

A HISTORY OF NGONI CHIEFS OF FORT JAMESON (CHIPATA) UNDER COLONIAL
RULE, 1895 - 1964

By

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the history of the Ngoni chiefs under colonial rule in Northern Rhodesia's Fort Jameson (Chipata) from 1895 to 1964. It shows the responses and reactions of the chiefs and the people they ruled towards the policies of the British South Africa Company and later of governments under the Colonial Office and the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. These policies include land alienation, taxation and labour recruitment. The study shows that the Ngoni were not passive in their reactions. Their rulers, for example, tended to collect taxes less resented by their followers and vehemently opposed land alienation because it compromised the interests of their subjects. The study begins by giving a brief background of how Carl Wiese managed to buy 10,000 square miles of land from Paramount Chief Mpezeni in 1890. It postulates that the purchase of land from the chief marked the beginning of problems for the Ngoni. This was because their means of subsistence production were reduced due to land shortages coupled with the tax policy which was earlier implemented. Land alienation, movement to the reserves, and tax obligations necessitated wage employment among the Ngoni.

The study further shows the changing roles of traditional rulers after colonial rule became deeply rooted among the Ngoni people. It argues that as much as Ngoni chiefs were required to carry out certain functions on behalf of the colonial state, they did not neglect their people as they executed chiefly duties. It has been noted, in this study, that even after being conquered by the B.S.A.C, the Ngoni traditional authority managed to carry out their administrative duties as demanded by the colonial state simultaneously with their traditional ones. In cases when the colonial state was in conflict with the local people, the chiefs sided with their local people.

This study further attempts to assess colonial impact on Ngoni traditional authorities and their subjects. It argues that the colonial state undermined traditional authorities in various ways. It undermined the authority of chiefs by abolishing tribute and unpaid labour which were earlier given to chiefs by their subjects. The abolition of tribute and unpaid labour interfered with the superior status earlier enjoyed by Ngoni traditional authorities. The situation led to increased friction between the colonial state and the chiefs. Contrarily to the underdevelopment theory, the study posits that much as the above colonial policies undermined Ngoni traditional authorities, Ngoni chiefs rose above colonial challenges to take care of their subjects in the expected traditional manner.

Key words: *Ngoni, Tribute, Chiefs, Colonial-Office*

DEDICATION

To my mother, Alice Musonda Mamboya, for educating me in the most special way and my beloved wife, Kalumba Chilombo who always loved, cared and encouraged me to study. My brothers, Saviour, Mathew and Edgar, this is for you. To my late father Saviour Chanda, you were the father I needed to be who I am. Lastly, this dissertation is also dedicated to my beautiful daughter Natasha Chanda whom I will love forever!

