negatively impacted upon the operation of cooperatives. According to Ephraim Marwizi, grinding mill cooperatives in the Chepiri, Chitsa, Gomba and Kurai areas ground to a halt because of power struggles, poor management and interference by local traditional structures in the running of these cooperatives. ‘Chiefs and headmen wanted regular remittances by cooperatives operating in their areas’.¹³ At the behest of VIDCOs, WADCOs, Councilors, Headmen and chiefs, the donors, through the cooperatives they funded were chaperoned to attend and donate money towards political meetings and gatherings. The once progressive cooperatives collapsed. Even though most of the cooperatives collapsed, members gained life-long skills like sewing, knitting and running poultry projects which transformed their lives.¹⁴ After the disbanding of Zanoredu Uniform Making and Chinyika Handicraft cooperatives, individuals were contracted by Mr and Mrs Jacobs of the Spiderweb enterprises to produce cotton and silk crotchery garments and related products for export.¹⁵ People seized opportunities which improved their statuses.

The rapid commercialization of agriculture after 1980 also generated intense competition for land where the ensuing competition saw the powerful and wealthy people often manipulating the land allocation institutions and rules to accumulate large holdings. In 1981, the Customary Law and Primary Courts replaced chiefs’ and headmen’s courts with elected presiding officers. The District Councils Act 1981 set up elected district councils as key institutions of rural local government while the Communal Land Act provided for the regulation of the occupation and use of communal land. In 1982, the Communal Lands Act gave district councils authority over land allocation, thus displacing the Tribal Land Authorities. Within the rural areas, as Alexander observed, the displacement of customary authority was decidedly ambiguous in that

¹³ Interview with Ephraim Marwizi, Gutu, 22 August 2013.

¹⁴ Interview with Mrs Hama of Zanoredu Cooperative 11 July 2013. She narrated how the local authorities would pester them for money for permission granted to operate in their areas of jurisdiction. Donations towards Heroes and Independence Celebrations were indeed a must for the cooperatives.

¹⁵ Interview with Melania Muza, Chinyika, Gutu, 6 July 2013. Mr and Mrs Jacobs were prominent farmers and business people who operated in the Chirumanzu, Chartsworth and Mvuma areas who contracted local communities to make crotchery garments which they exported.

pronouncements at district level were contradictory and at the same time, the central government instituted or perpetuated a number of measures that retained chiefs' status.¹⁶

A 1984 directive by the then Prime Minister, Robert Mugabe created VIDCOs, WADCOs, district and provincial development committees. These comprised of civil servants chaired by administrators, and the Provincial Governor who was a powerful political appointee. The VIDCOs and WADCOs were intended to create an entirely new basis for rural authority.¹⁷ Responsibility over land allocation was transferred from the traditional leadership of chiefs, headmen and village heads to the rural district councils which in turn executed their functions through VIDCOs and WADCOs. Since then, conflict between village heads and VIDCOs was outrightly a struggle for power and patronage.

As new institutions opened up, the traditionally closed, stratified social systems based on a system of rigid hierarchy started opening up to the winds of change where power and status, rather than being entirely ascribed, became the subject of intense competition. According to Terence Ranger, 'In practice, what was experienced was a relaxation of central control for the first time in decades . . . Chiefs and headmen and entrepreneurs and village committees and peasant households were all involved in the process of land allocation, appropriation and use in the communal areas'.¹⁸

The erosion of the gains the chiefs had accumulated under colonialism meant that the new government felt a strong suspicion and possibly fears for chiefs' alleged association with the Rhodesian Front government.¹⁹ Chiefs were thrown into the dust bins of obscurity to obliterate their seemingly unfavourable influence among the people. In the process, traditional bonds of unequal status and privilege were challenged and replaced by new norms based on political transaction. New notions of entitlement as purportedly enshrined in the socialist ideology fractured and further undermined the authority of traditional social roles and networks. As a

¹⁶ J. Alexander, *The Unsettled Land. State-Making and the Politics of Land in Zimbabwe 1893-2003*, James Currey, Oxford, 2006, p.108.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ T. Ranger, 'The invention of tradition revisited: The case of colonial Africa', p.369.

¹⁹ P.S. Nyambara, 'The Politics of Land Acquisition and Struggles over Land in the 'Communal' Areas of Zimbabwe: The Gokwe Region in the 1980s and 1990s' *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, Vol.71, No.2, 2001, pp.253-285.

result of these changes, conflict over developmental resources, norms of distribution and reformulation of the core values of rural life became the staple of local politics.

At the root of the growing conflict was the realization that political power and social status were closely related to the allocation of the benefits of development. What can be deciphered here is that even the role conflicts did not however just exist but they were ‘invented’ in a way that reinforced one’s power over an adversary or helped challenge the power of another person or group. The ruling party (ZANU-PF) structures which included the community courts that took over the judicial roles of the chiefs and the VIDCOs and WADCOS bridged the political links between the people and central government. There was however widespread resistance to VIDCO structures by rural communities. As Councillor Eliot Handina Ndonga put it;

WADCOS and VIDCOs were viewed as illegitimate structures with neither credibility nor any real power and resources to implement their roles. In the majority of cases individuals and other wealthier local business people dictated local VIDCO decisions by ensuring that their candidates were elected to important posts on the committees. The committees were subject to open manipulation and this made them very unpopular.²⁰

Despite their revolutionary rhetoric, ZANU-PF had established positive relationships with some local authority figures during the war of independence, no wonder why the post-independence policies which attempted to sweep away the structures of chieftaincy were not implemented uniformly across the country. The chiefs, and spirit mediums continued to exercise authority as politicians were tempted to hatch close links with these traditional authorities. It is prudent to highlight that chiefs continued to receive a salary thus leaving them better off than either elected councilors who received a fraction of the chiefs’ salary or party and VIDCO leaders who received no remuneration.²¹ As Chabal notes, “these politicians themselves realized that their ‘modern’ roles did not really address the demands of the ‘traditional’ world to which they belonged and in respect of which they defined themselves as individuals”.²² In some instances, those who had held positions of authority prior to independence were simply renamed and inserted within the new ZANU hierarchy.

²⁰ Interview with E. H. Ndonga, Gutu, 12 August 2013.

²¹ J. Alexander, *The Unsettled Land. State-Making and the Politics of Land in Zimbabwe 1893-2003*, James Currey, Oxford, 2006, p.109.

²² P. Chabal, *Africa. The Politics of Suffering and Smiling*, Zed Books, New York 2009, p.42.

Members of important lineages who had been alienated during the Rhodesian period but retained legitimacy in the eyes of the people were brought back to replace those who had usurped their positions during colonial rule. Besides their intended objectives, administrative reforms and procedures created opportunities for local political players to assert (or reassert), to negotiate (or renegotiate) entrenched or more volatile positions of status and entitlements in the fabric of local politics. As indicated later, this renegotiation took place in a range of different fora and by different means, ranging from court cases, political networking, lobbying as well as the actual occupation of land.

Chiefs however managed to establish a working relationship with the new government to the extent of pressurizing the government to restore their old powers. Under the mutable rubric of reconciliation and through an appeal for the preservation of culture and custom, senior government officials defended the recognition given to chiefs. Minister of Local Government Eddison Zvobgo argued,

We felt, in the end that we could not do away with our traditions. If we had done so we would have looked like people who do not know where they come from. We would have lost our tradition and dignity if we threw that away. We therefore agreed that chieftainship was part and parcel of our culture.²³

Justifying the decision by the government to give chiefs judicial functions, the Minister of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs stated that “the primary courts system had been embarrassing for elderly people to appear before youthful village and community court presiding officers with marital and family problems”.²⁴ The Minister of Local Government however retains overall authority over traditional leaders as he “may, by written notice, give to the Chiefs, Headmen and Village Heads such directions of a general character as to the policy they must observe in the exercise of their functions as appear to the Minister necessary in the national interest.”²⁵ Addressing chiefs, then Vice-President Mujuru emphasized their status stating, ‘Chiefs are not ordinary people. You are the tower lights of our culture, the icons and our identity.’²⁶ ZANU PF’s strategy of co-opting Chiefs has thus been pursued by leaving ultimate authority over traditional leaders and structures with central government; through the restoration of powers to the Chiefs (which can be used against political opponents) and by largesse.

²³ *The Herald*, 18 January 1982.

²⁴ *The Herald* 3 November 1988 and *The Sunday Mail* 06/11/1988).

²⁵ Section 49 of the Traditional Leaders Act.

²⁶ *The Herald* 1 October 2010.

7.2 The elites and the politics of land redistribution

Master Farmers who held certificates issued by the agricultural extension service were included in the list of people targeted for resettlement in 1984. While the resettlement programme by the new government was meant to ease land pressure, it was slow to take effect and in some cases, even the 1985 Land Acquisition Act, which was intended to aid in the acquisition of land for resettlement was scarcely used. Instead, Palmer argues that the Act aided in the accumulation of land by the black elite since some farms offered to the government were rebuffed and shoved onto the private market, where they eventually ended up in the hands of 'senior members of the government and the new black ruling elite.'²⁷

After the expiry of the Lancaster House Constitution, provincial land identification committees, with representatives from Agritex, ZANU-PF and the Commercial Farmers' Union (CFU) were established to identify land for acquisition. However, when the lists of farms targeted for acquisition were made public in 1993, they diverged substantially from those compiled by the committees, apparently reflecting struggles within the party and state over how and on what grounds commercial land should be acquired. In 1995, the ZANU-PF dominated National Land Task Force was established, marking an important movement in the locus of decision-making beyond the reach of ministerial structures. In Gutu, farmers like Makierk (popularly known as Makaki), Odendaal and Dicken Mal (popularly known as Derek) had up to 1995 remained on their farms and started to develop fully the Gutu area which had been demarcated as the European area. They had their offices in Chatsworth which they later sold to the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe following the merger of Gutu and Mpandawana areas in 1994.

C. Odendaal, whose family owned Condor and Lorn farms, was elected as the Councillor who represented the white community in the area. When veterans of Zimbabwe's liberation war initiated a wave of occupations of commercial farm land in 2000, the government was quick to come up with a policy- the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP). More people moved into the farms around the years 2000 and 2001 following the invasion of farms surrounding the Roy area by war veterans led by Black Jesus.

²⁷ R.Palmer, 'Land Reform in Zimbabwe, 1980-1990', *African Affairs*, 89, 355, 1990, pp. 180-1.

At the same time, some people made calls that they wanted to be resettled in the lands once occupied by their forefathers. Musarurwa and his people wanted to go back into the Jirimanda area.²⁸ The rising competition over land opened a hornet's nest of potential conflict between land occupiers and government authorities, the ruling ZANU-PF and influential members, based on attempts to evict the occupiers or exclude them from benefitting in the allocation process. There were open conflicts within the District Lands and Resettlement Committee which controlled land distribution. The Committee was made up of representatives of the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP), Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO), District Development Fund (DDF), Local Government, War Veterans Chairperson, Council Chairman and a Chief. As Lund put it, struggles over land fanned the flames of political conflict.²⁹

In Gutu, there were numerous localized and contradictory waves of land occupation. As the central state increasingly lost authority and control, new sources emerged. Although the District Lands and Resettlement Committee was formally chaired by the District Administrator, in most instances war veteran leaders were in control. The war veterans were the law unto themselves. Chenjerai Hunzvi then Chairman of the ZNLWVA remarked, 'the police cannot do anything to us [the war veterans]. We are the leaders.'³⁰

While addressing people at the Chiefs' Hall in Masvingo town on 29 November 2000, Hunzvi urged them to go and invade farms. In Masvingo, the long-running ZANU-PF factional fighting between the Zvobgo and the then Vice President Simon Muzenda divisions continued to be played out in this period. The dramaturgical invasion of Clare, Lonely and Northdale farms in Gutu is illustrative. In October 2000, war veterans established their base on Clare Farm and asked the farm owner to drive his cattle to the other side of the Chatsworth-Masvingo road so they could plant crops. When the farmer refused to comply, they took it upon themselves to drive out the farmer through an operation code named '*Operation Garirainoko*'. The police were called in but did not intervene.

In January 2001, the Ministry of Lands officers arrived to peg the land which was later allocated to the people by the District Administrator. The District Development Fund (DDF) sent tractors to help clear land. The Lonely Farm one of J. M. Erasmus's eight farms was first invaded

²⁸ Interview with Francis Mukaro, Gutu, 26 July 2013.

²⁹ C. Lund, *Local Politics and the Dynamics of Property in Africa*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2008, p. 2.

³⁰ *The Daily News* 14 April 2000.

in 1999. In 2001 government through its officials pegged land and provided offer letters to the new occupants led by Comrades Muchaparara and Gunpowder. Another group of war veterans also led by Comrade Muchaparara invaded Northdale farm belonging to J. C. Jovner who had a diary project.

Most of the people who got plots were outsiders from as far as Buhera who included senior officials who could choose their plots at the offices in town using aerial photographs.³¹ The portion of the farm which included the home stead and dam area had been retained for the former owner but later taken over by a high-ranking government official.³² J. C. Nell's Chindito farm was briefly occupied by the then Vice President Muzenda before he moved to Muirland (Tariro) Farm where his son Tongai Muzenda, the former ZANU-PF legislator for Gutu West resides. Following Muzenda's footsteps, Shuvai Mahofa also went into Chindito farm where she inherited the derelict farming equipment Muzenda had left behind before she moved into J. C. Smuts' Ludron farm.³³ The former Minister of Finance, Samuel Mumbengegwi went into Floradale farm.

In practice, party loyalty was a passport to recognition of land claims by both A1 plot holders referred to as the 'new settlers' and the A2 farm occupants referred to as 'new farmers'. The Masvingo Provincial ZANU-PF political commissar bluntly told the MDC supporters to go to the MDC if they wanted land.³⁴ The partisan and autonomous character of land committees displaced older forms of authority over land. ZANU-PF credentials were necessary to the exercise of authority. Committees of the FTLRP, civil servants, Ministers and ZANU-PF stalwarts started to bring in new beneficiaries to take over land thereby instigating new waves of occupations.

The Chinyaure people went into Harvey Farm. McIntosh's Grasslands farm and Silverdale farm (which was one of J. C. Smuts' four farms in the area) were occupied by people from Makura, Mushangwe, Muchekayaora and Mazuru areas led by Ephraim Marwizi the former ZANU-PF legislator for Gutu East. Plots in these farms were first allocated to those villagers

³¹ I. Scoones et al, *Zimbabwe's Land Reform: Myths and Realities*, Weaver Press, Harare, p.46.

³² Ibid, p.46-47.

³³ Shuvai Mahofa is the former ZANU-PF Member of Parliament for Gutu South who also served for more than a decade as Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Cooperative and Women's Affairs. In 2015, she was appointed Resident Minister of the Masvingo province.

