

CHAPTER TWO

HISTORIOGRAPHY OF TRADE IN MWATA KAZEMBE'S KINGDOM BEFORE 1890

In an environment with no money except the common interest of getting something in exchange for something another is willing to part with, trade was drudgery. Sometimes exchange was with community members, other times traders had to travel long distances laden with merchandise before they could find people to trade with. Then:

The purchaser began by putting on the ground a very small quantity of merchandise, to which he added as the vendor, examining it, lessened the price of the object; and as the price approached the amount he wanted, the purchaser kept a little back to hand over at the conclusion of the deal.¹

This uncertain and sometimes frustrating haggling over goods that Gamitto was describing was a trading system which the Lunda of Luapula also used in order to sell and buy merchandise. The process was not always successful and was prolonged if the traders could not comprehend each other's language. With a tinge of fatalism, Gamitto wrote:

Bargaining over ivory usually lasts two or three days; it requires unbelievable patience to acquire an elephant's tusk, and it sometimes happens that when the sale is almost concluded the buyer or seller calls off the bargaining. And thus only natives are able to buy from

¹ Gamitto, *King Kazembe*, vol. 2, p. 27.

natives because a European, however long he has been in the country ... only rarely has the patience needed to reap any advantage.²

Trade by bartering goods does not necessarily indicate the existence of markets in pre-colonial Luapula. The reference to Kazembe's capital as a trade centre by St. John³ or "the meeting-point of trade routes" by Roberts⁴ is difficult to substantiate because records left by literate travellers in Mwata Kazembe's kingdom do not show the existence of a market or a hive of trade activities taking place at Mwata Kazembe's capital. For example, the 1798, 1806 and 1831 Portuguese expeditions to Mwata Kazembe's kingdom recorded not many trading activities at the Lunda capital except some of their trade transactions. The only mention of other traders by the 1831 Portuguese expedition was of "two Dark coloured negroes with kofio on their heads" whose information is incomplete because they left the next day, 20th November 1831.⁵ This shows that even at the Mwata's capital, trade was irregular. It also shows that before 1890, the economy of Mwata Kazembe's kingdom must have been multi-centric in which markets were simply any place "where people met and traded their goods."⁶

² Gamitto, *King Kazembe*, vol. 2, p. 27. For some examples of failed exchanges see pp. 41, 47 and 59.

³ St. John, "Kazembe," p. 202

⁴ Andrew D. Roberts, "Firearms In North-Eastern Zambia Before 1900," *TransAfrican Journal Of History*, 1, 2(1971), p.4.

⁵ Gamitto, *King Kazembe*, vol. 2, pp.119-120.

⁶ Musambachime, "Changing Roles," pp. 82-83 and a discussion of societies without markets see introduction in P. Bohannan and G. Dalton (eds.), *Markets In Africa* (Northwestern University Press, 1962), pp. 1-25.

Defining market places as any place people met and traded caters for both local and long distance or international trade. Local trade in this dissertation will refer to exchange transactions made within and by citizens of Mwata Kazembe's kingdom, while long distance trade will refer to exchanges made with traders foreign to the Lunda kingdom. Although the whole lot of goods transacted cannot be categorized to specifically fit in local or long distance trade because all goods could be exchanged in either category, the goods transacted ranged from basic necessities like food, salt and oil to luxury items like cloths, mirrors and beads. The basic principle governing trade was demand and supply. As such everyone was a trader: farmers, fishermen, hunters, blacksmiths and politicians all had to trade in order to sustain themselves.