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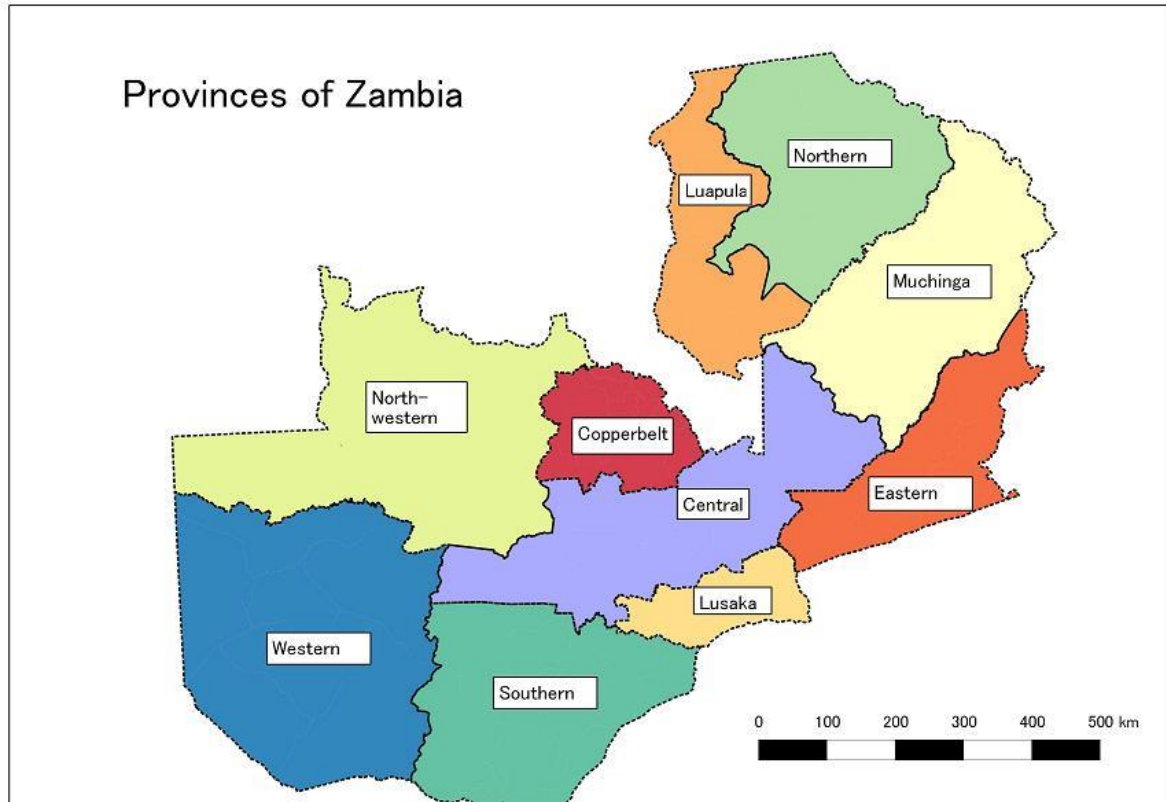
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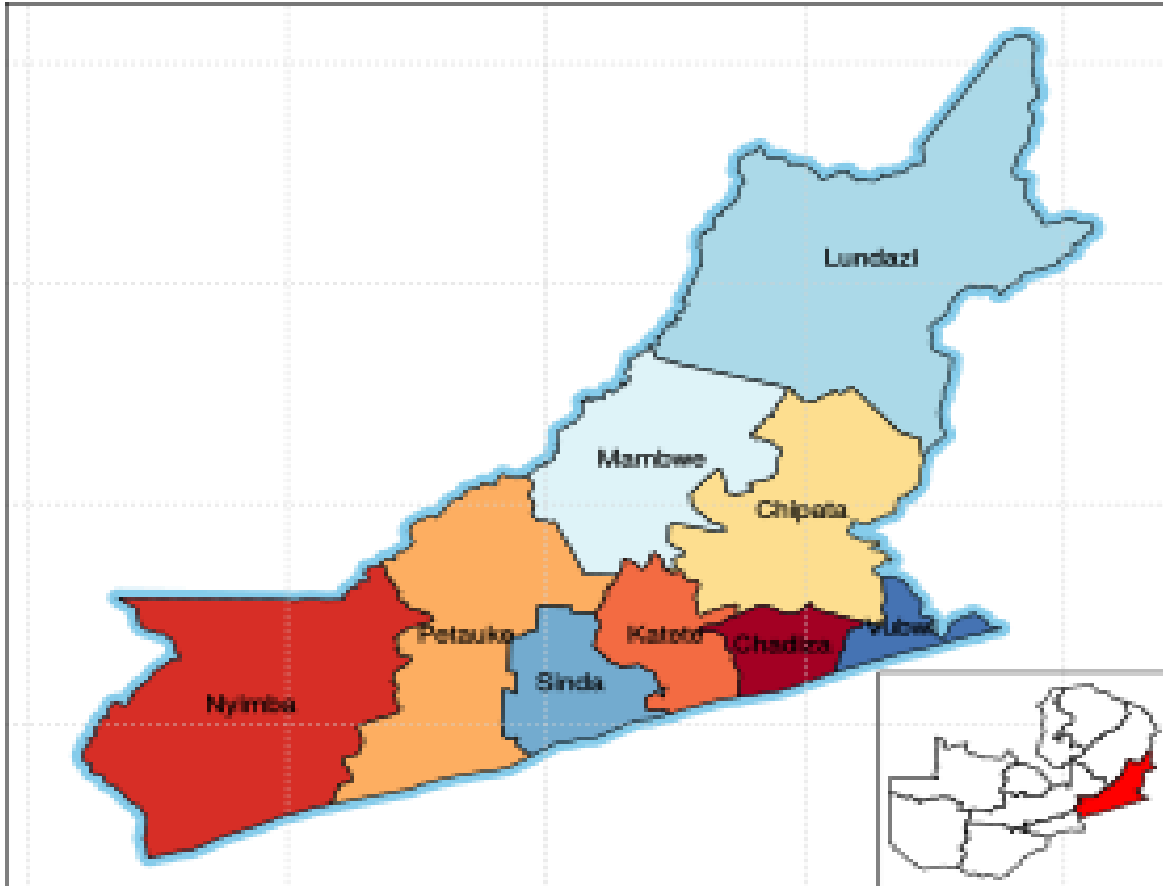
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Map 1: Map of Zambia Showing Provinces



SOURCE: <https://en.m.wikipedia.org> downloaded on 27 July, 2018.

Map2: Map of Eastern Province of Zambia



SOURCE: <https://en.m.wikipedia.org> downloaded on 27 July, 2018.

ABBREVIATIONS

A.N.C.....	Africa National Congress
B.S.A.C.....	British South Africa Company
C.O.....	Colonial Office
C.S.....	Colonial State
D.C.....	District Commissioner
M.G.C.L.....	Mozambique Gold Company Limited
N.A.....	Native Affairs
N.C.E.C.....	North Charterland Exploration Company
N.E.R.....	North Eastern Rhodesia
N.L.B.....	Native Labour Bureau
N.R.....	Northern Rhodesia
N.W.R.....	North Western Rhodesia
P.C.....	Provincial Commissioner
N.A.Z.....	National Archives of Zambia