³⁴ *Mirror*, 10 August 2000, *Zimbabwe Independent*, 11 August 2000, *Daily News*, 22 August 2000, *Daily News*, 8, 10 August, 2000, 11 September 2000.

who had paid money for the welfare of base commanders and their platoons whose role was to drive out the white farmers.³⁵ Chipisa and Inyatsitsi Farms owned by Campbell Holdings were allocated for resettlement. The insecurity of tenure alongside the politics of *jambanja* fed criminality on the farms where looting and vandalism of farm property was common.

Arguably a privileged group of veterans, politicians and business people immensely benefitted from the Fast Track Land Development Programme. Lovemore Matuke then ZANU-PF's Masvingo Provincial Chairman and former legislator of Gutu Central Constituency moved into Chris Nell's Tommy Farm. Tarirai Mandebvu the former ZANU-PF legislator for Gutu West went to settle in Eastdale Farm. It was indeed the land grabbing of elites which provoked veterans into angry protests at the ZANU-PF December 2000 congress. The extent of abuses was further revealed in an official 'land audit'. According to Brian Raftopolous and Ian Phimister, 'the displacement of settled people by the party elite; elite struggles over prime land and the use of 'hired thugs' by sections of the ZANU-PF leadership to press their demands; and the problem of multiple ownership amongst prominent members of the ruling elite'³⁶ were also part of a picture of the struggle for political power and land in Gutu.

Retired civil servants, largely teachers, soldiers and police who showed their loyalty to ZANU-PF rushed for farms. These retired people were largely teachers who before independence owned cars through financiers like SCOTFIN. Retirement had pauperized many of them who now saw land as a revival of lost glory.³⁷ As far as land redistribution was concerned, critics felt that the government should proceed carefully so as not to jeopardize Zimbabwe's international reputation or its position as Southern Africa's 'bread-basket'. The government however organised agricultural extension services for the peasant sector. Access to credit for agricultural inputs was provided for small-scale farming and peasants could now access seeds and agricultural chemicals produced by specialist commercial farmers. The people from the Zinhata, Magombedze and Mupata areas who were resettled in the Chipisa and Inyatsitsi farms had bumper harvests throughout the mid-1990s. One of the resettled farmers Munashe Ganyiwa narrated his success story;

³⁵ Interview with Ephraim Marwizi, Gutu, 22 August 2013.

³⁶ B. Raftopolous and I. Phimister, 'Zimbabwe Now: The Political Economy of Crisis and Coercion' *Historical Materialism*, 12:4,2004, p.370.

³⁷ Interview with Senator E.K.Makamure, Gutu, 10 August 2013.

I used to be a nobody because I could not harvest enough to feed my family in the Munyikwa area which had tired soils. Since 1995, I have not harvested less than 20 tonnes of maize and five bags of brown rice. I am now able to pay school fees for my children and even buy livestock. I also sent some maize to my relatives I left in Munyikwa. Thanks to the resettlement scheme.³⁸

To this end, Mahmood Mamdani's 2008 thesis that the fast-track land reform programme did not result only on crony capitalist primitive accumulation by the elites but achieved a radical distribution of land to the landless people of Zimbabwe is an indictment of the earlier literature that outrightly emphasized chaos, violence and corruption as the hallmarks of the fast-track land reform programme. *Chefs* who also acquired farms ventured into commercial farming. Tongai Muzenda became a renowned wheat farmer while Shuvai Mahova started cattle ranching. Of interest though is how the land issue created categories of identity in terms of political loyalty and war of liberation credentials. According to Bratton, 'the chefs succumbed to predatory temptations, in the process transforming themselves into wealthy political barons'.³⁹

7.3 Business is politics and politics is business

During the liberation struggle, businessmen had divided their time between family businesses and the demands of the struggle. Oblivious to the risks and costs involved, business people used the family businesses to provide transport, food, clothing, money and other resources required by freedom fighters to support the war effort. Some businessmen therefore came from the war bruised while others gained business stamina to face new challenges. Some businesses collapsed because people lacked creativity and innovativeness to diversify lines of businesses while others scored tremendous success through political patronage and clientelism.

Strong connections which developed between political and commercial elites enabled big business easy access to the inner ear of government and the other way around. The boundaries that defined politicians and business conglomerates remained porous, enabling political leaders to range widely in gathering resources and preeminence. Access to the political sphere seemed necessary because it was presumed as the means of acquiring wealth. Political rationality called

³⁸ Interview with Munashe Ganyiwa, Gutu, 22 August 2013.

³⁹ Bratton, *Power Politics in Zimbabwe*, p.12.

for the accumulation of as much material resources so that these could be judiciously redistributed in order to obtain political support.

This position contradicted the economic rationality of accumulation for investment. A consideration of the sources of networking among the business people of Gutu revealed that they networked as frequently through both formal and informal linkages. In some cases an influential mentor in the likes of Crispen Mandizvidza initiated them into business. However, business people also often followed in the footsteps of their parents and grandparents, who they typically identified as their mentors, taking over well-established family businesses. A pattern of elite cousinhood emerged in Gutu where businessmen largely came from prominent business families as Empire Makamure retorted;

Sons of prosperous businessmen kept the mantle burning as evidenced by the rise of Beria Musimudziwa, Merkia Sons (Kurungama, Onai, Peacemaker, Ransome and Samuel Makamure), Jonax Machinya, Isaiah Makechemu, Raymond Tsanyawu, Mkushi sons (Honour and John) among others. Their parents had a greater number of channels through which they could enter the world of big business continuing to establish and widen their networks through membership of business associations and church organisations. The Simbi, Feresu, Makamure and Chingombe families thrived within the Dutch Reformed Church while Marwizi, Mandizvidza and Muzenda were devote Catholics. To a large measure their children picked the thread of their parents' Christian circles and continued to reap the benefits of networking. Highly connected individuals may be more influential and may be more influenced by others just like contagious diseases and rumours which spread more quickly where there are high rates of connection.⁴⁰

It was rather uncommon to find businessmen who were not in some way politicians at the same time. Almost all Members of Parliament and Senators to have graced the Gutu constituencies for example Ransome Makamure, Empire Makamure, Ephraim Marwizi, Josiah Tungamirai, Vitalis Zvinavashe and Simon Muzenda were into business. Within such an environment where political, economic and social fields were not very differentiated, elite circulation from politics to business and vice versa was eminent.

The argument is that elites used a first position in order to obtain another one or to strengthen the original one.⁴¹ Gutu's major post-war development in the business sector was associated with the transport industry. Some of Zimbabwe's busmen like Gono Chiwara, Mashongwa and Tanda Tavaruva whose transport services traversed Gutu are believed to have

⁴⁰ Interview with Senator Empire Makamure, Gutu, 10 August 2013.

⁴¹J. Daloz, "Big Men" in Sub-Saharan Africa: How Elites Accumulate Positions and Resources' in Mattei Dogan (ed.), *Elite Configurations at the Apex of Power*, Brill Leiden, Boston, 2003,

acquired experience in the transport industry during their stay in the Mumbwa area of Zambia. According to Chakabuda the Mumbwa area was allocated to Zimbabweans most of them from Gutu who were resettled there by the Federal government of Rhodesia and Nyasaland in the late 1950s.⁴² When they came back home in the early 1980s, they directed their investment efforts in the transport business and inspired other local businessmen into joining the industry.

The business was so lucrative that within a year, Chiwara had accumulated enough money to deposit for a new bus and also open his first bus depot in Bulawayo in 1983. Thereafter, some businessmen from Gutu diversified and put attention into the transport business.⁴³ Kenny Chikerema's *Zebra Express*, Elias Madondo's *Kudzai Vabereki*, Jethro Dhauramanzi's *Rusununguko*, all plied the same Bulawayo-Gutu route. Much later *Zvichemo* K.M.Mawere, Crispin Tomu (*Nice Time*), Mike Chipepera, Lovemore Matuke all had a crack at the transport business.

The busmen's success was however short-lived largely due to lack of innovation and a rational business ethic. They obtained transport permits which confined them to ply in the same routes, buying old or reconditioned vehicles and the employment of a coterie of relatives who defrauded the businessmen. Wild notes that the success behind Matambanadzo (at one time Zimbabwe's most successful busmen) was that he had employees who banked cash, checked the vehicle logs and travelled on the buses to see that tickets were correctly issued and timetables adhered to. He employed one of the biggest detective agencies in the country under a Mr Taylor in addition to his inspectors.⁴⁴ Although the transport business collapsed, it had ignited the enthusiasm which later surrounded the development of Gutu-Mpandawana growth point.

In 1984 under the patronage of Vice President Simon Muzenda, the Gutu Business Development Association (GBDA) was launched. The pioneering membership included John Mushipe, John Mushayavanhu, Femias Chakabuda, Midzi, Jethro Dhauramanzi, Thomas Makaanzi, Crispin Tomu, Beria Musimudziwa, Rashai and Lovemore Matuke. Donor

⁴² Interview with Femias Chakabuda, Masvingo, 17 September 2013. Chakabuda argued that the presence of Zimbabweans (from Gutu and other areas) in the Mumbwa area explains why Zambia was the 'home' for people like Vitalis Zvinavashe and many others who joined the liberation struggle via the Zambia springboard. See also J. G. Mayowe, *Rega Zvipore*, Midlands State University Press, Gweru, 2015, p.145.

⁴³ Interview with Simbarashe Tarugarira, Gutu 2013. People like Dingwiza and Mashongwa who worked for Damher Coach Builders –the sole bus manufacturing company in the country - expedited the acquisition of buses on credit for their relatives from Gutu.

⁴⁴ Wild, *Profit not for profit's sake*, p.230.

organisations like the GTZ and NORAD provided money to build offices and micro- financing facilities which provided starting capital largely for emerging business people. Upon its formation the GBDA attracted many people particularly some retired professionals like teachers some of whom were business veterans. Matters which the association deliberated upon focused on the need to redefine the historically conditioned marginalization of African entrepreneurship. Initially the veteran businessmen in the likes of Madondo, Mkushi, Sithole, Machinya and Muchemwa did not join.

According to Ngwaru, the reasons for their reluctance towards joining such associations largely bordered on suspicions that their business ideas would be stolen. As jealous guardians of their business interests, they tended to be self-centred and very conservative. They feared competition from the upcoming businessmen. Such a stance was characteristic of the first generation businessmen who went to the extent of acquiring charms and even bewitching their competitors as ways of muscling them out of business.⁴⁵

At the end of 1990, the IBDC came into being. The promoters of this new organisation were a group of Zimbabwe's prominent business people with disparate backgrounds, but excellent political and social connections. These included Philemon Machipisa, John Mapondera and Chemist Siziba among others. The attraction the IBDC had bordered on "its perceived ability to win economic influence and build up patron-client networks involving the finance programme for African enterprises and the awarding of government orders".⁴⁶

Before the 1991 and 1992 agricultural season whose disastrous lack of rain contracted economic output, the ZANU-PF government had accepted the IMF/World Bank strategy of ESAP. The programme aimed at the revival of agriculture and the rural economy. It created a rational export-oriented economy by liberalizing existing controls and opening the economy to international markets.⁴⁷ The policy actions designed to achieve these objectives included massive devaluation, trade liberalization, drastic subsidy withdrawal and expenditure cuts in all sectors, credit and wage freeze among others.

The shift in Zimbabwe's development strategy, signified by the adoption of ESAP saw members of the ruling elite losing touch with their traditional basis of support, the peasantry and the working class. By embracing a capitalist ideology, the political elites came to identify their

⁴⁵ Interview with Isaiah Ngwaru, Gutu, 3 July 2013.

⁴⁶ Wild, *Profit not for profit's sake*, p.267-270.

⁴⁷ Weiss, *Zimbabwe and the New Elite*, p.148.

interests increasingly with those of the economic elites. The negative impact of the ESAP option -in terms of social service cutbacks and lost employment opportunities were extremely high and African businessmen were equally apprehensive of such developments. In Gutu, the apprehension manifested through the massive drive by members of the GBDA to join the IBDC which had lobbied with success for the awarding of contracts to black entrepreneurs.

In the building industry for example, tenders under \$3million now went exclusively to members of the Zimbabwe Building Contractors Association, an association of African building entrepreneurs.⁴⁸ This affirmative action encouraged corruption as contracts were awarded to contractors who did not possess the necessary capital or expertise. On a positive note, such developments witnessed the revival of the Dhauramanzi Brothers' Contracting Company and Guthrie International which had won the tender to construct Manyuchi Dam.⁴⁹ Soon, various factions with marked political differences emerged. These accused each other of using political muscles to dominate the business organisation.

Mandizvidza assumed a low profile and a number of businessmen who grouped round him later moved to join the Affirmative Action Group which had been set up in 1994 by Phillip Chiyangwa. The indigenization programme came to a head when the AAG called for a consumer boycott of all firms which had not entered into a joint venture with blacks. Gutu's veteran businessmen Piniel Mkushi and Elias Madondo remained members of the IBDC which retained its composure as a nationalist pressure group with populist ant-white sentiments.

These veteran businessmen are believed to have used their influence in the Gutu Council's Projects Planning Office and business protectionism to approve crucial decisions on the business development of Gutu-Mpandawana. In his capacity as the Councilor of Ward 33, Madondo thwarted efforts by OK Zimbabwe to open a shop at Gutu.⁵⁰ It is also alleged that Piniel Mkushi took advantage of his Gutu Rural District Council Chairmanship position to acquire business stands. The probability was high that his ability to influence decisions of committees might have enabled him to manipulate certain by-laws to realize personal gains. Although their roles during the liberation struggle should not be underestimated the above cases

⁴⁸ *Daily Gazette*, 30 August 1993. See also Patrick Bond, *Uneven Zimbabwe. A study of Finance, Development and Underdevelopment*, Africa World Press, Asmara, 1998, p.166.

⁴⁹ Interview with Femias Chakabuda, Masvingo, 17 September 2013. Crispin Mandizvidza was one of Guthrie International's shareholders.

⁵⁰ Interview with Isaiah Ngwaru, Gutu, 3 July 2013.

stand out as clear testimonies where the political and financial muscles were flexed to protect personal business interests.⁵¹ Business was politics and politics was business.

While the structural adjustment policies adversely affected both town and country, there was a net shift in the terms of trade in favour of rural areas. In the rural areas, the high cost of inputs and the low returns from farming served to increase the importance of non-farm employment. The resulting pattern meant that those with wealth already and strong networks tended to benefit under the conditions of structural adjustment while those without wealth lost out further. Those who benefited tended to use their strong links with commercial networks. With liberalization, deregulation and the growth of new industries and sectors, the elite economic positions opened to new entrants. A 'new rich' emerged.