In a barter system, prices were proposed and fixed by the bargaining parties but some basic prices at which bargaining for some goods started has been recorded. Records about the price range in Mwata Kazembe's kingdom exist starting with the 1798-99 Portuguese expedition to the Lunda kingdom. Father Pinto recorded that an ivory tusk of 15 to 22 kilograms was bought from two to three pieces of cloths plus ten couros (beads) while a tusk of 36 to 44 kilograms was worth five to six pieces with a little couro or velorio. Copper bars were exchanged for four common cloths or pagnes or 40 to 50

cours while small bars were bought at one cloth worth of goods.⁷ These prices seem not to have changed very much by 1807 for Burton writes that the price for a tusk ivory then, was six to seven cloths while a slave was bought for five cloths.⁸ In 1806, the Pombeiros recorded the price of salt to have been ten small pans for a chuabo (about a fathom of cloth).⁹

Prices seem to have appreciated by the 1830s because the starting price for bargaining proposed by the Mwata to Gamitto's group in 1831 was 20 pieces of cloth plus effects while the proposed prices for slaves was eight pieces of cloth for a good male slave, six pieces for a medium male slave; 12 pieces for a good 'negress', ten pieces for an old 'negress', and ten pieces of cloth for a *muleka* or young negress, all plus effects (for example, mirrors, cutlery or beads).¹⁰ Even Tip Tip's recalled price does not fall off the mark very much because he recalled the price for a tusk of ivory to have been 12 to 15 cloths or a chest of soap or about seven kilograms of gunpowder.¹¹

Nevertheless, whatever the exchange rate, trade left in its trail a mixed bag of fortune and misfortune. On one hand, it gave the traders their needed merchandise, wealth and adventure. On the other, the venture resulted in

⁷ Burton, *The Lands Of Cazembe*, p. 130.

⁸ Richard F. Burton, *The Lake Regions Of Central Africa: A Picture of Exploration* vol. 2 (London: Longman, Green, Longman and Roberts, 1860), p. 152.

⁹ Burton, *The Lands Of Cazembe*, p. 178.

¹⁰ Gamitto, *King Kazembe*, vol. 2, pp. 27 and 40.

¹¹ Heinrich Brode, *Tippoo Tib: The Story Of His Carreer In Central Africa*, trans. H. Havelock (London: Edward Arnold, 1907), p. 29

deaths, introduced new diseases, insecurity, wars, plunder and bankruptcy. This chapter however, does not discuss the pros and woes of trade in pre-colonial Mwata Kazembe's kingdom but examines the way historians have written about the role of trade in the history of the Kingdom of Mwata Kazembe.

HISTORIOGRAPHICAL SURVEY

Central to the historian's discussion of trade in pre-colonial Mwata Kazembe's kingdom are the questions: what role did Mwata Kazembe play in the economy of the kingdom and what role did trade play in the political economy of the kingdom? Thus, the discussion of trade leads to historiographical questions about the role of the individual in history and the driving forces in history or historical change. Over the years, historians have emphasized different aspects of trade in order to explain the nature of trade and the entire economy of Mwata Kazembe's kingdom from which we can discuss the problem of explanation in history, the use of theory and the use of evidence in the writing of history.

From the 1960s, Cunnison portrays the Mwata as the sole trader in ivory and "alone disposed of slaves."¹² Not only does Cunnison show how the Mwata forbade his subjects on pain of death to trade with a Portuguese expedition

¹² Cunnison, "Kazembe And The Arabs," p. 234.

to demonstrate monopoly of trade by the Mwata, he also shows that monopoly of trade could only be maintained as long as the number of traders remained small.¹³

In the same vein, St. John emphasized the monopoly of trade which the Mwatias held and argued that the failure to enforce monopoly only arose from the Kazembe's inability to compete with an influx of traders for the hunters' skills.¹⁴ In this way, St. John follows Cunnison's argument that monopoly of trade could only be maintained when the number of long distance traders remained minimal. He further shows that the reason for monopolizing trade was to maintain adherents lured by the largesse from trade that the Mwata distributed to them.¹⁵

For Roberts, the existence of a multi-centric economy in north-eastern Zambia meant that chiefs had to play a "leading role in the collecting and distribution of goods produced and wanted by their subjects."¹⁶ As such, Roberts argues that much of the exchange of goods was not trade at all because it was not organized by individuals with purely economic motives.¹⁷ Following this line of argument even for the Eastern Lunda

¹³ Cunnison, "Kazembe And The Portuguese, 1798-1832," *Journal Of African History*, 2, 1 (1961), p. 73 and Cunnison, "Kazembe and The Arabs," p. 234.

