COLONIALISM AND CATTLE MARKETING IN BOTSWANA, 1900 - 1954

by

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THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA

LUSAKA

1981

I, Andrew Chiponde Selemani Mutemwe Mushingeh, hereby declare that this dissertation represents my own work, and that it has not previously been submitted for a degree at this or another University.

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This dissertation of Andrew Chiponde Selemani Mutemwe Mushingeh is approved as fulfilling part of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in History by the University of Zambia.

H. W. Macmillan 22nd Oct 1982
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Balam Nyeko 22nd October 1982
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ABSTRACT

Botswana ranks among the least developed of black Africa's independent states. In this predominantly rural nation, most people have depended on subsistence agriculture (sorghum and maize) and on the rearing of cattle as a means of livelihood since the 19th century. Cattle rearing has been the principal cash earning sector of the economy since the establishment of the Bechuanaland Protectorate in 1885, and continued to provide over 90 per cent of the country's exports before the discovery of diamonds in the post-independence period. Although Africans have now taken control of the central bureaucracy, mass poverty still grips the nation.

This dissertation attempts to make a modest contribution toward the explanation of the origins of the culture of poverty in Botswana. Our basic aim is to provide some historical analysis of how colonial underdevelopment in this country manifested itself through the thwarting of the cattle economy. The process is followed from the eve of the 20th century, up to 1954 when the Lobatse abattoir was built by the Colonial Development Corporation (CDC).

We focus on the relationship between ecological factors and the pre-colonial socio-economic formations on one hand, and the colonial land and political legislations and labour problems, on the other. We have argued that the interaction of these forces had a far-reaching impact on cattle production

in general. For instance, the way in which Africans were dispossessed of their land or prevented from access to sufficient land was one important factor explaining the structure of the underdevelopment of the cattle economy. As access to productive land determined economic opportunities, the drastic reduction of African land by colonial land alienation combined with other factors to influence animal husbandry in a negative way. The nature of animal husbandry which evolved accounted for the poor quality of cattle produced during the colonial epoch. To a large extent the constraints on the marketability of these cattle stemmed from their poor quality and from the colonial state's pursuance of the policy of neglect and non-development of local resources.

Our conclusion is that land alienation marked the underdevelopment of the cattle economy at the level of production, while the maintenance of an exploitative and discriminatory market system which favoured European settlers against Africans, also underdeveloped the cattle economy at the level of exchange. In our view the internal constraints combined with the constraints arising from the operations in general of the colonial political economy in Southern Africa, to undermine the viability of the cattle economy in Botswana, thereby creating the culture of poverty there. As Donald Kowet points out, underdevelopment in this sense does not indicate the state of society prior to the "modernizing" impact, but rather the outcome of colonial penetration and the articulation of the colonial political economy.

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The material on which this dissertation is based was collected in the period between December, 1980 and May, 1981, in three countries, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Botswana. I am very thankful to the staff of the University of Zambia Library and the Zambia National Archives for cooperating with me during the time of my research. I am also grateful to the staff of the Zimbabwe National Archives for their efficiency and hospitality. The help I had from Mr. Gono, particularly, was first class and made me feel at home. It is opportune too, to thank members of the Botswana National Archives, Botswana National Institute of Research and the Botswana University Library for giving me valuable documents and information at the time I needed them.

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Finally, I am most indebted to my relatives for tolerating my long absences from home, sometimes without proper explanation. I hope they will understand me, and come to forget the injuries caused them by my marriage to 'a forest of books'.

DEDICATION

This work is faithfully dedicated to my late father, James Chiponde Selemani and to my late grandmother, Maria Kombe Mutemwe, who would have been proud to see their own child struggling to learn and learning to struggle. It is for you too, mother.

"History will one day have its say; it will not be the history taught in the United Nations, Washington, Paris or Brussels, however, but the history taught in the countries that have rid themselves of colonialism and its puppets. Africa will write its own history, and both north and south of the Sahara, it will be a history full of glory and dignity..."

——PATRICE LUMUMBA——

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AAC	= African Advisory Council
BNA	= Botswana National Archives
BP	= Bechuanaland Protectorate
B.S.A.Co	= British South African Company
CDC	= Colonial Development Corporation (later Commonwealth Development Corporation.
EAC	= European Advisory Council
ELEKAT	= Compagnie d'Elévage et d'Alimentation du Katanga
HC	= High Commissioner for South Africa
HCT(s)	= High Commission Territory/ies
ICS	= Imperial Cold Storage
JAC	= Joint Advisory Council
JAH	= Journal of African History
MLO	= Mine Labour Organisation
NRC	= Native Recruiting Corporation
RC	= Resident Commissioner, Bechuanaland Protectorate
SACUA	= Southern African Customs Union Agreement
WNLA	= Witwatersrand Native Labour Association

CHAPTER ONE : INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

A substantial contribution has already been made in the writing of the history of colonial underdevelopment in Botswana. For example, Neil Parsons has written on how colonialism dislocated the economy of Khama's country (Bamangwato) in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, while David Massey has convincingly studied colonial labour migration from Botswana to South Africa and its effects on the general productivity of the Tswana. Other important names in this respect include Stephen Ettinger and Donald Kalinde Kowet, who have, respectively, explained how underdevelopment in Botswana partly manifested itself through the latter's satellite relations with South Africa, and through the land and labour problems created by colonialism.[1] In the same vein, this dissertation attempts to contribute to this on-going interpretation of colonial underdevelopment in Botswana. In our case, we focus on colonialism and cattle production in Botswana. Botswana is taken as a case study of a colony whose cattle economy, with a large potential of becoming a viable industry, stagnated owing to the mode of colonial penetration, to the interaction of colonialism with the pre-capitalist social-economic formations and to the articulation in general of the colonial political economy.

The process of underdevelopment of indigenous cattle production is followed from the eve of the 20th century up to 1954. We look at the effects of colonial land alienation on animal husbandry, while we also examine the contributions of the colonial state's veterinary, financial and marketing policies to the thwarting of the cattle industry. A general survey is made of both the African ('native') and European (settler) sectors of the cattle economy, with the aim of isolating the main points which in our view, impinged on their production and arrested their chances of capital formation.

We argue that the way Africans were deprived of their land marked the beginning of a process which later culminated in the near-destruction of Botswana's cattle economy. As Kowet rightly puts it, 'the control over ... land resources in the BP was a major basis for the exercise of ... economic power'.[2] It is further pointed out that land alienation, which resulted in the breaking down of the established agricultural and pastoral economies in the region, increased pressure on land and negatively affected animal husbandry by reducing the carrying capacity of the pastures in the now crowded African Reserves. Secondly, we argue that the division of the cattle economy into two sectors——European and African——led the government to pursue discriminatory policies against the Africans, resulting in settler monopoly of government facilities such as capital projects, loans, transport and access to the markets, and the undermining of African cattle production.

The policy of neglect and non-development which for long remained the de facto policy of the state towards African production is seen here as part of the foundation of the underdevelopment of Botswana's cattle economy. Our conception of the policy of neglect and non-development which the state pursued, is informed by Quill Hermans when he says:

> It is quite clear that nothing occurred between 1885 and 1955 which contributed significantly to Botswana's economic and financial development .... The policies pursued by the British Government did not recognise political and economic development as an objective. Financial assistance, when it was provided, was given only to enable a minimally acceptable level of essential public services to be maintained .[3]

Thirdly, we analyze the implications of migrant labour against the requirements of the labour intensive cattle management. We argue that land alienation and the resulting decline in African crop production and animal husbandry, the pursuance of the policy of neglect and non-development by the state, compounded by measures such as the Hut Tax, were the root causes of migrant labour from Botswana. Lastly, we argue that the removal of the able-bodied men from the cattle economy further undermined it by depriving it of the necessary labour. Underdevelopment was in this respect perpetuated through the creation of a self-reinforcing cycle of poverty.

Theoretical Framework

The writing of history, as is the case with the production in general of all social knowledge, takes place within a fixed theoretical framework, within which the researcher poses specific questions, gathers the necessary data and answers the questions posed. Henry Bernstein and Jacques Depelchin have called this conceptual framework, a problematic.[4] In this dissertation a vigorous attempt is made to place our discussion within the materialist problematic. Reference has been made, though not very explicitly, to a methodology akin to classical Marxist and underdevelopment theories, in our explanation of the process which saw the transformation of the cattle economy from its pre-colonial level to its present one of marginality in the Southern African economic region. The materialist analysis in the Marxian sense is employed to study how the pre-existing socio-economic formations and their inherent relations of production were altered by the very entry of colonialism into the Tswana communities. This helps us to give certain explanations to how the changes in the socio-economic and production relations of the Tswana economies affected the internal articulation of the cattle economy during the colonial epoch. Such mode of analysis also helps us to understand the underdevelopment of the cattle industry at the level of production. Similarly, our discussion is informed by the underdevelopment theory as presented by André Gunder Frank and/or Walter Rodney[5]. This enhances our understanding of the contradictions which were inherent in the colonial political economy, and also helps us to delineate the factors which under-developed the cattle industry at the level of exchange or marketing.

Using Samir Amin's typology[6], we have categorized colonial Botswana as a colony/Protectorate lying between two modes of the colonial political economy, namely, the Africa of settler production such as Kenya and South Africa, and the Africa of peasant production such as West Africa and Uganda. As a result, we find the existence of both the indigenous and settler sectors of the cattle economy in Botswana. Although both sectors were allegedly 'maintained' at the level of official rhetoric, the colonial state at the level of actuality pursued policies which undermined African production (for example by its discriminatory legislation) such that in the end the Africans' capacity of capital formation was arrested, despite the 'full' participation by the Africans in the new economy. On the other hand, state intervention on their behalf helped the settlers to build a thriving sector of the cattle economy. Thus, we see a dialectical relationship between the viability of the settler sector and the impoverishment of the African sector of the cattle economy. The growing African under-capitalization and labour migration are seen as the same process which saw settler economic viability.

Data Collection

The data on which this dissertation is based were derived from a variety of sources. The first part of data collection which included the bulk of published secondary sources, such as books, articles, journals and official reports, was in the

University of Zambia Library. This literature formed the preliminary reading on the topic, and was important in verifying the data from original documents in the Botswana, Zambia and Zimbabwe National Archives.

Archival analysis made up an important component of the research. The first part of archival analysis was in the National Archives of Zambia (NAZ) where a number of secretarial files dealing with cattle marketing between Northern Rhodesia and Bechuanaland were consulted. The second part of archival analysis was in the Zimbabwe National Archives (ZNA). The archival research in the two countries was very valuable because both were important cattle markets for colonial Botswana's cattle exports. The data from NAZ and ZNA enriched those collected from secondary sources and were important in the provision of primary sources. The final part of the archival research was conducted in Botswana where a variety of primary documents were consulted in the Botswana National Archives (BNA), the library of the University College of Botswana (Botswana Collections) and the National Institute of Research.

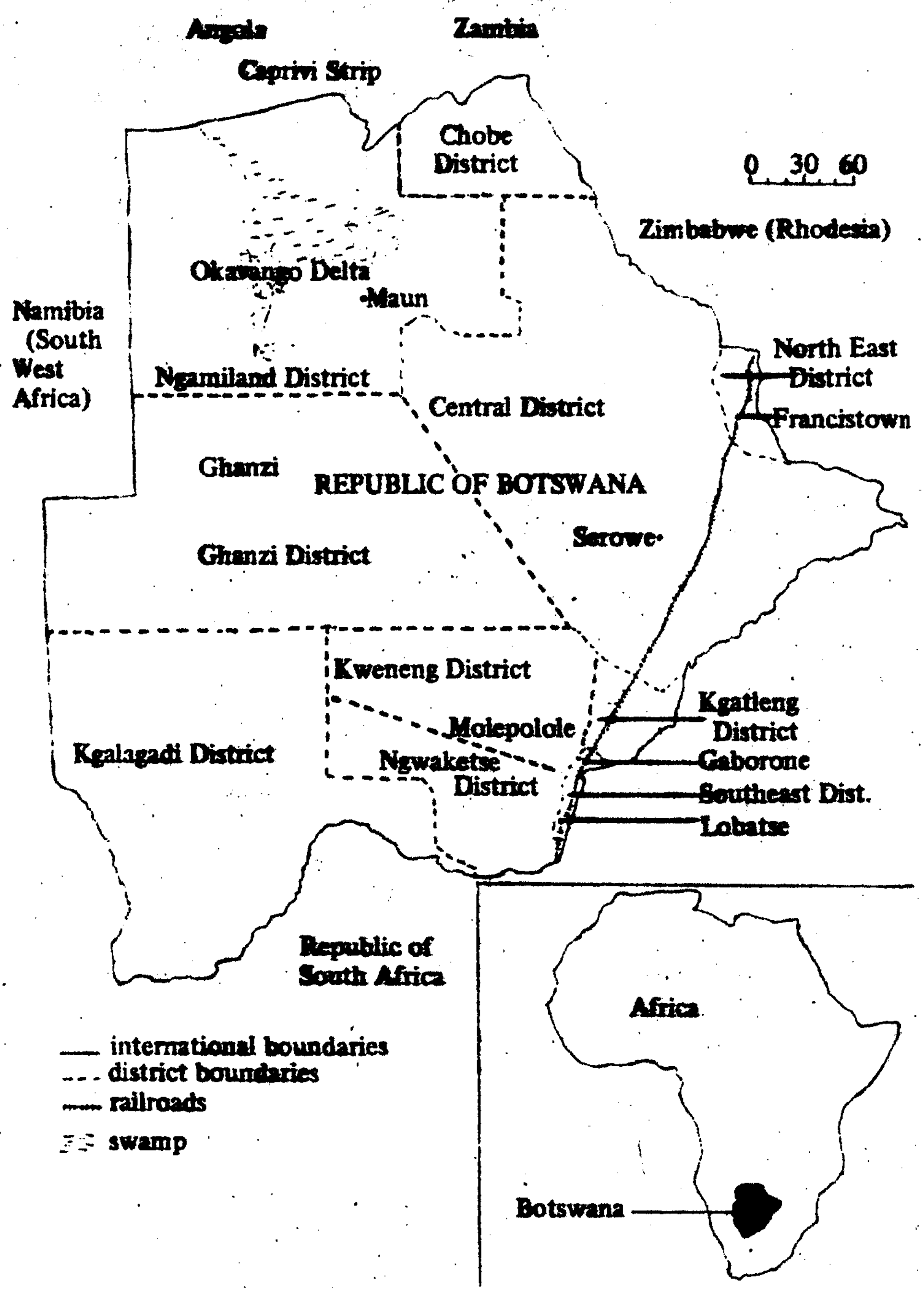
As far as this study was concerned, archival research in Botswana was the most important because the BNA had in store unique historical records on every aspect of Botswana's economy in the colonial period. Of particular interest were those files containing official correspondence between the colonial government in Botswana and other colonial governments in Southern Africa; information relating to cattle markets in the region and overseas; veterinary services and the general assessment of the cattle economy both by the colonial government and the Imperial government.

Geography

The study is a general survey of the cattle economy in the whole of Botswana during the colonial era, a vast tableland estimated to cover some 220,000 square miles (570,000 square Kms).[7] Botswana is bounded on the east by the Transvaal Province of the Republic of South Africa, on the north-east by Zimbabwe (Southern Rhodesia), on the north by the Caprivi Strip of South West Africa (Namibia) and on the south by the Cape Province of the Republic of South Africa. At the confluence of the Zambezi and chobe rivers, the four countries of Botswana, Zimbabwe, Zanbia (Northern Rhodesia) and South West Africa meet (see map 1).[8]

The geographical position of the territory provides a sub-tropical climate which varies with latitude and altitude. The eastern part has a fine hill scenery. The south and west is undulating scrubland. The great thirst land of the Kgalagadi (Kalahari) desert covers a large part of the south-west portion of the country and merges gradually into the northern and the eastern bush veld. The so-called desert consists of vast expanses of undulating sand belts with out-crops of limestone here and there and is covered with grass and acacia thorn scrub.[9] In large areas where the water

MAP 1 THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA



is near the surface, the country is wooded with strands of taller trees and resembles parkland. The only typical desert is found in parts of the extreme west corner, where there is little vegetation of any kind and sand dunes occur.[10] Apart from the Okavango and a few other rivers, there are very few perennial rivers throughout the country.

Rainfall is low, uncertain and erratically distributed, varying from an average of 500 mm in the south-east to less than 250 mm a year in the Kgalagadi desert. There are as a result vast expanses of waterless sand surfaces, except where boreholes and dams have been established. The periodic lengthy droughts which plague the country have led to a critical shortage of water. The climate is also marked by low humidity, high diurnal temperature for the great portion of the year and a high incidence of solar radiation, thereby contributing to a low carrying capacity of native grasses, shrubs and trees.[11]

For both ecological and economic reasons, the concentration of human population has been in the south-eastern part of the country along the line of rail. This area is important to the Tswana because of its fertile soils, 'reliable' rainfall and the 'developed' communications network for exports, such as the railway itself and a main road running north and south.

Cattle Diseases

Due to rigorous environment, there have been frequent occurrences of cattle pests and diseases recorded as early as 1885. The more significant ones have been:

1) Rinderpest: This swept the whole territory in 1896 - 97, except Khama's country around Serowe, and was said to have killed off almost 90 per cent of the country's cattle population.[12]

2) Foot-and-Mouth disease: this used to occur very frequently, especially in the 1930s and caused high cattle mortality. The disease spread into most parts of the country.

3) Animal trypanosomiasis: the disease which is associated with the distribution of the tsetse fly, has been widespread in the north-western part of the country like Ngamiland and Chobe area and is potentially conveyable beyond the limits of the spread of the tsetse.

4) East Coast fever: this occurred once in the southern part of the territory in 1904 and continued up to 1910, killing off large herds of cattle.

5) Bovine Pleuro-pneumonia: it first occurred in 1905 and became widespread throughout the northern part of the territory, and thereafter appeared in various places in the southern protectorate.

6) A variety of minor diseases mostly arising from droughts and insufficient pastures, such as lumpy skin disease, sweating sickness, heartwater, anthrax, quarter evil, blue tongue, red water, contagious abortion, gall sickness. These diseases were potentially dangerous to cattle and their occurrences resulted in many cattle deaths.

Organization of the Dissertation

In Botswana the policies of the colonial state remained more or less consistent throughout the period under study, except in times of crisis when short term changes were suddenly introduced. After these periods of crisis, the situation went back to 'normal'. Thus, to avoid the pitfalls of repetition which could have arisen from taking a chronological approach, a thematic approach was preferred in order to assist with the logical development of the argument. The dissertation is divided into five chapters, although in the original plan we intended to write six chapters. Due to lack of space, one draft chapter on the emergence and functioning of the Dairy industry was omitted. It is hoped to write up this material at a future date.

The remainder of this chapter looks at the pre-colonial socio-economic and political organization, with emphasis on the role of cattle. The second chapter looks at the internal organization of the cattle industry and the South African market, with a view to assessing the role of the state and the settlers in the underdevelopment of the cattle industry. The chapter ends with an analysis on the domination of Botswana's cattle industry by South Africa. The third chapter completes the analysis of market constraints by looking at the operations of the northern .. and overseas markets and summarizes the underdevelopment of the cattle industry at the level of exchange. The fourth chapter discusses labour migration both as a consequence and cause of the deterioration of the cattle industry, whose continuity created a self-reinforcing cycle of underdevelopment. Chapter five concludes by summarizing the main factors involved in Botswana's underdevelopment within the context of underdevelopment theory.

Pre-Colonial Social Structure and Social Stratification

The pre-colonial Tswana communities were governed by the importance of ascribed status. Each man knew his position, his limits in society by birth, and to what position he could aspire. Social mobility was within the confines of one's family. For example, a man who did not belong to the royal family, knew that he could never become a chief, just as the second son of a second wife knew that he could not be his father's inheritor or mojaboswa.

The distribution of power was hierarchical, based upon kinship affliations and inherited rank and status. At the top of the hierarchy was the hereditary chief, who ruled the whole 'tribe' and paid allegiance only to his departed ancestors. Below him were the members of his immediate family who in turn were followed by headmen of the villages and wards. Because of their importance, villages and wards were usually headed by people drawn from the nobles or dikgosana, consisting of descendants of any former chief. The dikgosana formed the second highest category in their communities and were generally a privileged stratum, surpassed in importance only by the immediate family members of the chief. Below the dikgosana were the headmen of the minor wards. These were largely drawn from the commoners or batlhanka, being descendants of aliens incorporated in the 'tribe' long ago. The batlhanka were drawn into the leadership hierarchy after distinguished service to their respective communities. This was a political strategy by which the chiefs ensured the loyalty of the 'outsiders' who in most cases outnumbered the originals, as in the Bamangwato chiefdom where the incorporated groups outnumbered their master 'tribe'.[13]

The commoners as a social group occupied a middle position; while being a less important group to the dikgosana, they were placed higher than the bafaladi or immigrants, and the malata or clients/serfs/slaves. The immigrants were the 'outsiders' of recent admission into the 'tribe', while the clients who were the lowest category were drawn from the Basarwa and Bakgalagadi communities who were subjected to a rigid overlordship after their defeat by the Tswana. The last two groups were socially and politically inferior and were treated as second class citizens.

Despite the division of the Tswana into different socio-political strata, social relationships were governed to a large degree by kinship ties primarily because of the complexity of maintaining the cattle economy which necessitated co-existence between households, especially in pasture management, watering and other aspects of animal husbandry. Kinship ties, as a vehicle of both social and production relations, had to be maintained.

Settlement Pattern

The Tswana lived in large and centralized villages of permanent dwellings. The largest village was usually the chief's village, which was also his 'capital village' and centre of community life. This facilitated control by 'tribal' authorities, and provided greater opportunities for the ordinary village dweller to participate in public affairs in contrast to the situation in acephalous and transhumant herding societies. The Tswana village, as Gunderson points out, 'can be thought of as the inner circle of three concentric circles making up the general settlement pattern of the tribe. The second circle, surrounding the residential area, represented 'lands' for agricultural purposes ....The area in which livestock grazed formed the third circle which surrounded the agricultural area'.[14]

Such community organization was geared towards combating ecological and human enemies. Thus necessities of defence and the struggle against the failures of water supplies, pastures and fear of attack by 'predatory tribes' resulted in large concentrations of the people. Failure to conquer these obstacles usually led to movement to other places. 'The Bamangwato, for example, occupied Serowe once before, about a hundred years ago, moving from there first to Moshu near to Palapye Road, thence to Shoshong because of its facilities for defence, and back to Palapye Road in 1889. Failures of water supplies ... led to the return of Khama to Serowe in 1902'.[15]

This trilocal settlement pattern, as Massey calls it, was an effective ecological adaptation, whose disruption by the impact of settler or colonial land alienation adversely altered the quality of animal husbandry. The resulting change of land alienation for long remained one of the roots of under-development of the cattle economy as it reduced the carrying capacity of pastures and led to the production of sickly and light-weight cattle which became a burden on the market.

Pre-Colonial Political Economy

The Tswana practised a mixed economy. They were agriculturalists as well as stock-keepers, growing maize and sorghum, and keeping large herds of cattle, goats, sheep and other animals. From the very beginning, however, agriculture was a poor cousin of stock-keeping. The ecology of the territory rendered animal husbandry the most suitable economic activity with agriculture generally being a painful undertaking due to poor soils, hot climate and scanty rainfall. Cattle-keeping thus became a vital aspect of the economy of pre-colonial Botswana. The predominance of cattle in the Tswana economy meant that most of the political, social and economic institutions which emerged were centred on, and reflected the requirements of the cattle economy (the transfer, distribution of, and rights in cattle). Consequently, this mode of subsistence created around itself a set of behavioural patterns to which the majority of the Tswana conformed. In short, the pre-colonial political economy revolved around land and cattle.

Livestock possession was for the Tswana a symbol of socio-economic as well as political status, and were a means of exchange. For instance, cattle were used as bogadi or bride wealth. With the introduction of ploughs in the first half of the 19th century, oxen formerly used as pack animals were harnessed to ploughs, wagons and sledges. Cattle and small stock continued to be a standard medium of exchange even in the colonial epoch, and their sale for export provided the principal local source of income. The possession of cattle was itself a symbol of status in society; a man's wealth was estimated mainly by the size of his herds, and a large owner was generally respected and influential in the affairs of the community.

Contrary to a common, if not explicitly argued belief in a pre-colonial golden or glorious age, marked by at least sufficient endowment and prosperity for all, access to cattle in Botswana was unevenly distributed.[16] On the eve of colonialism, the cattle economy was marked by great disparities in distribution and by inequalities in ownership. These inequalities were perpetuated and accentuated with the coming of colonialism. Although cattle were said to abound in pre-colonial Tswana societies, these were mainly concentrated in a few royal households and their accomplices who formed a hereditary caste in cattle ownership, while the majority of the households had either very few or none at all. As expected, the chiefs were the wealthiest in their communities. This has been corroborated by Kowet who has noted that the chiefs and members of the ruling groups owned vast wealth in cattle [since] seniority, wealth and prestige ... were closely connected with cattle ownership. Apart from inheritence, chiefs were able to accumulate cattle through court fines and tribute'.[17]

This economic pre-eminence by royal households and their accomplices led to a situation whereby the Tswana commoners became increasingly dependent on the former as harbingers of change and progress in society. The disparities in cattle ownership came to be a significant factor in the promotion of African labour migration as those people without cattle found it imperative to move to capitalist enclaves within and outside the territory to look for paid employment as a way of participating in the new economy. These inequalities were heightened during the periods of economic crises. In Chapter four, we have shown how disasters like the rinderpest accentuated class differentiation. This stemmed from the fact that people with fewer cattle lost all their cattle during the epidemic, while those with large herds had some remaining and were able to rebuild their herds in a period of time. People with fewer cattle joined the impoverished groups after their cattle had been swept away by diseases.

It should however, be emphasized that unlike the colonial economy which was superimposed on it, the traditional Tswana economy was marked by little sense of competition among the people. Economic life, as exemplified by the use of <u>mafisa</u> system, was theoretically based on the idea of community sharing. As Gunderson points out, the pre-colonial Tswana economy 'was use oriented, as opposed to gain ....To the authorities and the mass, it was an economy of redistribution'.[1]

Pre-Colonial Land Rights and Animal Husbandry[19]

Prior to British colonialism, there were no precise demarcation lines between the areas inhabited by each of the eight Tswana 'tribes', although there were natural boundaries fully recognised by the individual 'tribes'. Because herding was combined with sedentary agriculture, land, livestock and above all, water were the crucial economic resources of the Tswana. Hence, land distribution became very important, particularly to animal husbandry. Those who had enough cattle also had enough land, and at the same time, land could not be effectively utilized without the use of cattle. Land was therefore important mainly in its relation to the maintenance of livestock. The control and distribution of land were the prerogative of the chief who acted as a trustee of the land for his community. He allocated all the land for building huts, cultivation and grazing. He also determined different uses for land, and he controlled both the agricultural and herding cycles. For instance, the chief issued orders on when to plough, harvest or graze. In certain circumstances, this function was delegated to surbodinate authorities (headmen or his close relatives).

In traditional Tswana land-use, the concept of freehold tenure was something unknown. Land was always the property of the community. Therefore, a member of the community was only allowed its use for the benefit of his or her household and the community at large. A holding of land reverted to the chief when it was abandoned by the family using it or was required for some communal purpose. In the latter event, a family was entitled to another holding. 'Tribal' custom limited the amount of land that anyone might utilize to that amount which according to Schapera, constituted 'effective domestic utilization'. Thus pre-colonial custom precluded land accumulation, rental or sale. Apart from the distribution of land and livestock, there was little opportunity for any group to acquire any means through which a situation of great economic differentiation among the Tswana might arise. Control and distribution of land are of immense importance in understanding the nature of Tswana economic activities and power relationships. It will be very difficult therefore, to understand colonial underdevelopment of the cattle industry in the later chapters, without relating it to the disruption of the pre-colonial system of land use by land alienation.

Looking at the traditions governing the utilization of natural resources such as arable land, pastures and water, one notices first that their use was geared towards bringing discipline into man's relationship with nature. There were specific rules or actions followed which led the Tswana to counter their hostile physical environment characterized by poor soils, droughts and scarce pastures. For instance, pastoral lands and water for cattle were never individually owned, as this would have deprived some people of their use.

Thence, pastoral lands were always common lands or <u>matswetla</u>, and these were divided into administrative zones under the appointed overseer or <u>modisa</u>, whose duty was to supervise the use of grazing lands and whose permission was sought to keep one's cattle there. The overseer was sometimes a ward head or a descendant of some other prominent man. If the grazing land was too extensive for one overseer, it was often subdivided, each subdivision being under a local overseer, appointed by the by the overseer of the whole district.

Secondly, the <u>mafisa</u> system by which cattle owners shared their cattle with, or hired them to the poor, was one way of redressing the disequilibrium between man and environment through rational use of land. As a way of distributing cattle to different localities, the <u>mafisa</u> indirectly helped to contain over crowding of cattle, hence avoided overgrazing. The carrying capacity of the pastures was in this way regulated for the better. Thirdly, the pre-colonial animal husbandry was very often characterized by the tradition of 'frontier mentality'——the idea that when one area no longer provided an adequate living, there was always somewhere new where the individual or group could move and start afresh. As far as the cattle economy was concerned, this pursuit of greener pastures helped the Tswana to discover areas of undisturbed ecology. Similarly, the increase in human population was countered by a system of distributing villages, opening up and developing new centres large enough to provide the required social services, and at the same time small enough to enable the cultivator to remain with in reasonable reach of his land and stock.

The tradition of group rights over grazing lands and the necessary officials to enforce control, was one of the highest virtues characterizing pre-colonial animal husbandry and was a clear expression of grazing discipline. Its disruption during the colonial political economy bred anarchy in grazing and contributed to the deterioration in animal husbandry. From what we have observed, the availability of land in reasonable quantity and quality was a great factor governing the pre-colonial economy. But land alienation reversed this by reducing the available land and by restricting people's movement.

Pre-Colonial Forms of Labour Organization and Labour Procurement

The division of labour in pre-colonial Tswana communities was limited and maintained at a fairly strict level. Men looked after and carried out all the major cattle operations, including ploughing, attending to community affairs and the organization of the community, hunting and a host of other duties. As a rule, any duty related to the cattle economy was strictly for men. Women carried out the household and the bulk of the agricultural work. They planted, weeded, harvested crops and stored them for future use. Women also occasionally brewed beer for their men-folk during times of resting and for ceremonies. They were also supposed to bring up children.

Hand in hand with the division of labour, was the procurement of labour by the chiefs, headmen and other people who wielded power. This was done in various ways, and was a way by which those in power enjoyed the surplus labour of the commoners. In general, this was important in providing the labour required in animal husbandry. Indirectly, a chief procured labour through tribute. He was entitled to various kinds of tribute from members of his community. Apart from organizing work expeditions on his fields, cattle-posts and kraals through his aristocrats, the chief claimed a beast from the head of every cattle-owning family at his installation, while he received an ox from the father of every child being initiated, and from the estate of every deceased person of note. In good harvest, every woman sent him a basketful of corn.

Directly, chiefs and other rich people procured labour in three ways. The first was through the use of mafisa. This system, as we have already pointed out, involved the placing out of one's cattle on loan to poor households. The cattle put out on mafisa remained in the care of such families for as long as their owners wanted. The mafisa system was one way of commanding labour and allegiance by men of property who had insufficient suitable young men or relatives to look after their cattle. The holders of mafisa cattle often rendered other services to their owners. The system of spreading one's herd geographically was also a form of insurance against total loss in times of disease and other natural calamities. Indirectly, the mafisa system was also a form of distributing cattle to the poor, as holders in return used the mafisa oxen for ploughing and transport, took the milk of the cows and usually received a heifer for themselves. The use of hereditary retainers and serfs was the second direct way of procuring labour. The retainers and serfs usually consisted of one or more family-groups descending from impoverished 'tribesmen' or refugees. This was the most exploitative way of procuring labour as the people used in this way had often no property of their own, and whatever they produced or acquired was at the disposal of their masters. As earlier pointed out, the Basarwa and the Bakgalagadi were used in this way, while in the northern Protectorate, the Pedi and the Koba were used in the same capacity. The third direct way of procuring labour was through the use of regimental or 'tribal' labour. This method was employed by the chiefs and aristocratic households. Once formed, a regiment was liable to be called upon at any time for public service. Young men's regiments were used as 'tribal' armies and fought the community wars, while in times of peace they were often mobilized or employed to round up stray cattle, destroy beasts of prey, clear fields for the chief, build the chiefs' huts and cattle kraals, go on hunting expeditions, search for missing persons and perform any ad hoc duty seen necessary by society. Women's regiments were used in jobs befitting women, such as keeping the village clean, fetching water and earth for building operations, and smearing the walls and floors of the chiefs compound.

The importance of this system of labour organization and labour procurement to animal husbandry will be seen in chapter four when we discuss the effects of migrant labour on the cattle economy.

However, the systems of tribute, regiments, land tenure and cattle distribution, were used to strengthen the power of the chiefs politically and economically, while at the same time they provided a basis for the class structure which matured under colonialism in which the poorest, mostly the minor and alien 'tribes' were kept on the lowest rung of the socio-economic ladder.

Pre-Colonial Trade

The 'cattle complex' view propagated by the colonial administrators during the colonial era attributed the reluctance of the Africans to market their cattle to the absence of trade in pre-colonial Tswana societies. Historical evidence shows otherwise. Trade had always been a significant aspect of the Tswana communities. According to Schapera, pre-colonial African societies in Botswana carried on 'much internal trade, both in iron implements, pots, karosses, and other objects made by specialists, and in livestock, corn, meat and tobacco. These were all bartered for one another, and in some instances their relative value was standardized (thus, hoes, spears and axes were worth a goat each, and a pot its contents in grain)'.[20] In times of crop failure, grain was often sought in other communities and this strengthened the basis of inter-community trade.

Colonial Penetration and its Characteristics

Botswana was declared a British Protectorate in 1885 by Sir Charles Warren, who was despatched from England to come and 'pacify' southern Bechuanaland where the Boers had for sometime clashed with some Tswana groups. This move by Britain was largely prompted by the desire to halt German and Portuguese expansionism from the west and east respectively, which were both seen as a threat to British hegemony in Southern Africa. Therefore, the declaration of a Protectorate was not followed by any action until 1891. Unlike other British colonies in the region (except Lesotho and Swaziland), the responsibility for Botswana was delegated to the British High Commissioner to South Africa, residing in Cape Town, hence the term High Commission Territory. The High Commissioner was 'authorised to appoint such officers as might appear to him to be necessary to provide for the administration of justice, the raising of revenue, and generally for the peace, order and good government of all persons within the limits of order'.[21]

In exercising his authority, the High Commissioner had the power to appoint a Resident Commissioner to administer the Protectorate on his behalf and under his direction. The legislative authority however, remained with the High Commissioner who was also responsible for the territory's affairs to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. This arrangement which continued up to the time of independence in 1966, subjected Botswana to second class status in the colonialist circles. When it came to making choices between British interests in Botswana and those in South Africa, the High Commissioner almost always sided with the latter, because his job was primarily to represent British interests in South Africa.