Differences among individuals in terms of kin network and intergenerational mobility were extremely consequential for understanding business and political elite attributes and behaviour. More connections often meant that individuals were exposed to more diverse information. Some traders (as subcontractors or franchise holders) struck it rich during the economic crisis. As Isaiah Ngwaru retorted;

I know one who started selling petrol in bottles and within a short space of time; he had a fleet of trucks and buildings. A lot of theft and clientelism went on. During the crisis, different assortments of goods were sold cheaply at the bus terminus. Others profited from the crisis by stealing and pillaging. Fraud and corruption were the fastest ways of getting rich.⁵²

The abrupt retrenchments caused by industrial shrinkage in 2000 left no alternative for labour but to join the informal industry to sustain livelihoods. High-level education and skills training enabled the informal sector to substitute in many activities of formal industry.⁵³ An analysis of the political context of the economic collapse is crucial for understanding the development of Gutu's indigenous informal industry. To a great measure, formal industry was dissipated and fast replaced by the informal sector.

The RBZ also introduced the Basic Commodities Supply-Side Intervention Facility (BACOSSI) to thwart continued hiking in costs for goods and services by formal businesses. Some legislators and unscrupulous businessmen abused the facility. Instead of sourcing supplies

⁵¹ Interview with Francis Mukaro, Gutu, 26 July 2013.

⁵² Interview with Isaiah Ngwaru, Gutu, 3 July 2013.

⁵³ Z. W. Sadomba, *War Veterans in Zimbabwe's Revolution*, p.221.

from neighbouring countries, they used their political links to acquire stock (especially salt) from the Grain Marketing Board depots at subsidised prices then sold the same stock at the parallel market at exorbitant prices in hard currency.⁵⁴

In 2003, the RBZ introduced the Productive Sector Finance Facility (PSF) to boost production of companies in all but the informal sector. The PSF was widened to cover agriculture, financing inputs, fuel and farm mechanization through a programme called the Agriculture Sector Productivity Enhancement Facility (ASPEF). Between 2000 and March 2008, tractors and other farming equipment (planters, disc harrows, scotch carts, cultivators, ploughs, chains, knapsack sprayers, etc.) were distributed to farmers through various government schemes. To secure any of these items, one had to be politically connected to ZANU-PF.

The ZANU-PF political commissar for Gutu East, Never ‘Pongo’ Kurehwa; the ZANU PF Councillor for Gutu Central Ward 15 Naison Chingombe; the ZANU PF Member of Parliament for Gutu Central Lovemore Matuke; Chief Gadzingo, Elias Madondo and Simbarashe Tarugarira are among those who received tractors even though some had little to show as farmers. In a way, the ruling elite created a buffer layer, using land reforms and related schemes to bestow privileges on new elites who were politicians-cum-businessmen. Of interest is the fact that all these socio-economic and political machinations easily accommodated opportunists into the restructured party leadership whose base in security functions had bought them political influence in ZANU-PF and access to state-mediated accumulation. Motivated by altruistic or selfish concerns to try to ‘improve’ the condition of the poor, they largely defended the new status quo of asset redistribution that directly benefitted them.

7.4 Social Reproduction: Pathways and recruitment to elite status

According to Bratton when ZANU-PF won the 1980 elections, its political organization was rudimentary in that the party needed to provide reliable links between its governing body (the Central Committee) and the scattered rural cells. As a result, “the new regime spent the first years before the Party Congress of August in 1984 focusing on the restructuring exercise”.⁵⁵ The fluidity of structures at the village level was evident in that the older generation was still

⁵⁴ Interview with Simbarashe Tarugarira, Gutu, 7 July 2013.

⁵⁵ M. Bratton, ‘The Comrades and the Countryside: The Politics of Agricultural Policy in Zimbabwe’. In *World Politics*, Vol.39, No.2 (Jan 1987), pp. 174-202, p.196.

struggling to reassert authority over the young guerrilla fighters and *mujibhas* who had seized leadership during the war.

The broadening of the political arena of the Gutu electorate since independence led to the steady, considerable turnover of leadership and the entry into the political process of those who were hitherto excluded. These were largely people of high standing drawn from high civil servants like school heads and business people. This process culminated in the accession of high profile figures in rural society particularly the teachers- cum-businessmen and farmers to positions in the local ZANU-PF hierarchy as councilors. Elite configurations clearly appeared in the osmosis between high administration and high politics.

The likes of Ephraim Marwizi, Elliot Ndonga and Cyprian Nyemba who were school headmasters and businessmen were among the first ZANU-PF councilors.⁵⁶ The introduction of village and ward committees in February 1984 further strengthened these local ZANU-PF functionaries. Decentralization of power within the growing state apparatus through the VIDCOs and WADCOs provided a means for rebuilding and reinvigorating clientelistic networks that tied politically strategic social groups to the regime. In some cases power was transferred to a virtually hand-picked and barely literate group of people who were trusted to further the long-term interests of the local politicians. Thus, party politics became the typical channel for new entries into elite positions and the penultimate political predation associated with the ruling elite.

Muzenda's move from Gweru to Gutu resulted in bitter power struggles erupting between the two dominant ZANU-PF factions in Masvingo province namely the one led by Eddison Zvobgo and the other by Josiah Hungwe the then Governor of Masvingo Province. As Richard Sandbrook has put it, "Factionalism is a form of conflict over access to wealth, power and status, frequently with only minor ideological or policy implications, in which members of the conflicting units are recruited on the basis of mercenary ties".⁵⁷ Muzenda, who was aligned to the Hungwe faction, contended that the Zvobgo faction did not support President Mugabe, a position which worked into the hands of Zvobgo's alleged Presidential ambitions. Zvobgo claimed that Muzenda's transfer to Masvingo Province had not been effected through the normal

⁵⁶ Ephraim Marwizi headed Makura Primary School; Elliot Handina Ndonga was at Muchekayaora Primary School while Cyprian Nyemba was at Mudzamiri Primary School. All became councillors.

⁵⁷ R. Sandbrook, 'Patrons, Clients and Factions: New Dimensions of Conflict Analysis in Africa', *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 5,1, 1972, pp.104-119.

party structures while Muzenda countered that he had followed the necessary formalities to facilitate his transfer.

The theatre of action for the potentially catastrophic drama turned out to be the Muzenda– Tungamirai tussle over the Gutu North parliamentary seat. The Zvobgo faction supported Tungamirai’s candidature and felt that Muzenda being a Vice President was not supposed to be associated with a constituency. In fact the Second Vice President Joshua Nkomo had rejected the move to a constituency. The ZANU-PF Politburo however decreed that Tungamirai was not supposed to fight his senior and so, sobered by the prospect of losing it all, he later withdrew his candidature.

In the year 2000, Josiah Tungamirai was appointed a non-constituency Member of Parliament and Minister of State for Indigenization and Empowerment. Following the passing on of Vice President Simon Muzenda, Josiah Tungamirai was elected Member of Parliament for Gutu North Constituency, a seat he retained in the March 2005 Parliamentary elections. While muddying their political planning with patronage, ZANU-PF succeeded in regulating elites, thereby perpetuating their own preeminence. The political elite had traditionally raised many obstacles to the intrusion of military officers in the political forum. Contrary to other civil servants, the military officers did not have the right to compete in parliamentary elections and because their military careers transferred them from one place to another, they had no ‘roots’ in any electoral constituency.⁵⁸

Vitalis Zvinvashe, for example, lived the greater part of his youthful age away from his Zinhata Kraal birth place. Born in 1943, he relocated to Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) in 1963 and returned to Zimbabwe at independence.⁵⁹ Military officers were also obliged to stay far from the political agora and awaited their promotion which largely depended on their neutral behaviour. This explains why Josiah Tungamirai and Vitalis Zvinvashe could only present themselves for elections in Gutu upon retiring from the military.⁶⁰ Also the fact that electoral success could not

⁵⁸ In 1983 Zvinvashe was deployed as the first Task Force Commander of the ZDF troops in Mozambique. In 1998 he was instrumental in the deployment of SADC allied forces in support of the DRC Government of Laurent Kabila in the face of invasion by Rwandese, Ugandan and Burundi forces. See *A Guide to the Heroes Acre*, pp.218-219.

⁵⁹ Interview with Stanislaus Mupunga, Harare, 22 January 2012.

⁶⁰ Josiah Tungamirai was promoted to the rank of Air Marshal and appointed Commander of the Air Force of Zimbabwe in 1986. When he retired in 1992, he had been promoted to the rank of Air Chief Marshal. Vitalis Zvinvashe retired from the army in December 2003. In 2005, he was elected Senator for Gutu and served up to 2008. See also *A Guide to the Heroes Acre*, pp.114, 219.

be guaranteed, military officers might have generally hesitated to take the risk of resigning from the army lest upon failure it would have been difficult to obtain reintegration in the army.

As a dominant party, ZANU-PF had to populate the Gutu political landscape with those who sympathized with the Josiah Hungwe faction to which Muzenda belonged. Those who could be considered as political novices with scanty war credentials like Shuvai Mahofa (Gutu South Constituency) and Ephraim Marwizi (Gutu East Constituency) were propped up at the expense of veterans like Vengai Guni and Nelson Mawema who more than qualified for cabinet appointments respectively. In a nationally publicized showdown between Shuvai Mahofa and war veteran Cosmas Gonese, the Politburo candidate (Shuvai Mahofa) lost the ZANU-PF primary elections leading to the 1990 general elections.

This humiliated the ruling party in what was seen as a head-on conflict between a war veteran-peasant alliance and the ruling clique. After succeeding in out-voting Mahofa in a crucial election, the war veteran-peasant alliance organized demonstrations against the ZANU-PF ruling elite. Police stepped in to stop a demonstration at Gutu where more than 200 people gathered to demonstrate against the 8 ZANU-PF Gutu representatives who had met President Mugabe to drum support for Mahofa.⁶¹ War Veteran leader Cosmas Gonese spoke out against the imposition of leaders by the Politburo:

Cde Nyagumbo [then the ZANU-PF Politburo member and Secretary for Administration] must not tell us what to do here, ZANU-PF must not be run like a company, it's for the people and Cde Nyagumbo must not talk as if he is a company director. We never voted for Cde Shuvai Mahofa who was imposed on us and we do not want her.⁶²

Demonstrators were attacking the selective hand-picking of people, usually comprising relatives, friends, acquaintances and loyalists with no liberation credentials. It is worthy looking at how Shuvai Mahofa who appeared to have reached her political Waterloo following her defeat in the 2008 harmonized elections made a comeback into the political limelight.

Born on April 4 1941, in Ndawi Village under Chief Ndawi in Gutu, Mahofa's political life had its shares of controversies.⁶³ While she is believed to have begun her political career in

⁶¹ *The Herald* 15 October 1988

⁶² *The Herald*, 8 January 1989.

⁶³ Muzenda Chekesai Murefu Nyamondo, the father of Simon had two sisters married by two brothers in headman Ndawi's area. It was also in headman Ndawi's area that Simon was born on 22 October 1922. Against this background, it is alleged that Simon Muzenda and Shuvai Mahofa should have been very close relatives.

1959 at a tender age of 18 years, she became popular during the liberation struggle as a war collaborator, running networks for the ZANLA guerrillas in the Gutu area of Masvingo.

According to the *Africa Confidential* 2005 report, Mahofa managed to stay in politics because “she held sordid details about past time activities of some of ZANU- PF’s top leadership during the liberation struggle and that explains why she has survived the dog-eat-dog fights within ZANU- PF”.⁶⁴ Mahofa faced her real litmus political test in ZANU-PF’s 1995 Gutu South primary elections when she squared off against Jethro Dauramanzi, a Gutu businessman. By this time, factionalism in Masvingo had taken root following the entrance of vice-president, Simon Muzenda, into the province from his Midlands base. Mahofa belonged to the Muzenda faction while her opponent, Dauramanzi, was in the Edison Zvobgo camp.

In the run-off to the primary elections, Mahofa felt the heat of Masvingo factionalism as she was accused by the late Air-Marshal Josiah Tungamirai, (who belonged to the Zvobgo faction and was eyeing the same seat targeted by Muzenda), of uttering claims that he (Tungamirai) and Zvobgo were fanning factionalism in the province. Tungamirai further castigated Mahofa for working for the Rhodesian government during the liberation war. In spite of such criticisms from Tungamirai, Mahofa managed to shrug off Jethro Dauramanzi’s challenge and later on successfully defended her Gutu South seat.

In 1998, Mahofa’s political career hit a snag after she was fingered in the diversion of maize grain from the Grain Marketing Board (GMB) to her supporters in the constituency, segregating perceived opponents. The investigations were, however, inconclusive. In 2000, Mahofa lost the ZANU- PF primary elections in Gutu South to lawyer Vengai Guni, but bounced back due to the benevolence of the party’s women quota system. Mahofa went on to win the parliamentary elections, beating MDC’s Ransome Makamure.

In 2004 Mahofa was, together with the then governor, Josiah Hungwe, implicated in a bicycles grab scam. UNICEF had donated over 100 bicycles in Gutu as part of its outreach programme to fight HIV and AIDS. Mahofa and Hungwe reportedly grabbed a number of bicycles and shared them among their supporters.⁶⁵ In 2008, Mahofa faced the most humiliating

See also N.Bhebe, *Simon Vengayi Muzenda and The Struggle for and Liberation of Zimbabwe*, Mambo Press, Gweru, 2004, pp .3-4.

⁶⁴ R. Chingawo, ‘Mahofa’s nine lives’ in *The Zimbabwe Mail*, 4 March 2015.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

incident in her career after seven chiefs, headmen and party members in Gutu South declared that they were fed up with her. They accused her of having failed to initiate development projects since being voted into office.

The disgruntled party members travelled to Zanu PF headquarters in Harare to air their disgruntlement over Mahofa's candidature. Despite the complaints, Mahofa still managed to represent the party through a women's quota system. Although ZANU-PF continued to prop Mahofa, her support base in the constituency had taken a nosedive as she later lost her seat to MDC-T's Elphas Mukonoweshuro. She subsequently lost her deputy ministerial post of Women's Affairs, rendering her a mere party card holder. In 2012, Mahofa was reportedly investigated after a butchery she allegedly ran in Gutu was raided by police, resulting in three buffalo carcasses and other game meat being recovered. Mahofa was also one of the 40 ZANU-PF members in Masvingo who were linked to the Save Valley Conservancy invasion. Police investigations were inconclusive.