¹⁴ St. John, "Kazembe," p. 220.

¹⁵ St. John, "Kazembe," p. 220.

¹⁶ Roberts, "Pre-Colonial Trade," p. 717.

¹⁷ Roberts, "Pre-Colonial Trade," p. 717.

Kingdom, Roberts has emphasized the central role of the Mwata in trade organization to the effect that even Mwata Yamvo's goods had to be carried to Kazembe's Capital to be exchanged for salt and copper.¹⁸ And like earlier writers on trade in Mwata Kazembe's kingdom, Roberts argues that the Mwata's monopoly over foreign imports was because "distribution of goods and services was a principal means of recruiting and maintaining political support."¹⁹

There is more continuity in the writings of Langworthy on trade in Mwata Kazembe's kingdom because the point reiterated is that the "power of the Lunda kingdom depended on the monopoly of trade which Mwata Kazembe held."²⁰ The dependency of the Lunda kingdom's power on the monopoly exercised by its king is again explained by the concept of redistribution of goods obtained from trade by the Mwata to the chiefs as an encouragement for their loyalty and (this time) as rewards for providing tribute. The disadvantage of the Mwata's monopoly of trade, argues Langworthy, was that it raised prices even for food as when "almost all trade goods had been extracted from the Portuguese [before being] allowed to return to Tete virtually empty handed."²¹ For Langworthy, even the Swahili evidently did not like those high prices charged at the capital

¹⁸ Roberts, *A History Of Zambia*, p. 109.

¹⁹ Roberts, "Abdullah," pp. 242-243.

²⁰ Langworthy, *Zambia Before 1890*, p. 40.

²¹ Langworthy, *Zambia Before 1890*, p. 62.

resulting from the Mwata's monopoly of trade. This made the Swahili to establish trade relations with subject chiefs.²² Because of this trade detour, Langworthy argued that:

The Lunda monopolies were broken and Mwata Kazembe was less able to depend on tributary wealth, either to maintain his capital or for redistribution to his subject chiefs to ensure their loyalty.²³

Whereas Alpers discusses the major role played by the Bisa as carriers of ivory and copper (dwindling their significance as elephant hunters) from Mwata Kazembe's kingdom to the east African coast and the Portuguese colony of Mozambique, there is no break from other historians when he portrays the Mwata as being the one who traded with the Bisa.²⁴

It has been noted above that the connecting of tribute to trade lies not only in the possibility that some tribute items received by the Mwata could have been used in trade transactions but also in the assertion that the reason people paid and continued to pay tribute was the expected redistribution of foreign goods acquired by the Mwata through trade. In this sense, redistribution, which made the Mwata monopolize trade, was the key to the Mwata's power in as much as it guaranteed loyalty from his subjects. This

²² Langworthy, *Zambia Before 1890*, p. 65.

²³ Langworthy, *Zambia Before 1890*, p. 65.

²⁴ Edward A. Alpers, *Ivory And Trade In East Central Africa* (London; Heinemann, 1975), p. 124 and p. 178.

line of argument has persisted even in the writings of 21st century writers on trade in Mwata Kazembe's kingdom. For example, Macola writes:

The value and prestige of the goods distributed by the Mwata Kazembes were proportionate to their scarcity. It was therefore in the Kings interest to enforce a monopoly over the transactions with long distance traders.²⁵

To clarify the point of enforcement, Macola argues that "commoners were prevented 'under penalty of death' from bartering food stuffs with foreign visitors."²⁶ For Macola, the attraction of Mwata Kazembe's kingdom lay not only in its sophistication but was also enhanced by the "vast array of exotic resources" whose distribution was controlled by the Mwata Kazembes.²⁷