As a 'Cinderella' colony of Britain, Botswana's marginal and uncertain political future, in the face of South Africa's persistent demands to have it incorporated, provided the seeds of future underdevelopment, because this uncertainty was used as a pretext for Britain's lack of commitment to the territory's economic development. Throughout the colonial period, Botswana remained an embarrassment to Britain. British rule was mainly negative, confused and contradictory. In order to overcome the embarrassment of neglecting its colony, Britain secretly arranged to have South Africa have a greater say in the affairs of the territory. For instance, the capital or administrative headquarters of the territory, Mafeking, was situated inside South Africa. This arrangement imposed a handicap on the administration of the territory by reducing close personal contact between the administrative headquarters, including the heads of departments and the residents of the territory.[22]

The main reason for this arrangement was that Britain had no intrinsic interest in the territory from the very beginning. The status of the territory was stated as early as 1885 by the British High Commissioner to South Africa when he said:

> We have no interest in the country north of the Molopo /river/ except as a road into the interior; we might therefore confine ourselves for the present to preventing that part of the Protectorate /from/ being occupied by either filibusters or foreign powers, doing as little in the way of administration as possible.[23]

On the basis of this status, Britain neglected Botswana's economic development and depended on South Africa to provide minimum essential services in the territory. For example, the majority of civil servants in the territory were South African, whose commitment to the territory was highly questionable and whose main pre-occupation was to work for the incorporation of Botswana into South Africa.

Colonial Policies in General

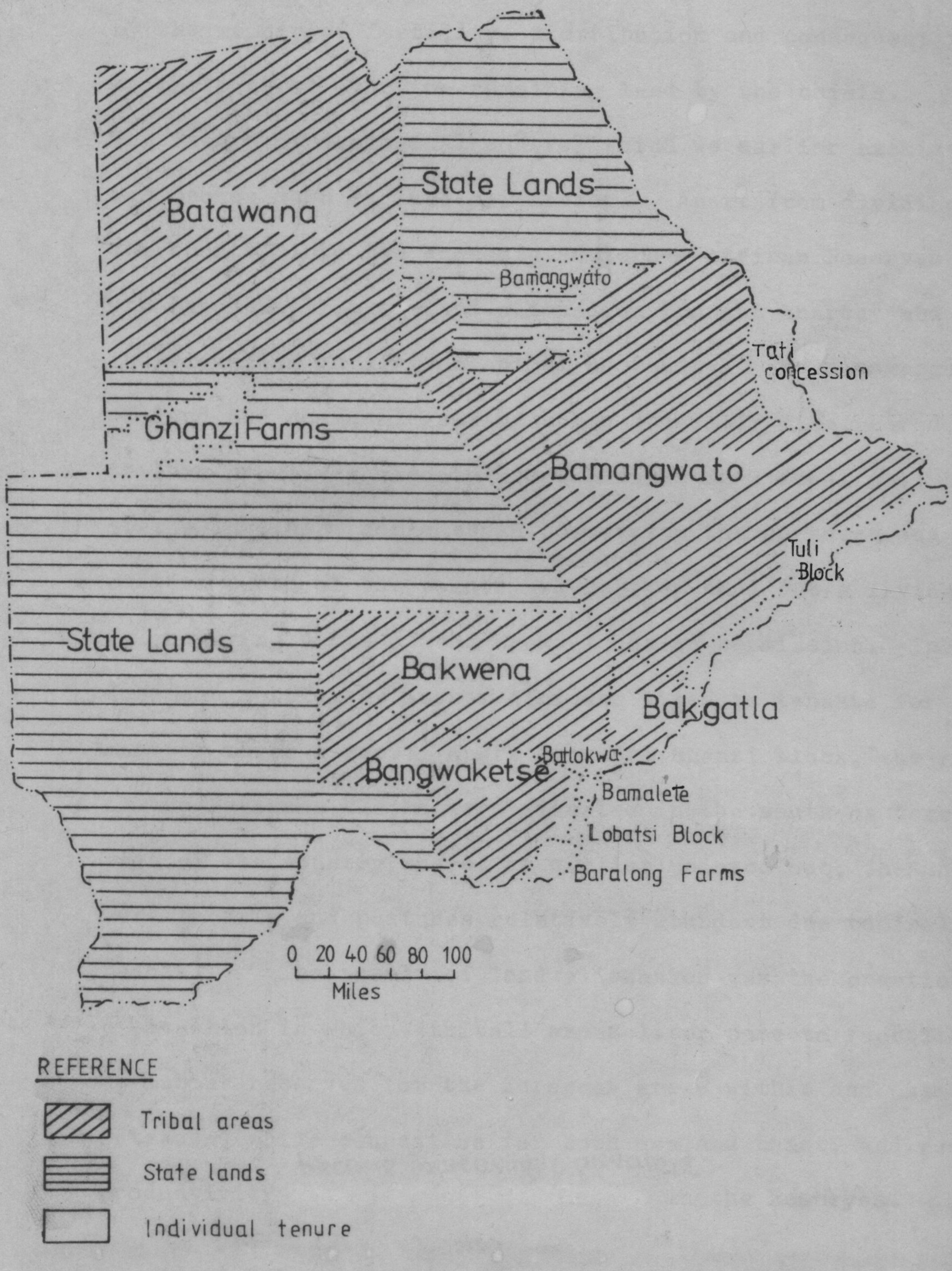
Britain's attitude towards the economic development of the country was negligible throughout the period. From 1885, British colonial presence in Botswana was largely nominal. Apart from settling some disputes regarding the boundaries and concessions, the colonial administration maintained an extremely low profile. For most of the period, except between 1912 and 1932, the country depended on hut tax and the negligible colonial grants for its budgets. Despite the perpetual deficits, expenditure on the police and on central and district administration accounted for eighty per cent of the annual budget.[24]

The provision of health and education facilities were left almost entirely to the Missionaries and the 'tribal' authorities. 'The annual Government expenditure on horse rations and transport for the police surpassed expenditure on education and veterinary services in every year prior to 1930'.[25] In the provision of extension services the government practiSed discrimination against the Africans in favour of the settlers.

Settler Land Alienation and Cattle Accumulation

Colonialism has historically succeeded in creating African wage labour forces by deliberately destroying the African peasantries through land alienation, and Botswana was no exception to this articulation of the colonial political-economy. In Botswana land alienation which accompanied white settlement, combined with other adverse problems existing in the African Reserves, such as insufficient water supplies and pastures to over-power African animal husbandry. These factors together facilitated the creation of the culture of poverty in the territory. Between 1899 and 1933, Europeans had alienated more than 10,000 square miles of land for settlement and farming. The European Farming Blocks, as they came to be known, comprised Tuli, Gaborone , Lobatse, Ghanzi and later the Tati Concession (see map 2).[26] Settlers, however, continued to increase their acreage by adding pieces of land from the 165,000 square miles which were officially designated as Crown Land, while Africans found it very difficult to do so.

MAP 2- COLONIAL LAND ALIENATION IN BOTSWANA.



Source: P. Smit, Botswana, Resources and Development, pp. 34 (1970).

By 'land shortage' here, we do not mean land per se, or land as it related to the total area of Botswana's land surface, but land as a proportion of the total fertile land. In Botswana, land shortage was largely determined by the manner of fertility, distribution and consequently by the control over the remaining land by the chiefs. The nature of ecological control which we earlier examined was broken down by land alienation. Apart from dividing the country into two economic sectors——African Reserves and European Blocks —land alienation brought anarchy and individualism in African animal husbandry. Ward segregation of land and communal grazing areas gradually disappeared due to land pressures, leading to increased individualism. Many of the landless people began to move to the northern and western parts of the country where they eked out a living by occupying parts of the crown lands on permission. In European settlement areas, Africans lived as tenants for most of their lives. Apart from the Ghanzi Block, the rest of the European Blocks were situated in the south-eastern part of the country where, as earlier pointed out, the soils were fertile and pastures relatively abundant due to 'reliable' rainfall. The result of land alienation was the creation of a situation in which 'tribal' areas later came to function as labour reserves for the European areas within and outside Botswana, while congestion for both man and beast, and reduced productivity became increasingly prevalent in the Reserves.

Settlers on the other hand, paralleled land occupation with cattle accumulation, using their own 'initiative' and also relying on the role of the State. As many of these settlers were undercapitalized, they took to an illicit barter trade in European goods in exchange with African cattle, starting with the early 1890s. According to Alan Best, settler pioneers in Botswana, 'were ranchers first and traders second, but they realised the close relationship between the two pursuits. They built up the herds with African livestock exchanged for clothing, hardware and other general merchandise from their stores'.[27] Initially, settlers had only partial success due to the Africans' reluctance to dispose of their cattle. Africans preferred to exchange hides, skins and grains for the new merchandise. Sensing this, settlers decided to change their strategy, resorting to building 'bush' stores all over the reserves. 'By the turn of the century, Europeans were operating numerous "bush" stores solely as a means of acquiring additional cattle'.[28] Some whites exchanged their merchandise for grain, such as maize and sorghum and stored it in a way similar to hoarding. They later exchanged this grain at inflated rates against African cattle during times of drought in the Reserves. Faced with the threat of starvation, Africans had no better choice than to dispose of their cattle. In this way many settlers managed to build their cattle herds, especially in the period between 1898 and 1914. Those European traders living in Lobatse, Tuli and Gaborones Blocks, had a distinct advantage over those operating in the reserves in that they could purchase large numbers of cattle from the Africans and readily graze and breed them on their ranches.

Settlers supplemented cattle accumulation by monopolizing government loans. The fund set up by the government in 1925 to provide loans to all categories of farmers turned into a tool of the settlers. The Financial Secretary projected that in 1921-22 roughly £53 per adult male head would be expended for the benefit of whites as opposed to £1.8s per adult male head for the Africans.[29] Indeed, from 1925 when it was established up to 1933, the Fund did not give even a single loan to any African cattle producer, while at the same time 34 loans were granted to European farmers. Sir Alan Pim criticized this monopoly of loan facilities by Europeans. He particularly criticized the arbitrary methods used in granting loans.

Veterinary and Transport Services

Veterinary services were not only negligible, but were also inequitably provided in favour of the settlers. There was no veterinary department in the territory until 1905, and this was established with great assistance from South Africa. Its financial problems prevented the veterinary department from expanding its activities. Between 1905 and 1933, by which time the cattle industry had established itself as the cornerstone of the country's economy, the veterinary staff consisted of thirty members. In the same period ~~tt~~ the cattle population had swollen to 777,000.[30] We are told by Hermans that expenditure on services designed to improve livestock productivity was not only a minor part of the total recurrent outlays, but was also of a protective nature, rather than developmental character. Disease control, rather than animal husbandry extension consumed most of the veterinary department's budgets.[31] Broadly speaking, the veterinary department perceived its role as that of supervising the export of cattle. Their basic aim was to comply with the requirements laid down by the buyer countries. As the Pim Commission put it, 'the maintenance of the veterinary staff is, in fact, practically a condition for being permitted to maintain an export trade, which is vital to the economic life of the territory.[32]

With regard to actual expenditures on veterinary services, the colonial state spent a total of £21,115 in the period between 1899 and 1933, and much of this was substantially supported by money provided from the territory's Native Fund.[33] For instance, the Native Fund's contribution to veterinary services between 1920 and 1932 amounted to £6,795. In the period between 1899 and 1954, the total expenditures of the state on veterinary and agricultural services, combined, amounted to less than two million pounds. In the same period, more than £5 million (five million pounds) were spent on policing the country.[34] The Pim Commission had earlier criticized this 'police philosophy' of the colonial state. According to the Commission, there was no need for the colonial administration to spend so much money on policing Native Reserves which in actual fact policed themselves, as the incidence of crime there was very low.

The transport network which was necessary for the cattle export industry was also very undeveloped. The country was remarkably poorly equipped with public transport. Throughout the colonial period, there was no absolute standard of adequacy in road communications. By 1954, the road system remained basically the same as it had been since the country was colonized. The whole road network consisted of a main road, successor to the old 'Missionaries road' into Central Africa, and this ran up the eastern side of the country parallel to the railway. From it, branches went east and west of the railway into areas officially designated as 'important'. These areas, as we earlier noted, were the ones occupied by European farmers along the railway and within the vicinity of thirty miles. According to the 'Bechuanaland Fact Sheet' released in 1965, the colonial administration left a total of 'five miles of tarred roads and 4,900 miles of gravelled or earth roads, out of which 4,500 miles were merely tracks. The whole country had only nine service stations.'[35] Of this road network, the recruiting company WNLA, owned and maintained 940 miles, to which the government granted £760 annual subsidy.[36]

Apart from the road, the railway was another form of transport. In fact, the railway system was the most important element in the country's communications. Built by Cecil Rhodes in the 1890s, the railway never belonged to Botswana. It was owned by the Rhodesia Railways and operated by South African Railways. Thus, although it was the spine on which all forms of transport in Botswana hinged, the government had no control over it. As it turned out, all the government could do was obtain certain concessions on behalf of settler exporters, while Africans who had no access to it, became cattle exporters through the Europeans. As a result of this poor transport, Botswana was faced with an internal as well as external isolation. This isolation was not only physical but was also economic.

Thus, as we proceed to examine Botswana's cattle export economy in the next two chapters, we should bear in mind that we are dealing with an economy largely undermined at the level of production by a host of constraints arising from the negative role of the State.

1. See Q.N. Parsons, '"Khama ana Co." and the Jousse Trouble; 1910-1916,' Journal of African History, 16, 3(1975), 383 - 408 and Parsons, 'The Economic History of Khama's Country in Botswana, 1844-1930', The Roots of Rural Poverty in Central and Southern Africa (London: Heinemann, 1977), pp. 113-143; David R. Massey, 'Labour Migration and Rural Development in Botswana' Unpublisned Ph.D. Thesis (Boston University, 1980); Donald Kalinde Kowet, Land, Labour Migration and Politics in Southern Africa: Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland (Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1978); Stephen Ettinger, 'The Economics of Customs Union Between Botswana - Lesotho - Swaziland and South Africa', unpublished Ph.D. Thesis (Michigan University, 1980).

2. Kowet, Land, Labour Migration and Politics, p. 10.

3. Quill Hermans, 'Towards Budgetary Independence: A Review of Botswana's Financial History, 1900 - 1973, Botswana Notes and Records, 6(1974), p. 108.

4. Henry Bernstein and Jacques Depelchin, 'The Object of African History: A Materialist Perspective', mimeo (University of Dar-es-Salaam, 1977). The article has now been published in History in Africa, but the published version was not accessible to the writer.

5. See André Gundar Frank, Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America.(Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1974); Walter Rodney, How Europe Underdeveloped Africa (Dar es Salaam: Tanzania Publishing House, 1972).

6. Samir Amin, 'Development and Structural Change: The African Experience', Journal of International Affairs, 24, 2(1970), 203-225.

7. Bechuanaland Protectorate: Report on the 1964 Census (Bulawayo: Rhodesia Printers, 1964), p.2.

8. Report on the 1964 Census, p.2

9. Report on the 1964 Census, pp 2-3.

10. Report on the 1964 Census, p.3.

11. Basutoland, Bechuanaland Protectorate and Swaziland: Report on Economic Survey Mission (London: H.M.S.O., 1960), p.92 (cited hereafter as the Morse Report).

12. Parsons, '"Khama and Co." and the Jousse Trouble', 384.

13. Kowet, Land, Labour Migration and Politics, p.53.

14. G. Gunderson, 'Nation Building and the Administrative State: The Case of Botswana', unpublished Ph.D. Thesis (Michigan University, 1970), p.45.

15. H.A. Fosbrooke, 'Land and Population', Botswana Notes and Records, 3(1971), 178.

16. The belief in the classless nature of the pre-colonial societies became very popular in the late 1950s and early 1960s when historians were 'rediscovering' Africa. This belief was gradually adopted by African nationalists in their political speeches.

17. Kowet, Land, Labour Migration and Politics, p.68

18. Gunderson, 'Nation Building and the Administrative State', p.61.

19. The material for this and the following sections have been principally derived from the ethnographical works of Isaac Schapera. See the Tswana (London: International African Institute, 1962), Tribal Innovators (London: Athlone, 1970).

20. Schapera, the Tswana, p.29; See also Schapera, A Handbook of Tswana Law and Custom (London: International Institute of African Languages and Cultures, 1938) pp 246-248.

21. Bechuanaland Protectorate Colonial Report, 1933, p.37

22. Colonial Report, 1933, p.37.

23. The Morse Report, p.37.

24. Massey, 'Labour Migration and Rural Development', p.75.

25. Massey, 'Labour Migration and Rural Development', p.71.

26. The Pim Report, p.7 . For a complete treatment of land alienation, see Lord Hailey, The Republic of South Africa and the High Commission Territories (London: Oxford University Press, 1963) and Native Administration in the British Territories, Part 5: The High Commission Territories: Basutoland, the Bechuanaland Protectorate and Swaziland (London: H.M.S.O., 1953); Kowet, Land, Labour Migration

and Politics; Anthony Sillery, The Bechuanaland Protectorate (London: Oxford University Press, 1952) and Botswana: A Short Political History (London: Methuen, 1974).

27. Alan G.C. Best, 'General Trading in Botswana, 1900-1968', Economic Geography, 46, 4(October, 1970), 600.

28. Best, 'General Trading in Botswana', 601.

29. Massey, 'Labour Migration and Rural Development', p.75.

30. The Pim Report, p.25.

31. Hermans, 'Towards Budgetary Independence', 114

32. The Pim Report, p.88.

33. The Pim Report, p.181.

34. Hermans, 'Towards Budgetary Independence', 114.

35. 'Bechuanaland Fact Sheet' (Gaborone: Information Services, 1965), p.5.

36. The Pim Report, p.185.

CHAPTER TWO: INTERNAL CATTLE TRADE AND THE SOUTH AFRICAN MARKET

The introduction of a cash economy in Botswana made cattle rearing and marketing the most important sector in the territory's economy throughout the colonial era. Cattle-keeping became the principal form of savings and the very basis of the export sector despite its numerous problems.

During the period 1947 to 1955 cattle marketing, for instance, accounted for 90 per cent of the total commodity exports and constituted 80 per cent of the contributions to the national economy.[1] The cattle economy became the chief source of income of the peasants and of the farming community in general. In this chapter, an attempt is made to survey and analyze the constraints on Botswana's cattle marketing industry, with the aim of delineating their role in the underdevelopment of the cattle industry. We first focus on the internal constraints against which the cattle export economy struggled, and then on the nature and operations of the South African market. We also look at the role of the State in stimulating the export trade.

The Setting : Early Colonial Period, to 1902

The early penetration of capitalism in South Africa exposed the Tswana to the needs of a cash economy earlier than many communities in Southern Africa. As pastoralists, the best opportunity for the Tswana to participate in the new economy was through the sale of their cattle. The South African mineral revolution, the building of the railway from Kimberley to Bulawayo by the B.S.A., together with many other demands of the new economy such as the payment of tax and consumption of 'European goods' were among the factors which fostered a commercial attitude of the Tswana towards their cattle.

Unlike some other African pastoral societies whose poverty was associated with their reluctance to sell their livestock, Tswana attitudes were market-oriented. Neil Parsons has for instance, described the wagon trade boom in Khama's country between 1887 and 1896 which involved Tswana cattle sales with the B.S.A. company.[2] Munger has also pointed out that 'the Tswana will and do sell their beasts ....Thus the "Masai problem" of large herds without practical economic value ... is not so thorny'.[3] Similarly, Anthony Sillery, once a Resident Commissioner of Colonial Botswana, described the attitude of the Tswana towards cattle commercialization as 'more market-oriented than that of the Basuto or the Swazi ... they come much closer to accepting cattle as a marketable commodity to be exploited commercially as a means of providing regular money income'.[4] Yet except for the final phase of their 'unparalleled prosperity' between 1896 and 1902,[5] the Tswana were virtually excluded from profitable participation in the cattle trade throughout the colonial period. This lack of effective participation by the owners of almost 95 per cent of Botswana's cattle population remains at the core of Botswana's underdevelopment.

Laurel Van Horn notes that the great rinderpest epidemic which swept away almost 90 per cent of Botswana's cattle population, resulted in the development of the cattle trade between Botswana and Barotseland. Thus a process of cattle imports from Barotseland started.[6] The same period, however, marked the time of unprecedented 'prosperity' in cattle trade for Khama's country (Bamangwato) and a few other areas which were spared the rinderpest disaster. For the first and last time in the history of Botswana, 'draft animals of all kinds are selling at extremely high figures....Very inferior oxen, with two months guarantee against rinderpest, fetched £30 each'.[7] This is corroborated by Parsons: 'cattle sold at prices not reached again for sixty years, at £25 to £30 each, [while] the military authorities purchased no less than £25,000 worth in Khama's country'.[8]

This 'prosperity' was not only one-sided, but it was also short-lived. To begin with, the trade involved only a small segment of Botswana's population and secondly, the 'prosperity' was soon overshadowed by a process of positive underdevelopment soon after the Anglo-Boer War (1902), leading to a decline both in the standard of living in terms of income and access to goods and services for the Africans. This decline subsequently led to the emergence of the territory as a major exporter of labour to South Africa, rather than as an exporter of beef. We may ask how this process of underdevelopment set in to become an accepted culture of the people. The answer lies in the internal organization of the cattle trade by the colonial State, as well as in the articulation of the external markets.

Internal Organization of the Cattle Trade, 1902 - 1954

Having distorted or undermined the cattle economy at the level of production through land alienation and insufficient veterinary and transport services, the Colonial State proceeded to undermine it at the level of exchange (marketing) as well as through a number of constraints. The cattle economy as a whole always operated in a hostile environment where it faced both ecological and human enemies. Despite the many environmental hazards such as drought, disease and lack of pastures, the colonial State remained its greatest enemy throughout the period. The marketing of cattle, except in time of crisis such as the World Wars, was never organized, nor did it receive effective state intervention to guide its short term, medium or long term programmes. Any State intervention that came was actually a contribution to the undermining of the cattle economy. Neglect, anarchy and exploitation of the African cattle producers, remained the most important features of Botswana's cattle trade from the very beginning.

The alleged 'prosperity' which the cattle economy passed through during the rinderpest disaster was superficial and cannot be attributed to the role of the State, since the government at this time was not properly organized. The 'prosperity' was rather a product of the inflation arising from the scarcity of cattle during the epidemic. This created an increased demand for cattle and naturally, the scarcity of cattle pushed up prices to £30 per head. But as soon as the cattle population increased (323,911 by 1911),[9] the economy entered a stage of marginal importance. Increasingly, the cattle economy became the victim of the confused and sometimes contradictory policies of the State, to the extent that its direction was not known. In its operations, the cattle economy was deliberately maintained in a lop-sided export-oriented capacity. The home market never existed to any appreciable degree, apart from a certain amount of internal movement of 'store cattle', and a negligible number required for local European consumption.

The 'store market' for young or unfinished animals became very important in the early part of the century. It largely existed as part of the process of settler cattle accumulation from the Africans, especially in Kanye, although some settlers used it to replenish their stock after the outbreak of the rinderpest. By 1933, a remnant of this trade still existed 'although it probably does not now amount to 2,000 per annum'.[10] From 1933 the 'store market' was insignificant except in times of cattle mortality, when attempts to rebuild cattle herds by those whose cattle had died of disease revived it. As for local consumption, this was estimated in 1939 at 4,000 head per annum, of which the Tati Concession accounted for approximately 1,500 head per year.[11] Having failed to create local employment opportunities or centres which could locally absorb beef from the cattle industry, the State allowed the cattle trade to slip into the hands of foreigners (local and outside Europeans). The cattle trade thus remained wholly foreign-controlled. As in the case of Lesotho, the bulk of the cattle export trade was chiefly in the hands of European speculators from South Africa, supplemented by local settlers. The exclusion of the Africans from the trade sector, which became institutionalized in the 1930s, remained at the root of exploitation of African cattle producers as most of their cattle were bought at very low prices. The exclusion of Africans in the granting of licences, which we shall later examine, became a kind of prescription for the European offer of lower prices for African cattle as Africans exported through these European middlemen.

One of the chief defects of the internal organization of the cattle trade was the indiscriminate, unregulated and anarchical buying and selling of livestock throughout the country for the first five decades of colonial rule. From as early as 1900 many African cattle producers found themselves in the midst of a host of approved and illicit European cattle buyers, both local and South African.

In early 1900s, local Europeans bought these cattle as part of their process of capitalization, while those from South Africa bought the cattle for sale in the South African open market. While approved buyers had state licences permitting them to engage in the cattle trade, illicit buyers had none, and as a result they conducted their buying secretly. The situation was aggravated by the fact that many of these traders who flocked into the country were undercapitalized whites who preferred barter trade to cash, while those who bought for cash offered very low prices.

In several instances, prices were decided upon between the buyer and the owner at cattle-posts, and these varied from place to place. Throughout the period, there were no government-controlled or fixed prices. The primitive accumulation on the part of the Europeans, as we have seen in the previous chapter, increasingly led to the unprofitability and detriment of the African cattle economy. The largely illegal transfer of cattle from the Africans to the Europeans, contributed to the depletion of African herds. The crooked cattle buying or accumulation by the Europeans was for a long time ignored by the colonial administrators until it became part of cattle marketing in Botswana. From the 1890s to 1954, this exploitative exchange between the Europeans and Africans continued. The barter trade gradually gave settlers a monopoly in Botswana's general trading, especially in the 1930s and 1940s following the ratification of the Licences Act of 1925 which required all traders to be properly licensed. Moreover, the anarchy involved in cattle buying culminated in stock thefts, starting from the early 1900s. These thefts were organized between gangs of European (local and South African) speculators and those Africans who owned fewer cattle, especially on the border between the southern Protectorate and the Transvaal. Africans with fewer cattle were used by these speculators to rustle cattle from other people's cattle-posts for sale to Europeans. This state of affairs prompted the chiefs to find some solution of curbing stock thefts, in the face of a reluctant and uninterested government.[11a]

By 1918, certain Reserves (e.g. Bamangwato) had an unofficial rule that prohibited any person from selling cattle unless he first obtained a permit or authorization from either the chief or the headman, and brought the cattle to the Kgotla ('tribal' Council) for inspection before the sale was effected. The point of this order, chiefs argued, was to get closer control over the people who were buying and selling cattle in the concerned Reserves, and to make it an offence for any African selling cattle suspected of having been stolen. However, cattle thefts continued as there was insufficient mechanism of control. The other obvious loophole was that the rule did not affect the Europeans and those buyers who continued to trek to cattle-posts to conduct their transactions. In addition, the rule was only applied in a few Reserves and did not therefore affect the whole territory. So, the chiefs' initiative failed.

As far as African cattle producers were concerned, the lack of understanding of the 'modern' marketing system due to the non-provision of the field staff by the State to educate farmers on marketing techniques, was a further handicap. The internal cattle transactions with the stock thefts and African exploitation associated with them, however, alarmed the chiefs. In the 1920s chiefs, starting with the Bamangwato Reserve, appealed to colonial authorities to take some measures aimed at controlling the cattle trade. The chiefs claimed that the rate at which Africans were disposing of their cattle was contributing to labour migration to South Africa. In order to curb this state of affairs surrounding the internal buying by the Europeans and their African employees, the government issued Proclamation No. 43 in 1923 which required every cattle buyer to carry a licence stipulating the kind of buyer he was, the number of cattle he was allowed at a time and the period of validity of his licence. The introduction of licences and official permits later in 1925 was the first official move by the government to control the illegal cattle buying by local and South African Europeans.

However, the system of issuing permits and licences failed to stop stock thefts. The lukewarm support the measure received from the settlers who benefited from the illicit cattle trade, and poor government enforcement of the law, were the main reasons why the attempts to control cattle thefts failed.

In his 'General Review and Importance of the Cattle Industry', produced in 1939, the Chief Veterinary Officer for Bechuanaland, Mr. Hobday, saw a great need for the government to take control of cattle marketing. He contended that:

> Government should endeavour to establish definite arrangements with the Governments or controlling bodies of countries or the companies providing export markets, particularly in regard to such questions as amount of export and season of export ....The organisation of cattle exports should be controlled by the Government, and export quotas should be allocated to exporters in accordance with the supplies they have available, taking into account certain geographical and other features which have a bearing on the convenience of supply.[12]

The problems of stock thefts and illicit cattle buying therefore continued and the government generally turned a blind eye to it. By the time Mr. Hobday produced his report, there were seventy official cases of stock thefts reported to the police, while in the following year (1940), the number of cases rose to 102.[13]

Indeed, the Resident Magistrate for the Bamangwato Reserve (District), Mr. G.E. Nettleton, complained that the 'system is weak and practically as it appears that the purchaser has no remedy if he buys cattle from a native who has stolen them and who is in possession of a selling permit. I have recently had cases in which stolen stock has been purchased by a store from a native who was in possession of a selling permit and such cattle have afterwards been claimed by the owner'.[14] In its further attempts to contain the spread of the illicit trade, the State continued to make a number of rules, although these did not achieve their intended results. In 1940, for instance, it introduced sale by public auction, conducted at appointed places. Sales were to be conducted on special dates advertized in advance, and only licensed buyers and producers carrying permit could carry out their transactions. In all, there would be 72 centres throughout the country for selling cattle. In addition, it would be made 'an offence to conduct any transaction in livestock whether by sale, barter or exchange, whether between Europeans, between Africans or between Africans and Europeans, except at duly established places or at licenced premises ... [and] offenders would, depending on the nature of their offence, either be fined or imprisoned'.[15]

As far as the government was concerned this measure had another major objective apart from the mere organization of the cattle trade. As this was during the time of the Second World War, the government wanted to ensure constant cattle supplies to South Africa and overseas, since as we will see later, the cattle export industry was boosted only in war time. Secondly, the government wanted to have a firm control on the export industry in order to levy without difficulty the cattle export tax and war levy on the sellers and buyers, which were imposed during the war as special taxes on profits arising from the war. This measure failed to bear fruit. The payment of two shillings and sixpence as a special tax on every head leaving the country, for instance, made many cattle producers and buyers shun these centres. As a result, the situation remained virtually the same. When the system of checking permits was relaxed in 1941 for example, there was such an influx of unlicensed buyers in the country especially in the Gaborones District, that the stock inspector there described the cattle buying activities as 'juggling'.[16] Instead of finding tough ways of punishing the culprits, the stock inspector recommended that the offenders be warned. This attitude suggests why many culprits went unpunished and therefore continued to flout government regulations.

In 1948, under pressure from the chiefs, the government 'banned' the barter system of trade in the Reserves. In a memorandum produced in August of that year, it was stipulated that:

> Any person who gives or tenders any credit note, token goods, wares, merchandise, livestock, or instrument, other than cash or a negotiable instrument, in payment of, or in exchange for any livestock or produce offered to him for sale by any Native, shall be guilty of an offence, and shall be liable, upon conviction, to a fine not exceeding £25, or in default of payment, imprisonment for a period not exceeding three months.[17]

This measure remained useful only on paper, as it was not strictly enforced, and culprits, especially settlers, went either unpunished or lightly fined. The failure to punish culprits stemmed from two loopholes. The first loophole was the provision in the law that this rule 'shall not apply in respect of any transaction between Native and Native'.[18] Capitalizing on this weakness, many Europeans used their African employees to conduct barter with African cattle producers. Secondly, since African offenders were to be tried by the African tribunals and Europeans by government officials, it turned out that many Europeans went unpunished. Besides, the legislation was bitterly opposed by settler cattle owners and buyers.

In some cases, European cattle buyers and shopkeepers coerced the chiefs and headmen into issuing permits to people not proved to be cattle owners. In other instances, settlers used their African servants or workers to obtain individual permits, so that one settler who had twenty or more servants, was assured of buying stolen stock from his servants provided they had permits. This was made possible because there was no mechnism of checking or identifying those people who had applied for sale permits whilst they had no stock. The end result was to see stock thieves in possession of permits to sell cattle.

Apart from thefts and European smugglers, Africans were also involved in the illegal disposal of their cattle.

Due to the poor transport system, African cattle owners found it inconvenient to trek their cattle a long distance for recording and disposal. Thus the plan which had the good intention of saving Africans from exploitative prices and stock thefts was, owing to poor communications, misconstrued by Africans as another way of restricting their cattle trade. Like many previous Proclamations, this one also fell into disuse. After the failure of this measure, the state introduced an annual regional enumeration of cattle in order to ascertain which areas were more involved in the illegal disposal of exportab surpluses, after making comparisons with official figures of exports from each area. These controls, devised and authorised in Proclamation 67 of 1941, were in 1949 describe as 'theoretically useful' but 'practically untenable'. 'The controls ... have two very serious weaknesses, first that the enumeration and recording of the bulk of the cattle is in the hands of poorly educated and paid Africans, namely the cattle guards who exercise very little authority and who cannot be properly supervised, secondly that there is no practical means by which an owner's statement that any number of his cattle have "got lost" or "even died" can be disapproved. These "lost" or "dead" cattle are those which go over the border illegally'.[19] Like its predecessors, this measure also died a natural death.

There were many other irregularities in European cattle buying which seriously undermined Africans' chances of economic viability and contributed to the underdevelopment of the cattle industry. In the (African) Reserves, for insisted on the original owners retaining the animals, grazin and watering them, sometimes for as long as one year. If the animals died, they were to be replaced by the seller, and no remuneration was received for the facilities used. As pastures and watering facilities were already limited, and the Africans' level sub-economic, the question of considering stern measures for the culprits became necessary. In 1940, it was decided by the State that the Chiefs and their headmen should be responsible for seeing that animals sold were removed by the purchasers, and in the event of non-compliance, action could be taken in reported cases on the ground of such cattle tresspassing on the Crown Lands. There was in practice, no principle of stopping this abuse because in many cases the Africans feared reporting the Europeans to the authorities for fear of reprisals.

Meanwhile, the stipulation by the State that buyers should have licences, came to be a further constraint for those Africans who aspired to become exporters. The racial prejudices which had for long remained the de facto policy of the State revealed themselves through the discriminatory granting of trading licences. Out of the five categories of licences for cattle export (Butchers' licences, Hawkers, General dealers, Producers', Auctioneers and Syndicates), Europeans held the monopoly. As Alan Best points out, Europeans continued to dominate trade in cattle throughout the period. In the period between 1932 and 1948, for instance, Europeans held 74 per cent of the total number of the export licences, while Africans who owned about 90 per cent of the total cattle population, had only 15 per cent, and Asians 11 per cent.[20] In 1949, Europeans held 155 licences (84 per cent of the total) with exclusive monopolies in the Batawana Reserve, the Kgalagadi, Ghanzi and Tuli Districts, including the Tati Block.[21] We are further informed by Best that the Tswana faced considerable European opposition in their bid to become traders in the 1930s and 1940s. 'One of the first but unsuccessful African applicants was the brother of the Barolong chief. In 1928 his application was rejected on the grounds that he was under-capitalized, that the area was sufficiently served by the existing European traders'.[22]

Although the state recognized the need for African participation in the export trade, it claimed that it saw dangers 'such as under-capitalization, overly aggressive European competition, and lack of experience, as inhibiting African chances'.[23] Thus, 'Europeans remained both ranchers and traders simultaneously, using their stores as cattle sales-stations and labour recruitment points. Indeed, in the 1940s cattle sales by the traders accounted for approximately half of the total trade turn-over and were the principal source of expendable cash in the Reserves. Furthermore, ranchers could not purchase Batswana cattle without trading licences'.[24] The licence Act was not only used to hinder the Africans' chances of building local capital, but it also became a mechanism for settler exploitation of the Africans. In order to engage in the trade, Africans had to use middlemen, who shuttled between them and the buyer countries. These groups, most of whom were speculators, exploited African producers by buying cheap from them and selling dear, something akin to what happened in South America for most of the 19th century. Mr. Bailey, the Protectorate's settler representative admitted at the meeting of the representatives of the cattle industry which met in Johannesburg in 1921: 'The BP is composed mainly of natives on the reserves, and the natives are the greater exporters, but they are exporters through traders. Of course, there are local [whit producers, the ranchers, but the proportion is smaller compared to the natives'.[25] In Botswana, as we earlier pointed out, the problem of local buying was complicated by the entry into distribution by so many of the under-capitalized whites. As a result of the gambling involved, it was the African who lost most. In his assessment of Botswana's cattle trade, Best concluded that: 'Bankruptcy, impermanence, and marginal profits have characterized African trading and will continue until the Batswana have more experience, capital and a richer market, and until the licensing boards realize that most areas are already over traded'.[26] As for many of the settler farmers, theirs was a success story, as they increasingly became more viable through State support. They did not only monopolize the trading licences, but many of them were members of the settlers' Meat Producers

Exchange formed in 1921 to 'protect every branch of the meat trade from the harmful effects of speculation, and middlemen by dealing directly with ultimate distributors, retailers and export companies'.[27]

Earlier Attempt in Cattle Processing

The problems of organization which we have already looked at, were aggravated by the method of exporting cattle on the hoof throughout the period. There was no determined attempt by the colonial state, given its embarrassing financial position, to establish a processing industry for cattle and cattle products. From a marketing analysis point of view, this state of affairs restricted the cattle economy to a small 'takeoff', and the situation did not change materially until 1954 when the Colonial Development Corporation (CDC) opened an abattoir at Lobatse. For a long time, the only type of processing existing in Botswana was the individual preparation of hides and skins, mostly by the Africans. Although by 1933, the trade in the hides and skins was described by the Pim Commission as important to the Africans, it was bedevilled by many problems. The absence of the abattoir to process cattle meant that the trade in hides and skins had to depend on a negative factor. Its existence and expansion was a reflection of the high cattle mortality from disease and lack of pastures, because there was no way Africans could slaughter thousands of their cattle just for the promotion of the trade in hides and skins.