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Ngoni originated from South Africa in the 19th century. They came into contact with the British South Africa Company (B.S.A.C) in 1890. This period marked the completion of the colonisation of North eastern Rhodesia and later the whole of Northern Rhodesia.¹ In 1911, North Eastern Rhodesia merged with North Western Rhodesia to form Northern Rhodesia.² Britain, having managed to convince other European powers, declared Northern Rhodesia under its dominion. It granted a charter to the B.S.A.C. under John Cecil Rhodes to rule Northern Rhodesia on its behalf until 1923. However, after convincing European powers that Northern Rhodesia now belonged to Britain, it had to defeat the Ngoni Paramount Chief Mpezeni to assume total control of the territory.³

Before the Ngoni were conquered by the B.S.A.C and the North Charterland Exploration Company (N.C.E.C.) in 1897, they settled between the Msipazi and Lutembwe Rivers. This area was good in terms of pasturage and was therefore quickly filled up with foreigners. These included Portuguese, German, British and Dutch fortune hunters.⁴ The Ngoni had a life dependent on their tradition. The king enjoyed absolute powers over everyone and tribute was a custom practised within the kingdom.⁵ The king redistributed this tribute thereby promoting growth and unity. The kingdom had an army which conquered weaker tribes who would either pay tribute or be taken as slaves. The chiefs were the final judges in settling conflicts among

¹ T.W. Baxter, "Slave Raiders in North Eastern Rhodesia", Northern Rhodesia Journal Vol.1, 1 (1950-1952), pp.9.

² Thomas Page, "Early Days in Fort Jameson", Northern Rhodesia Journal Vol. 3 (1956-1959), p.6.

³ Andrew Roberts, A History of Zambia (London: Heinemann, 1976), p.175.

⁴ Lane E.H. Poole, The Native Tribes of the East Luangwa Province of Northern Rhodesia. (Notes on their Migrations and History) 3rd ed. Lusaka, 1949, p.11.

⁵ N.A.Z., SEC2/322, Abolition of Tribute to Chiefs.

their subjects. They also had their subjects work for them for free.⁶ Additionally, Chief Mpezeni had the power to appoint and dethrone a chief. All land and cattle belonged to him. In this way, the kingdom flourished with chiefs enjoying a superior status and respect from their subjects. However, the situation changed with the coming of the B.S.A.C. The Ngoni lost their status and the chiefs themselves had their powers to govern reduced and the kingdom was colonised by the B.S.A.C.

The Ngoni colonisation was distinctive from that of most other ethnic groups of Eastern Province, such as the Chewa. This is because the Ngoni were a powerful state, or rather a mobile warrior nation. According to Sandram Henry Phiri, political power among the Ngoni was derived from the number of warriors and dependants that one had, the power base being the military.⁷ This state of affairs made it possible for the Ngoni to dominate trade with the Europeans from 1880 up to the early 1890s. As William Rau notes, the state of traditional authority was very strong before colonial rule. Mpezeni's subjects contributed to this strength as they could advise their king on a number of issues pertaining to the safety of the kingdom. For example, prior to 1897, Nsingo, Mlonyeni, Kamzembe and other young men who feared European presence impelled Mpezeni to kill the locally based agents of the North Charterland Exploration Company (N.C.E.C.).⁸

The N.C.E.C was started by Carl Wiese. A history of its formation is important as this will show how it marshalled arms with the B.S.A.C to defeat the Ngoni. Sundrabhala Naidoo argues that before the B.S.A.C gained control of North eastern Rhodesia, Carl Wiese had already

⁶ N.A.Z., SEC2/313, Chiefs –Headmen unpaid Labour.

⁷ Sandram Henry Phiri, "Some Aspects of Spatial Interaction and Relation to Governmental Policies in A Border Area: A Study in the Historical and Political Geography of Rural Development in the Zambia/Malawi and Zambia/Mozambique frontier zone (1870-1979)", PhD Thesis, University of Liverpool, 1980, p. 88.

⁸ William Rau, "Mpezeni's Ngoni of Eastern Zambia", PhD Thesis, University of California, Los Angeles, 1974, p. 241.

secured for himself concessions from African chiefs including Mpezeni as early as 1885.⁹ Carl Wiese's friendly relationship with Mpezeni brought him into contact with a number of Portuguese and British agents who sought his influence to gain a foothold in Mpezeni's country. Wiese chose the Portuguese which resulted in Mpezeni's rejection of treaties with Alfred Sharpe in 1889 and Joseph Thompson in 1890 who were both British.¹⁰

This turn of events made Sir Harry Johnston (His Majesty's Commissioner and Consul-General for the territories under British influence north of the Zambezi) to try and prevent the Portuguese from establishing themselves in North eastern Rhodesia. He, therefore, sent Alfred Sharpe back to Mpezeni to convince Carl Wiese and make a treaty with the chief.¹¹ Alfred Sharpe returned to Nyasaland in May 1890 without having secured a treaty. Sir Harry Johnston's failure to win Carl Wiese's allegiance made him to label the man as one who could not be trusted.¹² On 21 May, 1890, Northern Rhodesia was proclaimed a territory within the British sphere of influence. To this end, Wiese's claims in North Eastern Rhodesia directly conflicted with those of the B.S.A.C and Sir Harry Johnston rejected them. Carl Wiese took the matter to the Foreign Office hoping its ruling on the matter would be in his favour. The Foreign Office wrote to Harry Johnston that the B.S.A.C should come to an agreement with Carl Wiese because they would only recognise concessions in British territory if granted to a chartered company. This meant that if Carl Wiese was to have legal claim to the land, he needed it registered in form of a company and not in his personal capacity.¹³

⁹ Sundrabhala D. Naidoo, "The Origins, Conduct and Settlement of the North Charterland Exploration Company Land Dispute with the Colonial Office: 1895-1941", M.A. Dissertation, The University of Zambia, 1983, p.1.