However,

The arrival en masse of coastal traders in the 1850s and their buccaneering trading practices made the royal monopoly increasingly difficult to enforce. This shook the political economy of the kingdom and loosened the web of vertical relationships upon which it rested.²⁸

Gordon also reiterates other writers on Mwata Kazembe's Kingdom by arguing that Kazembe's kingdom relied on the distribution of goods, "mostly cloth acquired through trade in ivory and slaves" to ensure dependents.²⁹ Still in line with other writers on the eastern Lunda, Gordon argues that:

²⁵ Macola, *The Kingdom of Kazembe*, p. 134.

²⁶ Macola, *The Kingdom Of Kazembe*, p. 135.

²⁷ Macola, *The Kingdom Of Kazembe*, p. 104.

²⁸ Macola, *The Kingdom Of Kazembe*, p. 135.

²⁹ Gordon, *Nachituti's Gift*, p. 19.

Through the 19th century, the increase in the number of traders and an increase in the available goods led to a decline in the Kazembe kingdom's monopoly over trade goods, contributing to the centrifugal forces that led to the partial disintegration of the kingdom.³⁰

Thus, Gordon brings in another argument which seems contradictory to the concept of the Kazembe's monopoly but in support of the Lunda kingdom's monopoly of trade. In explaining the maintenance of patronage networks in pre-colonial Mwata Kazembe's kingdom, Gordon argues that "the monopoly that a few traders or trading lords had over imports from the Indian Ocean helped to sustain their privileged positions."³¹

THE NATURE OF EXPLANATIONS

The works considered above have been presented chronologically and the persistence of certain themes about trade reveals continuity in the writers' arguments which can make readers to mistake the writers' opinions for facts. This is because, when arguments recur in the works of different writers, it becomes easy to assume that what is presented to be characteristics of trade are "inherent in the facts themselves and not the result of generalisations by historians [such that even] further description and analysis [will seem] unnecessary."³² However, the recurrence of arguments does not simplify anything and though an indication of what

³⁰ Gordon, *Nachituti's Gift*, p. 19.

³¹ Gordon, *Nachituti's Gift*, p. 20.

³² Clark, *The Critical historian*, p. 130.

most writers hold fundamental, does not preclude an examination of the ideas propagated by such arguments.

With no particular attention to local trade, writers on pre-colonial trade in Mwata Kazembe's kingdom place emphasis on international or long distance trade which is shown to have been fundamental in the existence of the kingdom. From the historiographical survey above, it is clear that the eastern Lunda kingdom's history was embodied in trade because, the writers argue, with trade came power ensuing from guaranteed loyalty and recruitment of political supporters; while without trade the Mwata was powerless because he did not have goods with which to entice his subjects. Clearly, one thing that can be noted about the way trade is explained is that the explanations are processual explanations considering they explain historical change in the existence of the kingdom of Mwata Kazembe. For example, Langworthy, Macola and Gordon all show the role of trade in historical transitions of the Kingdom of Mwata Kazembe.³³

Although trade is used to explain historical change in Mwata Kazembe's kingdom, its role has little historical past in the history of the kingdom because its role in the development and expansion of the Kingdom was minimal. Lunda traditional history explains the initial expedition to have

³³ See Langworthy, *Zambia Before 1890*, p. 67; Macola, *The Kingdom of Kazembe*, p. 135; and Gordon, *Nachituti's Gift*, p. 19.

been in search of a fugitive blacksmith (Lubunda) before it was later allowed to establish an independent Lunda outpost in the eastern peripheries of the Lunda Kingdom.³⁴ When Gamitto recorded the history of the Lunda, he wrote that the Lunda expedition had set out in search of an eastern Portuguese nation with which they were to establish relations.³⁵ If they had known the existence of the Portuguese even through the Bisa, the Lunda came into contact with the Portuguese only about sixty years after settling on the Luapula valley. These sixty years are silent on Lunda endeavours to access the east coast but there is proof that they traded with the west coast.³⁶