Although the Pim Commission said that 'the Protectorate must always remain a large producer of hides and skins ... [so that] the Natives should be put into a position to compete on level terms with other exporting countries, and as an alternative to the cattle embargo', the trade in hides and skins was attended by numerous problems.[28] The first major problem was that the majority of the hides and skins offered for sale were poorly prepared due to the unavoidable human mistakes. With the increase in migrant labour, the preparation of hides was further complicated by the fact that preparation slipped into the hands of young herd-boys at cattle posts. Thus, the experienced traders expressed pessimism about the prospects of spreading knowledge on the subject. Commented the Pim Commission: 'The preparation of hides presents a much more difficult problem in that practically the whole territory is concerned, and the improvement desired may take a considerable time ... The first stages will be the spreading of education on this subject and this will involve an expenditure of £1,500 over a period of five years'.[29] The losses due to careless preparation amounted to tens of thousands of pounds which were urgently needed for the development of the country. There was no effective action taken by the colonial State to improve the market standards of hides and skins by implementing improvement schemes in order to be able to compete with growing regional competition. A decline in export returns was the result.

Largely for the reasons of disease and poor preparation, hides and skins exported from Botswana fetched very low prices. The following prices of skins and hides from Botswana at the South African market, testify to the unprofitability of this trade.

Table 1 : Producer Prices in the Union Market for Cattle Hides, 1939-1947

Sun dried	Grade	Price per lb.
0 - 9 lbs.	1	18d
0 - 9 lbs.	2	17d
10 and up	1	16d
10 and up	2	15d
Dry Salted	**Grade**	**Price per lb.**
0 - 9 lbs.	1	24d
0 - 9 lbs.	2	22d
10 and up	1	16d
10 and up	2	15d

Source: Botswana National Archives (BNA), File V1/5/1, Producer Prices in the Union Open Market for Cattle Hides, 1939 - 1947.

According to the Imperial survey of the cattle industry produced in 1949, 'all Bechuanaland Protectorate hides and skins which go to the Union are sold to tanneries for disease control reasons. The prices paid by tanners are said to be somewhat lower than those received on the open market'.[30] This was a very unfortunate development in that South Africa was the major market for Botswana's hides and skins, except in 1947 when exports to Southern Rhodesia exceeded the exports to South Africa. Apart from the problems enumerated above, the export of hides and skins was, as in the case of cattle exports, conducted through settler middlemen who bought skins from producers and sold them in importing countries. For a long time, the business was in the hands of South African wholesalers. These buyers had their own interests to promote and therefore made sure that they offered low prices to African producers in order to profit from the trade. The trade in hides and skins thus remained marginal to the cattle economy of Botswana.

The relative unprofitability of the cattle trade due to absence of processing facilities evoked settler pressure on the State for the building of an abattoir. But despite repeated calls from the vocal settler community for the establishment of a cattle processing factory, the situation remained pathetic until South Africa unleashed its notorious cattle embargo in 1921. As a desperate attempt, the State negotiated with the Imperial Cold Storage (ICS) to build an abattoir at Lobatse in 1927. On December 22, 1926, the territory's Chief Veterinary Officer (Mr. Chase) met with Woolf Davies, one of the officials of the ICS. As a result, the Lobatse abattoir was hurriedly built in four months by the ICS and opened in 1927. The scheme was unsuccessful. The scheme, which was supposed to receive total government support, became a white elephant when it was opened. Apart from receiving lukewarm support from the State, there were several other reasons why the attempts to establish the abattoir in 1927 failed to bear fruit. Firstly, the abattoir was perceived only in terms of a short term project——providing surplus or extra duties in times of crises in the South African abattoirs, and this was clearly stated in the official report of the Lobatse abattoir that 'in the event of cattle marketing facilities in South Africa being reduced partly or completely through disease outbreaks or restricted demand, the Lobatse Works could prove extremely useful to the cattle industry as a means of disposal of surpluses of cattle as meat to the United Kingdom'.[31] Hence there was no desire to establish the abattoir as an entity in itself. From the point of view of the colonial State, the main aim of the abattoir was to serve as a redemption of capital in times of crisis.

Secondly, from the time it was being constructed, it was already seen that adequate export facilities such as the supply of steers did not exist. This was partly used by the colonial state as a pretext for closing the abattoir in 1933; the state maintained that it was unsound to slaughter commercial cattle at Lobatse when coastal abattoirs in South Africa and South West Africa could always do the work more efficiently and economically than the inland ones. Thirdly, the abattoir collapsed because its equipment was very outdated and was not meant to last long, and this was clearly stated in the official report: 'it would appear that these boilers were manufactured in the year 1897 and therefore forty-two years old, placing them in a very doubtful classification respecting the persistent working pressure'.[32] Fourthly, the abattoir failed because its operations depended on the control of the cheapest beef in the country, so as to profit from the overseas beef trade since ICS had little marketing strength internationally. As such, ICS offered very low prices to African cattle producers, which made Africans reluctant to dispose of their cattle to the company. Africans saw the abattoir as another mechanism by which the State meant to seize cattle from them. Compounding this problem was the fact that even the cattle sold to the abattoir found no ready market mainly owing to three problems——the continuing collapse of world beef prices, the South African embargo which was extended to cover the carcasses from Botswana and the inter-monopoly rivalries in the region which resulted in the sabotage of the markets for ICS beef exports. The failure of the abattoir in 1933 marked a return to the original situation.

We have considered in Chapter one, the primitive nature of the transport system which existed at the time, and given the fact that the principal means of exporting cattle was on the hoof, the cattle trade for long stood to lose. This was because one of the real economic costs in this primitive marketing system as we mentioned earlier, was the loss of weight in cattle while <u>en route</u> to the markets. Given the long distances involved for instance, in transporting cattle from Ghanzi to Lobatse, a distance of four to five days by trucks, cattle lost substantially both in weight and in terms of contracting disease, factors which affected both their marketability and profitability. As these long distances lacked both the watering facilities and pastures, substantial deaths occurred among the cattle bound for export. It has been estimated that the loss of weight in the export-bound cattle in this way was as high as 15 percent per head.[33] Poor transport meant that cattle in the remote areas of the country had to undergo an arduous journey to the abattoirs, and this did not improve the farmers' incomes.

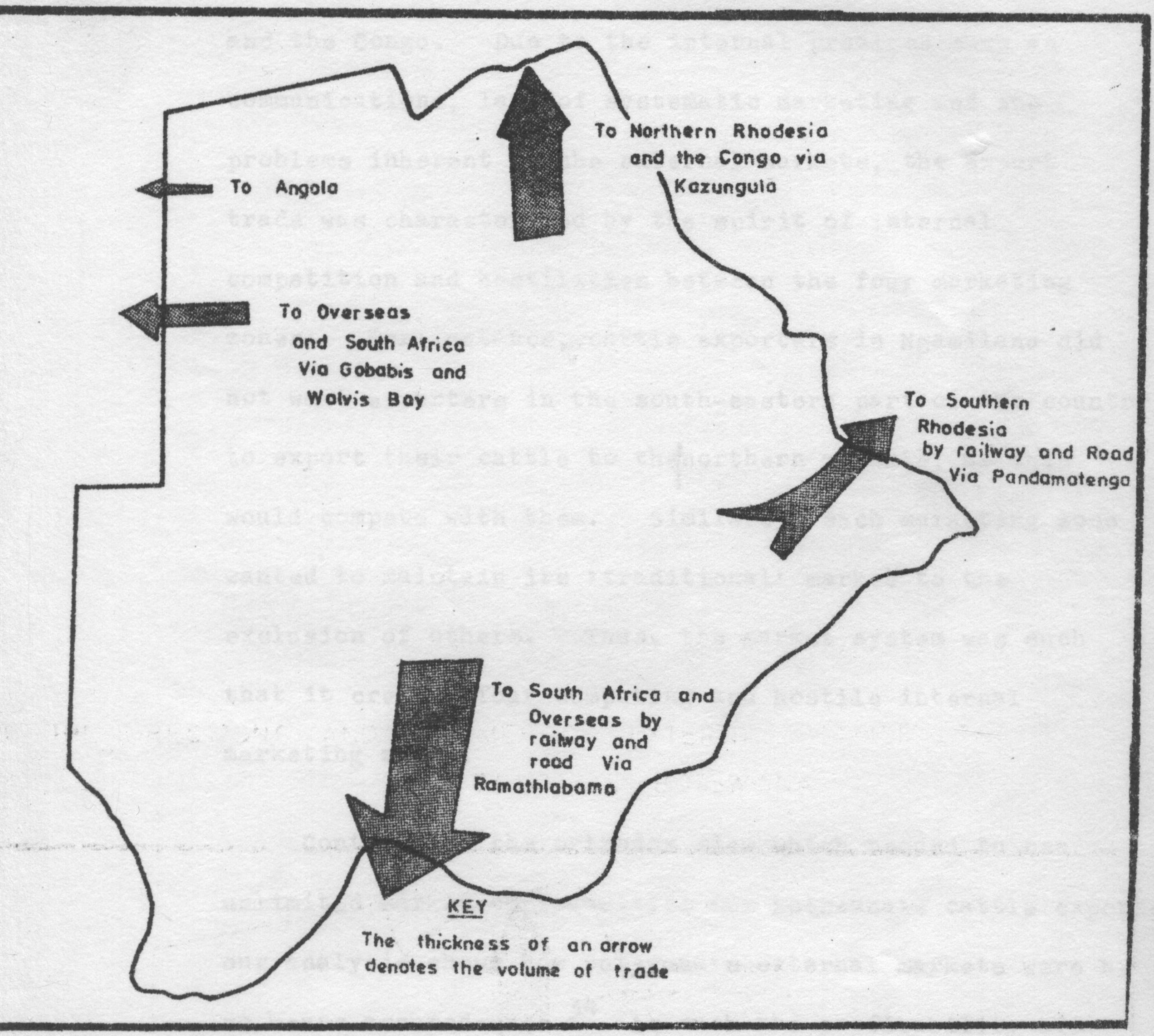
In the absence of a local abattoir, the losses on the final stages could be reduced for the cattle exported on the hoof by early availability of transport to the market and the speed of the transport. But as we have already observed, what could be described as 'reliable transport' was monopolized by settler farmers, while the majority of the Africans lived in areas least served by reliable transport. Moreover, the most common transport in the Reserves was the ox-wagons. Transport constraints were therefore used by the exporters as a pretext for lowering producer prices. Many exporters exaggerated the losses they suffered in transporting cattle to external markets and abattoirs, and to recover the alleged costs incurred, they demanded that Africans should sell their cattle at lower prices. As a result most African cattle were disposed of at very low prices. Apart from this problem , African cattle producers were also affected by transport problems since they had to transport their cattle many hundreds of miles to the nearest internal marketing places. Faced with these transport problems, the few African exporters (11 percent in 1933) saw the need to introduce the cooperative system of exporting cattle in order to alleviate such problems. But it was the policy of the State not to encourage African Cooperatives, and attempts in this direction were frustrated. For instance, the efforts by the Catholic Missionaries to develop African cooperatives on the pattern of Lesotho, were for long rejected. When the State undertook the responsibility of initiating the formation of cooperatives in 1948, the effort never succeeded The cooperatives were based on a wrong and often paternalisti policy, which ignored the local realities. In addition, the cooperatives faced perpetual financial problems, and qualified manpower in this field was lacking.

Thus, by keeping the transport system undeveloped while at the same time maintaining the cattle export trade on the hoof, the colonial State created a marketing system which not only affected the Africans' access to the market, but which also affected the money value of their cattle in terms of lower prices. As we have already pointed out, the near-absence of a local cattle market created competitive market conditions between Africans and settlers, out of which settlers emerged victorious.

Such were the constraints on the internal organization of the cattle trade in Botswana. We now proceed to analyze the constraints which were inherent in Botswana's external markets. Botswana gradually became divided into four marketing zones, each with its corresponding major external importer of cattle (see map 3). The most important marketing zone was the south-eastern area, which served the South African and overseas markets. From this zone cattle were exported either via Ramathlabama Quarantine Camp or by railway to approved abattoirs in South Africa, and for overseas bound exports, carcasses were prepared in South African abattoirs and exported via Cape town or Durban. The second marketing zone was the Ngamiland——Chobe area. This area served the Northern Rhodesia and Congo markets via Kazungula across the Zambezi into Livingstone and sometimes the Congo bound cattle exports passed via Southern Rhodesia by way of Pandamatenga. In terms of importance, the Northern Rhodesia and Congo markets combined held the second largest volume of trade. The third marketing zone was the northern Protectorate around Francistown. This area largely served the Southern Rhodesian market, especially Bulawayo, and in times of cattle supluses, consignments were also sent to South Africa by railway.

The fourth marketing zone was the Ghanzi area. This area served the South African and overseas markets, through Gobabis and Walvis Bay in South West Africa. In times of

3 THE DIRECTIONS AND VOLUMES OF EXTERNAL CATTLE TRADE IN COLONIAL BOTSWANA



cattle surpluses, the Ghanzi area exported its cattle to the northern markets—Northern and Southern Rhodesias and the Congo. Due to the internal problems such as communications, lack of systematic marketing and the problems inherent in the external markets, the export trade was characterized by the spirit of internal competition and hostilities between the four marketing zones. For instance, cattle exporters in Ngamiland did not want exporters in the south-eastern part of the country to export their cattle to the northern markets, as this would compete with them. Similarly, each marketing zone wanted to maintain its 'traditional' market to the exclusion of others. Thus, the market system was such that it created four competing and hostile internal marketing zones.

Contrary to the orthodox view which tended to see unlimited market opportunities for Botswana's cattle exports, our analysis shows how Botswana's external markets were by no means assured ones.[34] As such the profitability of the cattle trade was affected by the instability and fluctuations of the external markets. We therefore proceed to show how the operations of the South African market illustrates the problem of external markets.

The South African Market

South Africa was the most important regional market for Botswana's cattle exports, mostly being served by the southern and eastern parts of the country. As we have already pointed out, this arrangement was not accidental. Both the Imperial government and the Protectorate administra-tion deliberately wanted to keep Botswana in a subservient position to South Africa by promoting the economic inter-course between the two countries. Efforts were made in several fields to link Botswana with South Africa primarily in order to provide common ground for future incorporation of Botswana into South Africa. The trade which was general expanding between the two countries, was given an impetus in 1910 when the two countries signed the Customs Agree-ment linking the two countries in commerce. Theoretically, the agreement provided for 'a free interchange' of the products and manufactures of the Union and the HCT territories .[35] By virtue of this Agreement, Botswana had duty-free access to the South African market for her products, particularly her major export——livestock. By such arrangement, Botwana's cattle trade came to depend almost entirely on the South African market. It is in fact safe to say that the cattle industry existed and continued because of the alleged unlimited market opportunities existing in South Africa.

For a long time therefore, South Africa was Botswana's only market and sales to other countries were onl developed later. The trade between the two countries went as far back as the 1880s when the mineral revoluatio in South Africa created a large demand for beef for its workers. Traditionally the customary prices for Botswana's cattle exports in the region were conditioned by the Johannesburg prices. By 1954, the South African government had taken total control of cattle prices in the country various markets, and these prices bore no relationship with the world prices of meat. This was because from time to time the government fixed different prices through the medium of their parastatal, the Livestock and Meat Industries Control Board. The main bearing or element of the prices ruling in the South African market was the encouragement of its local white producers. For instance, for compound or lean cattle which comprised most of Botswana's exports, South Africa offered £5 per head in the 1930s while other regional markets only offered £2 per head, and even this price was subject to periodical reviews.

Thus the Colonial State in Botswana was determined not only to penetrate the South African market, but also to maintain it. The South African market was also imperative for a number of other reasons. Firstly, it was the only market which offered competition between the buyers, a factor which tended to push up prices.

In South Africa, Botswana's cattle exports were sold in three ways. One of the ways was through the open market by which cattle sales were conducted at government established markets, to different buyers and speculators.

Secondly, cattle were sold to the Municipal abattoirs opened in 1912 in Johannesburg and Durban. The Municipal abattoirs bought cattle mainly for local consumption. Thirdly, the Imperial Cold Storage Company was a major buyer of Botswana's cattle. 'The Imperial Cold Storage and Supply Company emerged in the early years of the century in association with meat supply contracts to the South African gold mines. It was initially steered by mining interests. By the 1920s, it was the dominant firm in all fields of cold storage in South Africa'.[36] With the formation by the South African government of the Union Cold Storage Company, the scope of competition among buyers in South Africa widened. In addition to competition, South African ports like Cape Town and Durban were the only major outlets for Botswana's international or overseas trade. With the turning down of the Walvis Bay railway project in 1933 by the Imperial government, and the growing prospects for the introduction of chilled and frozen trade, these two ports grew in importance to Botswana's cattle exports and overtook the regional routes of Beira and Lourenço Marques on the east coast which were said to have the disadvantage of a very humid atmosphere at the ports during certain months of year. During the inter-war period for example, both the ICS and the Union Cold Storage conducted cattle exports to Italy and the UK on behalf of Botswana's cattle producers and buyers through South Africa. For all practical purposes therefore, South

Africa was indispensable to the cattle economy of Botswana, a factor which rapidly contributed to the underdevelopment of Botswana's cattle industry.

The figures below show Botswana's official cattle exports to South Africa, and when compared with tables 4, 5 and 8 in Chapter four, for exports to Northern Rhodesia, the Congo and overseas in the same period, they bear further testimony of how much Botswana depended on South African markets for her cattle export industry. The drastic fall in exports between 1926 and 1934 resulted from the intensification of the restrictions due to the outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in Botswana.

Table 2 - Cattle Exports to South Africa, 1920-1946

1920-21	30,519	1934	1,071
1921-22	21,984	1935	20,388
1922-23	21,317	1936	16,843
1923-24	26,404	1937	7,295
1924-25	17,993	1938	19,114
1925-26	23,307	1939	19,240
1926-27	7,976	1940	19,610
1927	8,626	1941	22,432
1928	11,964	1942	33,721
1929	8,316	1943	30,597
1930	9,810	1944	26,019
1931	9,634	1945	30,346
1932	10,510	1946	34,907
1933	715		

Source: Ettinger, 'South Africa's Weight Restrictions' 24

The growing importance of the South African market gave the Colonial State false hopes with regard to the growth of the cattle industry. Predictions for the future extension of the cattle trade in Botswana, were now calculat on the basis of the stability of the South African market. The policy of total dependence on South Africa was however, a grave miscalculation because this market was not a product of the colonial State's long term arrangements with the South African government. The mistake of the colonial State was in its deliberate exaggeration of South Africa's motives for engaging in the trade. The other factor militating against the Botswana - South Africa trade was the attempt of the colonial State to isolate the cattle trade on its own merits without considering how much it depended on the non-hostility of the South African government. This led to the assumption of total control of the trade and conditions pertaining to it by South Africa, while the colonial State maintained a low profile, except when its settler farmers wanted their interests to be more protected.

From South Africa's point of view, as Ettinger has pointed out, the motive for its involvement in the cattle trade was to enhance the interests of its economy, rather than that of Botswana. 'From South Africa's point of view', Ettinger stresses, 'Bechuanaland cattle were a mixed blessing When South African meat production was low, they were a cheaper source of beef than overseas imports. But when South Africa produced a lot of meat, supplies from the BP could force prices down and undermine the profitability of South African ranchers, although to the benefit of South Africa's consumers'.[37] Both the Imperial Government and the Protectorate authorities were fully committed, through their policies, to push Botswana's cattle economy into a reserve and tributary relationship to that of South Africa. Their inability to support measures aimed at improving the industry, such as the introduction of the overseas chilled and frozen trade, which in turn depended on the establishment of processing and transport facilities in the country and the full participation or intervention of the State in securing more reliable and profitable markets, placed the fate of Botswana's cattle trade in South African hands.

Driven by self-motive, South Africa created conditions which helped to underdevelop Botswana's cattle economy at her own will. Of these conditions, the most important was the notorious cattle embargo, imposed on Botswana's cattle exports in the period between 1924 and 1941, which almost resulted in dislocating export trade. Previously (between 1909 and 1912), South Africa had introduced a quarantine on the cattle exports from Botswana due to the outbreak of lung sickness in Botswana. After this prohibition was lifted, cattle from Botswana moved freely to the Johannesburg Municipal abattoirs, but could not be sold elsewhere in South Africa for veterinary control reasons. Cattle herds in the BP were recovering from the rinderpest epidemic of the 1890s, but already cattle had become Bechuanaland's most valuable export, and the earnings spread widely among the Tswana.[38] Not satisfied with this half-restricted market, before 1921, South Africa sought further measures of frustrating the trade by subjectin Botswana's cattle exports to lower prices than before. This was done through the introduction of a manipulated and biased inspection system of cattle. South African veterinary officials were placed in all important markets to grade cattle exports from Botswana; the grading mostly being based on the mere appearance of the cattle.

We have already pointed out how African cattle production in Botswana had qualitatively deteriorated due to the decline in grazing areas and animal husbandry.

Hence, of the four categories of cattle grading (super, prime, medium and compound), African-bred cattle in Botswana were almost always of compound type. South Africa capitalized on this weakness to force prices down. Starting in 1919, prices of Botswana's cattle at the South African market began to fall. It was not until the 1930s that there was a recovery of the average price of African cattle from £2 to £5 per head.[39] The fall of wholesale beef prices in the South African markets between 1910 and 1930 in real terms is illustrated by the following price indices (i.e. prices deflated by the retail price index, as that best approximates the value to ranchers of their earnings).

From a 1910 base, Ettinger obtained the following:

Table 3 - Indices of Wholesale Beef Prices in the South African Markets, 1910 - 1930

Year	Index	Year	Index
1910	100	1921	81
1911	110	1922	74
1912	104	1923	69
1913	100	1924	69
1914	117	1925	70
1915	109	1926	65
1916	106	1927	70
1917	105	1928	71
1918	107	1929	73
1919	98	1930	66
1920	89		

Source: Ettinger, 'South Africa's Weight Restrictions, p.21.

Even with the fall of prices, the South African authorities were not satisfied. As long as Botswana's cattle continued to flood their markets, the threat still remained. Apparently Botswana responded to the falling prices by increasing its cattle exports to South Africa so as to maintain income from the trade. At last the South African government decided to impose its embargo in 1924 in defiance of the 1910 Agreement, and this continued up to 1941. Prior to the restrictions, the normal cattle exports to South Africa were in the range of 30,000 head per annum, and during the time the embargo was imposed, there were plans to raise this number to 50,000, especially if the same attractive prices such as those ruling before 1919 were offered. The sudden announcement of the restrictions certainly brought panic among African and European exporters and producers alike. The territory's Chief Veterinary Officer, Mr. Chase, proceeded to tell all Chiefs and traders in the country, about the new export regulations which were brought into effect on 15th January, 1924. Settler farmers who were the chief beneficiaries in the trade became concerned about this development, and the Tati farmers association promptly wrote to the Chief Veterinary Officer, Mr. Chase, to request clarification from the South African authorities, while at Tsessebe, settler farmers asked Protectorate authorities to request the South African government for modifications in respect of cows and slaughter cattle imported into South Africa. But the administration had already made a representation to the South African Department of Agriculture, which regretted its inability to back down on the measures adopted.

Following the restrictions, cattle exports to South Africa drastically dropped. The South African government, however, realized the importance of Botswana's settlers to its interests and decided to change the basis of the restrictions from indiscriminate to selective. They also realised that at some future date, circumstances might change so materially that it would render necessary a reconsideration of the position. With these views in mind, they introduced the higher weight restrictions for Botswana and other High Commission Territories (HCTs). This meant that cattle exports would only be restricted on the basis of their not meeting a stipulated weight limit. In 1924, Botswana's cattle exports to South Africa were restricted to those weighing the minimum of 800 lbs. In 1926, the weight restriction at the Johannesburg market was raised to the standard of 1,000 lbs. for oxen and 750 lbs. for cows. By 1930, the weight restriction was further increased to 1,050 lbs. and 790 lbs. for oxen and cows respectively. On top of this, cattle exporters were required to pay weighing fees to South African veterinary officials. These measures were aimed at insulating or excluding Botswana's settlers from the embargo, because as Ettinger tells us, 'a significant proportion of the cattle in ... the BP were owned by Afrikaners, often South African citizens ... /and/ they generally had heavier and better quality cattle than most Africans'.[40] As we have already mentioned, the quality of animal husbandry had swung in favour of settlers since land alienation. Therefore, only settlers and a tiny minority of Africans managed to meet these weight limits because their cattle were of a better quality than those of the Africans. Hence settler ranchers were left with a monopoly of the South African export market. Africans who mostly produced compound cattle found themselves the only victims of the restrictions as their beasts became unexportable. At a practical level therefore, the restrictions were only declared against African cattle exports. The only settlers who were affected by the restrictions were those in the trading sector, buying cattle from Africans and selling them in South Africa.

The restrictions were a financial disaster for Africans in Botswana. The 1933 Pim Commission reported such overwhelming impoverishment among Africans that the majority hardly had a penny to spend.[41] As a desperate act, the representatives of colonial government, acting on the advice of the High Commissioner approached a Mr. Mackenzie, proprietor of the Messina abattoir at Cape Town for possible buying of the rejected cattle for overseas chilled exports. Mr. Mackenzie responded that in view of the restriction, he could only pay 10 shillings to 12 shillings per 100 lbs. for cattle landed at Messina for meat extract purposes. With further settler pressure on the government to show more concern for the industry, the government in 1926, approached the Imperial Secretary in Cape Town with a view to finding the possibility of opening an abattoir at Lobatse, so that rejected cattle could now be processed there and carcasses sold to South Africa on the open market. As we earlier pointed out at the beginning of this Chapter, the venture was a complete failure mainly because it was not a product of a long term and properly laid down programme. With the failure of the abattoir's carcasses to enter or penetrate the overseas markets, the ICS, as expected, turned to the South African market, expecting the latter to relax the restrictions this time. The ICS asked the High Commissioner to approach the South African government to accept carcasses from Botswana in its open markets.

Coinciding with the completion of the Lobatse abattoir, South Africa announced new measures regarding beef exports in its markets. To this effect, a notice was made in 1926 stipulating that 'no meat from underweight cattle would be exported to the Union, therefore a certificate should be given by a duly authorised officer of the administration in respect of all carcases which might be sent to the Union from the works at Lobatse'.[42] When the ICS tried to interest the Municipal abattoir at Johannesburg in buying some of the carcases from Botswana, the South African government immediately empowered the director of the Municipal abattoir, Colonel Irvine Smith, to veto any carcasses which he considered not to have met Municipal sanitary regulations. The Colonial State was now under continued pressure from the settlers who wanted to expand their cattle exports through the Lobatse Meat Works. The State as a result, proposed to the South African government through the High Commissioner, that the export of beef to South Africa be based on production of a certificate from a duly appointed officer of Botswana, and that this should be accepted as sufficient guarantee that carcases of cattle from the Lobatse Meat Works were those of animals which complied with the provisions of the South African government Notice of 1926. The South African government promised that it was seriously considering the issue, but only to reject the request afterwards.

Faced with this problem, the Imperial Secretary at Cape Town, wrote to the South African Secretary for External Affairs, telling him how 'The High Commissioner notes with regret that the Union government desires to curtail still further the free inter-change of the products of both countries... [that] His Excellency feels constrained to deprecate the growing tendency gradually to establish a fiscal barrier between the Union and the Protectorate by imposing restrictions upon the freedom of trade which forms the basis of the existing customs agreement ....He is convinced that this policy only serves to encourage smuggling which, owing to the extent and nature of the border it is difficult to prevent'.[43] However, the soft approach of the High Commissioner to the South African government did not help, as in the end all export of beef from Botswana was restricted. This led the Resident Commissioner, Mr. Rey, to note later that: 'Cold Storage and abattoir buildings costing £40,000 were erected at Lobatsi [sic] and not to be utilized owing to the Union government prohibiting the export of meat in 1926'.[44] By 1933, the collapse of the Meat works at Lobatse, due to the lack of markets forced Rey to conclude: 'All my success at Pretoria is no good and all my efforts wasted, Lobatsi [sic] can't open and the farmers in that district will pretty nearly starve. God damn!'[45]

The situation remained bleak throughout the 1930s and the decline in Botswana's export trade was compounded by a simultaneous announcement by Southern Rhodesia in 1935 that it had also decided to follow South Africa's example to impose the cattle restrictions on Botswana owing to the outbreak of the foot-and-mouth disease in the latter. The Pim Commission was dismayed to note that the Johannesburg market for finished animals had almost completely disappeared 'for the present and, if we are to be guided by the case of Southern Rhodesia, there is little chance of its being opened for a considerable time to come. This has been the mainstay of the cattle trade in the eastern Districts'.[46] The Commission criticized the marketing system which was entirely one of livestock, and largely dependent on the good-will of South Africa. 'Such markets are always the first to be closed and the last to be opened ....An effort should be made to develop both the "chilled" and "frozen" meat industries inside the territory. A "meat products" factory appears now to be more necessary than ever', concluded the Commission.[47] This view was earlier expressed by a Mr. Milligan, who in his submissions to the Pim Commission described the future of the cattle industry in Botswana as being dependent on the establishment of an overseas chilled beef trade. 'Chilling, as distinguished from freezing of beef, has been carried on in the Union for sometime for the convenience of the butchers' establishments, but the externa trade is one of recent origin. Owing to the nature of the *chilling process, the object of which is to extend the* keeping period of the beef without destroying the texture, a temperature just below the freezing point of water is maintained. The keeping period extends roughly to about thirty days', said Mr. Milligan.[48] However, as we shall see in Chapter three on the development of the overseas trade, this was not possible due to many internal and external constraints which Botswana faced.

Meanwhile, Africans in 1926 had found a new market at Durban for beef Cold Storage purposes with the Union Cold Storage Company. But even this one was restricted to a quota of 10,000 head per annum for Botswana. 'So far as numbers are concerned', noted the Pim Commission, 'the loss in the Johannesburg market caused by the raising of the weight limit was replaced through the new outlet but, as very much lower prices have to be expected for Cold Storage products, the total revenue decreased considerably; in fact Government has had to resort to export bounties in order to secure this section of the trade in competition with the Union'.[49] In addition to low prices, the continuity of the Durban cold storage market depended on the securing of a substantial share of the frozen meat contract for the Italian Army, by the Union Cold Storage.

The cattle restrictions, as earlier pointed out, had disastrous effects on Botswana's cattle economy; and unfortunately, their long duration coincided with the loss of the overseas markets, prompting the Resident Commissioner to despair: 'This weight embargo is a disaster of which the full effects are only now beginning to be felt .... The result is a large dead-weight cattle population of no use or value to the Territory'.[50] A month after the restrictions were imposed, cattle rejected by the export inspector reached seven percent of all the cattle presented. The cattle not produced for inspection which it was feared would be rejected were estimated at ten percent of those previously exported, so that on a rough estimate, seventeen percent of the cattle previously exported remained in Botswana for which there was no sale and which an extract factory might purchase at its own price. These figures were only for the first month of the restrictions, but they continued rising as the minimum weight limits were increased.[51] In a well organized, modern industry, it might have been possible for the farmers to raise the average weight limit of cattle in order to overcome the restrictions. But for the Africans, this was not possible because their cattle were already undermined at the level of production.

<u>Possible Reasons for the Embargo</u>

There are but a number of possible reasons that can be advanced to explain why the South African government resorted to this unorthodox action against Botswana. One possible explanation is that South African authorities wanted to embarrass both the Imperial government and the Colonial State in Botswana for their failure to control disease. Although South Africa's relations with Botswana were marked by a degree of ambivalence on the part of South Africa, manifested through periods of cooperation and conflict, it is quite true, as pointed out in Chapter one, that the Colonial State had failed to control disease in Botswana. Lack of disease prevention was therefore one of the major contributions to the restrictions. In his memorandum to the Imperial Secretary, the BP's Chief Veterinary Officer, Mr. Chase, admitted that apart from other serious cattle diseases like foot-and-mouth disease, 'anthrax infection has existed in the vicinity of Palapye Road station for the past twenty-three years, and also exists in the neighbourhood of the trucking stations of Mahalapye, Gaborone, Lobatse and Ramathlabama ....With this existing infection, an occasional case of anthrax is found cattle on their arrival at the Johannesburg market'.[52]

In several instances, many animals *en route* to their markets in South Africa contracted an infection in the trucks after being pronounced healthy at their stations of origin. As a result of such occurrences, veterinary restrictions were imposed from time to time although it was sometimes felt that these restrictions were applied more stringently than necessary. When measures of half-restrictions proved unsuccessful, South Africa imposed another condition whereby cattle which reached South Africa *en route* to Johannesburg or Durban markets had to be inoculated against anthrax within South Africa with the costs paid by Botswana's exporters, and such cattle had to spend thirty days in quarantine camps before being disposed of. This action too, failed to control the disposal of diseased cattle. In 1934, with the passing of the South African Livestock and Meat Industries Act, cattle from Botswana were subjected to strict quotas, partly for economic reasons and also as a measure to check the export of diseased animals by Botswana. Still more, the situation remained the same. Thus, according to South African officials, the total cattle restriction was the only way of drawing the attention of both the Imperial and Protectorate Governments to the importance of veterinary extension in the maintenance of the cattle export trade. In fact 'the Union representatives argued that the weight restrictions had been beneficial in raising the standard of quality of cattle in Botswana and other HCTs.'[53]

The second and one of the most important reasons for the restrictions had to do with South Africa's policy of economic nationalism which the latter adopted after the First World War. This policy which manifested itself through increased State intervention in, and protection of the local economy in order to defend it against foreign competition, was solidified with the emergence of the State-sponsored vested interests of settler farmers. These vested interests expressed their political and economic grievances through the medium of various Control Boards (in the 1930s) such as the Livestock and Meat Industries Control, the Maize Control and Dairy Control Boards. Therefore, South African whites increasingly fought for their grievances which were often granted, especially with regard to the protection of exports and imports out of, and in South Africa, particularly after the passing of the Marketing Act in 1937 which established a government-appointed National Marketing Council to oversee the existing Control Boards and to create new ones.