¹⁰ Naidoo, "The Origins, Conduct and Settlement of the North Charterland Exploration Company Land Dispute with the Colonial Office", p.1.

¹¹ J.S. Galbraith, Crown and Charter: The Early Years of the B.S.A.C (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), p.237.

¹² Galbraith, Crown and Charter, p. 237.

¹³ Galbraith, Crown and Charter, p. 236.

In 1894, Carl Wiese sold his concession for £1500 to the Mozambique Gold Company Limited (M.G.C.L). The B.S.A.C and M.G.C.L agreed in such a way that the former took over Wiese's concession and granted M.G.C.L 10,000 square miles of land located in the East Luangwa District. It was further agreed between the two companies that to manage the grant (10,000 square miles of land given to M.G.C.L by B.S.A.C), a new company called the North Charterland Exploration Company (N.C.E.C) be formed. In this way, the N.C.E.C was formed with Carl Wiese as one of its employees and 30 percent of its shares belonging to the B.S.A.C. However, there was continued friction between the N.C.E.C and the B.S.A.C. For example, the latter was not happy with the visit of Colonel Warton to Mpezeni in 1896. Warton was the administrator of the N.C.E.C and wanted the introduction of tax among the Ngoni. According to the B.S.A.C, introducing such tax was too early as the Ngoni were still militarily strong, as such, they would easily declare war on the B.S.A.C especially that the company was not ready for war at that time.¹⁴

The above strategy by the B.S.A.C showed that the Ngoni were still a strong warrior nation and attacking them needed adequate preparation by the company. Ngoni militarism, though condemned especially by Europeans in the region, was respected in and of itself due to its strength. The Ngoni were a force who, once controlled, would act as a lever for the control of much of Central Africa by Europeans. However, Mpezeni did not know the intention of Colonel Warton and therefore welcomed him with a smile. It was only after Mpezeni realised Warton's intentions of imposing tax on the Ngoni that he showed resentment. The N.C.E.C activities aroused Ngoni suspicion and discontent.¹⁵ For example, Nsingo, Mpezeni's son

¹⁴ Naidoo, "The Origins, Conduct and Settlement of the North Charterland Exploration Company Land Dispute with the Colonial Office", pp.5-11.

¹⁵ Naidoo, "The Origins, Conduct and Settlement of the North Charterland Exploration Company Land Dispute with the Colonial Office", p. 5.

attempted to destroy the N.C.E.C. building at Fort Young.¹⁶ This made Carl Wiese, an employee of the N.C.E.C., to send word to Nyasaland that Europeans were in danger of Ngoni attack and that Fort Young was under siege.¹⁷

On 29 December 1897, troops were sent to Fort Jameson to ward off the Ngoni from Fort Young. The Ngoni were not aware of the attack as they had gathered at Mpezeni's kraal to celebrate the Nc'wala ceremony.¹⁸ To the B.S.A.C and the N.C.E.C., this gathering was a preparation for war. In January 1898, the Acting Commissioner ordered the Ngoni invasion arguing that time had come to crush the Ngoni once and for all.¹⁹ The Ngoni were, therefore, taken by surprise and easily defeated.²⁰

The actual defeat saw about twenty Ngoni people killed and some 200 soldiers dispersed. Mpezeni himself surrendered on 9 February and on 21 October 1900, he died and was buried in the Luangeni cattle kraal.²¹ The Ngoni were, therefore, defeated with 14,000 herds of their cattle taken away from them. Their territory was rapidly pacified by the British. As Lewis Gann contends, once this principle chiefdom was defeated and had submitted to company rule, it became easy to compel weaker tribes to submit to the new administration.

Now that the Ngoni who were a major ethnic group of Fort Jameson were subdued, the B.S.A.C expected to carry out its functions without interference from the locals and their chiefs. As a matter of fact, the company even moved its headquarters in 1899 from Blantyre in Nyasaland to Fort Jameson (Chipata) in Northern Rhodesia.²² This meant that Fort Jameson was soon to

¹⁶ Rau, "Mpezeni's Ngoni of Eastern Zambia", p. 263.

¹⁷ L.H. Gann, A History of Northern Rhodesia: Early Days to 1953 (London: Chatto and Windus, 1965), p.88.

¹⁸ Rau, "Mpezeni's Ngoni of Eastern Zambia", p.270.

¹⁹ Gann, A History of Northern Rhodesia, p.88.

²⁰ N.A.Z., SEC2/398, Extension of Indirect Rule, 1935-40.

²¹ Poole, The Tribes, p.16.