In 2014 when President Mugabe went on a scheme to purge former Vice-President Joyce Mujuru's loyalists across the country's provinces, Mahofa became the beneficiary of the purge. It is alleged that Mahofa broke the news to President Mugabe, that Mujuru was a traitor. In the 2014 Zanu PF Women's League congress, Mahofa, with the backing of the First Lady, became the party's secretary for security. President Mugabe put an icing on Mahofa's political career by appointing her the Minister of State for Masvingo Province, making her not only the first woman in the province to hold that post, but also the oldest minister to be appointed to that portfolio.

Arguably without Muzenda's support (before his death in 2003 and through elite cousinhood propped by the ruling elite thereafter) Mahofa could not have managed to shrug off challenges by Jethro Dauramanzi, Advocate Vengai Guni and Paul Mkondo for the Gutu South parliamentary seat. Shuvai Mahofa might have been a popular figure because of the air of solidity and capacity to inspire confidence from her status as a marginal woman. However, she is believed to have survived ZANU-PF politics through patronage and nursing close kin relations with the late former Vice President Simon Muzenda.

According to Bhebe, Simon was born in the Ndawi area and his father migrated to Chief Munyaradzi's area when Simon was eleven years old.⁶⁶ The Ndawi area is also believed to be

⁶⁶ Bhebe, *Simon Vengayi Muzenda*, p.4.

Shuvai Mahofa's birthplace before moving to Chivi.⁶⁷ Notwithstanding the above, invoking the name of the party and holding ZANU-PF office was important in local power struggles and in claiming patronage. Party membership remained a key prerequisite to positions in other institutions and some individuals retained influence as a result of personal links to political gurus in the likes of Simon Muzenda.⁶⁸

At different times in the political history of Zimbabwe, Muzenda saved the lives and propped the political careers of the Mawema brothers (Michael and Nelson), Josiah Tungamirai, Crispin Mandizvidza, Oliver Munyaradzi, Simon Mazorodze, Nolan Makombe, Simbarashe Mumbengegwi, Charles Majange, Josiah Hungwe and Shuvai Mahofa among others, by using his personal loyalty to Mugabe. According to Chakabuda, even Mugabe's ascent to power in Zimbabwe was largely due to Muzenda's efforts and this explains why upon independence; Mugabe rewarded him by making him his deputy prime minister and foreign minister and later his vice president.⁶⁹

While some Karanga politicians like Michael Mawema and Eddison Zvobgo hoped that Muzenda would bid for the country's leadership, he remained a faithful friend and second-in-command to Mugabe right into the grave. Even though he was criticized and challenged by his Karanga colleagues, he used his status to retain political power not only in Gutu but repeatedly delivered the Masvingo heartland to the Mugabe camp. Addressing a gathering to welcome Shuvai Mahofa to the new portfolio of Minister of State for Masvingo Province, Josiah Hungwe said 'the President will never find a true friend like Muzenda. Now Muzenda is dead and only rascals are left in the party and government'.⁷⁰

Hungwe credited the late vice president for prophesying about the 'Gamatox' and 'Weevils' debacle which first surfaced in 2002 and has continued to haunt ZANU-PF. Hungwe added that while some party members planned to topple the president, Muzenda had told him 'never to abandon the President'.⁷¹ As a reward for loyalty and patronage, both Hungwe and

⁶⁷ Chingawo, 'Mahofa's nine lives' in *The Zimbabwe Mail*, 4 March 2015.

⁶⁸ J. Alexander, *Unsettled Land*, p.164.

⁶⁹ After the Anglo-Rhodesian peace negotiations in 1971, Muzenda visited guerrilla camps in neighbouring countries, calming fractious elements and organising a key meeting of the divided leadership that eventually confirmed Robert Mugabe as the new ZANU leader ahead of Ndabaningi Sithole. See J.G.Mayowe, *Rega Zvipore*, Midlands State University Press, Gweru, 2015.

⁷⁰ Accessed on www.radiovop.com/index.php/national-news/11764-hungwe-says-muzenda-was-mugabe's-last-true-friend.html 25/02/2015.

⁷¹ Ibid.

Mahofa have been rescued by President Mugabe from the political scrap yard. What might be viewed as the resuscitation of legendary political deadwood is indeed a classic example of the unbreakable thread of elite circulation.

Muzenda thus, played the role of a backroom power-broker in the recognition of politicians who were loyal to Mugabe. Mahofa remains the First Family's close confidant and praise-singer. Paul Chimedza who became the ZANU-PF Member of Parliament for Gutu South in 2013 then appointed the Deputy Minister of Health and Kudakwashe Bhasikiti the former Provincial Governor of Masvingo among others were dismissed after Mahofa sniffed them out for sympathizing with the deposed Vice President Joice Mujuru.⁷²

Ephraim Marwizi (the former legislator of Gutu East) was also convinced that his political demise came in the wake of bad blood between him and the Zvobgo-Mavhaire faction.⁷³ Such political developments deterred senior ZANU-PF supporters from engaging in leadership challenges or unmonitored factionalism. They found themselves prisoners of political mechanisms they could hardly control. Ephraim Marwizi was dumped into the political wilderness after rebuffing the ZANU-PF Politburo's decision not to stand as an independent candidate against Gabriel Machinga for the Gutu-Bikita constituency in the 1995 general elections.

Those frustrated by the way people rose within the ranks opted out of ZANU-PF for the opposition MDC. Chakabuda, who had served as Muzenda's personal secretary in Zambia in the mid-1970s and had remained loyal to ZANU-PF since then, crossed the floor to join the MDC.⁷⁴ Those who remained in the ZANU-PF structures became increasingly dependent on the mercy of the party to maintain their prestige and power. At the same time, the political elite remained a close-knit group particularly in cases where members knew each other personally and were connected in multiple ways through a web of tightly interwoven social relationships.

Vice President Simon Muzenda, who was also the Member of Parliament for Gutu North from 1996 till his death in 2003, was one of the district's successful politicians and entrepreneurs. Muzenda owned Paradise Park Motel and a wholesale complex formerly owned

In 2014, Josiah Hungwe was appointed Minister of State for Psychomotor Activities in Education and Vocational Training.

⁷² Interview with S.K. Gutu, 10 March 2015.

⁷³ Interview with Ephraim Marwizi, Gutu, 22 August 2013.

⁷⁴ Interview with Femias Chakabuda, Masvingo, 17 September 2013.

by Merkiek at Gutu-Mpandawana growth point⁷⁵, Murefu Investments at Zvavahera Township which dealt with hardware and agricultural supplies, Chekesai transport and a filling station among other business interests under the holding company-Murefu Investments. He had also inherited the Chekesai Pig and Dairy Company from his mother who ran an irrigation scheme and multiple agro-ventures.

Muzenda's children Tsitsi and Tongai were also involved in running the family businesses and remained within the ZANU-PF political orbit, bagging some portfolios within the party. Tsitsi had been in politics much longer than her brother. Tongai's political activism started in the early 1980s when he was a member of the ZANU-PF Youths Gweru Branch. At different times, Tsitsi held the Politburo and Senatorial posts while Tongai was elected Member of Parliament for Gutu West in 2013 and later appointed Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Welfare.

Although the two did not inherit political positions but won contested elections, I argue that they were better prepared for a political career, better armed in the political arena than their adversaries whose names were less known by the voters. The two certainly benefited from the aura of their father to climb to the summit. This buttresses my argument that those who earned their way into elite status systematically and consistently coordinated their actions to perpetuate their status and privileges by socializing and training their children to succeed them. Tongai Muzenda's case becomes a classic example of what McDonough called a "father-to-son quality" in the transmission of elite status.⁷⁶ What is implicit in McDonough's formulation is that the mystique of eliteness and the full assemblages of the qualities of elite status can also be learned informally in the well-to-do families. In Africa, there are sons who have become leaders in countries where their fathers also ruled. After independence, these 'long distance men' were able to coercively retain power, growing extremely rich in the process and shaping the political destiny of their states through their reluctance to step down.⁷⁷

⁷⁵ Merkiek, popularly known as Makhakhi owned a wholesale complex next to Paradise Park Motel. The Motel had recreational facilities and a club where white commercial farmers and businessmen coalesced. The Motel was acquired from Merkiek by a Harare businessman Joram Makombe who later on lost it to Simon Muzenda in unclear circumstances.

⁷⁶ P.McDonough, *Power and Ideology in Brazil*, Princeton University, Princeton, 1981, p.59.

⁷⁷ The generations of African leaders that took power at independence and stayed in office for decades afterwards are often referred to as "the long distance men."

See Jo-Ansie van Wyk, *Political Leaders in Africa: Presidents, Patrons or Profiteers?* The African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD). 2007 *Occasional Paper Series: Volume 2, Number 1, 2007*.

Cases like Uhuru Kenyatta and Ian Khama sons of former presidents of Kenya and Botswana respectively confirm the above. The zeal by political elites to promote the political and business interests of their families has happened when sitting presidents died in office, as in Togo in 2005, Gabon in 2009 and the Democratic Republic of Congo in 2001. At a London Business conference in 2011, Gabon's President Ali Ben Bongo explained that he was simply following his "father's profession" when he took over the presidency in Libreville.⁷⁸ In Equatorial Guinea, President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo's grip on power ensured the dominance of his children and relatives in the political, military and business elite in Malabo. After President Gnassingbé Eyadéma's death in Togo in February 2005 his son Faure Gnassingbé took over. As part of Eyadéma's legacy, his family's networks remain a part of the regime blurring the lines between the state and private power.⁷⁹

Thus, the control over resources lubricates patronage networks and satisfies the ambitions of elites. This explains, for example, African presidents' reluctance to surrender power, their maintenance of an inner circle oligarchy, and the personalization of political power.⁸⁰ No wonder Ellis came to consider the elite as "a predatory, carnivorous, clannish species of mammals that hunt in small groups called families."⁸¹ Both Tsitsi and Tongai Muzenda could just be basking in the glory of their parents. As Tongai admitted:

I owe it to my parents. They taught us the correct political ideology from a tender age. Mudhara Mzee could not miss a moment to educate us on the importance of Zimbabwe's independence, sovereignty and liberation struggle. Although I was young to have gone to the liberation struggle, I got enough teaching from my old man.⁸²

When Tongai Muzenda was hit with a vote of no confidence in the events leading to the December 2014 ZANU-PF Congress, he shrugged off the ban from attending the congress. He argued that ZANU-PF was formed by his father together with Robert Mugabe and so there was [is] no way he could rebel against his father.⁸³ A deduction can be made that Simon Muzenda's longer tenure in high-status posts was influential towards keeping his offspring in elite circles.

⁷⁸ Marshall van Valen, 'Snakes and leaders: Africa's political succession', in *The Africa Report*, 20 September 2013.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Jo-Ansie van Wyk, 'Political Leaders in Africa: Presidents, Patrons or Profiteers?' *The African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD). 2007 Occasional Paper Series: Volume 2, Number 1, 2007*, p.31.

⁸¹ S.Ellis, *Season of Rains: Africa in the World*. Hurst and Company, London, 2011, p.95.

⁸² Fortious Nhambura, 'Tongai Muzenda: It runs in the Family' in *The Herald*, 9 July 2013.

⁸³ Chengetai Zvauya, 'Tongai Muzenda defies ban' in *The Daily News*, 5 December 2014.

In pursuit of the indigenization and black economic empowerment policies, predatory behaviour and unorthodox means of wresting wealth from the white community at Gutu-Mpandawana were used by marauding politicians. Further enrichment of businessmen sometimes took illegal paths.⁸⁴ Having snared a series of portfolios, including foreign affairs, being characterized as Gutu's most successful politician-cum-businessman and followed by his position as Vice President, Muzenda's elitist stance marked an unprecedented fusion of political and economic power.

The wealth which Muzenda accumulated and the fame he earned gave his family socio-economic and political standing. Daloz's study on the Nigerian elites confirmed that it was much more current to meet a politician/businessman who constantly drew resources from his economic activities to finance his political activities and maintain his social prestige than the contrary⁸⁵. As a result of over accumulation a supra-elite would be created and this would transform and deploy power through cohesion, consent and the use of predatory methods. The moment cohesion was made a means of accumulation, consent came in to subsist and sustain a patron-client relationship.

The Muzenda-Tungamirai wrangle over the Gutu North constituency is again illustrative. Thomas Makuvishe a villager remarked;

All the villages in Chinyika, Chatikobo and Nyamande had endorsed Josiah Tungamirai for Gutu North Member of Parliament. People questioned why after so long Muzenda was deciding to come home. Only those around Zvavahera for whom Muzenda had built houses came out in his favour.⁸⁶

Although dissenting peasants might have discussed their situation over the candidate they wanted, they eventually lost the final battle because the people's choice of a candidate was largely shaped by the ruling or privileged group. The inability by the electorate to formulate a discursive critique of their situation confirms Gramsci's position that the peasants rely on leaders from outside the peasantry.

This development resonates well with Moore's perspective of 'minimal hegemony' which analyses how a ruling class can gain power and ultimately construct a society-wide form of

⁸⁴ According to *Horizon*, May 1996, p.13. Muzenda's companies which had been first registered in September 1991 had not submitted annual tax returns forms which are required initially 18 months after registration and every 15 months thereafter. Also missing in Murefu Investment company files were CR14 forms which should be submitted a month after a company is registered. These forms should name the directors appointed by shareholders

⁸⁵ J. P. Daloz., "Ostentation in Comparative Perspective: culture and elite legitimation", *Comparative Social Research*, Vol.21, 2002a,p.62.

⁸⁶ Interview with Thomas Makuvishe, Chinyika, Gutu, 6 July 2013.

hegemony. Applying such a perspective to the history of Gutu's political elite reveals that the struggle for rule was to persuade the local people that leading nationalists were fit to act as the hegemonic organizers for socio-economic and political development in the region. The danger of voting in a way not pleasing to the ruling elite was found clear and imminent in rural areas. Violent actions and clientelism accelerated the process of upward political mobility which enabled charlatans to climb into higher social ranks.

This was amply demonstrated by Vice- President Simon Muzenda at Ngundu Halt in Chivi when he told a rally that even if the ruling party fielded a baboon as a party candidate people should vote for it. "Even if we put a baboon in Chivi, if you are ZANU-PF you vote for that baboon," he was quoted as saying. The Vice-President bragged further, "I am called Mzee, the vice president of this country. When President Mugabe is not there I run the country and if I sign your death warrant you will hang."⁸⁷ These were not only threats to opponents in the opposition but in ZANU-PF itself.

To ensure that people acted according to their (elite) will, the ruling elite turned state apparatus into an instrument of violent predation. As Michael Bratton observed, 'the top leaders have used the sacrifices of the guerrilla fighters – "we died for this country" – as the ultimate justification for their own political and economic entitlement.'⁸⁸ Liberation struggle credentials (or lack of them) determined access to power and resources and divided the political elites into "insiders" and "outsiders".⁸⁹ No doubt, the over- riding objectives of the political centre were to consolidate control over the countryside and to ensure a ZANU-PF victory in the parliamentary elections through the management and manipulation of the people's consent.