As a result of such vocal groups, control and prohibitive tariffs developed on the importation of competitive primary products in order to save the local market for the local producer. For our purpose, this arrangement was expressed through restricting the South African cattle markets to Botswana's cattle exports. The popular opinion of both the South African Government and its white farmers came to be that 'as long as free importation [of cattle] from adjoining territories is allowed, the condition of the agricultural industry itself must grow worse, and the burden it imposes on the country generally must grow'.[54] From the point of view of the South African State, it was more imperative to protect the interests of South African white farmers because they were not a vested economic interest per se, but were also a politically important element in the ruling white polity by virtue of their power to vote. In fact, a few months before the restrictions, white farmers in South Africa had expressed opposition to the way their cattle markets were being flooded with cattle from neighbouring territories. To prevent what they called the 'undue dumping' of livestock of inferior quality at their markets by contiguous territories, South African white farmers, particularly in the Transvaal, continued to agitate for some time in favour of the restrictions. They regarded the market situation in South Africa to be 'in an extraordinarily depressed condition ... which in reality amounts to a natural crisis ... [and were] convinced of the necessity for the immediate measures for amelioration'.[55] They were also strongly opposed to the provision of funds for bounties in respect of live cattle or beef to Botswana's exporters, and their subsequent payment, in such manner as to ensure the most fair distribution for all the territories in Southern Africa.

In an article entitled 'Combined Grip on Cattle' in the Rand Daily Mail on 22nd August, 1924, it was reported that the Transvaal Agricultural Union Congress which had met the previous night to consider the market situation in their country had called for an immediate embargo and unanimously passed the following resolution: 'Congress urges the Government to place an embargo on all cattle and meat from adjoining territories as early as possible, and in the meantime to give relief to farmers by restricting imports to oxen weighing 1,200 lbs. live weight and cows 900 lbs. live weight'.[56] The Congress also favoured the appointment of a Commission of Inquiry by the government, to look into the possibility of eliminating speculators, in favour of local cattle producers at the South African market. In response to these requests, the South African government decided to impose restrictions on cattle exports of neighbouring countries. This view was in fact officially acknowledged by a representative of the Imperial Government in South Africa when he commented that: 'clearly the interests of South Africa's white farmers were a major factor leading to the imposition and the continuation of the weight limitations, just as the desire to protect the sections of the white farming community is primarily responsible for the termination of the Customs Union Agreement between South Africa and the ... contiguous territories'.[57]

The third reason for the restrictions was that South Africa saw it as a way of dominating the regionally organized overseas beef trade, as the trade had its centres in South Africa itself and its controlled territory, South West Africa——Durban, Cape Town and Walvis Bay. In his study, Hubbard has also observed that 'South Africa's motives in imposing the embargo on the disease-free northern Protectorate were thus revealed clearly: not only to keep BP cattle out of South African markets but also to force the fulfilling of the continental beef export contracts with South African cattle'.[58] For as long as the presence of cattle from Botswana was prevented on these markets, South African producers were assured of beef contracts in the overseas trade. At this time, South Africa was just struggling to penetrate the overseas markets dominated by a few powerful names like Australia, Argentina and New Zealand, and as such wanted to avoid the luxury of competing with countries in the same region for overseas markets.

The fourth and one of the major reasons was that South Africa wanted to use the economic weapon to achieve its political aim. The objective of the South African government was to use the restrictions as a vehicle of forcing the incorporation of Botswana and other HCTs into South Africa. Ettinger points out: 'From the South African officials' point of view, it was a happy coincidence that the economic interests of her ranchers in restricting HCT cattle imports gave the South African Government a weapon it could use in trying to pressure London to hand over the HCTs'.[59] When the Nationalist-Labour government came into power in 1924, Prime Minister Hertzog (and later General Smuts), pressed Britain harder on the issue and a lot of secret correspondence between the two countries testify the desire by South Africa to incorporate the three HCTs. Discussions on the subject continued during the 1930s and were resumed after the Second World War, in 1950. During the lengthy discussions about incorporation, South Africa stressed that only by incorporation would the HCTs develop. Britain never openly opposed incorporation until after the Second World War (due to rise of African nationalism), but kept delaying on the grounds that the Africans in the HCTs were opposed to South African rule, and hence the time for transfer was not yet ripe.[60]

Given this attitude of the Imperial Government, the South African authorities went ahead pressing for incorporation of HCTs into South Africa. For example, in his 1933 'Memorandum of the Proposed Incorporation of Basutoland, Bechuanaland and Swaziland in the Union of South Africa', General Smuts clearly stated that: 'The Union producers resent the competition in their own markets of Bechuanaland and Swaziland livestock .... There can be no doubt that the Union bears the brunt of the economic maintenance of the Territories ....If they are to remain politically separate /my emphasis/ the Union Government may find it very difficult to resist the pressure brought to bear upon it to prevent their products from competing with Union products in Union markets'.[61]

In the HCTs themselves, colonial administrators never missed the point of incorporation of their territories by South Africa. Captain O'Reilly, the BP Acting Resident Commissioner, said in Mafeking in 1932: 'His Excellency /the High Commissioner/ openly said to us that the Union were keen as mustard on taking us over and their policy is directed to that end'.[62] Two years later Mr. Millin, a member of the Advisory Council in Swaziland, accurately commented: 'It is generally believed in Swaziland that it is the determined policy of the Union Government to harass Swaziland producers of cattle and other products with the sole object of achieving the political ends, namely the incorporation of the territory in the Union of South Africa'.[63] Thus, the incorporation-import linkage became a double-edged sword.

The fifth reason for South Africa's restrictions which was implicit in the dealings of the South African authorities and which has often been omitted, was South Africa's determination to use the restrictions as a way of achieving an easier procurement of African labour from

Botswana and other HCTs to prop up mining and farming activities in South Africa itself. The destruction of Botswan export economy was in this light, imperative to the procuri of labour from Botswana, for as long as the cattle economy in all its various aspects thrived, it would make Africans reluctant to look for wage labour beyond their borders. This view was stated by the South African authorities as early as 1904 during the inquiries into the Transvaal Labour crisis when the Commission appointed to look into the possibilities of recruiting more African labour declared: 'The fluctuating character of the African labour supply is due mainly to the limited character of the native wants and the easy conditions of his life ... intimately bound up with the fact that African natives are in possession ... of large areas of land suitable for both agricultural and pastoral purposes ... it follows from the above that in our opinion, the principal causes affecting the labour supply must be sought in the conditions affecting the native in his home and kraal, and not until these conditions are greatly modified can any great improvement occur'.[64] The imposition of the restrictions was in part a way of modifying the African economic conditions so as to create in them a need for wage labour. As there were few chances of economic differentiation internally, the poverty created by the destruction of the cattle export trade and the meagre outlook for employment or any economic prosperity, would naturally drive Africans to South Africa to look for wage labour.

Smuggling

As the results of the cattle restrictions began to bite, Africans in Botswana resorted to illicit trade in order to dispose of the growing number of their cattle along the border. Thus emerged the illegal introduction or trafficking of cattle from Botswana into South Africa, especially into the Transvaal and Cape Provinces. Through smuggling, many African cattle producers managed to reduce the growing cattle surpluses, albeit at prices far below the normal ones, while the illegal South African buyers found the trade very profitable. For the Africans, the situation was worsened by the fact that many of the animals involved in smuggling were oxen, trek oxen and slaughter ox-type. 'Smugglers did not usually handle breeding stock, except in financially difficult situations, such as the 1937-1938 "operational" year; with very few heifers. There were on the average, 4,000 slaughter cows sold in this way; and about 8,000 oxen per year represented the maximum number of cattle smuggled by 1940'.[65] On the black market, 'the average price, given by traders in this territory, for an ox is £4 10s 0d, whereas if the same animal is taken into the Union, the sum of £8 [per head] can be realised for it, and the illicit introduction [of animals into South Africa] adversely affects the profits of the cattle breeders in the BP'.[66]

Alarmed by the expanding volume of smuggled cattle on the South African markets, the South African authorities sought further measures to reinforce cattle restrictions. To this end, they decided to tighten their Diseases of Stock Law (1911 Act) which provided for the shooting of Botswana's cattle which strayed into South Africa. In 1928, the South African authorities asked the Resident Commissioner to warn African chiefs of the consequences of failing to abide by the Act. 'It should be clearly understood that in all future cases of transgression, the Union Minister of Agriculture feels that he will have no option but to carry out the destruction of animals illegally introduced. Please call owners of cattle ... to be warned to this effect'.[67] In its application, the Act weighed more heavily on the African-owned cattle than on those of the settlers, a factor which resulted in the indiscriminate killing of African cattle at the mere suspicion of trying to stray into any part of the Transvaal or the Cape Province. Shortly after the announcement of this Act, about two hundred cattle were killed in chief Isang's area inside Botswana on dubious grounds, and the South African authorities justified this action by saying: 'Protectorate natives were duly warned of the consequences of such acts and His Honour [the R.C.] could therefore offer no objection to the destruction of the ... head of native cattle captured on farm Worchester'.[6] As for settler-owned cattle, only fees were imposed on their owners. One of the settler victims of this law was

Captain Martin of Tuli Block, whose cattle strayed into the Transvaal and was 'heavily' fined.

When this measure failed to control smuggling, the South African authorities coerced the Protectorate Government by the end of 1928 to start building a fence or cordon along the border with South Africa, and as the Protectorate had no money to finance the project, the burden fell on the Africans who were taxed to build a fence aimed at economically liquidating them. By 1939, the efforts of both sides to control smuggling had failed and this was acknowledged by the Joint Advisory Conference on Cooperation, composed of representatives of the HCTs and South Africa, when it reported that: 'The lengthy land-borders of the Union make evasion easy and cattle smuggling has become a notorious evil, difficult to control except at considerable cost in non-productive activities of police and border guards ...[this] shows how smuggling has come to be regarded as a settled order of things in the Bechuanaland Protectorate....It [seems there is] a "cattle racket" with powerful financial backing and that pressure is exerted on any Union border-guards who are found to take a too conscientious view of their duties'.[69]

Response of the Imperial Government

The response of the Imperial government to this crisis exposes what we have called 'the myth of Imperial Protection'. Apart from the individual attempts of colonial officials (i.e. Resident Commissioner Charles Rey in the 1930s) to have the restrictions removed, the Imperial Government remained in the background for a number of years, and when it intervened in the 1930s after pressure from certain colonial officials and the owners of the Lobatse Meat Works, its stand was implicitly in favour of the restrictions. When the restrictions started, Bongola Smith, one of the contractors operating both regional and overseas cattle contracts in Southern Africa and who had at this time an interest in opening up an abattoir in Botswana, 'had thought that such evidence of flagrant abuse by South Africa of veterinary regulations at Bechuanaland's expense would sting the British High Commission to do something about it, he was quickly to be disillusioned. The only appeal to South Africa came from the BP Resident Commissioner himself...'[70] It was not until 1928 that the Imperial Secretary wrote to the South African authorities declaring that: 'His Excellency wishes me to point out that ... the cattle industry is the principal and indeed almost the only industry of any consequence in the Protectorate ... he is compelled to take a grave view of any proposal calculated to place restrictions upon it'.[71]

This was the only measure of magnitude taken by the High Commission, and soon after this letter was written, the same Imperial Secretary backed down when he wrote back that: 'The High Commissioner desires to state that he appreciates the difficulties with which the Union Government would be confronted with if the importation of Protectorate beef in the Union on a substantial scale were to commence in the near future and he would not wish to press any request which, if conceded, would involve the Union Government in a controversial issue at an inconvenient time. I am instructed therefore to inform you that the H.C. intends for the present to refrain from asking the Union Government to accept the certificate of a Protectorate Veterinary Officer in respect of the cattle slaughtered at Lobatse Works for the export to the Union until circumstances are more propitious.'[72] And in 1932, the Acting Resident Commissioner for the BP wrote to the Resident Commissioner, Rey (who was then on leave in the UK) about his discussions with the High Commissioner's Office when preparing for a conference with South Africa on HCT - South African economic relations. 'I gathered that we are entirely at the mercy of the Union in every way and unless the Home Government take more than a passing interest in our affairs, we shall be frozen out. I said so at the Preliminary Conference and I was told that His Majesty's Government had higher things to consider than the welfare of the Bechuanaland Protectorate'.[73]

The attitude of the High Commissioner, H.J. Stanley towards the above conference actually summed up the official position of the Imperial Government. In his letter of May 16th, 1932 to the Dominions Office in London, Stanley is quoted as having said: 'I consider the result to have been as satisfactory to the Territories as, in all circumstances, could have been expected .... I had little or no hope of being able to secure any substantial improvement of conditions, and my chief concern was to forestall further prejudice'.[74] Is it therefore surprising that a negotiator with such an approach and attitude, was unable to get South Africa to lift the restrictions? This pro-South African stand by the Imperial Government was further exposed by a Mr. I.S. Pierce, member of the Advisory Council in Swaziland when he wrote to the Swaziland Chamber of Commerce in 1935: 'But a previous High Commissioner told me he thought it not unreasonable for the Union Government to protect their producers against High Commission Territories, or words to that effect'.[75]

It was this heartless attitude towards the HCTs by the Imperial Government which prompted Rey in 1931 to maintain an attack on the 'cursed, brainless, visionless dunderheads of the Colonial Office, who throw money about like water to bribe the damned electors at home - but haven't the sense to see that the only way to keep the

British flag flying in S/outhern/ Africa ... is to build up a rich prosperous territory here ... and they can't see that if they don't do this everyone in it will get discontented and disloyal and demand incorporation in the Union of South Africa, that poisonous colony that makes anti-British treaties ... and doesn't even fly the Union Jack ....I suppose they want to smash up the Empire'.[76]

As we pointed out earlier, the restrictions remained in force, only to be lifted during the Second World War which brought a crisis in both the South African and Imperia Government's economies. With the advent of the Second World War, South Africa experienced an acute shortage of beef due to the decline in local production as many farmers went to fight. In August 1941, South Africa suspended the restrictions in all their manifestations and suddenly encouraged the HCTs to actively embark upon the export of more beef. In 1947, during the Imperial Survey of the livestock industry in Botswana, a greatly increased demand for Botswana's cattle exports by South Africa was reported, with the ruling prices ranging from £8.15s to £12.15s per head.[77] Thus, with the connivance of the Imperial Government, the cattle economy of Botswana was deliverately maintained in a servile status in order to serve the South African economy. In the war conditions, exports to South Africa accelerated (see figures at the beginning of this chapter). The problem now was not one of markets, but of transport. 'Great difficulty was experienced on occasions in maintaining the full flow of exports of an economic character in the Union Livestock Industry and to truck shortages', concluded the report of the African Advisory Council in this period.[78]

Although the lifting of the restrictions was a source of happiness in the territory, there were some people who were unhappy with the way they were imposed. Complained Chief Bathoen II of the Bangwaketse during a session of the African Advisory Council: 'Union people do not favour our cattle, but it is not because they are not of the same grade as their own ... at one time a Union official came to the Protectorate and asked that we should send our cattle to the Union markets because the residents in the Union ... were not willing to send their cattle, and at that time no quota was stipulated ... but whenever the number comes favourable for us they begin to impose ... restrictions on our side. The Protectorate as it were, is a reserve from which they can get stock whenever their stock is exhausted'.[79] However, seventeen years of the restrictions had already created tensions and distortions in the economy of Botswana to the point of arresting the indigenous or African capacity of capital formation. These external linkages with the South Africa-based capital were primarily responsible for the creation of dependent 'development' in Botswana. Moreover, this war-time boom was no guarantee that the South African market would for a long time remain stable and maintain its demand for Botswana's cattle exports in the post-war period. Inside Botswana itself, the profitability of the cattle economy created by the boom was negated by the introduction of a number of taxes, such as the cattle export tax and the war levy. The former was imposed as a special tax on profits arising from the war since the war had pushed up prices, and 2 shillings and 6 pence was levied on every head of cattle leaving the country. The latter was levied at 6 pence per head. All these factors combined to undermine the profitability of the cattle industry in Botswana.[80]

Summary

This chapter has attempted to explain how the underdevelopment of the African cattle industry in Botswana partly manifested itself through the maintenance of an exploitative marketing system (both internally and externally). We have argued that the anarchical or disorganized nature of the internal cattle marketing system between Africans and Europeans was the first move of this underdevelopment at the level of exchange. Secondly, we see the marginal role taken by the State in developing a profitable marketing system, as a further contribution to the undermining of the Africans' chances of capital formation. We therefore argue that the internal cattle trade was deliverately kept disorganized so as to perpetuate African exploitation through offering them lower prices for their cattle. Thirdly, we take the monopoly of trading licences by Europeans as one of the measures not only aimed at restricting the Africans' access to the market, but also of creating a marketing mechanism through which Africans depended on the exploitative European middlemen for economic survival and at the same time functioned as an economic appendage of the settlers. Fourthly, we see the South African cattle restrictions as a measure which seriously undermined the capacity of self-sustenance for Botswana's cattle economy. The above factors paved the way for the emergence of Botswana as a labour exporter. In the next Chapter we complete our analysis of the underdevelopment of Botswana's cattle economy at the level of exchange by looking at the operations of other regional as well as overseas markets.

1. B.A. Young, Bechuanaland (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1966), p. 79; The Morse Report, 53.

2. Parsons, 'The Economic History of Khama's Country', pp 122 - 1

3. Edwin S. Munger, Bechuanaland Protectorate: Pan-African Outpost or Bantu Homeland? (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), p.50.

4. Sillery, The Bechuanaland Protectorate, p.203.

5. Parsons, '"Khama and Co." and the Jousse Trouble', 384.

6. See Laurel Van Horn, 'Agricultural History of Barotseland, 1840-1964', The Roots of Rural Poverty in Central and Southern Africa (London: Heinemann, 1977), pp 144 - 169.

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8. Parsons, 'The Economic History of Khama's Country', p.127.

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CHAPTER THREE : THE NORTHERN AND OVERSEAS MARKETS

This Chapter completes the survey and analysis of Botswana's cattle export markets in the same period (1900 - 1954). We focus on the operations and nature of the Northern and Southern Rhodesian, Congolese, Angolan and Overseas markets. The mode of analysis is similar to that employed in the previous Chapter. We isolate the main factors affecting Botswana's cattle export industry in the colonial epoch. This and the previous Chapter demonstrate the constraints which faced and underdeveloped Botswana's cattle industry at the level of exchange, leading to the emergence of the culture of poverty in the territory.

The Northern Rhodesian Market

Northern Rhodesia ranked second to South Africa in Botswana's foreign cattle markets. The Northern Rhodesian market drew almost exclusively from the Ngamiland-Chobe area and Ghanzi. This market was, like the South African one, far from being a reliable or assured one. It was often partly or wholly closed to Botswana's cattle exports for reasons which we shall soon consider.

During the early period of the century, the most important vicissitude affecting Botswana's exports to Northern Rhodesia was competition between Botswana and

Barotseland. From the early 1900s Barotseland was a major producer and exporter of cattle to most parts of Northern Rhodesia, especially to the urban areas. Barotseland's hegemony in Northern Rhodesia's cattle trade posed a problem to Ngamiland and Chobe areas which had to struggle to penetrate the market, and the problem became increasingly acute as Barotseland flooded the market with its cheap or compound cattle. According to Laurel Van Horn, Barotseland sold '7,712 cattle ... in 1909 – 10, 8,108 in 1910 – 11, 7,578 in 1911 – 12 at prices in the latter year of £1 to £8 for oxen, £2.10s to £4 10s for cows, and £2 to £3 for heifers, all above the average for the period'.[1] In terms of transport, the situation was in favour of Barotseland for a long time as the distance involved in transporting cattle to Livingstone, and later to the Copperbelt, were shorter than those involved in transporting cattle from Ngamiland, which involved swimming them across the Zambezi at Kazungula. The other factor in favour of Barotseland at this time was that veterinary services were better than those of Botswana. In the case of the former, the veterinary department, stationed at Mazabuka was instrumental in disease control activities. Thus, the risk of importing diseased cattle from Ngamiland was always higher, and this problem was compounded by the problems of transport. If anything, transport from Ngamiland via Kazungula to Livingstone, though physically near, was very hazardous, tortuous and long. It took about two to three days to move from Ngamiland by truck to Livingstone.

Before 1915 Barotseland increasingly threatened Botswana's markets by even penetrating the Katanga and Johannesburg markets, where Lozi cattle fetched lower prices (£5 per head) than the ruling ones of about £8 per head. Perhaps the most important factor in this challenge was that trade in Barotseland was more organized than that of Ngamiland. In Barotseland, the cattle trade was a monopoly of the Jewish Susman brothers, who were general merchants and Livestock Dealers, with their headquarters at Livingstone. In Barotseland, the Susmans held their branches in strategic places such as Sesheke and Nalolo, where they conducted cattle buying activities throughout the territory or Province. Unlike in colonial Botswana where government intervention between buyers and sellers of cattle was biased in favour of settlers and almost non-existent in African production, trade in Barotseland was well organized as both the Northern Rhodesian Government and the Litunga took a keen interest in it, and therefore made attempts to stabilize cattle prices, while at the same time ensuring constant supplies of cattle from Barotseland to urban areas.

Botswana's opportunity to penetrate this attractive market came in the period between 1915-21 when the economic self reliance of the Lozi in cattle abruptly collapsed. 'An epidemic of bovine pleuro-pneumonia reduced the herd to about 70,000, none of which could be sold outside the province ....This embargo which remained in force until 1947, utterly destroyed the basis of the Lozi economy. The number of cattle sold plummeted from 6,346 in 1914-15 to 106 in 1915-16 ....Foot and mouth disease closed down the trade in hides'.[2] Thus the Northern Rhodesian market became open to cattle exports from Botswana not because of government intervention on behalf of Botswana's cattle producers, but as a result of a natural disaster which befell Barotseland. The closing down of cattle exports from Barotseland following the outbreak of this disease gave Ngamiland cattle an external outlet. At the same time Southern Rhodesia could not effectively compete with Botswana because the former's cattle were excluded from the northern markets owing to the outbreak of East Coast fever there in the same period.

However, settlers in both Southern Rhodesia and Northern Rhodesia persisted with their demands to have their farmers' cattle admitted to the northern markets; including the Congo. The collapse of trade in Barotseland pushed the Susmans into Ngamiland. At this time (around 1916), the Susmans opened three branches at Maun, Tsau and Gumaree where they employed three Europeans and a number of Africans to buy cattle on their behalf.

The expansion into Botswana by the Susmans greatly enhanced trade between Ngamiland and Northern Rhodesia because 'the firm had ... a well established connection [and reputation] in the mining areas in Northern Rhodesia, and was, therefore, owing to its strength locally, in a position to effectively compete with imports from other territories'.[3] The employees of the Susmans went to as far as Ghanzi to buy cattle for export to Northern Rhodesia. From 1915 Northern Rhodesia, particularly with the expansion of the Copperbelt mine labour in the late 1920s and throughout the 1930s, became a major consumer of Botswana's beef cattle. She imported an average of 12,000 head annually and the figures increased as the mining activities on the Copperbelt expanded.[4]

A critical examination of this trade, however, reveals a number of problems epitomizing its weaknesses and unreliability. To begin with, the challenge over the Northern Rhodesian internal markets continued between Botswana and settlers in both Northern and Southern Rhodesias. The settlers became increasingly uneasy about the development of the Ngamiland - Northern Rhodesia cattle trade. In order to overcome this economic challenge from Botswana, settlers became vocal and used their political influence to persuade the Northern Rhodesian Government to suspend trade with

Botswana. This settler response was strengthened by the formation in the 1930s of the Cattle Marketing Control Boards in the two Rhodesias. These Boards which were settler-dominated and controlled, institutionalized the settler challenge not only to the African producers internally but also to the trade with Botswana. Since their entry into commercial cattle keeping, settlers in both Northern and Southern Rhodesias sought the intervention of their respective State to help them secure capital. Settler capital particularly resented a process in which it saw its reproduction and expansion being handicapped by African competition. The major objective of the settlers in the two countries was to exploit the growing demand for beef on the Copperbelt to their benefit. They hoped to achieve this by entering the cattle trade and secure the main contracts with the mining companies. Their main dilemma however, was that having fewer cattle, they counted on over-charging on their cattle, while on the other hand the mining companies preferred cheaper cattle from Ngamiland. This led the settlers to appeal to the State in Northern Rhodesia for help. In return the State influenced the Veterinary Department at Mazabuka to impose severe veterinary conditions on cattle entering the country from Botswana, especially in the early 1920s.

With the transferring of Mr. J.H. Hobday to Northern Rhodesia from Botswana as Chief Veterinary Officer in August, 1943, the process of importing cattle from Botswana started to become more difficult. Commercial cattle buyers such as the Susmans, were subjected to calculated harassment by the State. There were now deliberate delays in the renewal of import licences. It seems Mr. Hobday played a significant role in feeding the Northern Rhodesian Government with the myth of 'diseasec cattle from Botswana.[5] At a practical level, this also meant the tightening up of the earlier veterinary regulatior The 1926 veterinary regulations for instance had made it mandatory for cattle from Ngamiland, destined for both Northern Rhodesia and the Congo to have certificates of inspection from certified veterinary officials, failure of which would lead to the total embargo of Botswana's cattle in the Northern Rhodesian markets. This declaration had proved to be very costly for the cattle producers as well as the buyers, because in order to effect this condition, the colonial State in Botswana had imposed an inspection fee of one shilling per head and a dipping fee of one shilling per head on both the producers and the buyers - payable on demand. This money, it was claimed, went to pay some of the veterinary officers hired by the State from South Africa to do the work, and who were now stationed at Maun, Kasane and Palapye Under such regulations, the Susmans had been made to pay £43 6s for the inspection and dipping of 866 head of cattle in July 1926.

The system of cattle inspection and dipping had proved to be a further burden on the producers who had been inconvenienced by the process of moving cattle from their cattle-posts to the inspection areas. It had been officially stated that 'the owner of any cattle intended to be removed from the district for the purpose of export from the territory, except to the Union of South Africa, shall before the issue of the sale permit... bring such cattle to a place to be appointed by the Government Veterinary Officer for inspection by him.'[6] As if all these measures were not enough, the Government in the 1940s added delaying tactics in the granting of licences to the importers. The Susmans, however, insisted on buying cattle from Botswana as these were cheaper than the ones supplied by the settlers. Nevertheless, the process of importing cattle from Botswana became a lengthy and frustrating one, particularly with the announcement by the Northern Rhodesian Government in the 1930s that local cattle and those from Southern Rhodesia would receive first priority over those of Ngamiland. To complement its stand, the Government also announced a quota system of not more than 2,000 head per annum to be imported from Botswana into Northern Rhodesia. When these cattle arrived in the country, they were subjected to severe quarantine conditions at Livingstone, Mazabuka and Ndola, before they reached the Mines. Under such circumstances, a number of cattle were reported to have reached their destinations in worse shape than they left Botswana, and many died of disease contracted in quarantine camps themselves as they received little veterinary attention. There were cases when some cattle lost almost a quarter of their normal weight. This process was but a way of proving the alleged inferiority of Botswana's cattle in comparison with the local herds.

The challenge from Southern Rhodesia cattle exports which had earlier ceased due to the outbreak of East Coast fever had been removed in 1922, and the restrictions on Southern Rhodesian cattle bound for Northern Rhodesia and Katanga were removed. It is probably opportune to point out that there was some kind of connivance between the governments of Northern and Southern Rhodesias regarding trade in cattle with Botswana. Both governments, with their settler communities, were united in their hostility to Botswana as a competitor in the Northern Rhodesian and Congolese markets. The two governments with their settler populations had one major objective: to secure the Copperbelt and Katanga cattle markets for their settler farmers. This was despite the fact that settlers alone could not be relied upon as constant suppliers of beef cattle. The lifting of the restrictions against Southern Rhodesia in the Northern Rhodesian markets, had led to the total capture of the northern markets by the former. Although records for the years preceding 1925 are not available, Ngamiland exports to both the Copperbelt and Katanga fell sharply during the period between 1925 and 1930 'from 6,600 head to nil, while figures from Southern Rhodesia had risen from 12,700 to 27,000'.[7] In Southern Rhodesia itself, we are informed by Kanduza that rate reductions and other aspects of State intervention, helped settler capital to overcome marketing problems, while the African cattle market which boomed in the inter-war conditions (1914-18), took a downwards turn after 1919. 'In 1921 the demand for African cattle [in Southern Rhodesia] "diminished" and "practically ceased" in 1922'.[8] The domination of African cattle production in Southern Rhodesia, coupled with the inter-government arrangements between Northern and Southern Rhodesias stimulated the settlers in Southern Rhodesia to extend their hegemony to the Northern Rhodesian markets. In this way, Southern Rhodesia posed a serious challenge to Botswana's cattle exports to Northern Rhodesia. The worst year was 1930 when the Ngamiland trade to Northern Rhodesia practically ceased to exist. According to the Pim Report, 'a consignment for export [from Ngamiland] lay for about a year on the banks of the Zambezi without a sale being effected in spite of the animals being offered at phenomenally low prices'.[9]

This economic bargain between the governments of the two Rhodesias was meant to kill Botswana's cattle trade with the northern markets. In this way, Botswana was forced to bring down prices to uneconomic levels for her cattle industry to continue. For instance, the ruling prices of Botswana's cattle in 1932 in the northern markets, ranged from £1 10s to £2 per head.[10] It was partly in the light of this situation that Charles Rey (Resident Commissioner for the BP) decided in 1933 to visit Northern Rhodesia to hold discussions with both the Governor, Sir James Maxwell and the Susmans regarding the future of the cattle trade between the two countries. 'I went around and had a talk/ with Susman, the biggest cattle exporter in the north about my new scheme of bringing cattle up from Tati on the hoof through Northern Rhodesia into Congo - which I had also discussed [amongst other things] with the various people mentioned above [Sir James Maxwell and Captain Hopkins]. It is perfectly feasible but there are a lot of cross-currents'.[11] Rey maintained that his trip was not fruitful, for the following reasons. Firstly, there was this hostility against Botswana by settlers in Northern and Southern Rhodesias which was officially backed. Secondly, within Botswana itself, cattle sellers in Ngamiland did not like the idea of Tati cattle sellers 'intruding' in their traditional market, particularly at the time when they were facing external hostility. Sellers in Ngamiland, therefore put pressure on the Susmans not to extend cattle buying activities to other parts of Botswana such as Tati. The third reason was the setting in of the economic depression in the early 1930s which resulted in the fall of demand by buyer countries due to reduced buying.

The last reason of economic recession or depression compounded Northern and Southern Rhodesian competition and hostility. The recession led to such a sharp fall in beef demand on the Copperbelt and Katanga that it taught Rey how the external cattle trade was also controlled by the forces of international capitalism, far beyond the region. He later noted: 'The main difficulty however, is that the demand [for beef] ... has fallen because, owing to the slump in world prices of copper, production has fallen off in the Congo and Northern Rhodesia, thousands of people have been dismissed and the consumption of meat has fallen. It all depends on a conference of copper producers sitting in New York now - so does the price of copper in London and New York affect the sale of cattle in Bechuanaland!'[12] Thus Botswana's cattle economy had this other misfortune of being a pawn in the operations of international capitalism susceptible to periodical crises. The most unfortunate thing however, was that government intervention which was very much needed for the guarantee of stability and profitability of the markets was lacking. During such crises, the cattle trade came to sudden halts, thereby affecting the viability of the industry at home.

Throughout the 1930s the Northern Rhodesian market continued to be a depressed one, with periodic closures. As in South Africa, the cattle market in Northern Rhodesia was controlled by a number of factors, ranging from veterinary considerations, competition mainly with Southern Rhodesia and regional politics, to economic crises within the buyer country itself. The cattle trade with Botswana was kept in the role of a surplus source of beef to fall on in times of acute shortages of beef in the two Rhodesias. As soon as Southern Rhodesian settlers started to export enough to Northern Rhodesia, the trade with Botswana received a sharp blow. Conversely, the trade was given a boost as soon as a crisis in cattle production affected the Southern Rhodesian settler farmers. For instance, a short period of relief for Botswana was once more obtained on the eve of the depression through the exclusion of the Southern Rhodesian cattle, owing to the outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease there in 1931. But this did not change the position of the territory vis-a-vis market restrictions. 'But the position as it is today', noted the Pim Commission, 'with the reduced... demand and the overstocking of the Northern Rhodesian depots, coupled with the prospect of Southern Rhodesia competition in the near future, is such as to cause the greatest anxiety'.[13]

The prevailing market situation led Sir Alan Pim to comment with more pessimism in 1933 about the future prospects of Botswana's trade with the Congo and Northern Rhodesia: 'from the above considerations it seems inevitable that the northern market will be for some time to come of a very restricted nature and, even with a recovery in copper mining, it is unlikely to approach its previous dimensions. It is therefore necessary to consider carefully the other possible markets outside those to the north'.[14] Perhaps what Pim pretended not to know was the role of the State. For while this was very instrumental in protecting the beef industries both in South Africa and Southern Rhodesia, this role was conspicuously absent or lacking in the case of Botswana. Therefore, regardless of how depressed the northern markets would be, there was no determined attempt from the State to look for alternative markets. From Botswana's side, the trade was directed purely by market forces. The cattle export industry in Botswana lacked parents to protect it against a hostile environment.

The export market prospects, however, changed during the war period (1939-1945) and thereafter. During and after the Second World War, the demand for Botswana's beef increased owing to the radical change in both the regional and world prospects for meat. The war itself increased the regional shortage of food, and in Northern Rhodesia this situation reproduced itself through the accelerated demand for beef for consumption. On the other hand, the war created an increased demand for copper and this in turn required an expanded labour force. To maintain this labour force, sources of cheap food were necessary. Whereas a few years before cattle from Botswana were almost unsaleable in a saturated and problem-ridden market, the increase reversed everything. During the war period, Northern Rhodesia found herself competing with major consuming countries like South Africa, Italy and the UK over Botswana's beef exports. The swelling of the mining industry due to war demands prompted the Northern Rhodesian Government to drop its negative attitude towards Botswana's beef exports in the Northern Rhodesian markets. In Botswana itself, the number of whites licensed as exporters suddenly shot up.

By 1946, for instance, Ghanzi for the first time had two reliable buyers and exporters, Messrs. Kollenberg and Wulfsohn, whose licences permitted them in that year to purchase 2,000 head of cattle each to export to Northern Rhodesia. The war indirectly created conditions which saw the break of the monopoly exercised by the Susmans as the sole exporters to Northern Rhodesia. In the same year (1946) a meeting was sponsored by the governments of the Congo and Northern Rhodesia at Mafeking, attended by their respective veterinary officials and the major exporting companies. The major objective of the meeting was to find ways of stabilizing and improving cattle exports to the northern markets. Ironically, Northern Rhodesia was represented by Mr. Hobday who had been elected Chairman of the Northern Rhodesia Meat Marketing Council.[15]

In Northern Rhodesia itself, a number of cattle-buying companies sprang up, especially on the Copperbelt. Amongst these were Chevetof, based in Mazabuka, Werner Brothers Limited and Copper Fields Cold Storage based at Nkana. For the first time, producer prices for Ngamiland and Ghanzi cattle rose beyond £8 per head, and this was reflected in an incident when 'a price of £8 per head for oxen had been offered to one farmer who turned it down as too little'.[16] According to the official survey of the livestock industry of Botswana, Northern Rhodesia imported more cattle from Botswana in the period between 1939 and 1947 than she had done before. The following statistics show the cattle imports and their estimated values in Northern Rhodesia, from Botswana:

Table 4 : Cattle Exports to Northern Rhodesia and their estimated value, 1939-1947

Year	Cattle Imports	Estimated Value in Pounds(
1939	448	2,520
1940	7,283	36,415
1941	8,544	42,000
1942	10,392	51,960
1943	9,859	69,656
1944	8,648	64,728
1945	8,826	88,260
1946	9,298	113,938

1947	8,612	80,754

Source: Botswana National Archives V1/5/1, Survey of the Livestock Industry of the Bechuanaland Protectorate, 1939-1947.