²² In this study, Fort Jameson and Chipata will be used interchangeably.

be a big town.²³ This was in 1899 and at that time, Robert Codrington was the new administrator.²⁴ This illustrates that Fort Jameson was going to be influenced by the company much more than other areas. From 1899 onwards, Fort Jameson became the capital of the B.S.A.C.²⁵ As for the Ngoni chief and his subjects, they were to be controlled through orders given to them. The Ngoni were introduced to colonial administration and their authority was not independent of the will and wish of the colonial government.

The B.S.A.C brought a number of changes to Northern Rhodesia. For example, policies were enacted to suit the needs of the company. In 1900, the company introduced African taxation in North eastern Rhodesia and it was enforced almost at once in most parts of North Eastern Rhodesia.²⁶ The taxation compelled the local people to start paying tax. Chiefs were expected to carry out this order as expected by the B.S.A.C. Samuel N. Chipungu, however, argues that chiefs did not always implement colonial policies as expected by the colonial state. This is because they had to safeguard the interests of their people alongside those of the colonial state.²⁷

The company further introduced laws that prohibited the killing of game in the early 1890s. This negatively affected traditional authority in that chiefs were not the ones formulating policies. However, they had to carry them out and inform their people. To this end, their

²³ R. K. Lloyd, "By Caravan from Fort Jameson to Lusaka in the early 1930s", Northern Rhodesia Journal Vol. 6 (1965), pp. 335-339.

²⁴ Lewis H. Gann, The Birth of a Plural Society: The Development of Northern Rhodesia Under the British South Africa Company 1894-1914 (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1958), p. 68.

²⁵ J. H. Chaplin, "A Note on the Forts of Eastern Province," Northern Rhodesia Journal Vol. 4 (1959-1960), pp.462-468.

²⁶ Gann, The Birth of a Plural Society, p.80.

²⁷ Samuel N. Chipungu, "African Leadership under Indirect Rule in Colonial Zambia" in Samuel N. Chipungu (ed.), Guardians in their Time: Experience of Zambia under Colonial Rule, 1890-1964. (London: Macmillan Press Ltd, 1992), p.51.

traditional authority and superiority towards their subjects became extremely affected. Mpezeni and other chiefs carried out intermediary functions between two opposing sides.

Other policies introduced by the B.S.A.C. which saw the change in the history of the Ngoni chiefs under colonial rule included dog licenses which affected traditional livelihood.²⁸ Dog licenses imposed on the Ngoni and their chiefs were not popular as they were seen as an expense. A number of these policies were not serving their interests in that they reduced chiefs' authority. This, therefore, negatively impacted on their authority and led to conflict with the colonial state.

By 1903, European settler farmers arrived in Fort Jameson and this was a source of additional challenges to the survival of traditional authority and the rural populace at large. The arrival of the farmers meant that land and labour were going to be of primary importance to their economic survival, on the one hand, and that of the rural populace who were mostly peasant farmers, on the other. Settler farmers wanted land and cheap labour. Thus, they saw African peasants as the solution to these challenges. Firstly, the settlers acquired land by displacing the Africans. Secondly, they acquired cheap labour by making displaced Africans work for them. In this context, land and labour were interlinked because removing Africans from their land limited their means of production and left them no option but to work for the settler farmers.²⁹

In this context, the Ngoni lost land to settlers. The only land that remained at their disposal was not fertile. The reserve policy was also enacted in 1903. This meant that the Ngoni had to leave their fertile land they once occupied for reserves. This move had an immediate economic impact on the Ngoni people and their chiefs. The local people were required to form contour ridges so that soil erosion could be avoided in the reserves. This was done under the instruction

²⁸ Baxter. "More about Mpeseni", Northern Rhodesia Journal Vol. 2, 6 (1953-1955), pp.46-52.

²⁹ Baxter. "More about Mpeseni", Northern Rhodesia Journal, pp.46-52.

of the Native Commissioner who received orders from the District Commissioners. Ngoni labour was not only important in the reserves but was also vital for European farms in Fort Jameson. Further, Ngoni labour also served the Katanga and Southern Rhodesian mines.

In 1924, the B.S.A.C. handed over the administration of Northern Rhodesia to Britain. The administration once again took another turn. Britain decided to strengthen the powers of chiefs and introduced the Ordinance Act in 1929 which was the cornerstone of British indirect rule. The African Native authority, on the other hand, came into being in 1934. It was responsible for collecting certain taxes as directed by the colonial state.

In the 1940s, the Ngoni, as opposed to conforming to colonial rule, continued to show resentment of colonial rule by continuing to be labour migrants. For example, in 1947, the people working outside the province increased from 35 percent to 39 percent. The trend in labour migration continued to increase from the 1912 through to the 1930s and 1940s.³⁰ In 1953, traditional authorities showed their grievances against amalgamation of the Rhodesias and Nyasaland. Henry Meebelo notes that both traditional rulers and their subjects banded themselves together in crusades against amalgamation.³¹ Mpezeni, with the support of his sub chiefs clearly stated that the Ngoni did not want the Federation because it would completely take their superior status away. The protest against the Federation among the Ngoni intensified and contributed to their fight for independence. Even after the rejected Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, the Ngoni maintained their anti-colonial attitude exhibited through labour migration and holding meetings with the A.N.C officials. In 1961, out of a total of 108, 275 taxable males in the province, half that number were working outside the territory.³²

³⁰ N.A.Z., SEC2/689, Chipata Tour Reports, 1940 to 1947.