This demonstrates that when the enthusiasm of the populace waned, the leaders were inclined to use coercion in an attempt to reactivate the people. Such use of a battery of unorthodox and vindictive methods to register ZANU-PF's claim to unchallenged power in this regard can be interpreted, in Gramsci's terms, as being part of the attempt to have "the supremacy of a social group".⁹⁰ As Michael Bratton observed that whoever were deemed not to

⁸⁷ Insiderzim.com/of baboons-and-voters, 26 June 2000.

⁸⁸ M. Bratton, *Power Politics in Zimbabwe*, Lynne Rienner, London, 2014, p.28.

⁸⁹ Jo-Ansie van Wyk, *Political Leaders in Africa: Presidents, Patrons or Profiteers? The African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD). 2007 Occasional Paper Series: Volume 2, Number 1, 2007*, p.6.

⁹⁰ C. Mouffe, 'Introduction: Gramsci today' in Mouffe (ed.) *Gramsci and Marxist Theory*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979, [p6] p9-10.

have participated in the liberation war were considered permanently ineligible to rule Zimbabwe.⁹¹

A study of members of parliament in Gutu and those moving in ministerial circles revealed a high degree of continuity in elite cousinhood where the old generation bequeathed positions to younger political actors. As Manganga rightfully put it, “the postcolonial period provided new socio-economic and political milieu for the definitions and re-definitions of selves and others as attention was paid to socio-economic and political elite configurations which fomented, sustained and reproduced autochthony”.⁹²

The devolution of the chiefs’ power in 1992 witnessed the Gutu District Administrator’s office and courts inundated with cases over succession disputes. Chiefs were given renewed power to preside over traditional courts, act as commissioners of oaths and enjoy the benefits of new vehicles, farms and houses with electricity, paid secretaries and messengers. Analogous to the adage of pouring new wine in old bottles, families enmeshed in chieftainship wrangles started securing the services of their own educated children to outwit each other. The Matengarufu clan infiltrated the ascendance race to the Chiwara chieftainship through the efforts of Runesu Piniel Mkushi one of the prominent businessman at Gutu-Mpandawana. Piniel Mkushi was requested to use the influence of his son a lawyer Honour Mkushi to muscle their way into the race for the Chiwara chieftaincy.⁹³

Pome Rushwaya who had acted as Chief Serima refused to surrender the chief’s uniform given to him when he was in office. When his house lost incumbency to another house, he resorted to court action vowing that he would only surrender the chief’s uniform to a ‘white staff’ member whom he presumed to be neutral. Their lawyer summoned both the then Minister of Local Government Enos Chikowore and the new chief of Serima. The Rushwaya house appealed against the appointment of Mapurisa Chapanduka. The case was heard by the civil division of the High Court in April 1985 and the appellant lost. In a wrangle over the succession of the Serima chieftainship, the application by Reshon Rushwaya was dismissed upon realizing

⁹¹ M. Bratton, *Power Politics in Zimbabwe*, p.28.

⁹² K. Manganga, *A historical study of industrial ethnicity in urban colonial Zimbabwe and its contemporary transitions: The case of African Harare, c. 1890-1980*, p.174.

⁹³ PER 5/CHK/ 141 CHIEF CHIWARA, *The Court of Chief Chiwara on the infiltration by the Matengarufu clan.*

that the past administration had confined the chieftainship to one house-Rushwaya of Matambo family for no valid reasons.⁹⁴

In 1990, prominent legal practitioners Sawyer and Mkushi represented Kuusa Mudziwapasi over the disputed Serima Chieftainship succession. Victory scored through court action culminated in the installation of Matapi Mudziwapasi as Chief Serima in 1992.⁹⁵ When the Gutu chieftainship fell vacant for three years following the death of the chief in 1993, Sawyer and Mkushi represented Bodzo Dzinoumurumbi in his bid for succession to Gutu Chieftainship in 1996, arguing that it was not in the best interest of the people under chief Gutu to remain without a chief for so long.⁹⁶

A legal wrangle also ensued following an erroneous Gutu paramount chieftainship recommendation by the District Administrator in favour of Chief Gadzingo, businessmen Elias Dzimba Madondo. Dr. Masanganise of the Zivengwa house pointed out the anomalies whereupon his research had established that in line with the 1996 guidelines to be used when selecting a chief, houses were to rotate.⁹⁷ Although the Matonhodze, Goronga and Chagwiza houses also challenged the selection of Madondo, Masanganise's efforts made the Zivengwa house eligible for the Chieftainship. The challenge to the selection of Madondo as chief Gutu was spearheaded by Dr. Masanganise. Ultimately, Anos Kasirayi Masanganise was declared the legitimate candidate for installation as the next Paramount Chief Gutu in 2009. In a case widely believed to be an utter display of his financial muscle, Madondo took the matter to the High Court of Zimbabwe but lost the chieftainship claim to Masanganise.

In the Makore chieftainship wrangle, Advocate Vengai Guni of the Muunde family which did not appear in the Makore family tree, called for the updating of the family tree, to include his house before the impending appointment of the chief.⁹⁸ When Guni was accused of trying to use his legal knowledge and ability to manouvre his way and usurp a succession to which he was not

⁹⁴ PER 5/CHK/SERIMA/84, Former acting Chief Pome Rushwaya refuses to give back the chief's uniform. See also The Herald, April 7, 1985.

⁹⁵ CHK/SERIMA/92, Speech to be read at the installation of Mr. Matapi Mudziwapasi as Chief Serima in Gutu, 23/03/92.

⁹⁶ PER/5/CH.GUTU/96, Sawyer and Mkushi Legal Practitioners on Gutu Chieftainship, August 1996.

⁹⁷ PER 5/CH. GUTU, Minutes of the meeting to select Substantive Chief Gutu held on 2 August 2008 at the Council Board Room.

⁹⁸ PER 5/CH MAKORE, Makore Chieftainship: Minutes of the meeting held at the L.D.O's house on 27 January 2000. As far back as 1973, Vengai Guni had made a claim to the District Commissioner Menzies for the recognition of the Muunde house either to be allowed to claim the Makore chieftainship against Morris Gwema or to be given their own dunhu within the nyika of Makore.

See PER 5/CH MAKORE, A claim for Headmanship under Muunde under Makore Chieftainship.

eligible, he argued that ‘it was not his fault that his opponents were not educated enough to be lawyers nor would he avoid using his knowledge just because his opponents were not lawyers.’⁹⁹

Guni went further and declared that no appointment would be made until the Makore people agreed to update the family tree by including the Muunde house.¹⁰⁰ The cases discussed show how the legal system was growing to be an essential means by which the old elite maintained its weakening hegemony. Instead of waning, the traditional clan dominance of local politics was indeed gaining much ground even in the face of the gradually emerging new generation of young politicians without ties to the traditional political clans.

7.5 Elite Associations

Associations of town and country educated men and women who identified with a particular region or group are not a new phenomenon in Zimbabwe and Gutu in particular. Gutu has had a mesh of cross-cutting associations connecting people who had been to the same schools and colleges, belonged to the same church, had common business interests or lived in the same neighbourhood. During school holidays those from DRC schools met their colleagues from Catholic schools so that they could be taught Latin. Between 1960 and 1962, Nelson Takawira Mawema as the Chairman of the Gutu African Students Association (GASA) facilitated debating sessions and book exchange facilities among members. The Devule Branch of GASA ran a library which boasted of 100 books and held meetings and lectures on language, history, customs, religion and morality.¹⁰¹

Focus on elite association membership is crucial in that it is a key indicator of the stock of social capital. It is also an important vehicle through which individuals learnt to relate to each other so that the beneficial effects of social capital could be realized. The dynamics of voluntary association membership showed that local associations were far from ‘neutral’ associations which people might have or might not have joined, but were means of establishing special network structures and patterns of interaction. Though, the educated elite’s voluntary associations did serve as a bridge to non-elite sections of the community, they also had a symbolic role in drawing boundaries between the prominent educated elite and the rest of the

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ *Moto*, Vol 7, No.7 July 1965, p.3.

population. This was evidenced by restricting the administrative roles of these associations to the prominent educated elite members.

Founded purely for mutual aid, membership of elite associations often cut across ethnic ties. Even during the colonial era, occupational associations were formed with the object of supporting people of particular vocations, such as the Rhodesia African Teachers' Association (RATA). The associational activities were described as a means of concealing various difficulties that the educated elite inevitably confronted, such as frictions among themselves and with other groups. The educated elite had a sense of unity or group cohesion through associational activity. Zimbabwe's independence ushered a spate of associations in Gutu district. The Gutu Development Association founded in 1980 was more of a modernizing project, bringing an awareness of the role the elites could play in developing the district.

The Gutu East Schools Development Association (GESDA) formed in 1987 at Alheit Secondary School largely attracted a membership of businessmen and professionals, the majority of whom were former Alheit students. Among them were Betserai Madzivire, Kokerai Rugara, Heneri Dzinotywei, Mashinga Mapondera, Pedzisai Madume, Empire Makamure and Crispin Mandizvidza its patron. The relationships which they developed in school thus continued in adulthood and transcended into a network of overlapping cliques of friends.

The association represented people in a defined geographical area, who shared common interests in local development. In his maiden speech, Dzinotywei the chairperson of the association and an indigene of Gutu said, 'I encourage both the young and old people who are accomplished business people and those who went abroad to gain an education not to forget their debt to those who supported them at home in the village... The formation of GESDA is indeed a fulfillment of the *ziva kwawakabva* (do not forget your roots) idiom.'¹⁰² Dzinotywei's pronouncement reverberated Nyamnjoh and Rowlands' observation that ploughing back to the community benefits of education was the benchmark for measuring regional progress and development in Cameroon.¹⁰³

¹⁰² H. A. M. Dzinotywei, Speech delivered by Prof. Heneri Dzinotywei at the official launch of GESDA, 1987. In addition to subscriptions from schools GESDA sourced funds from the Australian embassy and constructed a \$35 000 library. This was to be a reference library for use by teachers and students in the Gutu East schools. It was envisaged that once GESDA had scored commendable success, it was going to spread its operations to every part of the district.

¹⁰³ F.Nyamnjoh and M.Rowlands, 'Elite Associations and the Politics of Belonging in Cameroon', *Africa 68* (3), 1998, p.320.

In 1996 the Makore Development Association (MDA) was formed. Chaired by Mr. Guni, the association received financial assistance from an American organisation. In its developmental projects, the association was accused of sidelining members of the ruling party-ZANU-PF. Shuvai Mahofa the Member of Parliament for Gutu South had to call upon Mr. C. Mudenge, the District Administrator to discipline Chief Makore for allegedly using the Chief's powers to scuttle developmental efforts stirred by ZANU-PF in the area.¹⁰⁴ Mahofa lambasted the tendency for elite associations to reinvent or rework regional loyalties in conjunction with whites as part of the mobilization of regional support to gain political mileage. Such a stance was expected because Mr. Guni's brother Advocate Vengai Guni had shown interest in challenging Mahofa for the Gutu South parliamentary seat.

While the Makore Development Association was still functional, Advocate Vengai Guni launched the Mawunde Development Association (MDA) which he chaired. In the year 2000 the local community moulded bricks and with assistance from the United States based Health and Salvation to Every Nation (HASTERN), the association built a Z\$10 billion clinic at Chitando in Gutu.¹⁰⁵ While Advocate Guni saw the sprouting of new associations as a product of manipulations by political elites in their quest for power, he dismissed the allegation that the developmental efforts he was initiating were directed towards vote-buying to oust Mahofa from Gutu South. Indeed, he claimed that his efforts were a response to the mandate bestowed upon him by President Mugabe when he visited Gutu that he (Guni) had to shoulder the responsibility of developing the area.¹⁰⁶

In 2013, Gutu Development Forum was formed. The presumably non-partisan and apolitical forum attracted membership from chiefs, headmen, intellectuals, businessmen, politicians and professionals with a passion towards the development and progress of the District. Chief Masanganise Gutu was the patron with Dr. Shumbairerwa as the Executive Chairperson. The motives claimed by both traditional and modern elites for pursuing these new alliances were the furtherance of local development and the assertion of regional identities.

Advocate Guni, Advocate Chagonda, Innocent Gonese, Obert Gutu, Wiston Chitando, Honour Mkushi among others were incorporated as members of the forum in absentia. According to Guni, claims to indigenous origins and hostility to 'strangers' had already become

¹⁰⁴ Letter from Mrs.S.B.Mahofa-MP Gutu South to C.Mudenge-District Administrator Gutu, 13 June 1997.

¹⁰⁵ *The Herald* 14 June 2007

¹⁰⁶ Interview with Advocate Guni, Harare, 24 June 2014.

part of the rhetoric of exclusion by politicians who wanted to maintain authoritarian rule through the manipulation of local networks.¹⁰⁷ Guni argued that the Associations continued to play their chauvinist games, each extolling their own locality making the possibility of thrashing out a unanimous position less and less likely. The Mawunde and Makore Development Associations claimed that most of the associations had tended to be associated with Gutu East and Central, marginalizing Gutu South.¹⁰⁸ Some of the associations Guni argued were established by prominent individuals to serve as important vehicles in maintaining their social prestige where the quest for personal gain led to the rediscovery of communal solidarity.

When assessing the effectiveness of an association, the concept of ‘representation’ had two meanings. It referred to the extent to which its membership reflected the composition of the community as a whole, as well as the extent to which community priorities were then reflected in the association’s decisions and actions. The trend for local associations to take on increasing political significance as a means of representing local interests in Gutu as Senator Makamure implored was encouraged by the unpopularity of ZANU-PF. Interestingly, as associations operated, they professed to be politically and ideologically neutral even though arguably, their leaders stood to gain more by seeking prestige and power within the confines of the home region or village.

Among the elite from Kumba in Cameroon, Gieschiere and Nyamnjoh, found that “someone’s home should be where you are born, where you went to school, where you live, where you have all your property and also where one is buried when one dies.”¹⁰⁹ According to Fontein, the Karanga also believe that one’s home is where they have a symbolic and material bodily connection with their land epitomized by burying the umbilical cord (*rukuvhute*) of a newly born child in the soil or in the cattle kraal.¹¹⁰ “Wherever one goes, their home is where their *rukuvhute* is and it is ideally also where they should be buried after their death, to complete the cycle of life where it began.”¹¹¹

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Gieschiere and F.Nyamnjoh, ‘Capitalism and Autochthony: The Seesaw of Mobility and Belonging’, p.424.