At what stage did trade become a pull factor for the kingdom's subjects' loyalty? Conquered chiefs like Nkuba and Katele or those that surrendered like Lubunda, Malebe and Mulundu³⁷ did not become part of the Lunda Kingdom because they were attracted by the wealth and trade connections of the Mwata but because their resistance was broken or deemed pointless and their power could only be retained at the mercies of the Mwata. Thus, trade could only play any role after the conquest or expansion phase and it is in this sense that trade can qualify as a means of maintaining subjects' loyalty. That is, to argue that goods acquired through trade were used in attracting subjects in the expansion phase of the kingdom is difficult to

³⁴ Mwata Kazembe XIV, *Ifikolwe Fyandi*, p. 48.

³⁵ Gamitto, *King Kazembe*, vol. 2, p. 128.

³⁶ Burton, *The Lands of Cazembe*, p. 109.

³⁷ Mwata Kazembe XIV, *Ifikolwe Fyandi*, p. 61.

prove. But if trade did not play any role in the expansion of the Lunda Kingdom, what evidence exists to support its cardinal role in later stages?

Before 1890, no redistribution of trade goods, which is used to explain trade as a tool for maintaining loyalty, is recorded. The using of the concept of redistribution, which justifies monopoly, is not based on actual evidence but on imagined evidence. For example, when Gamitto writes that “Kazembe can dispose of everybody and everything as his own property,”³⁸ historians can infer monopoly and tyranny. In this sense, imagined evidence is data which points to something but provides no evidence to support its assertions. That is, historians “suppose the existence of some unobserved or at least unrecorded factor in the situation that [they seek] to explain.”³⁹ In this way, “a good deal of what passes for direct observation is in fact inference.”⁴⁰

Redistribution, the concept used to explain the role of trade in the existence of Mwata Kazembe’s kingdom, is a theory which can be defined as the gathering of wealth to a “political center [which is] then redistributed to the people in return for obedience to the ruler-distributor” and in order to

³⁸ Gamitto, *King Kazembe*, vol. 2, p. 114

³⁹ Gallie, *Philosophy*, p. 106.

⁴⁰ Kitson, *The Critical Historian*, p. 58.

provide for areas lacking certain goods.⁴¹ As Sahlins argued, this “chiefly pooling generates the spirit of unity and centricity, codifies the structure, stipulates the centralized organisation of social order and social action.”⁴² In this sense, historians have also argued that the Mwata redistributed the largesse from trade to lure adherents, encourage loyalty or ensure dependents. The Mwata’s redistribution is further explained by his monopolization which made him the only source for foreign goods.

Apart from the fact that the Mwata’s redistribution of goods from trade transactions is a supposition and not based on evidence, the problem of quantifying the redistribution process can only make historians imagine smaller quantities being redistributed to a limited number of adherents (further imagining these held the kingdom together), who however, must be specified considering the great expanse of the eastern Lunda kingdom. The result for Lunda history is speculative history. Again, it is difficult for historians to quantify and give evidence for the assertion that parts of the kingdom of Mwata Kazembe that lacked certain materials due to ecological factors obtained these through the Mwata’s redistribution of goods.

Furthermore, it is also noticeable that the role of the Mwata in trade transactions is emphasised. Such emphasis is not, however, in a monist

⁴¹ Schneider, *Economic Man*, p. 248.

⁴² Sahlins, *Stone Age Economics*, p. 190.

sense but the Mwata as a *social individual* thereby confusing the role of the individual with that of a group.⁴³ Treating the actions of a Mwata like actions by a group of Mwatas who in reality lived at different times leads to mistaken identity and thus wrong reference. For example, when Macola argues that the “eastern Lunda Kings saw fit to implement a set of formal rules which forbade all exchanges between territorial representatives and long distance caravans,”⁴⁴ he includes all the Mwata Kazembes in the history of the kingdom regardless of their personalities, circumstances surrounding their reigns or the external and internal forces when they reigned.