³¹ Henry S. Meebelo, Reaction to Colonialism: A Prelude to the Politics of Independence in Northern Zambia 1893-1939 (Oxford: Manchester University Press, 1971), p. 266.

³² L. H. Zgambo. "Workers Response to Conditions on the Settler Farms of the Eastern Province, 1898-1964" in A.M. Kanduza (ed.) Social Economic Change in Eastern Zambia: Pre-colonial to the 1980s. Lusaka: Historical Association of Zambia, 1992. p.87.

This study looks at the history of the Ngoni in the colonial period in Northern Rhodesia's Fort Jameson district. It shows the response and reaction of the chiefs and their subjects to the B.S.A.C. and later the government appointed by the Colonial Office. It argues that the Ngoni chiefs did not only serve the B.S.A.C and later the colonial state, they also salvaged above colonial challenges to serve their subjects in the expected traditional manner. The study attempts to resurrect the agency in traditional leadership and gives the ordinary rural populace a voice during the colonial period.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine the history of the Ngoni chiefs in the colonial period and to show how they reacted to colonial rule. The specific objectives of the study are:

- 1 To assess the reactions and response of the Ngoni to colonial policies at the inception of colonial rule.
- 2 To examine the changing roles of Ngoni traditional authorities in the colonial period.
- 3 To assess the impact of colonial rule on the Ngoni.

Rationale of the Study

The study contributes to the history of the Ngoni in the colonial period. The study distances itself from most scholarship that portrays the history of African chiefs in the colonial period as merely serving colonial roles at the expense of the rural populace. Further, the study is a contribution to the political history of the Eastern Province particularly that of the Ngoni.

Literature Review

World over, the history of traditional leadership has been very important in the governance of most countries. In the United Kingdom, this was the basis for the establishment of certain laws

such as the law of trust in 1800 to 1860s. In Africa, the history of chiefdoms in the colonial period has mostly been documented with a view that chiefs saved their colonial masters and neglected the people they ruled. Scholars like John Iliffe, for example, have argued that traditional authorities partnered with the colonial authorities in the exploitation of their subjects.³³ According to his study, African chiefs did not serve the interests of their people. While John Iliffe's assertion was presented with rare elegance and illuminates our study. However, it cannot go unchallenged. As Sandram Henry Phiri argues, Ngoni chiefs exhibited a sense of consciousness and resisted colonial rule.³⁴ According to Phiri, Ngoni chiefs did not neglect their subjects. They spoke for them in times when the colonial authorities exploited them.³⁵ The studies by John Iliffe and Sandram Henry Phiri were important for our study as they showed the varying arguments advanced by different scholars about African chiefs in colonial Africa.

Studies by Lord Hailey have shown the position of traditional leaders in other parts of Africa colonised by Britain. With reference to other territories in Central Africa other than Northern Rhodesia, Lord Hailey has shown that chiefs were important as they made the job of the colonial masters less stressful.³⁶ In all British African territories, Britain had a similar policy of Indirect Rule in which chiefs carried out the functions of the colonial state and reported to District Commissioners. On the other hand, Henry S. Meebelo postulates that the appointment of chiefs by the colonial authorities only preserved the outward form of the indigenous systems but its main effect was to undermine the authority of chiefs by making them dependent on the administrative officers and District Officers.³⁷ In this context, indirect rule achieved two aims

³³ John Iliffe, A Modern History of Tanganyika (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), pp.25-38.

³⁴ Phiri, "Some Aspects of Spatial Interaction", p.220.

³⁵ Phiri, "Some Aspects of Spatial Interaction", p. 220.

³⁶ Lord Hailey, Colonial Office Native Administration in the British African Territories (London: Majesty's Stationary Office, 1951), pp.300-330.

³⁷ Meebelo, Reaction to Colonialism, pp.34-66.

for the colonial authorities and none for the Africans. Firstly, it made administration expenses cheaper. Secondly, it reduced the power of chiefs.

Mebelo's contention stresses that there were few or no advantages for chiefs in being answerable to the colonial state. The chiefs had a task of making their followers content with their leadership despite colonial challenges. Sandram Henry Phiri echoes this view when he contends that the chiefs did not apply inimical policies to their fullest extent. Both scholars agree that traditional leaders were the ones who mitigated the oppressive policies of the colonial state to make life easier for their followers. These studies were important as they showed us how Indirect Rule is perceived by different scholars.