The demand for Botswana's beef cattle continued in Northern Rhodesia up to the time the Lobatse abattoir was opened in 1954. It should be clarified however, that the demand stemmed more from the inability of the settlers in the two Rhodesias to maintain a steady and cheap supply of cattle to the Copperbelt and other beef consuming public. In fact this demand was controlled by a lot of factors such as the operations in general of the copper economy, State and settler agrarian pressures in the two Rhodesias, and also the internal problems like transport and veterinary constraints. Another factor worth of mention is that after the war, Northern Rhodesia preferred seasonal buying. There was a tendency among the buyers not to distribute their buying evenly to cover the whole year round, but to wait for times when large surpluses of export cattle accumulated in Botswana. This strategy was used to lower producer prices. Looking at the past trends of instability and unreliability of the Northern Rhodesian market, one would expect the same to continue from time to time.

The Congolese and Angolan Markets

Together with Northern Rhodesia, the Congolese market was one of Botswana's most important regional markets. This market also developed with the expansion of the copper mines at Katanga, where the growing mine labour force increased the demand for beef. Both the internal (Congolese) and Southern Rhodesian supplies of beef could not meet the meat requirements of the mines.

Before looking to Botswana for meat contracts, Congo's meat requirements were supplied by Southern Rhodesia, especially after 1914 when Barotseland which was Congo's main supplier suffered the effects of pleuro-pneumonia. The contracts for the supply of beef to the major Congolese companies, such as the Union Miniere, Katanga Railways as well as to the Government, were held by Mr. Barnett 'Bongola' Smith, whose Southern Rhodesian-based Congo-Rhodesian Ranching Company supplied the Congo through its subsidiary, the Compagnie d'Elevage et d'Alimentation du Katanga (ELEKAT). But in the 1920s, Southern Rhodesia could not meet the ever growing demand of beef in the Congo, due to the economic expansion there and in Southern Rhodesia itself. Northern Rhodesia which had lost the services of Barotseland was also in need of beef, some of which came from Southern Rhodesia.

To make up for these shortages, the Congo looked to Botswana for the supply of the remainder. Dr. Colback, the Chief Veterinary Surgeon for the Belgian Congo from the 1920s to the 1940s, admitted in Mafeking during the 1946 regional session aimed at boosting cattle exports from Botswana to the northern markets, that the Congo on its own was incapable of supplying the meat requirements to various Congolese companies: 'We are a very poor country in cattle and need a lot of meat; we need 5,000 tons per year and only get 800 toms from Southern Rhodesia, of which we are the oldest customers. We could probably get 100 tons from South West Africa and also probably from Southern Rhodesia a further 400 tons. Before going to look elsewhere to get the balance, we think it is better to come and see the Bechuanaland Protectorate to make our enquiries here, and to ask what quantities of this need you may be able to supply us and under what conditions; how long, etc. I may assure you that we certainly are customers for a considerable time'.[17] Although the Congo's meat demands from Botswana expanded rapidly after the Second World War, the Congo had come to be one of the major importers of Botswana's beef from the 1920s. According to Hubbard, 'the Congo imported some 35,000 head of cattle per year - more than BP exports to South Africa at the height of the export boom/[from Botswana] around 1920'.[18] With the closing of the South African markets during the embargo, the Congo became one of the few unrestricted markets for Botswana's cattle exports. Being geographically far from Botswana the Congo conducted its trade via the neighbouring countries. The major outlet for cattle exports to the Congo was Northern Rhodesia. Cattle were trekked from Ngamiland via Kazungula to Livingstone and then transported by railway through Sakania to Elizabethville (Lubumbashi). The second outlet was by railway from Francistown via Southern and Northern Rhodesias to Katanga. The third and less widely used route was through South West Africa to Angola and then transported by railway to Katanga. The first part of the third route involved the driving of cattle to Angola through South West Africa, a journey which took almost six months.[19]

Although this market was potentially large, there were a couple of problems which affected the full operation of the market forces. As a market located physically distant from Botswana, its operations could not be isolated from what was going on in the transit countries. The first constraint which hampered the smooth operation of the Congolese market was competition with Southern Rhodesia. As we mentioned earlier, Southern Rhodesia succeeded Barotseland as a major supplier of beef to the Congo. Despite the fact that settlers in Southern Rhodesia could not satisfy the Congo's beef demand, they put up a relentless battle, through the State controlled Cattle Advisory Board to retain their pre-eminence in the Congo. The settlers' main fear was the dilution of prices which the dumping of Botswana's cattle at the markets in the Congo would create. This fear was heightened by the fact that Ngamiland was a supplier of compound cattle which were cheaper than those from Southern Rhodesia. In order to maintain the market, Southern Rhodesia sought means of obstructing trade between the Congo and Botswana for most of the period. The first move in this direction was to restrict the access of the Congo-bound cattle exports to the railway transport, particularly in the northern Protectorate. This was done through influencing the Southern Rhodesian controlled Rhodesian Railways. The exporters to the Congo who were based around Francistown, such as Messrs. Haskins and Sons, and H.J. Dennison and Sons, found it increasingly difficult to export cattle to the Congo through Southern Rhodesia. The most important challenge from Southern Rhodesia, for instance, occurred in 1922 when after the withdrawal of restrictions by the Congo on Southern Rhodesian cattle exports (imposed due to the outbreak of East Coast fever), the latter again captured the market in the Congo almost completely, to the disadvantage of Botswana. The Pim Commission commented: 'The 1922 experience should not be forgotten in considering the future of the export .... This experience showed that the Congo market was not a reliable one'.[20]

The second impediment arose from the actions of the Northern Rhodesian authorities. The question of supplying cattle to the Congo was closely allied to, and in fact to a large extent governed by the factors on which Botswana's market with Northern Rhodesia was founded. This was due to the fact that the bulk of Botswana's cattle exports to the Congo passed through Northern Rhodesia. The continuity of the Botswana-Congo trade thus depended on the attitude adopted by the authorities in Northern Rhodesia. Assured by the Southern Rhodesian settlers of the constant supply of beef to satisfy the Copperbelt demands, especially from 1926 and the early 1930s, the authorities in Northern Rhodesia proceeded to block the flourishing trade between the Congo and Botswana. At the height of the trade, the Northern Rhodesian authorities imposed a condition that Botswana's cattle exports to the Congo had to meet certain veterinary conditions. In March 1926, a conference was held at Livingstone, attended by veterinary officials from Northern and Southern Rhodesias, the Congo and Botswana. The outcome of their deliberations was that the export of Botswana cattle through Northern Rhodesia to the Congo was entirely prohibited due to the continuing existence of trypanosomiasis in animals from Ngamiland. It was 'revealed' that the cattle trade of Ngamiland and Ghanzi with the Congo was constantly menaced by the fact that cattle apparently healthy when they left the country reached their destination in a diseased condition. In order to avoid this danger Botswana's veterinary officers were asked to certify that the cattle in transit to the Congo were clean and that the area from which they came was free of transmittable diseases for at least six months prior to export.

Another condition imposed was that a report by Botswana's veterinary officer on the tsetse fly belt through which the cattle proceeding to the Northern Rhodesian border must pass, should be presented to the Northern Rhodesian veterinary authorities. This decision necessitated a government veterinary officer being stationed in Ngamiland, whose duties were to examine the herds in the whole of the District, and in the eastern portion of the Caprivi Strip, an area comprising altogether some 50,000 square miles.[21] A quarantine was also imposed on the entrance of such cattle into Northern Rhodesia, where cattle underwent a microscopic test before they were allowed to pass, and 'in order to conserve the grass' at Livingstone during the quarantine period, only a limited number of cattle was allowed to cross annually. In the case of cattle from the Tati (Francistown) District via Southern Rhodesia, exception was only allowed of 'purely Tati' settler cattle, and no cattle were allowed to leave the train in Northern Rhodesia. The Congo was also influenced to impose a quarantine at Sakania for cattle entering its markets.

These measures were a blessing in disguise for Southern Rhodesian exporters who welcomed such an opportunity because a decline in Botswana's exports to the Congo reinforced their exports. We have already observed how the State in Botswana failed to control disease. Therefore, these measures were imposed with a total embargo against Botswana through rigid adherence to veterinary requirements. In the circular he released in 1947, the Principal Veterinary Officer in Botswana said: 'Initially the export of animals and animal products from the Ngamiland and Chobe districts was totally prohibited but more recently this has been modified ....The entry of cattle ... to Northern Rhodesia via Kazungula will be permitted provided they are inspected before departure from the place of origin ... and provided they are accompanied by a certificate that they have been inspected by a veterinary officer'.[22] However, the introduction of cattle inspection greatly affected the volume and profitability of the northern bound trade. Many cattle producers were reluctant to sell large herds of their cattle for fear of paying more inspection and dipping fees, which we said together stood at two shillings per head, while buyers were also opposed to this system. In a memorandum entitled 'Dipping fees on cattle exported at Kazungula', addressed to the Government Secretary at Mafeking by the Acting Resident Magistrate at Kasane in 1926, the latter pointed out that 'Messrs Susman Bros. have always been against paying the dipping fee ... and now that 1072 head of their cattle have been crossed without formality of being dipped, they will quote this crossing as a precedent. This particular crossing has deprived the government of £26 16shillings in revenue'.[23] From the above quotation one is given the impression that even the government in Botswana was a beneficiary in the system whose aim was to retard the

the full knowledge that it was almost impossible for the State in Botswana to control disease. Looking at it from another angle, the restrictions reflected the success of the two Rhodesias in manipulating the veterinary situation to their advantage. The decline in the exports to the Congo following the declaration is reflected in the trade statistics below:

Table 5 : Cattle Exports to the Congo, 1926-1932

1926-27	-	9,914
1927-28	-	9,914
1928	-	1,536
1929	-	4,405
1930	-	145
1931	-	1,992
1932	-	1,875

Source: Bechuanaland Protectorate Colonial Reports, 1926-1932.

The fluctuations in the decline of the trade are due to the fact that the restrictions were relaxed from time to time when it was discovered that Southern Rhodesia alone could not satisfy the Congo's ever growing demand for beef. This proves the fact that veterinary measures were in fact disguised economic measures, whose main aim was to reduce competition between Botswana and Southern Rhodesia. However, the economic situation in the Congo (e.g. beef shortages) forced the authorities not to maintain development of trade between Botswana and the Congo.

These factors militated against the profitability of the trade with the northern markets throughout the time the veterinary regulations remained in force. As we saw in the case of the market in Northern Rhodesia, the situation was worsened in the early 1930s with the coming in of the economic depression in the Congo caused by the slump in the world price of copper. Production of copper greatly fell and to keep the mines from collapsing, the mine owners resorted to dismissing their workers. This situation affected Botswana through the fall in the consumption of meat by the Congo. The worst year was 1930 when the Congo imported only 145 cattle from Botswana. At home, the economic crisis was aggravated by the drought disaster and the outbreak of the foot-and-mouth disease which together killed off hundreds of thousands of cattle and almost succeeded in bringing the cattle trade to a halt. The trade was further undermined by the conflict between the regional cartels. The Imperial Cold Storage Company which in 1931 held contracts to supply the Congo with beef from its Lobatse Meat Works, clashed with Mr. Bongola Smith when the latter tried to extend his operations from Southern Rhodesia into Botswana. The ICS did not like the idea of having to compete with Smith over the supply of cattle inside Botswana. Using its influence with the Imperial Government in London, the ICS succeeded in eliminating Smith's company from Botswana. In return, Smith used his connections with the Belgian Government to obstruct the ICS from having a foothold in the Katanga markets. The end result was that Bongola Smith was kept out of Botswana by the ICS through the intervention of the Colonial Office, while he in turn ousted the ICS from the Katanga markets through the help of the Belgian Government.[24]

These inter-cartel clashes, rather than hurting the involved contestants, in fact hurt Botswana as these reflected the failure of Botswana to secure an immediate market for its embargoed cattle in the South African market. Then comes the export of cattle to the Congo through Angola. This route was the most problematic of all, as it involved the trekking of cattle on foot mainly through the Caprivi Strip to Angola, where cattle were transported to the Congo by railway. Because of the problems involved in herding cattle along the way, the average number of cattle bought was only three hundred in six months. 'Three natives, to each one hundred head, wages £1 10shillings per month including food, were employed'.[25] Apart from the problem of transport, the route was less frequently used because of the mortality involved in transporting cattle, the average rate being fifty in one thousand.[26] With the imposition of veterinary restrictions by the Portuguese in Angola, the route went into disuse, and the export trade to the Congo once again depended on the Kazungula-Livingstone and the Pandamatenga and railway routes via Southern Rhodesia.

Thus for most of the 1930s, Botswana's Congo markets remained depressed. But, as was the case with South Africa and Northern Rhodesia, the situation came to change materially during and after the Second World War. The first significant change of the increased demand for beef cattle was to reduce the competition between Botswana and Southern Rhodesia over the northern markets. 'The expanding industrial programme in Southern Rhodesia seems to preclude that territory from seriously competing with us for our markets in Northern Rhodesia and in the Congo for some years', commented the Resident Commissioner soon after the war.[27] Instead of competing over export markets, there was competition between South Africa, the Congo and Northern Rhodesia, as buyer countries over Botswana's beef cattle. South Africa, which had by then maintained an embargo on Botswana's cattle, suddenly removed the restrictions and demanded a quota of 40,000 cattle annually.

To avoid an antagonistic competition by the buyers, a meeting was held in October 1946, at Mafeking between the Chief Veterinary Officers of the Congo, Northern Rhodesia and Botswana, with the aim of recommending 'the numbers ... which Northern Rhodesia and the Congo will require from the Bechuanaland Protectorate next year and the indications for following years'.[28] The Northern Rhodesian representative at the meeting, Mr. Hobday was quick to point out: 'Northern Rhodesia is aware of the Congo shortage of beef, and we are good neighbours, and the Northern Rhodesian Government wishes to do all it can to assist the Congo to obtain supplies ... it would, however, be unfortunate if these supplies were to interfere with the anticipated supplies of the BP to Northern Rhodesia'.[29] At the end of the meeting it was worked out that Botswana would supply between 19,000 and 20,000 cattle for a period of two years to the Congo through the Congolese exporters such as the Elekat, Gelmat and Messrs. Granat Companies.

For the first time, authorities in Botswana demanded that cattle exports to the northern markets should fetch prices resembling those ruling at the Johannesburg market. At the Johannesburg market, prices ranged from £8 to £12. 15 shillings per head for the different grades of cattle. As in the cases of all regional markets, the increased Congo demand for beef in the post-Second World War period, represented only a temporary boom, and was not therefore a reflection of the improvement or stabilization of the Congolese market. Moreover, it is doubtful whether the boom was capable of reducing the poverty which decades of market fluctuations and instabilities had produced in Botswana. The numerous market constraints which characterized the Congolese market were a clear indicator or 'barometer' of the distortions which a market dependent on outside forces can produce.

With regards to Botswana's cattle exports in Angola, the market there was short-lived, undeveloped and uneconomic The Angolan demand for Botswana's cattle depended on the operation of the diamond mines which ranked among the major labour employers in that country. From the early 1920s, the Angolan Government signed a contract with the colonial State in Botswana for the supply of cattle to the diamond mines. The average price per beast in this trade was £3 10 shillings, paid in cash in nearly all cases.[30] The problems of transport resulted in confinement of the trade to cattle from Ghanzi and Ngamiland. Cattle were herded along the route via the Caprivi Strip, across the Cunene river into Southern Angola.

Owing to the problems involved in the trekking of cattle, the flow of trade was slight. The average number of cattle bought was three hundred per month. As in the case of the Botswana-Congo trade via Angola, three Africans were employed to drive the cattle at a monthly wage of £1 10 shillings each, including food. In addition, two Europeans were employed as <u>capitaos</u>, one received a monthly wage of £20 and another £25.

These trips were costly not only in terms of the poor transport involved, but also in terms of time taken to and from Angola. The total time estimated for a single journey was six months, while the cost of food for the trip was one hundred pounds (£100). Other expenses included £25 for ferrying the cattle across the Cunene river, while the average mortality rate was fifty head per thousand.[31]

In 1925, the trade halted for a while due to the operational problems of the diamond mines, and in the 1925-26 buying period, the Angolan Government went into another contract with Botswana, described by the colonial report as 'completely new'. Under the new contract 'mobs of one thousand' were sent to Angola on each trip. The contract was a blessing for Botswana which had suffered the South African embargo. Angola accepted the surplus from Ghanzi and Ngamiland which could not find a ready market. The Angolan market remained unrestricted for some time although the entry of cattle into Angola was subject to authorization from the Inspeção dos Serviços Veterinários in Luanda. The statistics below show the volume of trade between Botswana and Angola in the late 1920s.

Table 6: Cattle Exports to Angola, 1926-1929

1926-27	2,280
1927-28	1,536

1928	2,752
1929	1,106

Source: Bechuanaland Protectorate, Colonial Reports, 1926 - 1929.

In 1930, the exports to Angola came to an end. There were basically two reasons for this. Angola lost the contract to Italy, and this move was necessitated by the problems involved in exporting the cattle to Angola. Secondly, the Angolan Government was reluctant to continue with the trade due to the circulating rumour that the foot-and-mouth disease had broken out in Botswana.[32]

The Southern Rhodesian Market

Southern Rhodesia was also part of the so-called 'traditional' markets for Botswana's beef cattle during the colonial period. From the beginning of the century, Southern Rhodesia became an increasingly important market for Botswana's cattle, and this market captured the Ngamiland and Francistown zones. At its highest, Southern Rhodesia imported an average of 2,000 head per annum from Botswana. Cattle importation from Botswana rose after the rinderpest disaster when many settlers in Southern Rhodesia became more undercapitalized through the depletion of their herds. In order to replace their herds, many settlers embarked upon a process of cattle buying from local Africans as well as from Botswana. Cattle exports from Ngamiland entered Southern Rhodesia via Pandamatenga, while those from the Francistown area went by railway to Bulawayo. For a long time, trade to Southern Rhodesia was a monopoly of the settlers based in northern Botswana. For instance, the firm of Messrs. Jas Haskins and Sons, based at Francistown, exported about 2,000 head per annum to Southern Rhodesia between 1912 and 1917.[33]

The Ngamiland trade to Southern Rhodesia periodically proved a major source of cheap beef cattle. Like the rest of Botswana except the settlers, Botswana mainly produced what was known as compound cattle, with a few medium and prime herds. The cattle from Botswana were initially used to feed African workers in the mine compounds and sometimes on settler farms. Following the establishment of an abattoir at Bulawayo by the Imperial Cold Storage (ICS) in 1925, it appeared that market opportunities or prospects for all classes of cattle from Botswana would be larger. As earlier mentioned, the ICS was interested in processing meat for overseas trade, and its main objective was to secure control of the cheapest sources of beef in the region. As Hubbard points out, 'control of the cheapest beef was necessary to profit from the overseas trade since Southern African beef was predominantly lean [i.e. low grade] and since ICS had little marketing strength internationally; the prospects for ICS buying cattle from Botswana were very high'.[34] Moreover, this company had stated its willingness to assist in the matter of the export of cattle from Botswana through their works at Lobatse and Durban.

The presence of other meat buying companies in Southern Rhodesia such as Liebig's, enhanced Botswana's hopes for a permanent market in the former. Liebig's operated an extract factory at West Nicholson for local and international trade. Despite this potential, the Southern Rhodesian market for long remained nightmarish for Botswana's trade. Like its South African and Northern Rhodesian counterparts, the market in Southern Rhodesia was subject to periodic restrictions and fluctuations, reflecting a relationship marked both by cooperation and conflict. Firstly, the market was very restricted due to settler competion; as in Northern Rhodesia, Botswana faced tough competition from the settlers, and the Southern Rhodesian authorities worked hard to give top priority on their markets to the settler farmers. We are informed by Phimister that settlers in Southern Rhodesia were always in a process of capitalization as it was the aim of the State there to make settlers the cornerstone of the country's economic development. In response to this, a settler-based agrarian economy received substantial government support. Thus, 'in 1911, European-owned cattle had totalled some 371,000 head, and from 1914 onwards had increased at an average annual rate of about 14 percent, until by 1925 they numbered one million head'.[35]

This increase in settler-owned cattle posed a serious challenge to Botswana's cattle trade not only in Southern Rhodesia but also in the whole region. While Southern Rhodesia had been a net importer of meat and meat products before 1916, this radically changed starting from the 1920s when Southern Rhodesia started looking for markets to dispose of the growing proportion of her surplus cattle. The home market was not only unable to absorb significant cattle numbers, but it also led to depressed prices, as the flow of cattle increased. 'The need to find cattle export markets was thus a matter of great urgency', observes Phimister.[36] Settler farmers increasingly put pressure on the State for the exclusion of Botswana's cattle from the Southern Rhodesian market. This competition, as earlier pointed out, expanded to include the Northern Rhodesian and South African markets.

The fear of competition by the settlers increased with their failure to break into the world market dominated by big businesses such as in Australia, New Zealand and Argentina. A decade or so earlier, settler ranchers in Southern Rhodesia had nursed ambitions of entering the international beef trade with the assistance of their government. These ambitions were frustrated when the settlers met the harsh realities of the world market dominated by big businesses, and through outright hostility and efficient competition from such companies, Southern Rhodesia failed to penetrate the world market.[37]

Settlers therefore turned their attention to the capture of the regional markets, and were not prepared to entertain any serious challenge in their own market from other competitors. Southern Rhodesia was thence determined to outdo Botswana in this and other regional markets.

Initially the Southern Rhodesian Government was willing to accept Botswana's cattle in its markets. This measure was by and large a patronizing and paternalistic gesture aimed at inducing settlers in the Tati District of Botswana to accept incorporation of the northern protectorate into Southern Rhodesia. Settlers in the Tati District conducted their commercial and marketing activities in Bulawayo; as such settlers in the northern Protectorate had on several occasions expressed a wish to be incorporated into Southern Rhodesia. The growing public opinion in Botswana against incorporation in the late 1930s, coupled with the ever-increasing market problems for its cattle, led Southern Rhodesia to terminate this preferential treatment for east-central Botswana.

In order to pacify settler anger against Botswana's dumping of cattle on their markets, Southern Rhodesian authorities decided to follow South Africa's action of first imposing a partial cattle embargo on Botswana in 1924, particularly for cattle from the northern part of the Protectorate. By 1931, the outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in Southern Rhodesia was used as a pretext for declaring a total cattle embargo on Botswana. As a result, cattle exports to Southern Rhodesia between 1931 and 1938 almost came to a halt, leaving the exports of hides as the only major trade between the two countries. During the closure of Southern Rhodesian markets to Botswana, the State in Southern Rhodesia went as far as influencing both Liebig's and the Imperial Cold Storage Company to frustrate their trade with Botswana by offering very low prices. Throughout the 1930s, the ICS's Bulawayo abattoir offered '£2 15s. per head for a boner weighing 900 lbs live weight ... and £3 12s 6d for a better class of cattle weighing 900 lbs. live weight ... and being exported as ungrade chilled beef to the United Kingdom market', while Liebig's bought cattle from Botswana at a price close to 6 shillings per 100 lbs. live weight, while the same weight would cost 13s 6d in Northern Rhodesia or South Africa.[38]

Having failed in their attempts to penetrate the international beef trade, settlers in Southern Rhodesia sought to secure continued market stability in the region for their cattle exports by membership in regional settler-dominated and controlled organisations and later by depending on the role of their State. The first move was meant to put the regional cattle trade under settler hegemony by excluding African traders. To this end, settler representatives from Southern Rhodesia, Botswana, South West Africa and South Africa had decided to meet in 1921 in Johannesburg to find ways of protecting their interests, and in particular 'to stabilize the markets and give the producer of cattle his fair share of the price paid by the consuming public'.[39] As a result a Meat Producers' Exchange had been formed to represent settler interests in the regional cattle trade.

Still, Southern Rhodesian settlers felt this measure was not enough to guarantee them future security in the regional markets. In the mid-1930s therefore, settlers used their political pressure on the State, forcing it to pattern its agricultural policy on South Africa's model whereby the State was supposed to take measures to assist white farmers by gearing its policy towards intervention in the country's agriculture. Thus, the disorganized challenge to foreign interference in Southern Rhodesian markets and to Southern Rhodesian-based monopolies which flouted government regulations by continuing to import cattle from Botswana, was replaced by close cooperation between the government and settler farmers through the medium of Control Boards on which settler farmers' representatives and government officials served together. This, it was argued, was a way of regulating production and arranging marketing. Laws were passed to establish Control Boards, among which were the Cattle Advisory and Dairy Control Boards.[40]

Among the tasks assigned to the former was the administration of measures aimed at aiding cattle exports for settlers. Besides providing the means for gaining the cooperation of settler farmers in the organisation of the agrarian sector, the Control Boards had another major purpose. They were also intended to serve as the focus of settler agrarian capital.

The creation of a settler agrarian vested interest in Southern Rhodesia marked the success of settler capital which was supplemented by the creation of a local Cold Storage Commission in 1938 to take over the cattle buying and processing activities previously done by the Imperial Cold Storage Company (ICS). The growing success of the settlers marked a further decline in Botswana's cattle exports to Southern Rhodesia. Throughout the pre-war period, the Southern Rhodesian market was a very restricted and unreliable one. The ever-increasing restrictions of the Southern Rhodesian market and the growing African poverty in Botswana forced Rey to visit Bulawayo in 1933 to try and persuade the ICS to buy at least some 10,000 head of cattle from the accumulated surpluses, but he was unsuccessful. 'A heavy morning at the Office. Chase and I interviewing the ICS people until nearly one o'clock. They are a slippery lot of devils and tried to wriggle out of their obligation to buy 10,000 head of cattle from us by saying that there weren't enough! When I had proved that there were, and they had been forced to admit it themselves, they fell back on the argument that they could only get them at their price — which ridiculous argument of course cuts no ice'.[41]

As in the cases of every regional market, the cattle trade with Botswana was, on the eve of the Second World War, maintained as a reserve of cheap beef to fall on in times of beef shortage in Southern Rhodesia. This is reflected in the sharp rise of cattle imports by Southern Rhodesia from Botswana in the war period. Between 1939 and 1947, Southern Rhodesia imported about twenty-three thousand cattle from Botswana. But in comparison with either South Africa, the Congo or Northern Rhodesia, the requirements of Southern Rhodesia were said to be negligible.[42]

The Overseas Markets and the Role of the Monopolies

As far as Botswana's cattle exports were concerned, the overseas markets were the least developed. This was because the operation of the overseas markets was controlled and governed by many factors, many of which were beyond Botswana's capacity to deal with. The difficulties of overseas markets were reflected primarily through the stiff competition involved both at regional and world levels.

To begin with, the world meat trade was for a long time dominated by South America starting from the turn of the century, and particularly Argentina, while other big names included Australia and New Zealand. Because of the high quality beef produced by these countries, the developed nature of their transport (i.e. refrigerated ships), and their efficient organization of trade, backed up by many years of experience, Argentina, New Zealand and Australia managed to establish their hegemony over the foreign markets, especially in Britain which, for a long time constituted the largest beef market in the world. The trade by these countries was made easier by the fact that they had managed to attract bigger monopolies from both North America and Britain (i.e. the British-owned Vesteys) whose reputation in the market countries was very high. The value figures below taken from the International Meat Statistics, show the extent to which the beef export trade was for long dominat

by Latin America and Oceania.

Table 7 : International Meat Statistics

Averages in 1,000 Dollars

	1934-38	1946-50	1947
North America	Export 13,000	Export 519,800	Export 660,300
Europe	Import 2,776,100	Import 3,357,200	Import 3,954,200
South America	Export 2,032,000	Export 1,725,00	Export 2,078,000
Africa (total)	Export 42,200	Export 33,500	Export 41,[illegible]
Australia New Zealand (Oceania)	Export 1,089,900	Export 1,273,000	Export 1,342,200

Source: Report of a Mission in the Western Kalahari, 1952, p.40.

In real trade terms therefore, the world competition in the beef trade was between Australia, New Zealand and Latin America, while North America was also increasing the volume of her trade. Africa's world trade continued to be both insignificant and fluctuating, a situation reflecting the unpredictable nature of the demand for Africa's beef. There are a number of reasons responsible for the almost static nature of Africa's overseas exports. In the first instance, the major names in world chilled and frozen beef trade such as the Vesteys were reluctant to invest in regions of lower grade animals and higher incidence of disease, as this would have caused them problems in entering the world markets. According to a study published by B. Habjanic in 1964, meat exporting countries of Africa were hampered by the presence of disease and the poor nature of their animals in their attempts to penetrate the world markets. He commented:

> Exporting countries of Africa should be able to benefit [in the world beef trade] ... provided that they succeeded in improving animal husbandry and in eradicating animal diseases, the presence of which is the main obstacle to the entry of carcas meat from Africa into most important markets. As long as the strict sanitary regulations applied by the importing countries are not met, African countries will be unable to enjoy the full benefits of the expected growth of the world import demand for beef.[43]

This state of affairs frightened the big monopolies who would have otherwise interested themselves in investing in the Southern African Cattle exporting countries like Botswana. The frustrating experience of settlers in Southern

Rhodesia caused by their failure to penetrate the overseas markets, or to attract big monopolies, of which Phimister informs us, was even more applicable to Botswana. The fact that Botswana's cattle were of an inferior quality to those from Australia or New Zealand was acknowledged by the Resident Commissioner in the 1944 African Advisory Council session when he said: 'Although I have stated in my opening address that the cattle produced by Africans in the Protectorate compare very favourably indeed with cattle produced by Africans anywhere else in Africa, we must face the fact that they do not compare with export cattle from the Union, from the Argentine, from Australia and from New Zealand, all of which export prime beef to Britain. Our meat is inferior and we must face that fact'.[44] In Botswana the situation was worsened by the fact that colonial State, unlike its Southern Rhodesian counterpart, was incapable of profitably or positively intervening on behalf of the majority of its producers and exporters alike in an attempt to penetrate the world beef markets.

In the absence of the big monopolies to invest in the Southern African beef exports, one would naturally expect the local monopolies such as the ICS, Liebig's and ELEKAT to take the initiative of promoting Southern African beef trade in the overseas markets. This was, however, not possible due to many operational problems these monopolies encountered. The major problem of the regional monopolies was that they suffered from insufficient capitalization to compete with the big monopolies which were already established. We are told by Hubbard that 'although regionally a giant, ICS was small by the size and standards of the big multinational meat packing firms (e.g. Vesteys, Swift, Amour)'.[45] The problem of under-capitalization was compounded by the fact that Southern Africa generally produced lower grade animals which in normal circumstances could not have easily penetrated the overseas markets, as the ensuring competition would have rendered some regional monopolies bankrupt. The clear indication of the uncertainty on the part of the regional monopolies can be deduced from the fact that the ICS which was the biggest monopoly in the region, was in the early 1930s reported to be 'in a critical position financially and ... the share holders attribute this to the large number of unprofitable subsidiary enterprises embarked upon during recent years'.[46] Ironically, access to cheap, lower grade animals formed the basis of the Cold Storage companies in Southern Africa, and they always strove to avoid prime cattle.

To penetrate the overseas markets, the regional monopolies also needed to ensure continuity in the supply of export cattle and to have improved methods of internal marketing.

In his further analysis of the World beef market in the 1940s and 1950s, Habjanic wrote:

> When endeavouring to increase their share in the world markets, African countries will have to face sharp competition on the part of traditional exporters who have built up efficient marketing organisations and transport facilities, while their potential for further expansion of production and exports is large ....Success in developing an export trade will depend greatly on the way African countries organise internal and external marketing. Improved methods of internal marketing will result in higher returns to producers and reduce costs of meat. In the export trade the greatest attention is to be paid ... to quality and regularity of supplies.[47]

In the case of Botswana, many of the above pre-conditions for entry in the world markets were absent. The presence of disease, the disorganized internal marketing system and the undeveloped physical infrastructure, were among the many factors militating against Botswana's overseas trade.

The regularity of cattle supplies in Botswana was, for instance, arrested by the long distances involved in trekking cattle to the South African ports from remote places such as Ghanzi, which by 1952 cost as much as £1 per head, and these problems were in turn compounded by the loss of weight in cattle. For Botswana, the problem was not only that of access to the world markets, but also that of exploitation by the regional monopolies which were supposed to spearhead the overseas trade. As we have already pointed out, the almost total dependence by these monopolies on lower grade animals led to the offer of lower, exploitative prices to the exporters and producers alike by the latter. For instance, in 1924 during the South African embargo, the price offered by Liebig's on Botswana's cattle for chilled overseas trade at the Johannesburg market was £1. 2s. 6d. per 100 lbs. for compound cattle, £1. 4s 6d per 100 lbs. for medium and £1, 7s. per 100 lbs. for prime.[48] It naturally follows that in normal circumstances (of free markets), Liebig's would purchase very few cattle at the above prices they stated they were prepared to pay.

During the embargo, Africans had no alternative but to sell their cattle even at lower prices. But the overseas outlet for African cattle in this period, was not a viable economic outlet as it contributed to the decrease in the total revenue of the Africans. There was also a problem of the seasonal character of the chilled beef in Botswana, owing to the scarcity of grass at the end of the rainy season. It was therefore not possible for Botswana to keep up a continued supply of cattle throughout the year.

For the regional monopolies, their further handicap was that if they had to develop the chilled and frozen overseas trade, which was an important alternative to Botswana's cattle restrictions, they had also to develop special railway and steamer communications in order that the carcases might arrive well within the keeping period.

This factor was heavily emphasized by the Ottawa Conference on beef exports in 1932. The Conference also estimated that in Southern Africa, the total costs in the chilling process including freight and marketing charges would amount to two pence per pound on an ordinary beast. The carcases would probably average about 4½d per pound.[49] All these considerations contributed to the non-development of the chilled trade by the Southern African-based monopolies which as we earlier mentioned, were undercapitalized.

The overseas trade, as far as Botswana was concerned, remained both experimental and unpredictable throughout the period. Its continuity depended not only on the ability of the regional monopolies such as Liebig's, ICS and the Union Cold Storage to secure contracts with overseas buyers, but also on the cooperation of the South African authorities through whose ports its overseas exports passed. Having no ports of her own, Botswana was dependent on South Africa for access to world markets, as her cattle passed through Mafeking via Durban, Cape Town or Walvis Bay, to the world markets (e.g. the UK and Italy). Botswana's overseas trade was thus dependent upon a stable and cooperative South Africa. If Botswana refused to sell her meat through South Africa, it would not only be to the delight of South Africa, Southern Rhodesia and South West Africa who were her hostile competitors in this trade, but it would also mean the end of the overseas trade itself. The geographical location of Botswana in the Southern African economic region favoured South Africa.

The entry of Botswana's meat in the overseas markets started in the period after the First World War. There were sporadic entries of small consignments of Botswana's meat into the UK, as usual exported through South Africa, and these continued up to the 1920s. Botswana's overseas exports were needed particularly in times of major economic crises in the buyer countries, necessitating demand for lower grade beef. There were two periods of 'silver-lining' for Botswana's overseas exports of beef. The first was in 1933 when experimental consignments were organized for the London market via Durban, with the cooperation of the Imperial Cold Storage Company. This was after Botswana had taken part in the British Industries Fair held in London in 1932, with the aim of making an impression on the British market that its cattle were not after all unexportable. 'If it proves successful', commented Sir Alan Pim, 'a new outlet of great future possibilities will be proved'.[50] But this optimism came to nothing as British demand for Botswana's cattle were never stimulated beyond periodic needs.