In the same line, the reference to Lunda Kings brings into the discussion the problem of selection by historians in their use of evidence on the role of trade in Mwata Kazembe’s kingdom. When writers stress the monopoly of trade that Lunda kings exercised, one example which they give is that of Mwata Kazembe forbidding his subjects from trading. Cunnison wrote that Kazembe forbade “his subjects on pain of death to trade” with the Portuguese expedition⁴⁵ while Macola wrote that “commoners were prevented generally ‘under penalty of death’ from bartering foodstuffs with

⁴³A. C. Danto, “The Historical Individual,” in William H. Dray (ed.), *Philosophical Analysis And History* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), p. 286. The use of the term ‘social individual’ in this chapter is in reference to the generalization by historians when they discuss the different Mwata as a class only here the class transcends time.

⁴⁴ Macola, *The Kingdom Of Kazembe*, p. 135.

⁴⁵ Cunnison, “Kazembe And The Portuguese,” p. 73.

foreign visitors.”⁴⁶ Cunnison’s selection seems factual but excludes the circumstances surrounding the prohibition, while Macola’s selection totally misuses available evidence because a ‘Portuguese expedition’ cannot be equated to ‘foreign visitors’. Overall, what Cunnison and Macola achieve is a distorted presentation of available evidence which in the end achieves a distorted history.

Before examining the basis of Cunnison and Macola’s statements, another writer to note is Langworthy who wrote on the two Portuguese expeditions that were not allowed to cross to Angola that they were also:

Not allowed to trade with anybody except the representatives of the Mwata Kazembe. Very high prices were charged for food until almost all of the trade goods had been extracted from the Portuguese who were then allowed to return to Tete virtually empty handed.⁴⁷

Although Langworthy does not use the ‘death penalty’ clause to demonstrate how monopoly was seriously enforced, the argument that citizens were forbidden to trade still stands.

There are three recorded cases from the Portuguese records which refer to the prohibiting of subjects from trading with the Portuguese expeditions that visited the Lunda kingdom in 1798 and 1831 during the reigns of Ilunga

⁴⁶ Macola, *The Kingdom Of Kazembe*, p. 135.

⁴⁷ Langworthy, *Zambia Before 1890*, p. 62.

Lukwesa, Kazembe 3 and Tshibangu Keleka, Kazembe 4 respectively. The first to be highlighted comes from Fr. Pinto's record which reads:

The Cazembe having sent for our inspecton various lots of wollen cloths such as calamanhas, lastings (durantes), fine serges (sarafinas), shaloons (saetas), opaque stone beads (pedras de cor), and coloured ditto (pintadas), inquired if such articles were found in our country. He also made us a present of some blue drinking-glasses. Notwithstanding all this kindness, all those who from 3 P.M. came to our camp with wood, flour, legumes, and comestibles for sale, were seized and maltreated by the Fumo Ancheva, and from that time natives were prohitod from selling anything to the strangers.⁴⁸

Burton as translator and editor then commented in a footnote that "this is a general proceeding in Central Africa, where the king *wishes to be the only customer.*"⁴⁹ But clearly, the king was not involved unless historians suppose the action of a king's official were always recommended by the king. Otherwise, since there is not even indirect reference to the king's involvement, this demonstrates the autonomy of some actions done by officials of the king by virtue of the offices they held.

It also becomes clear that historians do not use this passage to demonstrate the prohibiting of subjects from trading to enforce the Mwata's monopoly of trade. The selections which have been used by Cunnison, Langworthy and Macola were excerpted from Gamitto's diary. After some misunderstanding about the *Milambo* the Portuguese were expected to present to the Mwata,

⁴⁸ Burton, *The Lands Of Cazembe*, p. 109

⁴⁹ Burton, *The Lands Of Cazembe*, p. 109. My emphasis.