In her work entitled *Traditional Leaders in Modern Africa: Can Democracy and the Chief Co-exist?* Carolyn Logan has shown that with the attainment of independence and advanced levels of education, two groups on different sides of the fence emerged viz the modernists and the traditionalists. The modernists, however, view traditional leadership as a hindrance to the flourishing of democracy. They view traditional political systems as relics of the past that may actually impede democratic development, and which must, therefore, be overcome.³⁸ On the other hand, the traditionalist view chieftaincy as the most legitimate, justifiable way of leadership. Logan's study, though does not share the same approach of looking at traditional leadership with Sandram Henry Phiri, was important as it showed that much as there is democracy, some people still want to hold on to traditional type of governance. This has led to the continuous existence of traditional leadership in modern society, it further proves that chieftainship can co-exist with democracy.³⁹

³⁸ Carolyn Logan, "Traditional Leaders in Modern Africa: Can Democracy and Chief Co-Exist", *Working Paper No.93*. (Michigan: Michigan State University, 2008), p.1.

³⁹ Logan, "Traditional Leaders in Modern Africa", pp.1-3.

Philip Joseph Mtisi's work was also important to this study. He looked at how colonial rule impacted on the economy of Zambia's eastern province. Though not in detail, he showed how traditional authority and the rural populace participated actively in the affairs of their liberation. He gave Chief Madzimawe as an example when he recorded that "in 1953, Chief Madzimawe was said to have been so influenced by the African National Congress (A.N.C.) that he went round speaking against agricultural laws and Government generally."⁴⁰ This study was important as it gave us an idea of the attitude Ngoni chiefs had towards the colonial state. While Philip Joseph Mtisi's study showed that the Ngoni fought for their independence, Lewis H. Gann argues that African independence was not fought for but given by Britain.⁴¹ Lewis H. Gann's argument cannot escape criticism, Walima Kalusa and Joseph Philip Mtisi have documented independence struggles by the Nationalists such as Kalonga Gawa Undi and John Chipembe.⁴²

In his study on the role of traditional authority in the conservation of natural resources in the colonial period, Nawa Nawa showed that chiefs who include Mpezeni of the Ngoni did not only actively participate in nationalist politics but they also had a role in watching over the natural environment. Chiefs had the power to dictate where their people practiced subsistence agriculture.⁴³ This was the case especially after the colonial state allocated land for Africans. Nawa Nawa's study confirms Sandram Henry Phiri's views with regards to how chiefs maintained their sovereignty and role of leading their people during the colonial period.

⁴⁰ Joseph Philip Mtisi, "The Economic Impact of the Colonial Rule on Eastern Zambia 1900-1953: The Experience of Chipata and Petauke District", PhD Thesis, The University of Ibadan, 1979, pp.157-179.

⁴¹ L. H. Gann, A History of Northern Rhodesia: Early Days to 1953 (London: Chatto and Windus, 1965), pp.70-90.

⁴² Walima T. Kalusa, Kalonga Gawa Undi X: A Biography of an African Chief and Nationalist (Lusaka: The Lembani Trust, 2010), pp. 1-6.

⁴³ Nawa Nawa, "The Role of the Traditional Authority in the Conservation of Natural Resources in the Western Province of Zambia", M.A. Dissertation, The University of Zambia, 1990, pp. iv-v.

Rau William's study on the Ngoni offered a brief but precise introduction of the Ngoni movement from South Africa into Zambia. Rau documented how difficult it was in the first twenty years of colonial rule for the Ngoni to receive orders from Europeans. He notes that the Ngoni relationship with the Europeans was not a cordial one as the Ngoni chiefs were reluctant to execute their new functions. According to Rau, Mpezeni's sub-chiefs 'advised Mpezeni to get rid of the European traders. This earlier attitude of the Ngoni traditional leaders towards the Europeans signalled what would come out of their future relations. His study was important as it informed our study about the antagonistic relationship that existed between Europeans and the Ngoni even before colonial rule was deeply rooted. ⁴⁴

In his chapter, *The Fort Jameson Ngoni*, J.A. documents the history of the tribe under investigation. He also enlightens our study on the Ngoni old administrative system before colonial rule. His study notes that chiefs were the last and final authority in the kingdom. In an admirable manner and fashion, he highlights the differences in the power balance of the Ngoni before and during colonial rule. His study is informative on the other group of Ngoni found in Malawi.⁴⁵ In another study entitled, *Politics in a Changing Society: A Political History of the Fort Jameson Ngoni*, J.A. Barnes states how difficult it was for chiefs to balance between serving interests of the administration and their people. For instance, he observes the challenge faced by chiefs to support requests from his people to travel. Normally, chiefs would not want to be unfavourable to the administration. Simultaneously, they did not want to disappoint their subjects. Barnes' study was pivotal to our study as it informs us of the antagonistic role Ngoni chiefs assumed during colonial intrusion.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Rau, "Mpezeni's Ngoni of Eastern Zambia", p.294.

⁴⁵ J. A. Barnes, "The Fort Jameson Ngoni" in Elizabeth Colson and Max Gluckman (eds.) Seven Tribes of British Central Africa (Manchester: Manchester University Press,1951), p.205.

⁴⁶ J. A. Barnes. Politics in a Changing Society: A Political History of the Fort Jameson Ngoni (Oxford: Manchester University Press, 1967), p.137.