¹¹⁰ J. Fontein., “Graves, Ruins and Belonging: Towards an Anthropology of Proximity.” *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 17 (4): 706–727,2011,pp.713-714

¹¹¹ G. C. Mazarire (2013): The Gadzingo: Towards a Karanga expansion matrix in 18th- and 19th-century southern Zimbabwe, *Critical African Studies*, 5:1, 4-16, p.10.

The names of some of the associations in Gutu, for example Muunde and Makore Development Associations, led by the Guni brothers conveyed autochthonic notions which completely eroded the ideal of regional let alone national citizenship. Each association tended to develop in its own way and at its own pace. The rate of progress was influenced by several factors such as levels of social cohesion and the attitude of chiefs and others in authority. The level and quality of representation achieved by each association was important for reasons of financial sustainability and institutional credibility.

A study of the Record Club of Cameroon revealed that the actual role of elites in promoting local interests was often cloaked in the language of development with the aim of gaining access through central administration to capital for business ventures at the local level.¹¹² The mobilization of regional elites for business and political purposes appeared to have been a consistent feature of associations in Gutu from the mid-1980s. Gradually, these elite networks developed to give political expression to fears of exclusion and conflict stemming from the impact of political liberalization. Thus, regional elite associations offered special possibilities in the new political configuration.

What could have been GESDA's hidden political hand and a classic example of elite interlock was discernible in a number of ways. As already indicated, the networking contact which formed the base upon which GESDA was launched occurred in an educational setting. However, two decades later, some of the founding members of GESDA went on to join the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) led by Morgan Tsvangirai.

Empire Makamure the Vice Chairperson of GESDA joined the MDC at its formation and became the Senator for Gutu in 2008. Heneri Dzinotyiwei the Chairperson of GESDA who had founded the defunct Zimbabwe Integrated Programme (ZIP) later joined the MDC and became a Member of Parliament for Budiro, ultimately securing a Ministerial post on an MDC ticket in the Government of National Unity (GNU) in 2009. Dr. Kokerai Rugara, the Secretary of GESDA later became the MDC Senator for Bikita.

The MDC victory in the 2008 harmonized elections shifted the balance of power significantly towards the opposition resulting in a massive exodus of Gutu's elite from ZANU-PF. With four out of the five constituencies in Gutu district having been won by the MDC in

¹¹² F. Nyamnjoh and M. Rowlands, 'Elite Associations and the Politics of Belonging in Cameroon' in *Africa* 68 (3), 1998, p.323.

2008 elections, the district became a target of ZANU PF's violent campaigns to the presidential run-off in June 2008.

The emergence of the Movement of Democratic Change (MDC) as a political rival to ZANU PF significantly changed the political landscape in the district, broadly dividing it into those supporting ZANU PF and those supporting MDC. Mujere established that the labelling of the Basotho community as MDC supporters made them targets of political violence because Job Sikhala, one of the members of the Basotho community was a founding member of the MDC.¹¹³ The Sikhala family became one of the most conspicuous targets of political violence since 2000 in the Dewure Purchase Area. Thus, the marked political polarization in the district since 2008 put the community in a very precarious position where political networking became paramount.

When the transitional government of national unity—described in the GPA as the Inclusive Government was sworn in on 11 February 2009, rival elites began contesting the delicate equilibrium of power sharing. Even though Robert Mugabe and Morgan Tsvangirai might have reluctantly gone into the new settlement, politicians from both parties gradually succumbed to predation, transforming themselves into wealthy patrons. Bratton notes that ‘at least two MDC ministers who were rumoured to have taken bribes were demoted in a cabinet reshuffle in July 2010.’¹¹⁴

The Inclusive government was thus viewed by MDC members as an opportunity to gain access to assets and benefits previously enjoyed by ZANU-PF. This explains why new Members of Parliament demanded state-of-the-art vehicles.¹¹⁵ All the political parties created political space for their most reliable party loyalists. The result was that power-sharing provided a top-heavy, bloated and most expensive cabinet in Zimbabwe's history. Within the political divide also came the clergy who made up a new power elite.

7.6 The clergy and the advent of a new power elite

In this section, an effort is made to show the extent to which faith-based organisations as formal or informal channels linked the social networks of Gutu residents to individuals who held positions of power in the post-independence era. I argue that leaders of various religious groups

¹¹³ J. Mujere, “Autochthons, Strangers, Modernizing Educationists, and Progressive Farmers: Basotho struggles for belonging in Zimbabwe 1930s-2008”, Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Edinburgh, 2012, p.204.

¹¹⁴ Bratton, *Power Politics in Zimbabwe*, p.46.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid*, p.132.

who used to occupy the lower ranks of society manipulated or transformed evangelical faith into a portal to elitism. As one Church Minister elaborated;

When you network, you know the right people who can come to your rescue in times of need. Through the click of a button, you can get things done by talking to the right people...for preferential treatment when you need a residential stand... My position as a minister of religion is most revered because people from all walks of life address me as Father or the Man of God. Whether you believe in God or not, at some point in time you shall need my service. There has to be that reciprocity through lived experiences.¹¹⁶

There are a variety of reasons why some church leaders have chosen to be openly identified with the ruling elite. Some have deep-seated ideological convictions that tally with those of President Mugabe and ZANU-PF and these relate to his appeal to racism, African pride and sovereignty.

Leaders who fall in this category tend to be older church leaders who had to negotiate racism, exile and condescending attitudes towards African indigenous religions and cultures. Addressing ZCC members at the church's centenary celebrations in Gokwe South, Nehemiah Mutendi described President Mugabe as a 'God-sent leader.'¹¹⁷ He went further to describe ZCC as a revolutionary church just like ZANU-PF a revolutionary party. The founding father Samuel Mutendi was arrested and persecuted by the colonial regime for starting a church that espoused African values. Schools set up by the church were banned by the colonial inspectors because they considered them to be springboards for resurgent African nationalism.

The government policy to redistribute land among the black majority also appealed to leaders of African Initiated Churches (AICs). Some church leaders are beneficiaries of the land reform programme while others have found President Mugabe's attack on imperialism compelling and also approved strongly of his public disdain of homosexuality as un-Christian and un-African.¹¹⁸ Notwithstanding the above, there are economic and other benefits to be derived from supporting Mugabe. According to Ezra Chitando, "leaders who are deemed favourable to Mugabe get preferential treatment on state occasions, use their political connections to increase their own grip on power and also enjoy the psychological benefit of feeling 'safe' in an uncertain socio-economic and political environment".

¹¹⁶ Interview with Reverend Motsi, Gutu, 8 August 2014.

¹¹⁷ *The Herald*, 14 August 2013.

¹¹⁸ M. R. Gunda, *The Bible and Homosexuality in Zimbabwe: A Socio-Historical Analysis of the political, cultural and Christian arguments in the Homosexual Public debate with special reference to the bible*. Bamberg University Press, Bamberg, 2010.

Members of non-traditional families achieved upward mobility through the church and the rapidly proliferating Pentecostal sects. Gutu has had a fair share of African Initiated Churches (AICs) like Zviratidzo, Leonard Pentecostal Church, Ruvheneko, Vabati Pamunda, Mwazha, Zion (Makamba), ZCC (Mutendi), ZAOGA and the Apostolic Faith Mission operating alongside mainstream missionary churches like Roman Catholic, Reformed Church in Zimbabwe (still largely referred to as Dutch Reformed Church) and United Methodist among others.

The ZCC (Mutendi) cultivated very close relations with Zimbabwe's ZANU-PF ruling elite who have taken turns to attend church conferences and address congregants. Top ranking government officials among them the late Minister of Higher and Tertiary Education Stan Mudenge and the late Vitalis Zvinvashe frequently visited Mbungu Estates (the ZCC Masvingo Headquarters). In 2010 and 2013, then Minister Emmerson Mnangagwa and Vice President Joyce Mujuru respectively attended the Easter Conference at the church's Mbungu headquarters.

On behalf of President Mugabe, Minister Sydney Sekeramayi addressed a gathering of adherents at their Defe Shrine in Gokwe. When President Mugabe conducted a political rally in Mucheke stadium in a trail campaign leading to the 2008 harmonized elections, Mutendi was invited to grace the occasion. The year 2014 witnessed the installation of Jethro Mutendi as a chief in Gokwe at an occasion which was attended by several government officials and politicians hailing from across the political divide. No doubt, Mutendi's honeymoon with the ZANU-PF political elite has elevated his status. Against the backdrop of the ZCC (Mutendi)'s experiences, I argue here that the growing influence of the church has largely been accomplished by the leaders working through their social networks of the nation's leadership. In the process some politicians have manipulated this as an Achilles' heel for their political expediency.

In Gutu, an AIC called Vabati Pamunda led by Mudangandi worked closely with the former Gutu Central ZANU-PF legislator Lovemore Matuke during his 2008 campaign for the Gutu Central parliamentary seat which he later on lost to the MDC-T. Cash donations and food handouts were distributed through the church structures and at services where preachers would deliver political messages in support of ZANU-PF. The faith-inspired leaders of Ruvheneko, whose headquarters is located at the Dewure-Sote confluence, are alleged to be ZANU-PF activists. It is equally undeniable that some churches have been arm-twisted to become conduits of political propaganda in the struggle for political mastery in Zimbabwe and Gutu in particular. In the same vein, some AICs were alleged to be led by conmen. In the court of Chief Chiwara,

local village heads held a meeting where they complained about the operations of Vengai Magwidi's Madzibaba Oblance church which they accused of child abuse. Magwidi's followers were barred by their doctrine from greeting people or having handshakes and also not attending any formal gatherings which included funerals.¹¹⁹

Leonard's Pentecostal church has enjoyed the monopoly of gracing the Heroes Day activities at the Kamungoma shrine in Gutu, courtesy of the ZANU-PF leadership in the area. This practice is not unique to Gutu because the late 'Madzibaba' Border Gezi as ZANU-PF Political Commissar invited his church members to come and grace state occasions like the National Heroes Day and Independence Day celebrations.¹²⁰ Along the same lines Madzibaba Nzira of Johane Masowe weChishanu and his members 'constituted a dependable support base and were ferried to various State occasions where special seats were reserved for them. They were also taken to the airport to form the welcoming party whenever Mugabe returned from his foreign trips'.¹²¹

In the light of the above, I concede that a sizeable number of AICs in Gutu sought to impose their vision on society, using their convening power to build networks with powerful people. While the Johane Masowe Church insisted that Apostolic Churches should be apolitical and regarded manipulation of churches by political parties as ungodly, they were not immune to the wave of political violence associated with the land reform programme. Masowe adherents occupied farms in the Zoma area of Gutu. According to Sibanda and Maposa the numerical superiority and entrepreneurial thrust of some AICs placed them in a unique position of being a force to reckon with in the social, economic and political processes. The collaboration of churches in developmental projects also provided opportunities for evangelical public leaders to interact and develop friendships with the ruling elite.

A case in point is how in 1994 the Roman Catholic and the Methodist Churches came together and established Gutu United Primary School. The webs of interpersonal friendship and professional networks which were cultivated by this development were such that the Gutu Rural District Council could no longer afford to hold planning meetings without inviting church

¹¹⁹ PER 5 CHK 141 Chiwara File, The Court of Chief Chiwara, 12 March 2012. The meeting between the local village heads and the Chief took place on 1 September 2011.

¹²⁰ E. Sibanda and R.S Maposa, 'Behind the Smokescreen: African Instituted Churches and Political Processes in Zimbabwe'. In Chitando (ed.) *Prayers and Players: Religion and Politics in Zimbabwe*, Sapes Books, Harare, 2013, p. 132.

¹²¹ E. Chitando, 'In the Beginning was the Land': The Appropriation of Religious Themes in Political Discourses in Zimbabwe' in *Africa*, Vol.75 (2), 220-239, 2005, p.231.

organisations.¹²² Churches like Johane Marange, Mwazha and ZAOGA among others have instilled hard work, frugality and consistent shrewd investment of profits among their followers through the gospel of prosperity. Leaders of numerous AICs in Gutu have, through political influence, academic respectability, creative inspiration, and financial capital, put significant resources into generating sources of political power or what Berry terms 'investment in seniority'.¹²³

People went beyond religious groups to forge business networks. High-ranking religious leaders have rendered themselves as ZANU-PF's goodwill ambassadors in defending the controversial issues surrounding the land reform programme, the Constitution-making and electoral processes and the Anti-Sanctions campaign. Convening power or the ability to bring disparate people together is not simply the purview of politicians and business people but also religious leaders who have created bonds of loyalty with the communities cemented by shared faith. Religious leaders also serve as nodes of information and points of contact within high-status social networks.

Within the religious circle, persuasion was found to be a more effective way to exercise power than domination. Religious leaders are not only powerful but wealthy, well educated, and motivated. Their social networks were found unique in that these emerged out of members who were or are not recruited through procreation and inheritance. Convening power which has been used to assemble mass political rallies has ceased to be a monopoly of political elite ranks since the churches have already proved their capacity of mobilizing society. The emergence in religiously motivated terrorism all over the world shows that religious organisations have the potential to enter into the power vacuum left by a collapsed/failed state.

7.7 Conclusion

The Chapter has made it apparent that differentiation is inevitable, no matter what the political system. The war of liberation's gun-fashioned relations created a political environment which manufactured its own elite while the post-war period created positions for those skillful or lucky enough to benefit. Even though political parties might be factionalized and consumed by

¹²² Interview with Francis Mukaro, Gutu, 26 July 2013.

¹²³ S. Berry, *Fathers Work for their Sons: Accumulation, Mobility and Class Formation in an Extended Yoruba Community*, University of California Press, Berkley, 1985, pp.75-78.

internal succession disputes, they would always create political space in which party loyalists were rewarded. Whenever the dominance of the ruling elite is threatened, they would always revert to coercion where violence remained the standard operating procedure.

In Zimbabwe, politics is a type of business because political positions give access to economic resources. The nexus between business and politics has been explored, making it abundantly clear that politicians and businessmen constantly draw resources from their economic activities to finance political activities and maintain social prestige. A myriad of pathways in the recruitment to political power revealed how elite status can also be inherited. The educated elite's involvement in the enterprise of succession disputes to safeguard and retain the chiefs' legitimacy was interrogated to explain social self-reproduction within the realm of chieftainship politics. The chapter has also shown how religious leaders have manipulated or transformed evangelical faith and their convening power as portals to elitism.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

“In the course of time, each meets each or knows somebody who knows somebody who knows that one”. C. Wright Mills (1956:283).

8.0 Introduction

This chapter offers a synthesis of the findings of the study in relation to the thematic focus of this research. To do so the study’s questions are recalled for the purpose of making critical remarks on the appropriateness of social capital towards understanding how networks acted as conduits for hegemonic precepts within communities. The chapter discusses and summarizes some of the salient issues that were raised in preceding chapters and those aspects which might require further exploration.