Gamitto wrote that they “heard that the Mwata had prohibited, under penalty of death, the sale to us of foodstuffs or any other object. He wants to starve us into obedience.”⁵⁰ Later on, on 17th February 1832, Gamitto recorded a new prohibition (the other prohibition noted above having been heard on 22nd November, 1831) and complained that:

No food has been brought to camp, and this state of affairs proceeds from a new precaution of the Mwata. He now sends men to examine the houses of his people and seize anyone found with ... our merchandise in his possession, and these are then taken from him. The Mwata said plainly in public that his treatment of the whites was meant to reduce them to hunger, so that they would decide to give him their merchandise which was his in any case.⁵¹

The next day, Gamitto wrote that the Mwata’s prohibition of his subjects from selling food to the Portuguese was still standing such that “to get any at all- and we can only obtain little and at a high price- it is necessary to get it at night at great risk to both buyer and seller.”⁵²

The cardinal thing to note about the prohibitions recorded by Gamitto is that since they were enacted when the Portuguese got to the Lunda kingdom, it is an indication that they were done to prevent what was going on-trade, because one cannot forbid what does not exist. Simply put, trade was taking place for it to be prohibited. Then, it can also be noted that the prohibitions were made when relations between Mwata Keleka and the Portuguese

⁵⁰ Gamitto, *King Kazembe*, vol. 2, p. 25. My emphasis.

⁵¹ Gamitto, *King Kazembe*, vol. 2, pp. 59-60.

⁵² Gamitto, *King Kazembe*, vol. 2, p. 60.

soured. Furthermore, the first prohibition carrying the 'death penalty' is an indirect reference to an anonymous source. Gamitto is also silent on the revocation of the first prohibition. Finally, the main objective of the prohibitions was not to strengthen the Mwata's monopoly of trade but to punish the Portuguese for their intransigence. Thus, to extrapolate from such occurrences a general practice of prohibiting subjects from trading is erroneous and misrepresents Lunda history.

In fact, Pinto's record further provides evidence that the Portuguese continued trading not only with the King but with other Lunda citizens. As such, at one point Pinto (seeing the *negligence* of his men) had to withhold the stores from them so as to distribute on the day of departure, "intending to explain to the poor fellows the sufferings which would result from *wilful waste* of their subsistence for the journey."⁵³

From another angle, the information in Gamitto's diary about the Portuguese stay in Lunda country should not be treated as absolute. Livingstone, as a traveler in Mwata Kazembe's kingdom traded freely with Lunda citizens in order to meet some of his needs and thus the king was not the sole trader.⁵⁴ Although Livingstone visited Lunda when a different

⁵³ Burton, *The Lands Of Cazembe*, p. 142 my emphasis. See also pp. 118, 119, 134 and 149 for more evidence of trade. Emphasis added.

⁵⁴ Waller, *Livingstone's Last Journals*, vol. 1, p. 253, 267-268

Mwata was reigning, he investigated the alleged abuses suffered by the Portuguese under Monteiro and Gamitto and was told by Mohammad Bin Saleh who was present at the time that the Portuguese assertions were false.

Mohammad Bin Saleh argued that the Portuguese visited in:

A year of scarcity, and Monteiro had to spend his goods in buying food instead of ivory and slaves, and made up the tale of Cazembe plundering him to appease his creditors.⁵⁵

Although Bin Saleh's argument has been dismissed that he was literary a prisoner trying to secure his release by Cunnison,⁵⁶ his arguments can be confirmed by Gamitto's alluding to the "famine and small-pox the people have suffered"⁵⁷ which the Lunda explained as resulting from the King's neglect of honouring his predecessor. Again, the honorary escort given to the Portuguese by the Mwata which went up to Tete, Sena and Quilimane with Monteiro's expedition⁵⁸ confirms that had the Cazembe maltreated the Portuguese, none would have been granted. Gamitto also referred to a Lunda caravan that was to accompany them.⁵⁹

Again, Lunda traditional history also provides information contrary to Gamitto's picture of the Portuguese stay in the Lunda country. According to

⁵⁵ Waller, *Livingstone's Last Journals*, Vol. 1, p. 294.