The second overseas market for Botswana's cattle exports came with the rise of Fascism in Italy when Mussolini signed a contract with the Union Cold Storage Company for the supply to Italian soldiers in Ethiopia, during the South African embargo. 'The Italian Meat Contract secured by the Union Cold Storage Company provided an outlet for a large number of Protectorate cattle, generally although not always of a class debarred from export to the Union', continued Pim.[51] This raised the spirits of both Botswana's cattle exporters and the Colonial authorities who banked on this contract to secure a substantial share of the trade. However, the market was both short-lived and full of constraints. Its major weakness was the stiff competition between South Africa, Southern Rhodesia and Botswana at one level and settlers and Africans at another level. Secondly, the prices offered were very much below those ruling at the embargoed Johannesburg market, and the State had to consider subsidizin the trade in order to provide its continuity. 'A special rebate in railway rates and a high subsidy, applicable to beef exported overseas, raised the initial price paid to the producer, but there was much loss of condition on the long rail journey, from which condemnations for being underweight resulted, and measles, etc., were heavy, so that there again prices were barely satisfactory'.[52] Thirdly, Britain being against fascism, organized sympathetic South African dockers at Cape Town to block beef consignments designed for export to Ethiopia, and this contributed to the collapse of the trade. Regardless of the merits of this action, it did certainly hurt Botswana's export trade, a move which prompted Rey to dismiss the League of Nations as 'a collection of intriguing politicians'.[53]

Indeed, before 1933, Botswana had lost its regular overseas markets as the Union Cold Storage lost its contracts. The statistics below show Botswana's overseas cattle exports between 1920-21 to 1946 via the port of Durban.

Table 8 : Botswana's Overseas Exports, Via Durban, 1920-1946

1925-26	2,336
1926-27	11,719
1927	4,918
1928	10,050
1929	16,846
1930	11,709
1931	7,739
1932	8,247

Source: Ettinger, 'South Africa's Weight Restrictions', p.24.

The overseas trade (and to some extent the regional trade) was further undermined by the competition and conflicts between the local monopolies in their operations, especially in the securing of contracts, to the detriment of exporter countries like Botswana.

The regional monopolies enjoyed individual affiliations with the colonizing powers in Southern Africa. As such each monopoly regarded the areas colonized by the Imperial Government backing it, as falling in its sphere of influence, and therefore sought measures of precluding other monopolies from operating there. Measures taken to maintain monopoly in their operational zones included sabotaging each other's contracts for buying and selling cattle. The Imperial Cold Storage Company which for instance, had connections with the British Government wanted to monopolize market contracts in South Africa, Southern Rhodesia and Botswana. The ICS established itself in Botswana in 1927 when it constructed an abattoir at Lobatse. In its operations, the ICS banked on the support of the British Government against other monopolies. Similarly, the Union Cold Storage which was based in South Africa had the support of the South African Government, and was particularly established to create competition with the ICS.

Then there was another major meat supply conglomerate in the region——the Southern Rhodesian-based Congo Rhodesian Ranching Company, owned by Mr. Barnett Bongola Smith. The subsidiaries of Mr. Smith's companies, such as the Compagnie d'Elevage et d'Alimentation du Katanga (ELEKAT), held all the major meat supply contracts (i.e with the Union Minière, Katanga Railways and the Government) in the Congo, which he fulfilled with live cattle railed from Southern Rhodesia. Through his company connections in Belgium, Smith enjoyed close relations with the Belgian Government. 'Among the Directors of Smith's companies were Count Lippon, ex-Governor of the Congo and one of the Rothschild family, Monsieur Carton de Wiart and others'.[54] In their dealings, these monopolies tried to outdo each other through sabotage, and the end result of their dirty games was to contribute to Botswana's market constraints.

The classical example of the inter-monopoly conflicts occurred in 1931 between Smith's ELEKAT and the ICS over the meat contracts in Botswana. In order to have access to the cheapest source of beef during South Africa's cattle embargo, Smith signed an agreement with the colonial authorities in Botswana whereby he would erect a 100 head per day abattoir at Francistown. This, according to Smith, was aimed at promoting Botswana's overseas and regional trade. But the agreement was subject to confirmation from the Colonial Office in London. The Resident Commissioner, Rey, grasped eagerly at Smith's offer which represented a threefold opportunity for relief: to provide a market for embargoed northern cattle, to break out of the sterile monopoly agreement with the ICS by establishing a market and escape from exclusive dependence on South Africa.[55]

Although the ICS had infringed the 1925 agreement with Botswana by buying only half of its contracted annual quota of 10,000 head, it regarded the contract between Mr. Smith and the colonial State in Botswana as a disturbance of the balance of power in the region. If Smith ousted them from their cold storage contracts in Southern Rhodesia and Botswana, he would increase his control of resources in cheap cattle significantly and further undercut ICS in his (Smith's) future continental contracts, a situation regarded by the ICS as fatal.

To stop Smith from outdoing them, the ICS went ahead to block this agreement by appealing to the Colonial Office in London to cancel it. Hubbard notes that 'more powerful forces than ICS were [now] at work to block the agreement with Smith. The delayed reply from London was lukewarm ....The opinion of the Dominions' Office was also voiced that bringing Smith into the BP would amount to "taking sides".'[56] With further pressure from the Colonial Office, the agreement was cancelled and Smith was ousted from Botswana. Rey was furious at this turn of events: 'Needless to say the contentions advanced by the Imperial Cold Storage are mostly rubbish and inaccurate ....Their whole object was, of course quite clearly to prevent our negotiations with Smith for the establishment of a factory at Francistown'.[57]

Smith also responded to this challenge by appealing to the Belgian Government to obstruct trade between the ICS and the Congo. As a result, the ICS also found their markets in the Congo taken away.

This affair inspired Rey to research into the operations of the regional markets. He was overwhelmed to find how the cattle trade in Southern Africa was controlled by a host of factors, many of which were external. He complained: 'And there are other factors too: all the meat contracts in the Congo [the Union Miniere, the Railways, the Government and other big names] are controlled by my villainous friend Mr. Bongola Smith - his directors sit in Brussels and they in turn control the Belgian Government! A dirty game, and a network of intrigue covering Cape Town, Salisbury, Bulawayo, Livingstone, Elizabethville, Brussels and New York'.[58] Although these conflicts were in the main a reflection of the interplay between industrial, colonial, imperial and nationalist affliations of the monopolies involved, they had tangible and adverse effects on the colonised cattle exporting countries. For instance, in the above case, the main loser was Botswana which lost the markets for its cattle although the struggle was between the monopolistic meat firms. Hence, throughout the period, Botswana's overseas markets never developed until after the establishment of the abattoir at Lobatse in 1954 by the CDC. The post-Second World War boom brought up by the increased world demand of meat did not expand Botswana's overseas trade as the regional demand challenged the overseas demand, and consequently dominated Botswana's export trade.

During and after the Second **World War**, the world prospect for meat marketing had radically altered, 'and this alteration would appear to have more permanence as long term trend in the case of meat than of almost any other commodity ....Whereas twenty years or so ago beef from [Botswana] was almost unsaleable in a saturated world market, the demand for meat in the post-war period reflected reduced output export in major exporting countries like Argentina and Australia as well as increased demand'.[59] This world position was reproduced in the territories surrounding Botswana, and the regional markets——South AFric the two Rhodesias and the Congo, which previously had restricted markets for Botswana's cattle, were now anxious to secure their full shares of Botswana's beef production for some years. By 1951, Southern African countries (except Botswana) were generally passing from exporting to importing beef due to the intensification of industries (i.e. mining, manufacturing) in their countries. The expanded labour force provided a stimulus for greater food consumption.

Total exports from Botswana for the regional markets in 1950 stood at 77,000 and 71,000 in 1951.[60] However, the operation of both the regional and overseas trade had already caused irreparable harm to the cattle economy of Botswana so that the territory was unable to effectively respond to new opportunities. The thwarted nature of Botswana's economy in general prompted the Mission appointed by the Imperial Government to investigate the possibilities of economic development in the Western Kalahari in 1952, to conclude that 'the economy of the BP is exceedingly poor, a condition which stifles all development, from which state of affairs there seems little hope of escape unless some major activity provides some revenue'.[61]

Summary

In this Chapter, we have attempted to show how the operations of Botswana's regional and overseas cattle (beef) markets contributed to the underdevelopment of its cattle industry. We have argued that the restrictive operations and the control of the markets by outside forces were among the factors which militated against the autonomy and profitability of the cattle industry in Botswana. Secondly, we see the operations of the regional monopolies and their subsequent rivalries as another example of market problems which contributed to the underdevelopment of the cattle industry at the level of exchange. The most significant aspects of Botswana's cattle economy from the 1890s to 1954, in our view, were as follows: 1) the cattle trade was almost entirely under the control of non-indigenous hands; 2) cattle prices dropped steadily due to marketing problems from 1902 and did not reach the pre-1902 level again until 1942 (war period) when cattle exports and prices rose, stimulated by an increased demand in the region; 3) the market fluctuations and the disaster that the South African weight restrictions represented for the cattle industry were further intensified by the effects of the worst recorded drought (1933-35), the deep economic depression (1931-33) and the serious outbreaks of foot-and-mouth disease (1933-34), virtually leading to a near total collapse of the livestock industry; 4) the cattle economy was maintained in a subordinate, tributary category, leading to the creation of both the detrimental structural transformation and to the internal distortion of the industry. This historical record largely explains why Botswana rapidly emerged in the perspective of a South African Reserve, to be a major exporter of migrant labour rather than an exporter of beef in the Southern African economic region. Therefore, labour migration as analyzed in Chapter four should be seen as a cause as well as a consequence of the distortions of the cattle economy at the levels of production and exchange.

NOTES

1. Van Horn, 'The Agricultural History of Barotseland', p.53.

2. Van Horn, 'The Agricultural History of Barotseland', p.156.

3. *The Pim Report*, p.127

4. BNA V1/5/1, Principal Veterinary Officer, 'Survey of the Livestock Industry of the Bechuanaland Protectorate, 1939-1947'.

5. See Zambia National Archives, File SEC 3/586. Meat Supplies, 1947.

6. BNA S19/4, the Bechuanaland Protectorate Diseases of Stock Proclamation, 1926.

7. *The Pim Report*, p.126

8. A.M. Kanduza, 'Railway Rates and Capitalist Agriculture in Southern Rhodesia' UNZA History Seminar Paper (August, 1980), 6.

9. *The Pim Report*, p.127.

10. BNA V1/5/1, 'Survey of the Livestock Industry'.

11. Rey, 'Bechuanaland Diaries'.

12. Rey, 'Bechuanaland Diaries'.

13. *The Pim Report*, p.127.

14. *The Pim Report*, p.126.

15. BNA S70/1/1, 'Minutes of Meeting Held at Mafeking with Representatives of the Belgian Congo and Northern Rhodesia Governments, 1946'.

16. BNA S70/1/1, 'Cattle Export from Ghanzi to Northern Rhodesia, 1946.'

17. BNA S70/1/1, 'Minutes of Meeting Held at Mafeking'.

18. Hubbard, 'Desperate Games', 7.

19. BNA S19/4, Approximate cost in Connection with the Export of Cattle from Ngamiland to Angola, 30 July 1929.

20. *The Pim Report*, p.126

21. BNA S19/4, The Bechuanaland Protectorate Diseases of Stock Proclamation, 1926.

22. BNA S70/1/1, Restrictions imposed in Respect of Foot and Mouth Disease Outbreak, Ngamiland, 1947.

23. BNA S19/4, Memorandum from Acting Resident Magistrate, Kasane to Government Secretary, Mafeking, 7 July 1926

24. Hubbard, 'Desperate Games', 1 - 9.

25. BNA S19/4, Approximate Cost in Connection with the Export of Cattle From Ngamiland to Angola, 30 July 1939.

26. BNA S19/4, Approximate Cost in Connection with Export of Cattle from Ngamiland to Angola, 30 July 1939.

27. BNA V1/5/1, 'Survey of the Livestock Industry'.

28. BNA S70/1/1, 'Minutes of Meeting Held at Mafeking'.

29. BNA S70/1/1, 'Minutes of Meeting held at Mafeking'.

30. BNA S19/4, Approximate Cost in Connection with the Export of Cattle from Ngamiland to Angola, 30 July 1939.

31. BNA S19/4, Approximate Cost in Connection with the Export of Cattle from Ngamiland to Angola, 30 July 1939.

32. See <u>Bechuanaland Protectorate Colonial Reports</u>, 1931 and 1932.

33. Parsons, 'The Economic History of Khama's Country in Botswana', p.133.

34. Hubbard, Desperate Games', 1.

35. Ian Phimister, 'Meat and Monopolies : Beef Cattle in Southern Rhodesia, 1890 - 1938', <u>Journal of African History</u>, 19, 3(1978), 401

36. Phimister, 'Meat and Monopolies', 401.

37. Phimister, 'Meat and Monopolies', 391-414.

38. BNA V1/51, J.H. Hobday, Report on the Cattle Industry of the Bechuanaland Protectorate, 1939 and S18/4, Cattle Restrictions into South Africa.

39. Meeting of Representatives of the Cattle Industry, p.

40. Among these were the Cattle Levy Act, 1931 and the Cattle Levy and Beef Bounty Act 1935.

41. Rey, 'Bechuanaland Diaries'.

42. BNA V1/5/1, 'Survey of the Livestock Industry'.

43. B. Habjanic, 'The World Beef Market', Agricultural Economics Bulletin For Africa, No.6 (Addis Ababa, 1964), 48.

44. Bechuanaland Protectorate: Minutes of the 20th Session of the Bechuanaland Protectorate African Advisory Council (Mafeking, April 1944), p.130.

45. Hubbard, 'Desperate Games', 1.

46. BNA S243/1, Resident Commissioner (BP) to High Commissioner, 28 August 1931.

47. Habjanic, 'The World Beef Market', 49.

48. BNA S18/4, anon., 1941 Cattle Restrictions into South Africa, 1923 - 1941.

49. The Pim Report, pp 128 - 29.

50. The Pim Report, p.16.

51. <u>The Pim Report</u>, p.19.

52. <u>The Pim Report</u>, p.19.

53. Rey, 'The Bechuanaland Diaries'

54. Hubbard, 'Desperate Games', 7.

55. Hubbard, 'Desperate Games', 3.

56. Hubbard, 'Desperate Games', 3.

57. Hubbard, 'Desperate Games', 4.

58. Rey, 'The Bechuanaland Diaries'.

59. <u>Report of a Mission in the Western Kalahari, 1952</u>, p.9.

60. <u>Report of a Mission in the Western Kalahari, 1952</u>, p.9.

61. <u>Report of a Mission in the Western Kalahari, 1952</u>, p.21.

CHAPTER FOUR: MIGRANT LABOUR AND THE UNDERDEVELOPMENT OF THE CATTLE INDUSTRY

Labour migration from Botswana to other countries in the Southern African economic region, particularly to South Africa, has been going on for over a hundred years.[1] By 1954 it had already come to be accepted by many as part of the Country's economic and social fabric.

This Chapter attempts to achieve three major objectives to establish the fact that large scale labour migration from Botswana was a consequence of the underdevelopment of the cattle economy and the land alienation; to show that the continuing absence of the ablest members of the Tswana from the cattle economy, further undermined it; and to show how labour migration was officially enhanced by the cooperation and collaboration between traditional chiefs, the colonial authorities and labour recruiters. The Chapter will also outline some features in the pre-colonial socio-economic formations which played a contributory role in migrant labour.

Historical Background: Early Colonial Period to 1902

There are two phases in the history of Botswana's migrant labour to South Africa and other countries in the region. The first phase of out-migration has its origins or roots in the early 1840s after the Boers settled in what is today known as the Western Transvaal, and lasted until about 1902. In this phase the Tswana started to sell their labour (sometimes involuntarily) as farm labourers. The motive for the first phase of outmigration was not economic in the sense of internal poverty providing a 'push' to the extent that it did in the 1930s and 1940s. People went to work on the farms of the Boers in the Transvaal especially in hard times (e.g. during droughts and particularly following the rinderpest epidemic) with the aim of coming back in better time to continue with their usual economic activities. This kind of paid labour was usually done to supplement people's incomes from their own produce. The only exception to this was during the rinderpest epidemic of 1896-97 which struck almost the whole of Southern Africa, and killed off an estimated ninety percent of the cattle in Botswana. Because cattle represented the principal form of wealth and the production of the Tswana, the consequences were severe and long lasting. Many of the people without cash savings, large stores of grain or some surviving cattle were forced to migrate in search of employment. The Resident Commissioner in 1898 commented following the rinderpest disaster:

'So many men have gone out [to work] that most of the villages present quite a deserted appearance.'[2]

Otherwise the numbers involved in the first phase of outmigration were very small. Among a few BaKwena so involved, these experiences infact resulted in the transfer of agricultural technology. Such 'apprenticeship' migrations soon resulted in the widespread use of the plough. As a result, the extensive flow of labour to South Africa did not immediately follow South Africa's mineral revolution, starting with the opening of the Kimberley diamond mines in 1867. By 1880, there were only 2,135 Tswana (mainly from the South of the country) working in Kimberley and the number barely increased to 2,571 in the following year.[3] Although the discovery of gold in the 1880s at Witwatersrand created a more powerful magnet for labour in South Africa, it was still the eve of large scale migrant labour from Botswana. By 1899, the thirteen years after the discovery of gold, the gold mines were employing 100,000 Africans[4] and the demand for labour was so great that Botswana was flooded by recruiting agents. Many of these used unscrupulous methods to get labour, but the Tswana were still generally reluctant to migrate in large numbers. Indeed, the Transvaal Labour Commission admitted in 1903 that 'natives cannot be dragged suddenly into the industrial market by the [mere] operation of the ordinary law of supply and demand.'[5] Colonel Panzera, then Assistant Resident Commissioner for the Territory, also contended that 'the BP and Khama's country had approximately a maximum of 2,500 natives available at one time for service as migrants to South Africa.'[6] The Commission indeed confessed that the labour scarcity was expected, 'for it is not likely that a savage people, who before the advent of Europeans lived their own life ... should at once ... come out voluntarily to meet the labour demand which the introduction of such commodities into their midst has created.'[7]

Some members of the commission perceived that the subject of African food supply was intimately bound up with the fact that African 'natives' were in possession or occupation of large areas of land suitable for both agricultural and pastoral purposes. Thus, commissioners paid attention to suggested modifications to the system of land tenure throughout Southern Africa. According to their views, 'the natives are living practically under the same conditions as they were before Europeans came into this country. No considerable change can be reasonably anticipated in their industrial habits until a great modification of these conditions has been brought about.'[8] It was clearly perceived by the commission that 'the principal causes affecting the labour supply must be sought in the conditions affecting the native in his home and kraal, and not until these conditions are greatly modified can any improvement occur.... Until, therefore, the progress of any native community has been sufficiently great as to cause the need for money to be felt, the labour supply to be drawn from any districts, must be on the whole small, and subject to heavy fluctuations, dependent as it must be to a large extent upon the seasons and upon the character of the crops or pastoral wealth of the tribe.'[9]

The second phase of migrant labour from Botswana, which started after 1902 and intensified throughout the 1930s and 1940s, sprang from a deliberate policy by both the Imperial Government and the colonial State to destroy Botswana's agricultural and cattle economies in order to achieve the aims or objectives of the South African-based capitalism.

Land Alienation and Migrant Labour, 1902-1954.

We have already examined the process of land alienation in Botswana and how it was paralleled by a policy of neglect and non-development in the African Reserves. Up to 1954, the efforts of the British Administration to bring about meaningful social and economic changes were negligible. This was particularly so in the period preceeding the Pim Report. In the absence of enough land for cultivation of crops and for pastoralism, one would have expected the State to provide local employment opportunities to absorb the people who were not very pre-occupied on the land, but on the contrary, these were not available. Apart from a few Africans who migrated to the eastern part of the territory to work as farm labourers, cattle herders or as domestic servants on settler farms, the only 'major' employer was the Tati Mine which employed less than a thousand people by 1920. The number of locally employed people grew very slowly throughout the period. In 1943, Schapera estimated some 3,000 males and 830 females to be working locally for the government, 'tribal' administrations and for European residents, with their incomes ranging from 17s 6d to 40 shillings per month, depending on their jobs.

The total amount of the local earnings by 1943 was £82,000 with most people reveiving food and accommodation as part of their wages.[10]

The other major source of employment for Africans could have been in the trade or commercial sector, but this, as we earlier observed, was a monopoly of local settlers and other Europeans from South Africa. The absence of local employment opportunities for Africans meant that Africans had either to remain on the land or to look for job opportunities outside their Reserves. The former choice was almost impossible in that following land alienation to settlers, there was a progressive deterioration in African productivity due to the resulting over-crowding for both man and beast, soil erosion and the over-cultivation of land. Much of the agriculture carried on in the country was at the level of subsistence, often with no cash crops being grown. The factors mentioned above, which were an off-shoot of colonial land alienation, reinforced low productivity, especially in times of rain failure. Apart from generally affecting the economic and health positions of the people, the major result of land alienation was migrant labour. There was a dramatic increase in out-migration starting from the 1920s and these continued throughout the period under study. The overwhelming majority of wage earners, from the age of fifteen, were employed outside the territory in European industrial and farming areas within Southern Africa, especially in South Africa. In addition to South Africa, a few migrants went to Southern Rhodesia and others to Angola, where they worked on the diamond mines. 'Between 1923 and 1930, an average of 1,400 per annum were recruited to the diamond mines in Namibia'[11]

According to South African government figures for this period, the number of migrants from Botswana employed in South Africa, increased from 4,712 in 1930 to 18,411 in 1940, an increase of 390 per cent.[12] Many of these migrant labourers preferred to stay away for longer periods. During the 1921 census, for instance, the enumerators collected from those present, the numbers of absentees, totalling 5,169, whose limit on the number of years they were away was not known.[13] This number omitted by error those from Ngamiland and Ghanzi. Similarly, in the 1946 census, 1,816 males and 367 females were recorded as having been absent from the country for more than five years.[14] In 1947, Schapera estimated that six percent of the migrants never returned. The distribution of the migrants, as Schapera observed in 1943, was as follows: 9 per cent went to other parts of the territory (inside migration), especially to European areas, 89 per cent went to South Agrica and 2 per cent went to Southern Rhodesia and elsewhere. Of the migrants who went to South Africa, 74 per cent went to the Witwatersrand gold mines, others worked as un-skilled labourers in secondary industries such as commerce, while relatively few worked either as domestic servants or as farm labourers. Ten percent went elsewhere in the Transvaal and 5 per cent to other provinces.[15]

The 1946 population census which was said to be conservative, also distributed the whereabouts of the absentees as follows:

Table 9: Distribution Of Migrant Labourers

1 Location	Males	Females	Persons/Total
Witwatersrand	7,563	1,065	8,628
Elsewhere in the Union	2,418	888	3,306
Southern Rhodesia	184	116	300
Norther Rhodesia	58	49	107
South West Africa	12	9	21
Other places	145	90	235
Unspecified	1,305	217	1,522
	11,685	2,434	14,119

Source: 1946 Population Census, p xiii

Rather than being a short term trend, migrant labour became so ingrained in the social system that some people tended to stress its socio-economic importance as a rite of passage. By the time Schapera presented his report, migrant labour had become an outstanding feature of Botswana's 'modern' economy to the extent that it was inextricably interwoven with the total fabric of the territory's political economy. 'Without the income that it produces, the Tswana could not possibly maintain their present standards of living,' concluded Schapera.[16] It was estimated by 1943 that about £54,000 was earned annually by people working in the European areas of the protectorate, while 'from the wages of those going abroad about £333,000 comes back either in cash or in the form of goods, together these constitute

54 per cent of the total income /the balance being derived from the sale of produce and from employment inside the reserves/.'[17] As a result of these social and economic 'benefits', most men made several trips abroad before finally settling down at home. Mine labourers, most of whom were recruited, usually stayed away uninterruptedly for two or three years, and sometimes much longer. 'About 6 per cent have been away so long that they are considered lost to their tribes,'[18] Schapera observed.

Migrant labour had also social and psychological reasons behind it. Its penetration in Tswana communities led to a situation whereby people gave more respect to a man who had seen 'foreign lands' than to those who remained at home. Schapera has pointed out that migrant labour was also beneficial in the choice of spouses. Young women tended to prefer men who had been abroad to those who remained at home, since the former stood as signs of social and material success in society. Although both Schapera and the Pim Commission found migrant labour morally degrading and unacceptable, they were reluctant to recommend its termination until such a time that the colonial State found economic alternatives for men and women who were employed in South Africa. Similarly, Charles Rey, who was one of the most determined colonial officials to see economic development in Botswana, ended up prescribing migrant labour as the only dose for curing the chronic poverty existing in Botswana at the time. As Massey has pointed out, there were other factors which contributed to this phenomenal increase in migrant labour; such as the world depression, a serious drought in 1933, the cattle embargo, the continuing collection of hut tax and the opening up of the tropical areas to mine labour recruitment after 1934. But all these factors just supplemented the factor of land.

Meanwhile, the 1933 Pim Report criticized Britain's neglect of the three High Commission Territories as short-sighted, and described the payment of tax as burdensome in relation to the incomes of the people. It was noted that men faced with the obligation of paying Hut Tax had only two choices: to sell all their possessions to the white traders or to sell their labour power to the white economy. The latter choice, it was pointed out, implied migration to South Africa since there was only a handful of employment opportunities in Botswana itself. The report also took the Government to task for giving whites in the territory disproportionate benefit from Government expenditure on education, and the monopoly of agricultural loans, which were not available to Africans.[19]

Ironically, the data available shows that revenue collected in this period in form of taxes, made up 83 per cent of the total expenditure.[20] The collection of tax was reinforced during the time when Africans faced economic difficulties. In the light of these economic difficulties, the major recommendation of the Pim Commission was to urge the Colonial Office to end its policy of neglect and non-development and provide grants-in-aid for development projects. It was not surprising therefore that the British Government ignored this recommendation.

On the average, by 1940, 28 per cent of all adult males were absent or away from home at any one time, The vast majority, as we have earlier observed, worked in South Africa, a few within the Protectorate and others worked in South West Africa and Southern Rhodesia. The highest rates of out-migration were found along the eastern border (see map 4) where population densities, due to land alienation, were high, and where the proximity to South Africa and the existence of cross-border ethnic and family ties made migration both easier and more necessary. The table below shows the percentages of adult male absentees from different ethnic groups in Botswana by 1943:

Table 10: Percentages of Adult Male Absentees in Botswana 1943

Location of the Community	Ethnic Group	Percentage of Adult Males Absent
South East:	Kwena Ngwaketse Kgatla Malete Rolong Tlokwa	Average varied from 40%
North-West	Ngwato Khurutshe	26% in each case
North-West	Tawana	6%

Source: The Pim Report, pp 29-32 Schapera, Migrant Labour, p 13.

Of all the migrant labourers, Schapera noted that about nine-tenths belonged to the able-bodied groups (15-44 years), and in general, more bachelors were away than the married men. In addition to male migrants, Schapera's study revealed that five percent of the female population were also migrants by the 1940s. 'Women also have recently begun to go abroad ... the average [in the least] is 5 per cent of whom about one-fifth are together with their husbands'.[21]

For a long time, the colonial authorities ignored or failed to address themselves to the real causes and effects of migrant labour in the Reserves. To them, migrant labour was due to 'the vastly different life [style] in the towns of neighbouring countries which has attracted people'.[22] By the 1940s however, the situation in the Reserves, particularly the decline in food production, deterioration in the quality of animals and the rate at which the Africans were migrating to South Africa became alarming even to the local settlers, who increasingly urged the government in the European Advisory Council, to find a solution to it. It was in the light of this deteriorating situation on the part of the Africans that the administration decided in 1943 to hire Isaac Schapera, an anthropologist, to investigate the extent, causes and effects of labour migration in the Reserves, particularly in the Tati, Tlokwa and Malete Reserves. The findings by Schapera, to which we have already referred, were a product of these circumstances. The study by Schapera was the first 'scientific' analysis of migrant labour in Botswana. Previously, the colonial authorities depended either on what the chiefs told them or on statistics from South African authorities.

In his findings, Schapera was confronted by the fact that the self-reliance in food production which had for long characterised the Tswana communities, had already disappeared as the territory imported a lot of grain and other foodstuffs from South Africa and Southern Rhodesia. Schapera attributed food shortages and labour migration to land alienation which in the absence of employment opportunities in the country, had reduced the economic capability of the Africans. In the Tati Reserve, he found that 19 percent of the married men lacked fields for ploughing and that 50 per cent of the families were living as fully resident tenants on Tati Company land. Among the Bamalete and Tlokwa, Schapera found that 25 percent of the married men lacked land to cultivate. Of the married men in the two 'tribes', 71 per cent had migrated in search of employment, compared to 29 per cent of those with fields.[23]

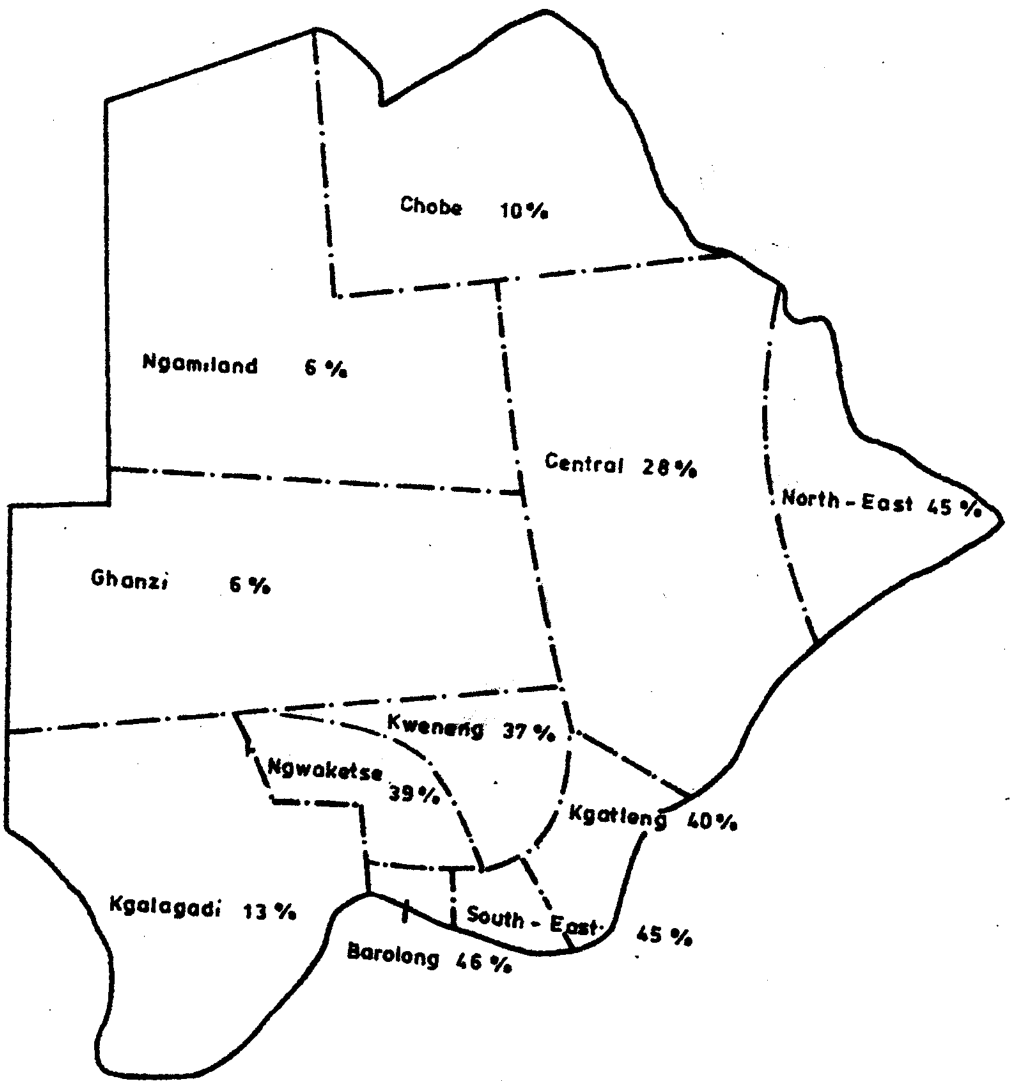
The districts with the highest rates of out-migration also had the highest population densities. The four highest rates of out-migration were in those districts bounded by blocks of alienated land.[24] Thus, the higher rate of out-migration from these districts as compared to other districts was partly a consequence of what Robin Palmer in the case of Southern Rhodesia has called a 'squeeze', produced by their boundaries.

Table: II Population Density and Outmigration, 1943.

District	People per square Mile	Percentage Dejure Population Absent
Tlokwa	41	18
Malete	41	18
Tati	28	18
Barolong	12	17

Source: Massey, 'Labour Migration and Rural Development', p 91.

AP 4 RATES OF ADULT OUT-MIGRATION IN BOTSWANA 1943



Source David R Massey, 'Labour Migration and Rural Development in Botswana', P 105

Animal Husbandry and Migrant Labour

Earlier, we showed how land shortage was accompanied by a rapid deterioration in animal husbandry. A report produced by the Veterinary Department in 1939 acknowledged the fact that 'the standard of animal husbandry amongst the native producers is very low [with] no provision whatsoever made for spare feeding during the long dry period of winter.'[25] Unfortunately, instead of looking for the real causes of this state of affairs, the Veterinary Department maintained that 'careless methods of breeding and herding contribute... to the production of a low quality animal which is slow to mature and of poor conformation and character from the meat point of view.'[26] However true the observation, the problem had its roots in land alienation which both reduced grazing lands and also led to the expansion in migrant labour. A short fall in pastures for grazing compounded by ecological factors such as droughts (leading to problems of watering facilities) and the continuing presence of disease resulted in cattle mortality, emaciation as well as the retarding of cattle growth. For instance, the cattle population of Botswana which in 1939 was stated by the Veterinary department to be 639,259 head, 'showed a decrease of approximately 550,000 head from census figures obtained during 1933 and 1934 ... with mortality accounting for over 30 per cent of the decrease.'[27]

By 1947, mortality in cattle had reduced the capacity of the cattle economy from being a cornerstone of the country's economic development to a periphery position.

Apart from cattle mortality, the factors of infertility, retardation in growth and loss of weight also contributed to the impoverishment of the cattle industry. Whereas in the European Blocks, cattle were ready for slaughtering or sale at between one and half to three years, in the African Reserves they were not ready before the age of seven years. With low fertility, high mortality and slow growth, the percentage of cattle available for sale was correspondingly low. The Chief Veterinary Officer observed in his general review of the cattle industry. 'Today the position with regard to the country's capital asset - cattle, is that it would appear insufficient to provide its share of the annual recurrent requirements of the territory, and unless plans are made for directing the cattle industry along lines which will enable it to recover and recommence its previous function, the financial position of the territory will become worse and recovery more difficult.'[28] The consequence of this decline in cattle production due land shortage, was the reinforcement of migrant labour, particularly in the 1930s and 1940s.

This undermining of the cattle economy at the level of production was effectively backed up at the level of exchange by the restrictive state and regional policies. We saw in Chapter two how both the internal and external marketing systems exploited African cattle producers. The watershed of this exploitation was the instituting of the notorious South African embargo (1924 - 1941), which inhibited the Africans' access to the biggest external market in the region. The combination of these factors (poor animal husbandry due to land alienation and its offshoots of cattle mortality, etc., and the exploitative marketing system) accelerated the degree of migrant labour to South Africa. Statistics of migrant labour show an upward trend from 1903 to 1954. The expansion of South African manufacturing industry in the period following the first World War and thereafter (1915-1946), and the increase in African wages in both mining and agriculture, in the midst of a declining economic situation in Botswana, drew increasing numbers of Africans into migration to South Africa. Kowet puts the number of Africans affected in migrant labour to South Africa in 1948, from all over Southern Africa at 497,000, with half the number being drawn from Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland.[29] Thus, the problem which began with land alienation in some places, later developed into the deterioration in animal husbandry as well as in cattle production in general due to insufficient grazing pastures and lack of extension services. These factors were rapidly accompanied by a process of proletarianization. While the land constraint produced a negative feedback on crop production, it also led to the production of poor quality cattle which in most cases became a burden on the market.

These factors also accelerated migrant labour, which in turn accelerated the deterioration of animal husbandry, and so the cycle continued.