The chapter also illuminates the broader relevance of this thesis particularly for purposes of understanding new elitist imperatives embraced in social capital but usually lumped together with cronyism, nepotism, regionalism, indigenous imperialism and patronage politics among others. The aspects of consent and coercion as enshrined in Antonio Gramsci’s theory of hegemony are discussed within the context of empirical evidence proffered in preceding chapters. Empirical evidence given in previous chapters indicates that there have always been different elite typologies who have invested energy, time and money to consolidate and maintain their elite statuses in society.

The experiences by the traditional elites, politicians, professionals and intellectuals are analysed to show how the dominant groups strove to secure the consent of subordinate groups on the road to power, fame and privileged statuses. I contend that a lived hegemony, as Raymond has put it, becomes a process which has to be “continually renewed, recreated, defended and modified”¹ through “physical sidelining and discursive absorption among other techniques”.²

¹ Williams Raymond, *Marxism and Literature*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1977, p.112.

² Michael Bratton, ‘The Comrades and the Countryside: The Politics of Agricultural Policy in Zimbabwe’ in *World Politics*, Vol.39, No.2 (Jan.,1987),pp.174-202

8.1 Brief insight

Periodisation is a necessary part of understanding the past, but it does sometimes mask continuities. My conclusion might not have fitted comfortably into distinct and distinguishable phases but the common denominator of all chapters rests upon elite interconnections, interpenetrations or interlock. These reveal varied patterns of recruitment and selection in terms of career paths, elite roles, power and prestige of diverse elite groups. The duality of focus, on the one hand on individuals and on the other on social groups of which they are part, runs through this thesis. This was, in a sense, unavoidable because social differentiation is made possible by individuals, responding no doubt to the stimuli of forces not entirely under their control.

The analysis of networking sources within Gutu's leading elite groups suggested several significant findings. As numerous examples illustrated, networking contacts within Gutu's elite occurred formally and informally. Those elite groups who exercised the most influence within their respective areas of responsibility had close ties to one another and these ties affected their personal and professional relationships. Members of the elite really wishing to get to the top could hardly be politicians exclusively, civil servants or businessmen only. They themselves or their entourage had to hold a plurality of positions in various sectors to gain a maximum of resources and social recognition and reputation.

As a function of elite interlock and interchangeability, many of the individuals referred to in the study held influential positions in a number of elite groups. However, while it is true that the elites defended their own interests and continuously sought to acquire more resources by all available means, (including predatory ones), it would be misleading to believe that they did so as an autonomous and all-powerful group. In some cases the political elite accumulated wealth in order to redistribute it to gain political support. This political capital in turn, enabled them to gain access to critical resources at times through state apparatus. Arguably, the legitimacy of the political elites derived from their ability to nourish the clientele on which their power rested. During election campaigns, donor aid was politicized in an attempt by the ruling class to win over potential opposition groups and to curry favour with a section of the peasantry. Money was donated to buy football boots, uniforms and balls as well as district soccer league prizes in cash

and food aid was distributed for purposes of buying votes to outwit political opponents.³ This type of relationship amounts to a simple manipulation within the framework of complex networks which are interwoven from the top to the bottom.

We saw that in Gutu, a profound crisis of hegemony emerged and deepened sharply in 2008. ZANU-PF's defeat by the MDC in the 2008 elections in Gutu was followed by its use of retributive violence. Despite the new focus on elections, elite politics remained an important instrument with which to build support networks during political campaigns. The flow of resources into rural localities enabled the political parties to act as agents of elite recruitment, channels for promotion and as patronage for the selection of top local leaders. Distributive politics offered politicians a resource with which to consolidate or build a popular following. Elites might have become rich from politics but they also had to be rich to do politics.

Aspirants to political office required both local recognition and the means to fulfill their ambition and so they had to be rich enough to become convincing.⁴ The empirical evidence presented in this thesis shows that while structural parameters like high social status, education or superior financial position were conducive to greater access to resources; they also brought in some rewards to the underprivileged through kinship networks. This confirms the Shona proverb: *Kuwanda huuya kwakatorambwa nomuroyi*, meaning that a person is bound to enjoy a good measure of security if one has a wide range of relatives and friends who are the best life insurance.

8.2 Summary

In chapter one, the thesis explored the basic foundations of elite attributes during the pre-colonial era, wherein the focal concern was on extensive power vested in a prescribed hierarchy comprising Chiefs, Headmen, and Village Heads. These individuals were appointed on the basis of custom governed by heredity which ensured social reproduction and the transmission of privileged positions. The chief maintained power and legitimacy over the polity by reinforcing the collective belief in his sacredness and by demonstrating his socio-political effectiveness. The

³ J. Zava, 'Muzenda's Business a Blessing for Constituents', *Horizon*, May 1996, p.13.

⁴ See Jean-Pascal Daloz, "Big Men" in Sub-Saharan Africa: How Elites Accumulate Positions and Resources in Mattei Dogan (ed.), *Elite Configurations at the Apex of Power* Brill Leiden, Boston, 2003.

chief skillfully deployed and used vassals organized in diffuse political networks. Thus the legitimacy of the chief derived from his social exclusivity and his proximity to the sacred.

Chiefs also derived prestige particularly when eliteness went along with the responsibility to exercise moral leadership. The pre-colonial and colonial periods saw chiefs distributing offices, privileges, gifts and land in return for political loyalty. As shown in chapter one, chiefs replenished their treasuries primarily by conducting successful wars, gathering booty and also by preserving the imperial tax system. This gave the chief the ability to command and influence the actions of others and to have his way in difficult situations. Thus, from the pre-colonial to the post-colonial era, the traditional elite families have had preferential access to advantages which facilitated the acquisition of varied forms of wealth.

The changes from ascription and hereditary succession to secular and competitive credentials for power seem to have precipitated with marginal success the erosion of the political influence of the traditional ruling families. The study has shown that the pendulum of mobility seems to have gradually moved from prestige to meritocracy in recruitment into the traditional political elite. Instead of being displaced wholesale by the westernized elite, the old elite increasingly belong to the new ranks or have educated their children to belong for the perpetuation of elite power and status.

Notable is that many African elite families traced their prosperity to an ancestor who flourished during the late colonial period. The terms in which struggles for hegemony took place were often derived from techniques or instruments introduced by the colonial system. Whilst traditional elites were seemingly incorporated into state structures in independent Zimbabwe, the potency of their new found roles was profoundly circumscribed. Instead, traditional rulers, dependant on the state for official recognition, have served as facilitators for the implementation of policy, particularly in the rural areas. Whilst accorded respect and status, their role was re-invented and chiefs became agents of the government at the grass-roots level. This presupposes a high degree of influence over policy by interest groups. As Gramsci noted;

...every State is ethical in as much as one of its most important functions is to raise the great mass of the population to a particular cultural and moral level, a level (or type) which corresponds to the needs of the productive forces for development, and hence to the interests of the ruling classes'.⁵

⁵ A. Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1971, p.258.

Importantly, regarding my consideration of hegemony, a moment exists when the ruling group “becomes aware that one’s own corporate interests, in their present and future development, transcend the corporate limits of the purely economic elite, and can and must become the interests of other subordinate groups too”.⁶

The Zimbabwean political elite at independence reflected Gramsci’s proposition. They were aware that they were inheriting a profoundly racially imbalanced economy. “Their keenness to advance their own elite interests, resulted in the new state pursuing a general developmental project that transcended narrow elite interests—thus ‘capturing’ the subordinate elites within the hegemonic discourse of ‘development’—whilst assiduously reproducing and developing capitalist relations of production”⁷. Post-liberation leaders have displayed the capacity to penetrate society politically and secure their hegemony.

We have seen that the political elite also achieved political greatness by recourse to violence particularly during elections in a bid to achieve immortal fame. In moves akin to the Machiavelli style, laws and institutions were created to purportedly impose ‘order’ on the unstable political landscape. In the process, ZANU-PF relegated any individuals who stood in the way of its attaining increased power and unfettered autonomy. Thus, President Mugabe has been able to crush at every opportunity self-styled ambitious politicians who stood in his way but at the same time avoiding unintended, deleterious consequences for his rule.

The study has shown that even the selection of cabinet ministers, was and has been accomplished according to non-written rules which reveal the fights between factions inside the ZANU-PF party. In situations where political fame was at risk, the party would readmit into its ranks any members who would have been expelled from the party for contesting elections as independent candidates. By so doing, the President was and has been able to eliminate rival threats to the longevity of his rule. The political game has therefore tended to be patrimonial with power becoming highly centralized and loyal supporters being rewarded and selectively

⁶ Ibid, p.181. See also Andre Astrow, *Zimbabwe, A Revolution that Lost its Way?*, Zed Books, London, 1983. Astrow addressed fundamental issues which were to determine Zimbabwe’s future in relation to whether the leadership was poised towards establishing the basis for a viable socialist alternative in the interest of the majority of the African people or whether it was going to follow a capitalist road.

⁷ I. Taylor, ‘Botswana’s ‘Developmental State’ and the Politics of Legitimacy’, p10. Accessed on <http://www.rrojasdatabank.info/devstate/Botswana.pdf> 11/04/2012.

favoured. These “supporters are [in turn] expected to mobilize political support for the incumbent”.⁸

Furthermore, politics continues to be conducted within a closely knit network of dependent relationships. The practice occurs elsewhere even in the Western world “where the elite’s ability to entrench their power and wealth, distribute public resources to their supporters and co-opt political opponents has become part of the political culture”.⁹

The social profile of the rural elite in Gutu suggested several paths people traversed to reach elite status. This thesis established that not all elites were born into their relatively exalted situations. Being elite would be no guarantee that one would remain an elite through one’s lifetime. Elite interchangeability or the potential impermanence of elite status was confirmed by the fact that prominent politicians and businessmen in Gutu were merely common men and women from the womb of the countryside.

Findings also confirmed that the inheritance of wealth and status were not necessarily accompanied by continuity in the same domain of activity. Each generation within a given family would experience a significant upward or downward movement from the summits of power. An interesting but equally not surprising metabolism of elites this study confirmed was that a family might also lose its wealth for whatever reason but without losing its prestige and influence within the village arena.

It is essential to note that although some families might have failed to revive their father’s business empire, they still commanded tremendous respect in their localities. Thus social power is not distributed according to a firm hierarchy; instead, it is spread around in various sectors, and in the hands of many different people and institutions. This confirms elite interchangeability where individuals can have multiple identities, move between different institutions and establish links with others across clusters. Looking at Gutu’s politicians, business people, professionals, evangelists and other elite typologies; we find qualified support for both perspectives that societal power is dispersed and that it is held by many different people who reach the pinnacle of their respective fields through different paths. Elite interchangeability and interlock meant that teachers could also be business leaders, politicians and agriculturalists but still retain their

⁸ Jo-Ansie van Wyk, *Political Leaders in Africa: Presidents, Patrons or Profiteers?* The African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD). 2007 *Occasional Paper Series: Volume 2, Number 1, 2007*, p.5.

⁹ M. Dogan, ‘Is there a Ruling Class in France?’ In M. Dogan (ed.) *Elite Configurations at the Apex of Power*, Brill Leiden, Boston, 2003, pp.17-90.

academic profession. This is an indication that the teaching profession tended to favour vertical social mobility than other professions.

Chapter two revealed that rural differentiation was moulded by people's varying family histories and differences in farming systems. We saw that Purchase Area farmers pursued an agenda that largely ignored the travails of non-elite Africans while seeking unequivocal recognition from the settler state.¹⁰ It emerged from the study that the rural economy was hardly autonomous but generally embedded in social relations through working parties where the maintenance of elite status by the society's 'big men' was entirely dependent on their capacity to meet the expectations of followers or admirers.¹¹ Conversely the acuteness of inequalities was reduced by personalized bonds of mutually beneficial reciprocity. Without underestimating the social dimensions of the links between the successful farmers and their less fortunate counterparts what becomes clear is that there were multiple centres and bases of power in society where no single group dominated decision making in all areas.

Chapter five situated the study in its social context by focusing on the primacy of the town-country interface in social networking. While kinship, neighbourhood and rural affiliations receded in importance as systems of defining and regulating relations, traces were made that traditional customs and norms continue to survive in town. Although migrants come as individuals and have to fend for themselves as individuals, the tendency is that one would choose friends from kinsmen or *vana vokumusha*. More formally, one would choose to spend leisure time with people from the same rural area who would habitually drink together or participate in social activities and clubs. The migrant however "retains his country networking in town, 'stretching' it to include town-based kinsmen, but maintaining its closed character in relation to other categories of people".¹² Even after distinctive customs and cultural traits are lost, rural

¹⁰ A. K. Shutt, 'Purchase Area farmers and the middle class of Southern Rhodesia, c.1931-1952', *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol.30, No. 3 (1997), pp.556-557.

¹¹ Jean-Pascal Daloz, "Big Men" in Sub-Saharan Africa: How Elites Accumulate Positions and Resources in Mattei Dogan (ed.), *Elite Configurations at the Apex of Power* Brill Leiden, Boston, 2003, p.278.

¹¹ E. Chitando (ed.) *Prayers and Players*, p.vii.

¹¹ P. Mayer, 'Migrancy and the study of Africans in town', *American Anthropology*, 64, 3 (1), 1962, 576-92, p.580.

affiliations are continually recreated by new experiences. The existence of a name as the study has revealed, could perhaps be sufficient to form group character in new situations, given that the name associates an individual with a certain past and region of origin. Consciousness of one's place of origin may thus be considered intermittent. The study has shown that even political elites seek to convert intra-ethnic loyalties, attachments or emotions to personal or factional advantage at the regional or national levels. What we are witnessing is none other than age-old patronage politics or group favouritism.

The study in its political context explored the development of African nationalist politics and the struggle for political independence. These were found to be characterized by tensions which seem to have set the stage for the postcolonial context of inter and intra-ethnic factional clashes. Chapter six weaved Gutu into the African nationalist politics and the struggle for political independence. The study has shown that the manipulation of regional or ethnic rivalries to divide and rule has been a long-standing strategy in Zimbabwean national politics. Strong political networks were also hatched in the detention camps. As Manganga has put it, "belonging and identification were politicized making them indispensable resources of political capital in contestations for power and hegemonic control over the nationalist movement and the envisaged new Zimbabwean state".¹³

The post-colonial period brought new imperatives where polarizations which characterized the colonial period also reflected politics of inclusion and exclusion. The thesis has, therefore, demonstrated the importance of taking a long historical trajectory in analyzing the problem of belonging in Zimbabwe in the light of the 'Gamatox' versus the 'Weevil' factions characterizing the ruling ZANU-PF party. As a function of social networks, cabinet reshuffles and party 'cleansing' have seen some individuals who occupied top positions, formulated policies and made decisions dismissed and others roped in. The divisions between the 'Gamatox' and 'Weevils' camps which have rocked ZANU-PF since the December 2014 Congress have had casualties who had commanded top positions in the party but were made redundant in the blink of an eye as winds of change blew. We have seen how people who had become politically moribund sprang back into the political limelight. In a classic example of elite circulation, when

¹³ K. Manganga, A historical study of industrial ethnicity in urban colonial Zimbabwe and its contemporary transitions: The case of African Harare, c. 1890-1980, pp.222-223.