⁵⁶ Cunnison, "Kazembe And The Portuguese," p. 76.

⁵⁷ Gamitto, *King Kazembe*, Vol. 2, p. 127.

⁵⁸ Waller, *Livingstone's Last Journals*, vol. 1, p. 294. Livingstone got this information from an old man he met-Kapika, who was "the chief or one of the chiefs" of that escort.

⁵⁹ Gamitto, *King Kazembe*, vol. 2, p. 107.

Chanshi, the 1831-32 Portuguese expedition's legacy is not remembered only in the 'numerous gifts' they showered on the Mwata but also:

The *chalila mwana mondo* fever [which] gripped the Lunda kingdom in November the same year [1831] when the Portuguese cast beads around the place where they were staying signifying that whoever respected the Mwata and his palace could go and pick the precious ornaments.⁶⁰

The role of the Mwata in trade transactions in his kingdom or his monopoly, suffer further deficit in the historian's disregard for pre-colonial Lunda production patterns which depended on the family as the basic production unit. Since no family could produce all that they needed, buying and selling through the bartering of goods existed at the local level. Again, available evidence shows that the Mwata was not the sole trader in the kingdom even in dealing with long distance traders.

For example, Pinto's group traded with locals not just the Mwata and his officials,⁶¹ while Joao Batista and Amaro Jose met traders when they traversed the western parts of Mwata Kazembe's kingdom and were even charged for ferry services.⁶² Gamitto's expedition also had to pay Lunda carriers and even bought a 'negress' who sold herself,⁶³ while Livingstone traded with Mwata Kazembe's subjects and recorded Kapika selling his

⁶⁰ Chanshi, *The Heritage*, p. 29.

⁶¹ Burton, *The Lands Of Cazembe*, pp. 118-119.

⁶² Burton, *The Lands Of Cazembe*, pp. 177, 181, 183 and 185.

⁶³ Gamitto, *King Kazembe*, vol. 1, p. 198 and vol. 2, p.101.

wife.⁶⁴ Clearly, Kazembe was not the sole trader in the Kingdom because individuals traded to meet their needs.

CONCLUSION

The explanations in this chapter are not just explanations of events but of events overtime. Thus, the explanations deal with trading in the existence of the kingdom of Mwata Kazembe. Process was involved, a process embodying historical change in the kingdom's history. In explaining this historical process within which trade played a role, writers on the kingdom of Mwata Kazembe have used the theory of redistribution to justify the supposed monopoly of trade by the Mwatas. The fact that redistribution is a supposition and monopoly a gross disregard for local trade and private entrepreneurship, and drops the 'Mwataship' to a middleman; has made the historian's treatment of the role of trade in Mwata Kazembe's kingdom more speculative than factual.

Furthermore, when discussing trade, writers on Mwata Kazembe's kingdom should have treated trade as something that happened in all parts of the kingdom. The concepts of redistribution and monopoly which are treated to have been the key features of trade in Mwata Kazembe's kingdom limit the existence of trade to the Mwataship and the capital of the kingdom as the

⁶⁴ Waller, *Livingstone's Last Journals*, vol. 1, pp. 247, 253, 267-269, and 300.

only trading centre, when there is evidence that trade took place in other parts of the kingdom as well. The general statements about trade that result are based on preconceived ideas or general impressions historians have about 'primitive' trade which has "allowed their imaginations to supply what might be missing in the evidence, and so [they] have produced a coherent picture"⁶⁵ about trade in pre-colonial Mwata Kazembe's kingdom. However, for historical explanation to be factual, it must be based on evidence; and for any explanation to be generalized, the omitted evidence should not distort the past historians are reconstructing.

⁶⁵ Clark, *The Critical Historian*, p. 162.