Pre-Colonial Determinants of Migrant Labour

The rate of migrant labour in Botswana was heightened by the persistence of the pre-capitalist or pre-colonial inequalities in cattle ownership. The factor of cattle concentration in the hands of a few aristocratic families, which we mentioned in Chapter one, received an impetus from the colonial class re-alignments. The increasing collaboration between the chiefs and their accomplices on one hand, and colonial authorities on another, saw the economic entrenchment of the former at the expense of the majority. The effective unequal distribution of cattle which characterised much of the pre-colonial epoch, was perpetuated through the increasing concentration of cattle in fewer hands during colonial rule. As a result, the majority of the people who found themselves with no cattle, saw their economic survival in migrant labour. The following examples illustrate the contribution of the unequal cattle ownership to migrant labour.

Generally, Botswana was said to be a nation of cattle men. The average holding of cattle per person in 1939 (man, woman, child) was 2.4 head.[30] But in reality, this was not the case, as cattle distribution differed not only from person to person but also from one place to another within the country. For instance, among the Kgatla, Schapera in 1932, found that five men [including the chief and three of his uncles] owned nearly one quarter of all the cattle in the 'tribe'. Similarly, a survey conducted during the Second World War revealed that nearly one family in four, had too few cattle to derive a regular annual income from stock farming, and that one family in every fourteen owned no cattle at all.[31] In 1943, Schapera conducted another survey at government invitation in six 'tribal' areas, embracing 4,047 families in order to ascertain the relationship between rural income distribution and migrant labour. The study revealed that:

a) 298 [7.4 per cent] had no cattle at all.

b) 749 others [18.5 per cent] had less than ten head each [ten head was said to be the minimum size of a herd that would yield an annual disposable surplus]

c) [On the other hand] Chiefs and a few other men had as many as 500 - 5,000 cattle each, or even more.[32]

In 1949 another government-sponsored study called 'Agro-Economic Survey of the Barolong farms', was conducted by F.O.A. Wande. This survey which involved 517 stock-owners in the Barolong farms, showed the following distribution of animal units per owner:

Table 12: Cattle Distribution in The Barolong Farms, 1949

Animals	Percentage of Ownership
1 - 10	18
11 - 20	19
21 - 50	40
51 - 100	18
Over 100	5

Average Per Owner, 38 animals

Source: F.A.O. Wande, 'Survey of Cattle Distribution in Barolong farms, 1949', Tables 11 - 13.

However, the concept of an average family with an average cattle holding camouflaged the disparities inherent in cattle ownership, since cattle distribution was very uneven. As we have already indicated, cattle distribution also differed from one place to another. Some places had larger concentrations of cattle while others had very few. For instance, while the national average holding in 1939 was 2.4 head, Soshong, in the Bamangwato Reserve, had more than others, with an average of twenty head per household.[33] These disparities in cattle ownership and distribution, played a great role in supplementing the factors of migrant labour created by the colonial political economy, as those men without cattle found the selling of their labour outside the territory (where job opportunities existed) the only way of participating in the new economy and the sure way to pay tax and buying European goods.

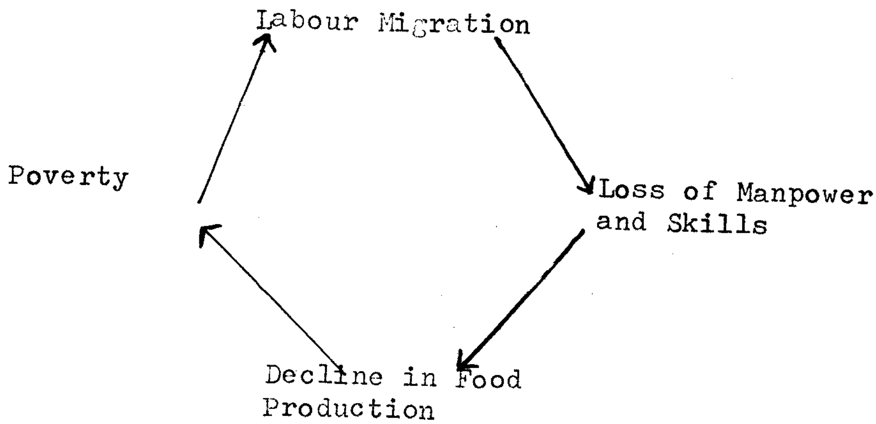
Similarly, the decline of the system of serfdom with the coming of colonialism, freed many people from their bondage. These people who usually consisted of one or more family-groups descended from the impoverished 'tribesmen' or refugees, and owned no property of their own during the pre-colonial era. The personal freedom and horizontal mobility they gained at the hands of colonialism were largely utilized in seeking ways of owning property of their own. Having no cattle, these people became a ready constituency for labour recruiters. To them, the time to own property for the first time presented itself via migrant labour. We are informed by Neil Parsons that 'the more usual migrants to the Rand might have been serfs pleased to gain in social and economic status, and "target workers" out to earn a bicycle.'[34]

Effects of Migrant Labour On The Economy In General: Cycle of Non-Development

Sandra Wallman's hypothesis, as quoted in Massey, says a cycle of non-development may occur when labour migration becomes the major economic activity in an area. According to this hypothesis, the withdrawal of large numbers of able-bodied workers from a local economy, the gradual loss of traditional skills adapted to local production needs, and the negative ideological feedback regarding local culture and norms, retard local development and lead to ever increasing dependence on labour migration. In the same vein, evidence for the applicability of this hypothesis in the case of Botswana is overwhelming, especially in the 1930s and 1940s when labour migration became the raison d'etre of existence, as well as an established sub-culture in the territory. Despite the seemingly economic benefits accrued from migrant labour, the economic activities of the territory were adversely affected by the drain upon the domestic labour resources. During the heights of migrant labour, the territory lost the most productive years of the ablest members of the societ Moreover, the skills acquired in the city were not as useful in the agrarian economy of the territory since most Tswana worked as mine labourers and acquired very few or no skills at all to be useful in the Reserves of Botswana.

Indeed, one of the most noticeable symptoms of migrant labour in Botswana, was the decline of local agricultural production, which in turn spawned continuing dependence of the territory on labour migration. As far as agriculture was concerned, labour migration showed one menacing feature: that the peak months of demand for agricultural labour were in March and April, which also fell within a period of peak demand for labour in South Africa. This meant most of the agricultural work being performed by women, and this feature had far-reaching implications on production. The intensification of migrant labour in turn contributed to the further decline in food production and animal husbandry. Hence, the 'cycle of poverty' reinforced and reproduced itself to the detriment of the territory. In agriculture, for example, 'crop rotation, row planting, the use of improved seeds, variable cropping, and winter ploughing, all seen as innovations which could lead to better harvests, were practised by hardly anyone'.[35] It was in the face of this fact that Schapera concluded that labour migration, by removing the manpower required for agricultural innovations, was acting as a 'powerful brake' upon progress in agriculture. This was in 1943 when the normal yield in the Bakgatla Reserve, was estimated to be less than one bag per acre.[36] The illustration below shows how labour migration led to the decline in food production.

Conventional Cycle of Poverty



Source: Massey, 'Labour Migration and Rural Development', p.11

Effects of Migrant Labour on The Cattle Economy: Under-Development By Deprivation

For stock owners, the major problems they faced were: ecological constraints such as droughts and disease; marketing restrictions and labour shortage. These, and other constraints, reinforced each other and in the end transformed the cattle economy from one of hope to that of pessimism. Mortality for African cattle - from disease and lack of pastures, complemented by restrictions, were directly related to labour migration. As Devitt has hypothesized, major outbreaks of disease and drought, heightened or enlarged inequalities in Botswana as a cattle based society. 'This results from the fact that the owners of small and medium-sized herds are likely to lose their entire herds as a result of such disasters, while those with large herds are more likely to be left with some stock. In such a situation, the cattle that survive experience an inflation in real value due to their relative scarcity .... While all stock owners lose something in drought those with the least lose everything, those with the most are best able to survive and rebuild their herds.'[37] Similarly, the frequent occurrences of disease, starting from rinderpest [1896-97] to foot-and-mouth disease in 1933-34, backed up by the government's policy of neglect and non-development, heightened inequality in Botswana.

These events, occurring in parallel relationship with the development and expansion of the gold mines and manufacturing capital respectively in South Africa, meant that many people had to leave their homes in search of employment. On the other hand, market restrictions were a great inducement for migrant labour. The embargos on African cattle exports forced Africans to find an alternative way of participating in the new economy, and given the limited nature of the local labour market, the only way remaining was to look for employment outside the territory's borders, which was either in South Africa, Southern Rhodesia, or South West Africa. Payment of tax and buying of European goods could only be possible with outside employment. This migration, withdrew the necessary labour from animal husbandry, an activity which is labour intensive.

By 1939, as a result of labour shortage, the cattle industry was described as an industry which 'looked after itself'. Among the most noticeable features of animal husbandry in this period was lack of proper cattle management. The most serious defects in African animal husbandry in Botswana in the 1930s and 1940s are best summarized in the 'Economic Survey of the Colonial Empire', conducted in 1949. According to the findings of the survey, 'herding of the cattle is carried out only when necessary /i.e. when straying may occur or when the cattle get into crops/.... In some areas the cattle are not herded at all. They go out to graze on their own and return to the well when thirsty. When surface water is to be found the greater part of a herd of cattle may sometimes not be seen by the persons in charge, for weeks or months until the cattle are forced to return to their well for water ... stock frequently have to travel long distances from their watering point to where grazing is available, sometimes up to 15 miles.... No breeding control whatsoever is practised. The cows and heifers are served by whichever bull they come into contact with. Many owners do not possess a bull and rely on their neighbours' bulls..... Castration of bulls is not generally carried out..../and/ no culling is practised.... No hygiene is practised and stock which become sick are left standing in the kraal without food or water to recover or die.... Very little indeed is done for the stock which to a large extent, maintain themselves.'[38] Many of these problems resulted from the fact that in the absence of adequate and efficient labour, animal husbandry slipped in the hands of either the young boys or the very old men, both categories physically unsuitable for the task. Moreover, young boys had no sufficient knowledge or experience of animal husbandry. Many aspects of cattle management such as disease control and grazing practices were beyond the understanding of young boys. Thus, apart from the usual routine of herding, young boys and old men had no capacity to cope with the complex aspects of modern cattle management.

The situation could have been worse if the education system was developed enough to absorb and divert a great number of boys from their herding activities. But 'fortunately' enough education remained undeveloped throughout the colonial epoch, with the first government sponsored secondary school not opened until after independence in 1966. Young boys therefore replaced their migrant elder brothers as cattle herders. According to the 1946 Population census, there were only 7,123 males attending school as against the 127,637 who had never been to school. In the same period 10,169 females were attending school, compared with 124,966 girls who had never been to school.[39] The following excerpt from the 1964 Population Census, further explains the negligible educational opportunities for young African boys in colonial Botswana:

> Among the Tswana it is customary for young boys to herd cattle out at the cattle-posts. Prior to 1920; this was not the custom as the cattle were herded by groups of young men. During the last 40 years, it has become the custom for boys up until about the age of 14 years to do the herding, such boys are consequently deprived of the chance of going to school. The reason for the change is not certain, but it may be that the young men now go to the mines to earn money and also that during the last 40 years, the crops have been consistently bad and the boys may have at first been sent out to the cattle posts to receive the benefit of the milk from the cows.... There is in most Tswana areas a preponderance of girls in schools. Boys usually enter school at a later age after working in cattle posts.[40]

The Tswana system of living in towns and large villages which was reinforced by colonial land alienation, compounded to the deterioration in animal husbandry by reducing the cattle producers' attention or contact with their herds. Commented the Imperial Commission its post-Second World War survey of Botswana's economic activities: 'From the agricultural aspect the system has every possible disadvantage for it means that the stock owner is very often not personally in charge of his stock which may be held at a cattle-post up to 100 miles or more away from where the owner lives and which are left to the care of younger members of the family or hired servants. The Africans' arable lands, on the other hand, are to be found near where he lives. This means that the essential requirements for success by the peasant farmer, namely that stock and arable lands be farmed in conjunction, is virtually non-existent.... Little has been done to alter this unhealthy system'.[41]

These constraints resulted not only in the production of the inferior-quality cattle, but they also led to cattle mortality described in 1949 as 'abnormally high', from starvation, thirst, disease and vermin (i.e. lions, etc.). Although chiefs were made beneficiaries in the colonial system of migrant labour, the damage it caused to the cattle industry was so great they could not ignore it. When signs of deterioration in the territory's cattle quality began to bite, a number of chiefs were prompted to call for restrictions on the recruitment of young men whose traditional responsibility it was to herd cattle. The minutes of the African Advisory Council Sessions in the late 1930s and 1940s are full of complaints from African Chiefs about the effects of migrant labour on the cattle economy.

The following excerpt from one of the African Advisory Council debates in 1942, summarises the increasing concern of the chiefs about the deterioration of the cattle economy. It is also a further demonstration of the dilemma which the chiefs found themselves in : of being their people's representatives on one hand, and beneficiaries in the system of migrant labour, on the other hand:

Chief Tshekedi [Ba Mangwato]: 'Sir, we should consider what action might possibly be taken to protect the cattle industry from the harmful effects of excessive native labour recruiting in the country, which removes the most active and vigorous section of the population and the beneficial effects exercised by this section on the cattle industry.... I have decided to bring this question before the Government in order that an advice may be given with a view to preventing young men from leaving the country and leaving cattle behind.... '

Chief Kgosintwa Madisa [Batawana]: '.... I agree with Chief Tshekedi.... Youngmen have left the country and there is not a single person, even small children to look after cattle. The deterioration of cattle in our area is due to two difficulties, because in our area the young men leave the cattle unattended, which go astray and sometimes die, and are left without water. Sometimes there is the total destruction of at least 100 head of cattle, if they stray into tsetse areas.'

Kitso Motsholakgetsi [Bamangwato elder]: 'Your Honour .... In our country a lot of damage has occurred to our cattle... the principal cause of damage has been the absence of people to look after the cattle. There have been deaths from lions and from other causes. We had herds at one time, and we progressed, but that is not so today. Those children who should look after cattle do not look after them. They have all gone to work.'

Chief Bathoen II [Bangwaketse]: 'The question of young men who are taken away by the recruiters is a source of worry to our minds.... The boys run to Lobatse to take up their tickets there or they go to Zeerust and Mafeking'.[42]

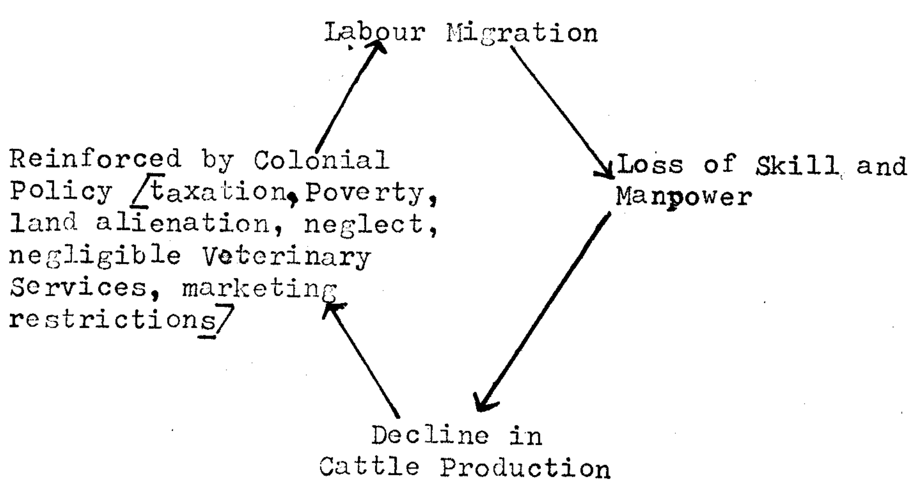
Adding to the problem of migrant labour was the persistence of unauthorized procuring of labour by Afrikaner farmers from the Transvaal. In most cases, young boys were just abducted or taken against the will of their parents by white farmers, under false promises. Such occurrences continued to be ignored by the colonial authorities despite numerous complaints from the affected parents. The seriousness of the issue led chief Ketsh-werebothata of the Bakwena to bring it before the African Advisory Council. He complained:

> Your Honour.... The Dutchmen are taking away our children. I am not referring to people who are old enough to go on contract but only to the small boys who are [now] suitable for looking after cattle. They come in motor cars and hide in the bush on the other side of the boundary and then come across to the stores as if they were going to buy something and whilst thus engaged, they speak to these boys and ask if they would not want work. They tell them there is not much to do, but just to wash dishes for the missus and they will give them 5 shillings a month .... Since small people are very fond of bread ... they think it is better for them to leave their parents' cattle. They overlook the whipping they get from the Dutchmen which is more than they get at the cattle posts... I saw an

experience only recently, of six Bakwena youngsters who were taken by Dutchmen in front of the store.[43]

In response to this call, the government had meanwhile instituted a committee to look into the problems of 'native cattle'. Among the committee's major charges was: to consider what action might possibly be taken to protect the cattle industry from the harmful effects of excessive 'native' labour recruitment, which as we have seen, 'removed the most active and vigorous section of the population and the beneficial effect exercised by this section on the cattle industry'. When asked for their opinion on this question in 1940, members of the European Advisory Council agreed that one of the problems facing the cattle industry was 'increasing mismanagement due mainly to emigration [sic] of large numbers of able-bodied male natives to seek work', but as competitors in the cattle industry, they cautioned that before any action could be taken, 'very careful consideration would have to be given to the economic importance of labour migration to the territory'.[44]

Thus, the tempo of migrant labour continued expanding to the extent that African cattle were described by Schapera in the late 1940s as the 'sorriest creatures' ever seen, because of the impact migration created on the industry. The frantic efforts of the State to improve African cattle through the introduction of Cattle Improvement Centres failed because of the suspicious motives of the project and partly due to lack of qualified labour on the centres. The programme also failed to stimulate interest in the Africans, to whom going to South Africa was a surer way of immediate access to material gains rather than the thankless duties involved in the Cattle Improvement Centres. As we have already pointed out, the process of underdevelopment was self-reinforcing as one factor led to the other. The diagram below shows how the 'cycle of poverty' reinforced and reproduced itself as a result of the underdevelopment of the cattle industry:



Source: Massey ,'Labour Migration and Rural Development,' p.65.

Social Effects Of Migrant Labour

Migrant labour of the Tswana to South Africa was a mixed blessing. It might have been a blessing at individual level, but it was certainly a curse at national level. The moving away of a large proportion of adult males in this time, became a root cause of many social problems in the territory. One of the major social problems of migrant labour was that it weakened the stability of the family. According to Schapera's findings, the prolonged absence of husbands led to social indiscipline among women and children. Widespread cases of infidelity were associated with those 'wives' whose husbands had been away from home for a number of years. Consequently, this led to many divorces among many couples, and this in turn promoted prostitution on those women who had no husbands.

The act of leaving children in the care and upbringing of their mothers was also contrary to tradition. Tradition dictated that male children should be brought up by their male parents and 'educated' in the traditions of their families and their 'tribes'. But by removing the male parents, migrant labour indirectly promoted anti-social behaviour among children. The absence of the 'teachers' from the homestead left children, especially boys, to do things which sometimes conflicted with the generally accepted norms and values. Migration also led to a later marriage age among both the migrants and the young women who remained at home. As the bulk of the migrants were bachelors, young women at home had to wait until their suitors came back. The high rate of the migrants by 1947, is illustrated by the fact that there were said to be 82 men for every 100 females in the 'tribal' areas. Among the migrants, the later marriage age which resulted, encouraged what Schapera called promiscuity. The over all impact of this was to affect negatively the birth rate in a territory where the population was so low.

Migrants were also said to be responsible for the introduction of a number of killer diseases in the territory, such as tuberculosis, syphilis and many others. Ironically, despite their encouragement of migrant labour, chiefs and headmen complained that men on their return were found to be less respectful for traditional authorities and obligations. The so-called westernized sojourners could not respect any authority beyond the routine of compound living and African 'boss-boys'. Many of the returning migrants were said to have the mentality of looking down on village, ward and kgotla activities, and to satisfy their new sub-culture, most men made several trips abroad before finally settling down at home. As a result, a new cultural psychology already referred to, emerged whereby a prestige factor developed, attaching to a man who had been to a 'big city', possibly undertaken dangerous mine work, and returned home, not only with 'European goods' but also with 'European manners'. This state of affairs became on one hand a threat to established morality and norms, while on the other, it became an indirect challenge to traditional authorities.

Cooperation and Collaboration: Traditional Rulers, Labour Recruiters and Colonialism

In analysing the growth and interaction of the forces of migration in the Botswana periphery, it is important to examine the policies of the government from as far back as the 1890s. These policies must be seen in terms of creation of the conditions conducive for labour migration. In Botswana, labour migration was facilitated as a result of collaboration between the colonial government labour recruiters and traditional rulers. Each of the three parties had a strong vested interest in labour migration. While the chiefs and the colonial administrators had a financial interest from migrant labour, the labour recruiters benefited by providing their industries with *cheap labour, thus encouraging the profitability of their* industries - while at the same time insulating themselves from the labour shortages which characterised South African industries in the early 1900s. The interaction between the offices of traditional rulers, labour recruiters and the colonial government in the forces of labour migration, basically originated from the above factors, and these functioned as important 'pull' and 'push' factors.

Firstly, the development of mining, agricultural and manufacturing industries in South Africa, was paralleled by the policy of doing 'as little as possible' in terms of local development efforts in Botswana. Therefore, the principal sources of revenue for the country, from 1899 until 1932 (when it was surpassed by customs revenue) was the Hut Tax, which accounted for forty percent of total revenue between 1900 and 1930, and sometimes accounted for as much as sixty percent.[45] The colonial government realised that the only way the tax could effectively be collected was through the involvement of 'tribal' institutions. 'The colonial administration had neither the manpower nor the legitimacy to collect tax directly. The chiefs were thus coopted to collect tax personally, and received 10 per cent of the receipts. In this way, chiefs became beneficiaries in the exploitation of their own people. Khama III, for example, is said to have been earning no less than £1,700 annually in this manner'.[46] **While purporting** to remain in the background, the colonial State actually exerted pressure on the chiefs, the consequence of which was to raise the tempo of force or coercion by the chiefs on their subjects.

This arrangement put the chiefs in a position where the encouragement of migrant labour was in their financial interest. By the time of the establishment of the Union of South Africa, these taxes had become an important 'push' factor in the context of the growing shortage of land and the underdevelopment arising from the cattle industry. According to the 1943 survey conducted in Botswana by Schapera, about 68 percent of the migrant labour force mentioned taxes as a main reason for going to work in South Africa.[47] The cooptation of the chiefs into tax collection, often led to abuses of chiefly authority as many people where forced to seek work by the chiefs in order to pay their tax. As early as 1903, for instance, the Kgatla chief is said to have imposed a levy of £5 on every able-bodied man in his 'regiment'. This practice continued until 1932.[48] Similarly, Massey, informs us that Seepapitso I of the Bangwaketse, announced at a 'tribal' meeting in 1911 that all members of certain age regiments who were unable to pay their tax were to be recruited for the South African mines. In the same year, he is said to have proclaimed that anyone unable to pay tax should be sent abroad to work for his tax money. The system was later adopted by the Chiefs of the Malete and Kwena, who imposed a levy of three shillings on every tax payer. 'By 1919, the levy system was institutionalised in the whole country by the colonial government and was included in the Poll tax as a native fund. The levy was increased to five shillings in 1924-25. In 1932-33 it was further increased to eight shillings.'[49]

When 'official' recruitment began in Botswana, chiefs found it not only as another important means of increasing their own income through the percentage received on recruitment fees, but also as a convenient way of raising their earnings from direct taxation of the recruits as a form of traditional tribute . For instance, the chiefs of the Kgatla, Malete and Tlokwa—the three most congested Reserves imposed a tax of £1 on every returning recruit as a personal tribute to the chief. In some of the relatively less congested areas where the income of the chiefs was also relatively less, the chiefs went to the extent of 'drafting' tax defaulters and handing them over to the South African recruitment organizations. Where such measures were insufficient, some chiefs sent their 'regiments' to work on the mines.[50] From the point of view of the chiefs, the imposition of the tax as an instrument of encouraging labour migration, served them a dual role which, as Kowet rightly points out, must be seen in the context of the internal power structure of the Reserves.

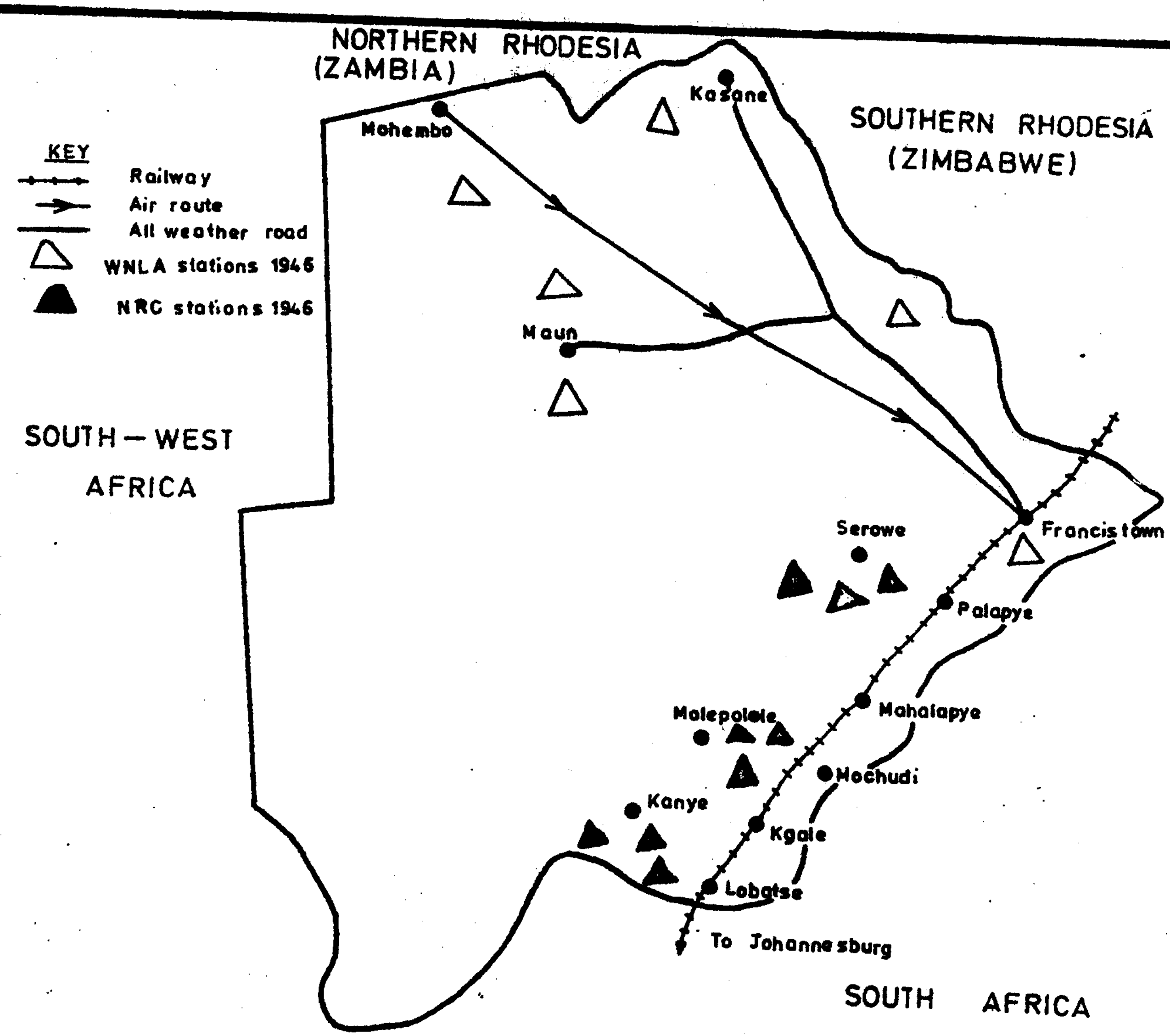
Apart from providing them (chiefs) with a direct income, labour migration had also a wider political interest for the chiefs in that it reduced the heavy surplus of labour and the excessive pressure on land. We saw in Chapter one, how colonial penetration and conquest sharply reduced the amount of land available for chiefs to distribute - thereby making land a soarce commodity. 'Labour migration allowed chiefs to keep control over land distribution. It provided the safety valve without which the traditional system would have faced immediate collapse'.[51]

As for the colonial government, its position vis-a-vis labour recruitment was well-known from the very outset. Apart from the financial benefit accrued from it, migrant labour promoted the South-African based foreign capital, much of which was British owned, while it also insulated the colonial government from the embarrassment of not providing local employment opportunities, caused by its policy of neglect and non-development. Kowet informs us that the cooperation of the colonial government in migrant labour was demonstrated as early as 1900. In 1903, for instance, the Assistant Resident Commissioner is quoted as having given the following evidence to the Transvaal Labour Commission : 'It is my most earnest desire to assist in my power the native labour movement. I have talked to all chiefs and headmen about the advantage of work.... I recently got Khama to call a public meeting to try and induce his people to go out.'[52] Thus, the introduction of Hut tax by the government, although largely intended to be a major source of government revenue, it was indirectly meant to achieve the purpose of procuring labour from Botswana to feed the South African-based industries. From the very beginning the state was not opposed to migrant labour per se from Botswana. On the contrary, it was the anarchical methods of recruitment which it was opposed to, as these methods did not assure the government of any recruitment fees and remittances. For example, following the rinderpest disaster in 1898, the Resident Commissioner was unahppy about the disorganized manner of labour recruitment which ensured in the country. Thus, he complained: 'The territory has been flooded by both white and coloured persons calling themselves labour agents, persons, who in most cases do not care to work for themselves, but who visit the country to try and induce the natives by flattering promises to go to Johannesburg to work on the mines'.[53]

As a result, the government preferred institutionalized recruitment. Between November 1896 and December 1900, the Rand Native Labour Association is reported to have recruited 2,068 men in Botswana, for the South African gold mines, out of which a London Missionary Society representative commented that 'the loss of their cattle has driven large numbers to seek work. Certainly the best thing that could happen as far as teaching them the value of labour is concerned.... Work was the last thing thought of except among the poorer class and with these the period rarely exceeds 6 months.... All that is [now] altered'.[54] The continuing illegal recruitment of labour, led the government to impose the Native Labour Proclamation, which allegedly protected the liberty of the African labourers. In practice, this simply meant the banning and replacement of illegal recruitment with the institutionalized one. Thus the introduction of licences for both individual and company recruiters. Both the colonial government and the chiefs preferred recruitment to be channelled through the services of the Native Recruiting Corporation (NRC) and the Witwatersrand Native Labour Association (WNLA) so as to assure themselves of a 'fair' return in form of recruitment fees and remittances. Prior to the commencement of recruitment by both WNLA and the NRC, the government took charge of issuing passes at Mafeking to those 'natives' seeking work in South Africa. Simultaneously, local whites, mostly of South African origin, were allowed to operate trading posts or stores where they also carried out labour recruitment activities. With the commencing of recruitment first by the Rand Native Labour Association and then by WNLA and the NRC, government and settler recruitment complemented the activities of the recruiting organisations, while WNLA and the NRC also complemented each other; where one was absent, at least the other was present and became the agent. Their operations were of course, never isolated from the cooperation of the chiefs who did everything possible to ensure the continuous flow of the migrants.

Both WNLA and the NRC were primarily instituted for the purpose of recruiting labour for the mines. WNLA in particular, was a division or subsidiary of the Mine Labour Organisation. It was however the policy of the South African government, especially after the coming to power of the Nationalist Party, that the two organizations should also serve the farming interest by providing it with the required labour. This policy intensified with the emergence of state intervention or economic nationalism which sought to promote white agriculture in South Africa. This cooperation between the chiefs, the colonial government and recruiting companies and their agents was sometimes opposed by the local settlers largely for their own interests, as it deprived them of cheap labour. Unsuccessfully, the local Europeans put pressure on the colonial government and the chiefs to limit the flow of migrant labour to South Africa during the ploughing season. To this end, a motion was introduced in the European Advisory Council in 1926, 'which sought to ban migrant labour during that period. The colonial government, supported by

5 SOUTH AFRICAN MINE RECRUITING STATIONS AND TRANSPORT ROUTES : 1912 - 1962



Sources Massey, 'Labour Migration and Rural Development', P 108 and Kowet, Land, Labour Migration and Politics in Southern Africa., P 95 most of the traders rejected the motion by pointing out that such a ban would be ineffective as most of the people would, nevertheless, manage to slip across the border. The rejection by the colonial government was motivated by the loss of income involved in an uncontrolled migrant labour system.'[55]

We have already pointed out that most of the traders closely cooperated with South African recruitment organisations. Thence, a ban on migration would involve a loss of income to the traders too. A colonial District Commissioner, has therefore, been quoted as saying: 'were it not for the union market for our Native Labour, the Government would have long ago ceased to collect any tax, the trader would have gone out of business and Natives, while the least affected, would be depending more than ever on Providence.'[56] Thus, recruitment of labour in Botswana continued without any state interference throughout the period. Any temporary suspension in recruitment that happened, was not decided upon by the Protectorate government but by the South African authorities themselves. For instance, in 1913 the South African Chamber of Mines in consultation with their government, decided to prohibit recruitment of men from the tropical regions lying north of latitude 22° (degrees) South, which passes through Serule (except in South West Africa) due to the incredibly high mortality rate (60 persons per thousand per annum)[57] previously experienced by such workers. In Botswana, this covered much of the northern Protectorate.

The expansion of mining activities in South Africa in the 1930s however, necessitated a resumption of labour recruitment from the banned areas in 1934. 'With the fall in working costs resulting from the world-wide depression in 1929, the gold mines began to expand rapidly. This expansion was further stimulated by the suspension of the gold standard by Britain in 1931 and by South Africa in 1932, and by the subsequent rise in the price of gold - from 8.61 Rands an ounce in 1932 to 12.47 Rands an ounce in 1933. The result was a rapid increase in the demand for African labour. In an attempt to increase the flow of labour without having to raise the level of wages, the Chamber of Mines decided to expand its recruiting areas'.[58] To this end, it was announced in 1933 that recruitment was to commence in northern Botswana as part of an experiment to test the possibility of once again using labourers from tropical areas on the mines. Towards the end of 1933, the South African government, under the pressure of the Chamber of Mines, authorized an experiment to test the mortality of tropical labourers. Under this scheme, a contingent of one thousand labourers was recruited from Botswana by WNLA.[59]

The re-introduction of recruitment was a source of great pleasure to the colonial authorities. For instance, when Charles Rey, then Resident Commissioner for the territory, was informed of the impending experiment in August 1933, he wrote to the Chairman of the Chamber of Mines that he 'was very glad to see that there is some prospect of increased employment for BP natives on the mines.'[60] This gesture by Rey was followed by assuring the recruiting agency of the cooperation of the Medical Officer in Francistown for examining recruits; and he offered them the use of the Police Camp at Maitengwe. To the High Commissioner, he wrote regarding the experiment: 'It will help the natives to get a little money which they badly need and will enable the Administration to get in a certain amount of additional Hut Tax, which they need no less badly'.[61]

In January, 1934, labour recruitment started in full at Francistown. At first it seemed as if WNLA representatives would have no problem of fulfilling their quota of eighty men a week, and that the complement of 800 men per month would be reached well before the April deadline. By the middle of February, however, the recruiters were reported to have started falling behind, out of which the Resident Magistrate in Serowe was notified to arrange with Chief Tshekedi Khama, to open up the Bamangwato Territory north of latitude 22^{o} (degrees) to WNLA. The chief's cooperation was readily forthcoming, and at the end of February the Magistrate reported back to Mafeking:

> I have taken steps to endeavour to stimulate enlistment and hope that the quota will be secured. I agree that all able-bodied men who owe Hut Tax and have not gone to work should be prosecuted and I will make an endeavour to visit Bokalaka in April to revise the [tax] Registers. . . . The explanation for the poor response is that Wenela [Sic] Schemes provides no advances . . . and all natives like leaving something behind for their families. It appears that some person has spread tales to the effect that the death rate has been high but this will soon be dispelled.[62]

This collaboration between the chiefs, colonial authorities and labour recruiters saw the establishment and expansion of a network of staffed recruiting stations in the country by the Mine Labour Organisations of South Africa. The situation was compounded by the recruitment of 10,000 Tswana during the Second World

War as fighters in the African Auxiliary Pioneer Corps. Instead of seeing this war-time recruitment in terms of the continuous process of colonial underdevelopment of the territory, R.A.R. Bent has been quoted as having written in his book Ten Thousand Men : 'That an African Territory with this small population could in these circumstances produce 10,000 men for service overseas is a tribute sufficient in itself to the African peoples of Bechuanaland; this was loyalty and appreciation of the years of care and protection afforded them by the British Crown and a tribute no less to the devoted service given by the three generations of British colonial administration.'[63]

Other measures employed by the state to enhance migrant labour during the Second World War included coerced contributions to the war fund—a beast per person, while a cattle export tax of two shillings and six pence levied on every head of cattle leaving the country (paid by the exporter), was imposed as a tax on profits arising from the war since the war pushed up prices very considerably over those ruling in the pre-war period. There was also a war levy of six pence per head paid by the exporters in addition to the cattle export tax. In order to make this order workable a penalty clause was inserted in the Draft Proclamation to the effect that any person who exported cattle or attempted to export without paying the tax would be liable to a fine of £5 on every single head that he attempted to smuggle.[64] The introduction of 'war-lands' where Africans went to cultivate in order to boost war effort, served as an addition burden in the Reserves. People without cattle and those who did not want to cultivate, were required to pay an alternative levy in cash, and if they did not have cash, they were forced to look for employment — which in this case implied to migrate to South Africa.