Tongai Muzenda fell victim of the purging of those who sympathized with Joice Mujuru, he was relieved from his post as Gutu West Member of the National Assembly and Deputy Minister of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare. Within the same period, his sister Tsitsi Muzenda was elevated to Deputy Minister of Energy. The indication that ‘big names’ in politics never die was confirmed and has disclosed the significance of the past in foregrounding places of elite status among kin from generation to generation.

Political predation where ruling is through a complex combination of coercion, consent, persuasion and material inducement was considered in chapter seven. The study established that political elites’ inclination to unleash violence against their own people and suppress dissent for political expedience created channels for cementing loyalty and checking rivals. Some elites went beyond creating opportunities for their immediate families and friends and appointed officials according to political loyalty rather than technical merit. Although the political elite initiated or exhibited plausible or practical evidence of a developmental vision or commitment to promote long-term and sustainable growth within the District, numerous instruments of coercion would be employed to instill fear among the people. As long as methods of oppression manage to maintain fear, they help to maintain the system. This study has made it clear that when the ruling elites feel threatened, they tend to close ranks and to reduce conflict within their own cluster. Daloz also observed that “when confronted by internal disputes, faction leaders are forced to cultivate relations with those below them in order to gain support in their power struggle with one another”¹⁴. That as it may, it is equally important to realize that “these political elites are never wholly dissociated from their supporters but remain directly bound to them through a myriad of clientelistic networks’ staffed by dependent brokers.”¹⁵

Networks of privilege in Gutu were also found to be highly extensive and complex. These consisted of different types of primary relationships: kinship, affinity, friendship within different clubs, professional gatherings, old-boy groupings and fraternities whose various techniques of symbolization or mystification achieved hegemonic precepts. To a large measure, their members were brought up in similar neighbourhoods and in some cases in the same religious tradition.

¹⁴ Jean-Pascal Daloz, “Big Men” in Sub-Saharan Africa: How Elites Accumulate Positions and Resources in Mattei Dogan (ed.), *Elite Configurations at the Apex of Power*, Brill Leiden, Boston, 2003, p.279.

¹⁵Ibid.

They were educated at exclusive or selective mission boarding schools. Relationships developed in school were continued in adulthood through former students' associations to create a network of overlapping cliques of friends.

Despite the heterogeneity of elite typologies, they exhibited almost similar patterns of behaviour and attitude largely because most of them belonged to several organisations which often met. Ties stemming from kinship, shared social and educational backgrounds and club memberships also broadened and strengthened their networks. The mushrooming of associations affirmed the rise of intellectuals to corridors of power and the construction of their own form of hegemony within the strictures of the domestic socio-economic status quo. These elites as the study has shown are far from being socially homogeneous and politically cohesive. The above notwithstanding, kinship and other social networks remain pertinent in securing and maintaining elite status in any given society.

The study also established that in a large measure, societal values were determined by the elite from the upper echelons of society. Because of their connections with influential people in different fields, the elite were able to ensure good formal education for their children. Through socialization in the home, and then at exclusive schools, the children of the elite acquired interests, motives, skills and a world view that went hand in hand with the formal educational process. At the same time, these elites elevated their children routinely in business and politics, consciously breeding cohorts of adherents to the status quo.

The wealthier and better educated had other social and economic advantages over other members of society. As a result, elites would remain subject to little direct influence from the apathetic masses. The majority would also appear generally poorly informed and thus subjecting themselves to manipulation by the elites. In this way, the continuation or regeneration of privilege and wealth for the elite is made possible.

Gramsci claimed that society was divided into two antagonistic or diametrically opposed groups of the powerful and powerless. However, findings revealed that the location of power migrates because of the different positions occupied by the different people in terms of their socio-economic and other privileges. Although hegemony is characterized by high levels of consensus, it is never without conflict. As Kottak rightly observed, discontent may be expressed

differently.¹⁶ ZANU-PF's loss to MDC-T in the 2008 Parliamentary elections in the Gutu district might here constitute the hidden transcript that was publicly revealed. Paradoxically, while the political elite for example influenced the masses far more than the masses influenced elites, the masses would also vote out politicians during elections. What can be derived from the above is that the less tangible reputed sources of power and influence can tip the scales of power in important respects.

In terms of its impact and contribution to knowledge, the thesis builds on the works reviewed and fills in the identified knowledge gaps. Through the study of elite configurations, issues of belonging, identity and the politics of patronage which have permeated the African and the Zimbabwean post-colonial state in particular were traced within contestations for power and hegemony at a micro-level. The thesis revealed that the preference for local candidates for political office, for example, might be informed by the realization that a local understands local aspirations, challenges and peculiarities better than a 'foreigner' or 'outsider'. Proverbially, the Shona would say '*Chawawana idya nehama mutorwa ane hanganwa*' (Whatever you have secured eat with relatives, a stranger forgets), meaning that in good and bad times, keep close contact with your relatives because strangers leave you in the lurch when you need help. Interpreted in another way, 'Blood is thicker than water'. Networks of amity can thus yield elite configurations which can be differently construed as nepotism, homeboyism and belonging.

The tensile strength of town and country networks was discussed in chapter five. The study confirmed that the degree of geographic concentration and the ability by a cluster to provide basic survival needs and expectations strengthened networks among increasingly insecure group members. Networked urbanism based on rural home grounds thus loomed large as the cost of death and burial continued to exceed people's resources.

The discussions on ESAP and the land question have demonstrated that when the bases of wealth accumulation were unstable, criminal networks which catalyzed the rise of different elite typologies emerged. A consideration of the origins and operations of social or business elite associations revealed how these were an avenue of socio-economic and political mobility through which individuals won or seized elite status. This work rescues from oblivion a

¹⁶C. P. Kottak, *Mirror for Humanity: A concise introduction to Cultural Anthropology*, McGraw-Hill. New York, 2005, pp.270-271. Kottak notes that there are also occasions like funerals, dances, festivals and other occasions that might unite the oppressed and it is such public gatherings that the elites would discourage.

fascinating narrative of a widespread though hidden relationship between the Indian, Greek and African businessmen in Gutu.

The study demonstrated how the political landscape can invite the abuse of power by political elites who have the prerogative to institute or not to institute investigations and legal proceedings against criminals. The twilight zone between legality and illegality and the fading boundaries separating legitimacy from illegitimacy have been manipulated to create opportunities for the elites to accumulate wealth through corrupt pathways. The study has shown that corrupt practices are at the very root of power and influence. Admittedly though, it might be difficult to distinguish between gifts customarily received by traditional functionaries and bribe in the modern sense.

Elected representatives; traditional rulers and the business elite among others constitute the ruling elite in Gutu. Some of the actors were found located in two or more of these ranks to establish a historic bloc.¹⁷ According to Taylor, such a historical bloc “seeks to ‘capture’ and maintain the levers of state power in its quest to build a hegemonic project”¹⁸. By virtue of having a shared desire to consolidate their hold on the post-independent state to accumulate and gain influence, the elites came to form a nascent bloc towards the construction of hegemony. As Miliband observed, “the hegemony constructed by a bloc is propelled by the capacity of the ruling elites to persuade subordinate ones that there was no alternative social order to what they provided”.¹⁹

Having waged a bitter struggle for independence, the nationalist elites seized space to begin the task of establishing a hegemonic position within post-independence Zimbabwe. As Gramsci put it, “the supremacy of a social group manifests itself in two ways, as ‘domination’ and as ‘intellectual and moral leadership’”.²⁰ In Zimbabwe, in general, and Gutu in particular, there is evidence that coercion, consent and persuasion operated and continue to operate in tandem confirming Gramsci’s classical definition of hegemony as being consent plus coercion.

Chapter seven also revealed that the absence of counter-hegemonic forces in Zimbabwe has created a situation where the incumbent ZANU-PF has continued to dominate Zimbabwe’s

¹⁷ In Gramscian terms, a historic bloc represents an amalgamation of economic, political and cultural elements of society into a broad political alliance of coalitions that combines coercion and consent.

¹⁸ I. Taylor, ‘Botswana’s Developmental State and the Politics of Legitimacy’, p.6. Accessed on <http://www.rrojasdatabank.info/devstate/Botswana.pdf> 11/04/2012.

¹⁹ R. Miliband, (1994) *Socialism for a Sceptical Age* London: Verso 1994, p.11.

²⁰ A. Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1971, pp.57-58.

political sphere. The fragmented opposition has meant that ZANU-PF has enjoyed hegemonic status since independence largely because of its ability to minimize the threat of counter-hegemonic politics. The opposition's ineptitude and factionalism has resulted in the emasculating of credible alternatives to ZANU-PF thus helping to sustain one-party domination in Zimbabwe.

As we have seen, the potential of the traditional leaders to assume a stance of a counter-hegemonic site was sterilized at the dawn of independence. The relative domination and seeming unassailable position by ZANU-PF are a product of a successful hegemonic project whose hegemonic processes embrace the notion of persuasion and its manipulative overtones. Communal ownership, increasingly favoured in the development discourse cannot escape the pervasive presence of the traditional rulers or ruling elites. Through the study of hegemonic processes, possibly some new ways of coping with the undesired consequences of hegemonic power can be developed. What might need further research is how some chiefs and their wider network of kin and affines have been able to negotiate for significant concessions from government and at the same time make alliances with opposition movements.

A consideration of Zimbabwe's Government of National Unity (GNU), has shown that even though the ruling elites might hail from different political parties and persuasions, they will meet to discuss the art and method of ruling. By so doing, they will tend to separate from the general populace. Arguably, the occurrence of a new elite settlement in 2008 marked a critical juncture in Zimbabwe's political evolution. According to Bratton, "the agreement between rival leaders to share power signals a break in the hegemony of the ZANU-PF party and the onset of regime transition".²¹ This could be an indication that no group interests can secure the lasting and unchanging consent of the general populace. As a result, hegemony has to be constantly renegotiated and reconstructed.

Overall, the study has made a contribution to debates on African elites by analyzing how as a function of social capital, the problem of belonging in the contemporary period, has assumed many dimensions. The study has shown how hegemony changes and continues to be constructed, negotiated and articulated. Power relations at village, district and national levels are not permanent as networks of amity lead to diverse elite configurations and vice versa.

In its wider context, the thesis adds to the growing body of knowledge on the African elite that they are not homogenous and cohesive groups even though they might share similar

²¹ Bratton, *Power Politics in Zimbabwe*, p.42.

backgrounds and may still maintain links. The study has also illustrated that elite configurations and social reproduction, are a continuum with no autonomous breakable threads once viewed through the lens of the trichotomy of the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial periods.

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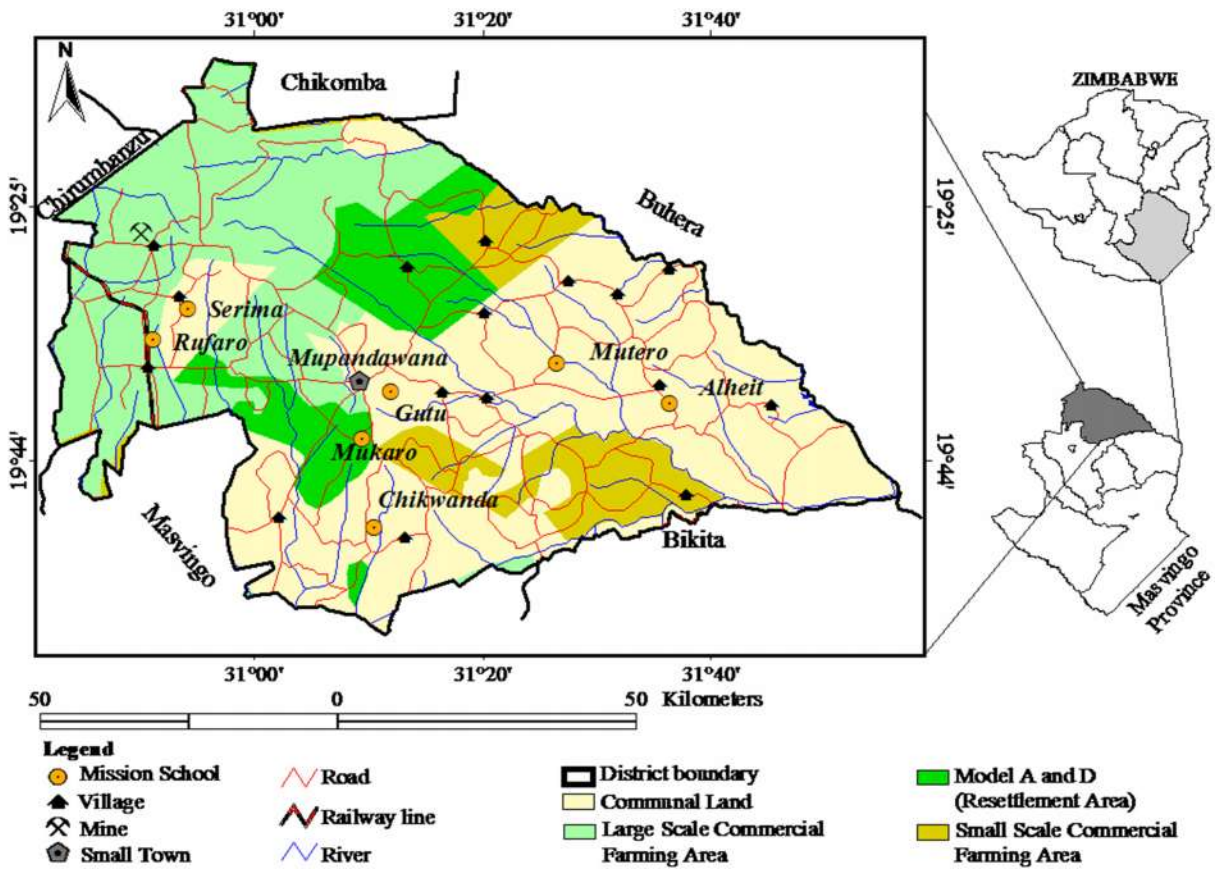
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APPENDICES

Gutu Maps

Appendix 1: Map showing Gutu District



Appendix 2: Map showing the wards in Gutu District