These measures pushed up the tempo of migrant labour to South Africa. By 1950 there were recruiting depots in every major town and tribal village (see map). As we mentioned in Chapter one, the WNLA division of MLO was responsible for building the first all - weather road linking Kasane in the north-east and Maun in the north-west with the rest of the country. In 1952, Wenela instituted air service between Mohembo on the western side of the Okavango Swamp and Francistown in order to move more easily the workers from that part of Botswana and from Angola down to the railway line, and thence to the mines on the Rand. In the same year, MLO announced that it had built twelve hundred miles of roads in western Botswana and estimated that its trucks had clocked over 860,000 miles a year in search of recruits for the mines.

We are further informed by Massey that the roads, air and radio network established by the Mine Labour Organisation through WNLA, especially in northern Botswana, provided that region with its only 'reliable' infrastructural links with the rest of the country before independence and that in terms of expanding communications and transport networks to remote areas, recruiting companies rivalled the Protectorate administration in the pre-independence period.[65] But, realising how much everybody in the country, including the government depended on migrant labour, the best the authorities could do had been to pass the half-hearted Native Labour Proclamation in 1941. Theoretically, the Proclamation provided for the repartriation of all recruited labourers who had overstayed (it did not affect the 40 per cent who went abroad independently without being officially recruited); prohibited direct and indirect recruitment by government officials, chiefs or headmen; specified the conditions under which labour agents might be licenced and carry on recruiting activities, and empowered the Resident Commissioner to limit the number of men recruited from any one district. Other stipulations of the Proclamation included the provision of written contracts of employment by the employers, to be attested before a government officer; medical examination of recruits and their transportation to places of employment. In practice, nothing much changed, the status quo remained as before. Like many previous Proclamations which had come and gone, this one also went into oblivion. As it was not backed up by any practical mechanism to ensure its implimentation, the 1941 Proclamation remained another joke for public consumption. Infact, the only effective mechanism could have been the creation of local employment opportunities. The absence of these rendered the Proclamation ineffective.

The fate of the migrant worker continued as before, to be in the hands of the recruiters and the employing firms. Thus, both the official and unofficial methods of recruitment, as we have already observed, continued and at an intensified rate, supplemented by voluntary migrations of those who sneaked into South Africa. In 1943, Schapera had infact silenced the government by submitting a report in which he said that he was reluctant to recommend any statutory attempts to restrict migrants to South Africa, because this was the only economic ventilation for thousands of the Protectorate's poor and hungry. Labour migration was therefore officially entrenched throughout the period, and it became the way of life for the people of Botswana.

SUMMARY:

In this Chapter we have tried to show how British colonial policy played an important role in transforming Botswana into a labour reserve for South Africa, to the detriment of the cattle industry. We have argued that African labour migration had its roots in land alienation and the state's policy of reglect and non-development, which in turn contributed to the deterioration in animal husbandry and cattle production in general and also led to decline in crop production. The factors of deterioration in cattle and crop production were, as we have attempted to show, reinforced by discrimination against, and restrictions of African cattle in the markets, and the involvement of traditional rulers in labour recruitment and tax collection. We have further demonstrated how this transformation was encouraged by the remnants of the pre-colonial socio-economic formations such as the disparities in the distribution of cattle and the existence of a serf class whose near-disintegration at the hands of colonialism freed a potential labour force of propertyless people. We have also argued that by removing the necessary labour from the rural areas, the migration process further underdeveloped the cattle industry, thereby stifling economic development through a self-reinforced cycle of poverty.

Notes

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3. Silitshena, 'Labour Migration from Botswana', 2.

4. Silitshena, 'Labour Migration from Botswana', 2.

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6. *Transvaal Reports*, p. 22.

7. *Transvaal Reports*, p. 33.

8. *Transvaal Reports*, pp. 33-34.

9. *Transvaal Reports*, p. 36.

10. Isaac Schapera, *The Tswana* (London: International African Institute, 1962), p. 30.

11. Silitshena, 'Labour Migration from Botswana', 3.

12. Massey, 'Labour Migration and Rural Development', p. 102.

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17. *The Pim Report*, p. 31.

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21. Cited in the Pim Report, p. 13.

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32. Schapera, Migrant Labour, p. 133. See also Schapera, 'Economic Conditions in Bechuanaland Native Reserve', South African Journal of Science, 30 (1933), pp. 633-655.

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34. Parsons, 'The Economic History of Khama's Country', p. 130.

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47. Kowet, Land, Labour Migration and Politics, p. 97.

48. Kowet, Land, Labour and Politics, p. 99.

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CHAPTER FIVE : CONCLUSION - CHARACTERIZATION OF BOTSWANA'S UNDERDEVELOPMENT

This concluding Chapter is in the main a recapitulation of the main points involved in the process of underdevelopment of Botswana's cattle industry as covered in the previous Chapters. However, this recapitulation involves the isolation of the major factors which contributed to Botswana's underdevelopment. We have isolated seven major factors in this underdevelopment, namely, ecological, pre-colonial, imperial, settler, veterinary, marketing and the colonial state. We have discussed these factors in the context of the underdevelopment theory.

Ecological

Rather than solely relying on the factors of colonialism in our understanding of the thwarting of the cattle economy, the case of Botswana illustrated the applicability of taking an integrated approach to historical explanation. Although many of the major constraints in the underdevelopment of the cattle industry in Botswana resulted from colonial encroachment on African productivity, ecological factors certainly played a role in complementing or supplementing constraints arising from the colonial political economy. Many scholars of Botswana have acknowledged the difficulties of ecological factors in the underdevelopment of the cattle industry in this country. *Indeed, Massey has concluded* that 'All of the practices for encouraging the creation of a wage labour force——land alienation, taxation, coöptation of the traditional leadership, and restrictions on independe development occurred in Botswana. Their presence ... becau of the relatively poor ecological base and the pre-existing situation of social and economic inequality lent themselves more readily to a process of proletarianisation through migrant labour'.[1] The presence of ecological factors was, as we concluded, used by the colonial State as a pretext for not doing enough to improve the cattle industry.

One of the most pressing ecological problems was the unreliability and sporadic nature of rainfall. As we mentioned in Chapter one, the scanty and unevenly distributed rainfall (decreasing as one moves west from the eastern side) often led to droughts and water scarcity throug the drying up of existing sources of watering facilities. The factor of droughts very often resulted in the production of poor-quality or inferior cattle which in turn became a burden on the market, while droughts also led to heavy cattle mortality. During the dry seasons when pastures became scarce, cases of cattle infertility, calf mortality due to insufficient availability of milk from cows, contagious abortions and disease occurrence were very common. Adding to these constraints, was the presence of the Kgalagadi desert. This compounded the problem of land insufficiency which colonial land re-allocation created. The resulting land shortage, supplemented by the Tswana custom of large scale population concentration (exacerbated by colonialism) further reduced grazing lands, especially during the dry seasons. The presence of ecological constraints meant the cattle industry being always menaced by the danger of drought and disease.

Remnants of the Pre-Colonial Socio-Economic Formations

The shattering of the romantic picture of the classless and egalitarian nature of the pre-colonial African societies has revealed the irregularities inherent in these societies, which should also serve as a background to our understanding of today's poverty in Botswana. The unequal distribution of economic opportunities explained in Chapter one which was reinforced by the class re-alignments of the colonial political economy also heightened the poverty among the Tswan communities and consequently contributed to migrant labour to South Africa. The inequalities which characterized the pre-colonial cattle distribution as a result of the concentration of cattle in the hands of a few, powerful and dominant aristocratic or chiefly households, was in part a prescriptio for poverty in Botswana. We have argued that with the coming of colonialism, many of the people without cattle decided to migrate to South Africa in search of employment. The few owners of the majority of cattle could not therefore adequatel cope with cattle management. Previously, many of the chiefly households and other rich families depended on the procurement of labour from the poor through a variety of ways such as the use of the <u>mafisa</u> system. The coming of colonialism with its different internal laws of motion, meant that many of the people living on hired cattle could no longer do so as the spirit of individualism started to permeate society to the extent of reducing the mafisa system. Sometimes people who previously received mafisa cattle preferred migrant labour to the latter. The withdrawal of this labour by the recipients of mafisa cattle, in part created a labour vacuum for the cattle industry, and also contributed to cases of reduced cattle management.

Similarly, the system of keeping serfs and retainers, which declined at the hands of colonialism, freed many people from their bondage. As these people did not own any propert they became a ready constituency for migrant labour, as this was the only opportunity available to them to own property of their own. While many people who did not belong to this 'class' could have been induced into labour migration by the coercion of the state and traditional chiefs, the majorit of the former serfs and retainers found migrant labour a kind of economic survival and therefore moved on their own. The movement to South Africa by many of the former serfs and retainers exacerbated the labour shortage on the cattle industry. In such situations, many of the cattle-owning households had either to provide their own labour or hire someone to do the cattle management work for them. The first choice was not very possible for many of the rich, while the alternative was often hampered by migration in general which had withdrawn many of the able-bodied men from the Reserve economy. The general picture was thus one of decline for the cattle economy.

Colonial Penetration and the Imperial Factor

The mode of British colonial penetration in Botswana and the 'Protectorate Status' surrounding it, led the territory to assume the position of a marginal or 'Cinderella' colony in the annals of British colonialism. In the colonialist circles the Protectorate was no more than a temporary and provisional one. Initial British interest in Botswana was mainly negative——to pre-empt the rights of other imperial powers in the territory. In particular, Britain wanted to keep the territory out of the hands of both the Germans who were rumoured at the time to nurse designs of expanding their colonial stake eastwards from South West Africa into Botswana, and the Boers whose lust for land at that time had earned them the Transvaal.

The continued British interest in giving up direct rule in Botswana, first began with the B.S.A. Company, then with the Cape Colony, and later with South Africa. These signs were indicative of Britain's lack of interest in the territory. The Resident Commissioner succinctly expressed the British attitude towards the territory in 1888 when he said: 'The country is neither an Arcadia nor a desert. The objects for which it was annexed, namely the protection of the natives and the retention of the trade route to the interior have been accomplished. For the rest the colony must be content to advance slowly, and to dispense with many desirable improvements until it is in a position to pay for them .[2]

These historical and political considerations are said to be the major reasons why Britain reluctantly assumed the responsibilities of 'protector'. Very often, the so-called future political 'uncertainty' of the country was used as a pretext for British pursuance of the policy of neglect and non-development in the territory. This can be seen in the way it was ignorantly believed in the colonial circles that the territory had no mineral wealth (without proper prospecting), a situation criticized by Rey when he commented: 'If our fools at home had allowed mining here, we might have been in the same position [as Northern Rhodesia].... All this is a result of mining. A few years ago they were as poor as we'.[3] Although colonialism was the very anti-thesis of economic development, the unique nature of British colonialism in the HCTs, as maifested in the policy of neglect and non-development, differentiated the HCTs from other British colonies in the area. These territories lacked even a basic capitalist infrastructure on which to base economic development in the post-independence period. The HCTs thus suffered not only from the South African-based capitalism but also from the absence of Capitalism in the teritories themselves. In the words of Anthony Sillery, Botswana and other HCTs missed 'the golden age of British colonialism ... [because] the HCTs were the responsibility of an inconsiderate section of the Dominions Office, itself by no means the most impressive of the great Departments of the State'.[4] It was partly through the neglect of local development, combined with a quest for local revenue to cover the cost of administration and economic development that the colonial administration aided Botswana's transformation into a labour reserve. But there were no doubt good reasons for this arrangement, particularly in connection with Anglo-South African relations Britain saw that she had more to gain from South Africa than from Botswana.

George Henry has rightly pointed out that the prevailin ideology governing relations between a colony and its colonis depended on the apparent coincidence of short and medium-run interests and benefits from the projects undertaken by the coloniser in the colony, and regulated by the motive of self-interest on the part of the coloniser.[5] In the case of Botswana, the assumed poverty in natural resources, led Britain to retain Botswana's economy, and particularly the cattle industry in a subservient category of a tributary economy to that of South Africa, and through this, increased South Africa's influence in the territory via migrant labour; buying cheap of Botswana's cattle resources; as a dumping ground for its manufactured goods; and as a <u>de facto</u> Bantustan——thus South Africa's pressure for incorporation of the territory.

In the classification of Botswana's underdevelopment, the colonial 'protector'——Britain, was mainly responsible for the structural underdevelopment through its policy of neglec and non-development. The usual form of exploitation which characterized the relations between a colony and its coloniz through the maintenance of direct satellite relations, did n exist in the case of Botswana as she was exploited (by Brita through South Africa. Botswana was directly exploited by South Africa to the interest of British Capital there. Thus while South Africa directly exploited Botswana, it was also exploited by British Capital. Britain deliberately allowed South Africa to maintain Botswana in such a dependent economi position. The economic harassment which Botswana's cattle producers suffered at the hands of South Africa was, as we have already pointed out, to the benefit of British capital in South Africa as this kept Botswana's economy in a tributary or supporting category to that of South Africa, whi on another hand it ensured the continuity of migrant labour. To some extent the persistent desire by the South African Government to incorporate Botswana into South Africa by the use of economic embargoes, stemmed from this cooperation between the latter and the Imperial Government in Britain. At face value, one would think of migrant labour from Botswana to South Africa as solely being for the benefit of the latter, while in actual fact this labour was largely absorbed and utilized by the industries where British capital dominated (i.e. the Mining sector).

The Imperial 'protector' was also responsible for the internal underdevelopment of Botswana as companies with close British connections such as the Tati Concession and the B.S.A.

operated in the atmosphere of unchallenged supremacy in the territory. Both companies owned very large tracts of land, much of which remained unused (but only held in speculation). The parts of the land which was in use, were given to European settlers in freehold lease. As we mentioned in Chapter one, each settler received an average of 3,000 morgen of land. These companies played a significa role in the creation of African land shortage in Botswana an therefore indirectly contributed both to the production of poor-quality cattle and to low crop yields. The Imperial Government also owned big tracts of land officially designat as Crown Lands which remained unused, and no African occupat of these lands was possible without the authorization of the High Commissioner (based in South Africa).

Operations of the Colonial State

E.A. Brett has described the colonial State in East Africa as one 'standing at the point of intersection of the political pressures emanating from British society on one hand and local society on the other', and he sees its role as 'to manage the whole system, although not to run it'. This description can be widely applied to the way the colonial administration in Botswana functioned. Here, the colonial State constantly operated within an orbit of unresolvable contradiction—it had to tolerate on the one hand the demands of a cash economy which required that African productivity be maintained and encouraged as a cornerstone of the country's economic development, while on the other hand the State pursued measures which negated or undermined this very production it supported at the level of rhetoric. In its pursuance of the latter goal, the State deliverately played a role which both neglected and discriminated against Africans, while it directly and indirectly sowed seeds of settler economic viability. John Lonsdale has also demonstrated the contradictions inherent in the operations of the colonial administration in the case of Kenya. In Kenya, the colonial State, while purporting to be committed to peasant production, actually undermined it by pursuing policies which favoured the settler community against the peasants. The monopoly of extension services and technical skills by the settlers, which we have seen in Botswana, was very similar to what happened in Kenya.[6]

The policy of neglect and non-development championed by the State was primarily meant to restrict Africans' opportunities of capital formation as this was in the interests of the local settlers and in the wider interests of the South African-based British capital. For local settlers the undermining of African productivity through the discriminatory and inhibitive distribution of social services (i.e. the transport network, veterinary services and access to the market), greatly reduced competition between them and the Africans——a state of affairs which was in favour of settlers. The _modus operandi_ of the colonial administration therefore, stands as a clear example of how to take from Jack and give to Jim. On the other hand, if we take the functions of the colonial State as 'merely to manage' the Protectorate without running it, then we should also accept the fact that the real responsibility for the underdevelopment of Botswana's cattle industry lay with the Imperial 'protector'——Britain, with the colonial administra tion inside Botswana playing a supportive or catalyst role. By instituting a policy of neglect and non-development, the colonial State could therefore be said to have been faithful carrying out the policy of the Imperial Government. Perhap by failing to provide the necessary financial assistance to Botswana, the Imperial 'protector' created a situation of economic dilemma on the part of the colonial authorities. The insufficiency of funds inside the territory could for instance, explain why the colonial authorities had to resort to 'colonial tribalism' in their provision of services to the people. The 'kith and kin' attitude adopted by the authorities in favour of the settlers was perhaps enhanced by this tight-rope situation.

Brett however, concedes that the colonial State's influence, 'which must not be underestimated for this reason, was therefore confined to the choice between two alternative strategies for capitalist development, which it could exercise by providing one group of entrepreneurs with opportunities to operate as against another——settlers rather than peasants',[7] and for our purposes, exporters rather than cattle producers. Nevertheless, in whatever capacity the colonial State functioned, the fact remains that its choice which was in favour of the settlers as again indigenous production, greatly undermined African productivi We proceeded to show how the application of the policy of neglect and non-development manifested itself through the biased provision of veterinary services and the operations of the markets.

As far as the meat trade was concerned, the conflict was not only one between settlers and African producers, but also involved international capital at a global level. The domination of the meat trade by international monopolies which Phimister has demonstrated, reflected itself in Southern Africa through the failure of the regional monopolie to penetrate the world meat markets. This situation heightened the struggle between settlers and Africans for regional markets.

The Veterinary Factor

We have already pointed out in Chapter one that veterinary extension in the African Reserves was one of the most inadequate extension services in Botswana. The failure by the Imperial Government to provide enough financia assistance to the territory, was partly reflected through the shoddy distribution of veterinary work by the colonial administration. The most visible sign of the shoddy performance by the State in this field, was in their inability to eradicate disease. As earlier mentioned, the provision of veterinary services, and in particular the authorities as an entity in itself, but it was performed onl as a response to the veterinary requirements of the external markets. In order to insulate itself from the embarrassmen associated with neglecting its Protectorate, Britain secretl arranged for the provision of some veterinary work on loan basis by the South African veterinary staff. This increased South Africa's influence in the affairs of Botswana.

The provision of veterinary services in Botswana was no only biased in favour of settlers, but it was also used as a way of reducing or controlling competition for the markets between Africans and the settlers. The system of cordoning off African areas which was very often used during the outbreaks of disease restricted African areas from the markets. Under such circumstances, Africans had their cattle excluded from the export trade until such times when it was officiall seen convenient, particularly when the disease subsided (but not eradicated).

The attempts by the State to control disease were in fact overshadowed by its failure to improve cattle management, particularly through animal husbandry. Increased productivity in cattle keeping did not depend on disease control _per se_, but rather on the coexistence of three important facets of improved cattle management, and these were indivisible, namely: disease control, better feeding and better breeding. Better feeding in turn depended on the availability of enough green pastures, while better breeding depended on the ability of the State to make farmers aware of their potentialities through improved education and extension services. The latter included provision of adequate credit facilities, improved conditions of land tenure, and also efficient marketing and distribution services. Unfortunately, all these pre-conditions were arrested by the very operations of the colonial political economy. Opportunities for better feeding of African cattle were reduced by land alienation which created Reserves for Africans. The situation was further compounde especially in the more densely populated Reserves, by the vicious circle created by the prevailing relationship between animal and crop hubandry on one hand, and large scale settlement on the other. In addition, the quality of dry-season feeding or grazing, particularly its deficienc in protein caused emaciation and frequently resulted in cattle mortality. Furthermore, the overgrazing which resulted, contributed to the ecological imbalance, which in turn posed an increasing conservation problem.

Disease control and better breeding were also inhibited by the financial inadequacy. Very often the attempts to control disease ignored animal husbandry in general, and the results were therefore negative. R.W. Boyens, an expert on animal husbandry commented: 'There is little to be achieve in a programme for the control of disease if the animals so saved are going to die from lack of food, nor is there any advantage in raising the production potential of live-stock breeds if complementary efforts are not made to protect them from disease and malnutrition and to improve marketing methods ....Disease control alone is not adequate—

it is widely recognised that livestock nutrition and management, must receive fuller attention ... this does not mean that there can be any reduction in the vigilance necessary to maintain animal health, better livestock implies increase value ... and depredations as a result of disease will be bring greater loss ....This means that more concerted action in veterinary medicine, animal husbandry and improvement in stock and meat marketing must be made if the necessary increase in productivity in African stock is to be achieved'.[8]

Many a time, 'destocking' of the African cattle in the Reserves, was the common method of controlling cattle population and of increasing the carrying capacity of pastures. The Cattle Improvement Centres which were introduced during the Second World War, were shunned by African cattle owners as they just increased African exploitation through the unprofitable individual contributions of beasts. If we take productivity of a livestock population as the amount of meat it yields per unit area of land, we can see how the structural underdevelopment of the African cattle industry in Botswana manifested itself at the level of production, because this productivity was in turn influenced by several factors such as the birth rate, the losses due to disease and the daily gain in weight. These factors were themselves a reflection or indication of the level of nutrition and animal management, which the colonial authorities ignored. Many of the problems which arose at the level of marketing, such as veterinary restrictions and the weight embargo's, were largely a product of this underdevelopment of the cattle industry at the level of production.

The Marketing Factor

In his analysis of the colonial economy in East Africa, Brett has rightly pointed out that 'access to the market and to the resources which it produces makes a process of capital accumulation inside peasant society possible'.[9] Similarly, the process of capital accumulation, leading to economic viability by African cattle producers in Botswana, partly depended on their getting access to the market and on the existence of an improved marketing system. It is generally agreed that the production of beef for market on a planned basis is a long term enterprise which presupposes reasonably predictable markets for some years ahead. In the absence of a widely representative producer organization or some kind of statutory or government-sponsored marketing body, supply and demand relationships cannot be expected to produce a stable price. Hence, the organization of regular markets and the improvement of market systems so that the producers and exporters could expect a fair price, was very important in attracting more cattle from livestock owners, in expanding the cattle economy in general, and in making possible the process of capital accumulation for producers and exporters alike. Commented a cattle expert: 'The marketing machinery must adequately represent producer interests. The facilities and prices it offers to producer are, however, the major determinant in the development of beef production'.[10]

In so far as the colonial State in Botswana accepted the 'responsibility' for peasant production, one would have expected it to be concerned with securing the establishment of an appropriate marketing machinery and (in some sectors at least) factors affecting the producer and export prices. But on the contrary, the Colonial State for long remained in an ambivalent position. On one hand, it required the creation of an export sector in the local economy, which in turn necessitated the evolution or emergen of a rural class with resources required to sell part of its production on the international market, while on the other hand, it denied these very producers access to the market through a variety of restrictive policies (allowing them to export through a stratum of exploitative middlemen), and at the same time it failed to take a significant role in the operations of the foreign markets.

The significance of government intervention on behalf of its producers in the process of production and export sectors has long been recognized in the dynamics of a modern economy. In the article by Boyens already quoted, he saw the necessity of government intervention in production and marketing in the following perspective: 'The extent and to the falling demand, competition or veterinary restrictio also affected the ruling prices, thereby increasing the ove head costs of the exporters, who in turn offset these costs by offering lower prices to producers. Apart from the above constraints, many of the problems inherent in the external markets as we earlier pointed out, resulted from lack of any meaningful intervention by the government on behalf of the producers and exporters alike.

Why was it necessary for the State to take an active, bias-free intervention in the cattle economy of Botswana during this time? The establishment and operation of State-controlled markets was essential and can be rationali in the case of Botswana's livestock trade during this time with the following points:

1) An organized and advertised market (as was the case in South Africa) could have enabled the stock owners to obtain the best ruling prices because of competition among buyers.

2) Risks of spreading disease by contact at the markets or during movements to destinations, which were so rampant in Botswana's cattle trade could have been minimized by a bias-free system of veterinary inspection and preventive vaccination at the markets.

3) The above factors could have enabled the collection and analysis of trade information concerning supply, prices and demand.

4) Revenue for the improvement and maintenance of stock routes, boreholes and other facilities could be collected by charging market fees.

5) Markets could be valuable centres of education and extension work among the stock owners towards improving cattle quality, rather than being places of torture through the discriminatory and biased grading methods.

6) For proper control of the trade to be exercised, the existence of an adequate organisation to provide market channels between producers and consumers was necessary. In South Africa, Northern and Southern Rhodesias, these market bodies were established with the consent and encouragement of their respective governments, and were empowered by law to take over certain marketing responsibilities (although they sometimes served as channels of exploiting Africans). The formation of the Meat Producers' Exchange by settler farmers in Southern Africa in 1921, incorporating settlers from Botswana, was a further step in this direction. As for the African producers, the attempts by the state to integrat them into the South African-based and controlled Meat and Dairy Control Boards (through the settler exporters), had no beneficial effects for them, since the operations of these bodies symbolized the dominant position of South Africa in the region.

7) When suitable marketing arrangements had been developed, they could have been supplemented by proper transport facilities, slaughtering and cold storage facilities, holding camps and the unbiased pricing on the

basis of grades and weight.

The absence of these factors led to two developments: dependence of Botswana's cattle industry upon the South Afr market (lack of market diversification) and the perpetuatio of an exploitative marketing system, which in Botswana reflected itself through the failure of the cattle economy to 'take off'. The dependence on the South African market was enhanced by both the geographical proximity and the colonial design. The failure by the majority of cattle producers to accumulate capital can be partly explained by the operations of the foreign markets—a situation which inside Botswana reproduced itself through the exploitation of African cattle producers by the middlemen exporters. The exploitative grading system for African cattle, butter and cream in particular, pioneered by the South African Government via its various Control Boards, was part of the same process of underdevelopment for Botswana's cattle industry.

This underdevelopment largely manifested itself through the maintenance of an exploitative marketing system. We showed how this process contributed to the escalation of migrant labour and the perpetuation of African under-capitalization. Sometimes Africans responded to the unprofitability of the markets by withholding the sale of their cattle. This reluctance on the part of the Africans to dispose of their cattle because of the unprofitable marketing system, was generally misconstrued by colonial officials as a 'cattle complex' arising from the Africans' regard of their livestock as a store of wealth rather than a productive or commercial unit. This view which became famous throughout the colonial epoch, has now been widely exposed for its inability to periodize social change in African societies and to analyse the exploitative nature and contributions of the markets during the colonial political economy. 'The effect of all this', Professor Roberts has pointed out, 'has not been a cattle complex but a European complex about African cattle and an African complex about European cattle policies'.[12] Similarly, Rex Boyens has refuted the 'cattle complex' view in the following words: 'colonialism assumed that because social purposes appeared to cut across economic principles accepted everywhere, then traditional management practices did not take into account economic considerations at all, or that they were *ipso facto* uneconomic. This attitude overlooked the fact that, in most parts of the world, wealth above a certain level was generally acquired for social purposes'.[13] While Roberts and Boyens have been modest in their dismissal of the notion of the Bantu 'cattle complex', R.G. Mtetwa has been very explicit, describing it as a myth. Mtetwa maintains that Africans have always placed an economic value on their cattle, provided good prices are offered. The exploitative marketing system of cattle which we have examined in the case of

Botswana, led Africans to be reluctant in the disposal of their cattle. 'So it is clear', contends Mtetwa, 'that it is capitalist exploitation and not the traditional irrational attitudes held towards cattle which made the Africans reluctant to sell many cattle in the capitalist market'.[14]

The Settler Factor

By acting as lobbies or pressure groups on their governments, settlers in Botswana, South Africa, Southern Rhodesia, and to some extent, Northern Rhodesia, also contributed to the creation of a process which inhibited African capital formation, because many of their views were hostile to African producers. Fearing competition wi the Africans, settlers in Botswana, for instance, used their political influence on the colonial State through the European Advisory Council (EAC) to eliminate Africans by a process of exclusion, coercion and discrimination in the provision of extension services. While they themselves suffered from a peripheral position in comparison with Sout African and Southern Rhodesian settlers, they were relative more capitalized than Africans, practically by virtue of their being a favoured component of the cattle producers, by their integration into the settler controlled Boards in South Africa and by their monopoly of extension services (i.e. transport, loans, veterinary services, etc.). The study also attempted to demonstrate how the earlier process of settler land and cattle accumulation compounded to the problem of African undercapitalization by a net transfer of the cattle and land resources from the peasant or African sector. 'This process, which can perhaps best be viewed in terms of Marx's analysis of primitive accumulation, produced a rural structure based upon ... [settler] expatriate capital employing African wage-labour in the sector'.[15]

In order to maintain this economic supremacy against the African challenge, settlers made sure that through the EAC and sometimes by directly appealing to the racial ideology, they excluded Africans from profitably participating in the cattle economy. The State usually granted their requests. The monopoly of trading licences, access to the market, internal transport, freight subsidies loans, and so on, which we examined earlier, further supported Brett's assertion that in the colonial sphere, access to the productive resources which determined success or failure, was controlled by a settler group through the direct control of the State, which behaved as the custodian of settler interests. According to Brett, 'the assumption that the "market" has ever operated independently of politi and social structures in allocating resources has never been true except in the most limited sense. In the colonia sphere it is even more misleading because of the direct and extensive role played by the State in the economy from the beginnings of colonial production ....If this is true . it is possible to argue that the dominant forces in the colonial system were bound to use their power to limit the access of indigenous groups to resources required for autonomous development and hence to perpetuate the underdeveloped nature of their condition'.[16]

In the same capacity of a pressure group, we saw how South African white farmers periodically agitated for market restrictions on Botswana's cattle exports. In order to protect their markets from the system of dumping by neighbouring countries, especially Botswana and sometimes for reasons of racism (i.e. they did not want to shar the prestige of State bounties with Africans and particular from a different territory), South African white farmers pressurised their government to impose restrictions on cattle exports from Botswana. Apart from denying cattle markets to Botswana, these restrictions were a major contri bution in the fall of prices for the territory's cattle exports.

Southern Rhodesian white farmers were also determined to secure their home market for themselves—to the exclusio of Botswana. The creation of Control Boards in the 1930s o the pattern of the South African white farmers institution lized the settlers as a vested political and economic inter The introduction of market restrictions for Botswana's catt exports after the creation of these Boards was a further testimony of the role the settlers were playing in undermini Botswana's cattle economy. As in the case of South Africa the call for restrictions against Botswana's cattle exports by Southern Rhodesian white farmers coincided with the long term political interest of their government of incorporating the northern part of Botswana into their country. Souther

Rhodesia which had always laid claim to the northern part of Botswana, was now too eager to achieve its political objective through the economic weapon of market restriction on Botswana's cattle exports. The settler farmers in Southern Rhodesia went as far as challenging Botswana's export trade in the Northern Rhodesian and Congolese markets. All these points, as earlier discussed, succeeded to squeeze the cattle economy in Botswana into a marginal position.

As Massey has pointed out, the underdevelopment of the cattle industry in Botswana cannot be perceived as the 'automatic' outcome or as a product of natural disasters or environmental hazards——such as ecological conditions *per se*—or as a predetermined state of affairs, but rather as a product of both colonial policies and ecological factors. We do not wish to argue with the fact that 'natural' factors did play a contributory role in the thwarting of Botswana's cattle economy and in the proletarianization process which ensued, but it should be clearly pointed out that the negative colonial policy championed by Britain was largely responsible for the creation of the culture of poverty through the transformation of the country not into a major cattle producer and exporter, but into a labour reserve.

The major issues involved in the underdevelopment of Botswana included: 1) the colonial land re-allocation marked by the alienation of a significant proportion of cultivable and grazing land to white settlers;

2) the British policy of neglect and non-development of local productive resources; 3) the related policy of pursuing a locally balanced budget primarily through taxation of the Africans; 4) the cooptation of the traditional leadership into the orbit of exploiting their people 5) the pursuance of discriminatory policies by the State which resulted in the favouring of the white settler popula in the allocation of government expenditure and the provisi of the extension services; 6) the subjugation of African interests to those of the white settlers and South Africans regarding cattle marketing; 7) the cooperation and even collaboration of the State with the forces of destablizatio (i.e. labour recruiting organizations); 8) the persistence and entrenchment by colonialism of the unequal distribution of cattle. The total result of these policies was the maintenance of Botswana's cattle economy on the periphery, the creation of dependent 'development' and the entrenchmen of labour migration as a way of life by most of the African in the country throughout the period. This state of affairs has remained a clear reflection of the myth of Imperial protection.

NOTES

1. Massey, 'Labour Migration and Rural Development', p.68.

2. Cited in Massey, 'Labour Migration and Rural Develoment', p.67.

3. Rey, 'Bechuanaland Diaries'.

4. Sillery, Botswana: A Short Political History, p.143

5. H. George Henry, 'The Economy of Botswana', Lesotho, Botswana, and Swaziland: The Former High Commission Territories in Southern Africa, edited by Richard Stevens (Pall Mall Press, 1967), p.171.

6. E.A. Brett, Colonialism and Underdevelopment in East Africa (London: Heinemann, 1974), p.300. See also John Lonsdale, 'The State and Peasant in Colonial Africa', J.A.H. 20, 4 (1979).

7. Brett, Colonialism and Underdevelopment, p.300.

8. Rex W. Boyens, 'General Report on the Numbers of Livestock, Their Productivity and Importance to the African Economy', Agricultural Economics Bullet for Africa, 6 (Addis Ababa, 1964), 20.

9. Brett, Colonialism and Underdevelopment, p.290.

10. Boyens, 'General Report on the Numbers of Livestock', 26.

11. Boyens, 'General Report on the Numbers of Livestock', 25.

12. R.S. Roberts, 'African Cattle in Pre-Colonial Zimbabwe', NADA (1980), 84.

13. Boyens, 'The General Report on the Numbers of Livestock', 24.

14. R.M.G. Mtetwa, 'Myth or Reality: The "Cattle Complex" in South-East Africa, with Special Reference to Rhodesia', Zambesia, 6, 1(1978), 35.

15. Brett, Colonialism and Underdevelopment, p. 289.

16. Brett, Colonialism and Underdevelopment, pp 285-86.

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