R.E. Robinson's study, on the other hand, states the dynamism of Indirect Rule. As Robinson contends, "the principles of 'indirect rule' were restated and redefined from time to time."⁴⁷

The Ngoni behaved in accordance with the moods and swings of their colonial masters. This made their attitude to be in a state of flux and their reaction to colonial rule not static. This study was important as it informed our project that the change in colonial policy determined the behaviour of the Ngoni at a particular period of time.

Bizeck Jube Phiris' study demonstrates the current position of chiefs in politics. The study shows the chiefly position in modern Zambia, it gives a chronological order of the role and reaction of chiefs starting from colonial times up to date. The study informs our project that traditional authority is still important in Zambian politics hence chiefs involvement in governance today in the post-colonial period.⁴⁸ Kusum Datta's work on traditional authority in colonial Zambia resonates with Phiri's study as it showed some of the unpopular roles the Ngoni chiefs and their subjects assumed and reacted to. Datta notes that some roles and policies such as tax collecting and labour recruiting made chiefs very unpopular in the eyes of their people.⁴⁹ To this end, chiefs themselves despised such policies. Other changes the Ngoni chiefs and their people despised include the introduction of the messenger. The role of the messenger in helping report against irregularities, crime, disease and tax evasions in their areas was not welcome to the chiefs. However, messengers became so powerful that their power would seem to almost be more than that of chiefs as they would even report chiefs to the colonial state. This

⁴⁷ R. E. Robinson, Why "Indirect Rule" has been replaced by "Local Government" in the Nomenclature of British Native Administration. *Journal of African Administration*. 2(3), pp.12-15.

⁴⁸ Bizecki Jube Phiri, Traditional Authorities and National Politics in Independent Zambia: A Historical Review, p.43.

⁴⁹ Kusum Datta, "The Policy of Indirect Rule in Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) 1924-1953". PhD Thesis, University of London, 1976, p.16.

reduced the powers of chiefs over their people.⁵⁰ His study was relevant as it shows the conflicts that colonial rule came with.

D.I Ray's "*Symposium for traditional leadership and local government*" is another study that was relevant to this study. The symposium, represented by Commonwealth countries including Zambia, argues that the local government should find ways of incorporating chiefs into governance. This is to make them contribute to development. It stresses that the reasons for obeying authority in democracy and tradition are different. To this end, traditional authority should be incorporated into democracy if democracy is to serve a meaningful purpose in Africa.⁵¹ This study served as a justification for traditional authority in post-colonial Zambia. It also showed us why traditional leadership continued even after independence in 1964.

In another study, entitled *Guardians in their time*, edited by Samuel N. Chipungu, Mwelwa Musambachime, in much the same way as Kusumu Datta and J.A. Barnes, shows how chiefs reacted and expressed their dissatisfaction towards colonial policy in Bemba land. Like Mpezeni of the Ngoni, the Paramount Chief Chitimukulu⁵² spoke against the ban on Chitemene system. This study was important in that it informs us that chiefs, regardless of the tribe, did not always want to serve the interests of the colonial state. There were times when chiefs would protest against the colonial state on behalf of their people.⁵³

⁵⁰ Datta, "The Policy of Indirect Rule", p.16.

⁵¹ D.I. Ray, "Symposium on Traditional Leadership and Local Government", Commonwealth Local Government Forum. (Ministry of Local Government, Lands and Housing: Botswana Association of Local Authorities, 1997), p.18.

⁵² Chitimukulu is the title given to the Bemba Paramount Chief.

⁵³ Mwelwa Musambachime, "Colonialism and the Environment in Zambia, 1890-1964," in Samuel N. Chipungu (ed.) The Guardians in their Time: Experience of Zambia under Colonial Rule, 1890-1964 (London: MacMillan Press Ltd, 1992), p.11.

Mwelwa Musambachime's chapter was important as it is concerned with traditional authority during the colonial period. It shows how far traditional leaders could go in making sure they remained popular to their people. For instance, chiefs sided with the rural populace when certain policies were passed. A clear example of such policies were the invocation of dog licences which rocked both Bemba and Ngoniland.⁵⁴ This work was relevant to our study in that it gives us a premonition of chiefs' reaction to colonial policies.

Lane Poole has written considerably on the tribes of Eastern Province. His study, *The Tribes of Eastern Province*, shows the point of contact of the Fort Jameson chiefdoms and the B.S.A.C. concession hunters. It gave a well thought out account of how the Ngoni of Fort Jameson, the tribe under investigation in this study, were subdued into colonial rule. Additionally, it traces the movements of the tribes of Fort Jameson such as the Chewa and the Kunda people.

Walima T. Kalusa's work entitled *Kalonga Gawa Undi X: A biography of an African Chief and Nationalist* provides the history of the Chewa people found in Fort Jameson.⁵⁵ It also goes a mile in illustrating the way Undi X balanced European way of life with the traditional culture. In addition, it shows how Africans emerged as Nationalists under African National Congress to fight for independence. Kalusa, like Joseph Philip Mtisi, observe that African chiefs while discharging the functions of the colonial state, maintained their allegiance to their followers throughout the colonial period. This study, though not directly on the Ngoni, was important as evidence of African agency and consciousness in the midst of colonial rule.

The study by Henry S. Meebelo entitled *Reaction to Colonialism* offers a different and unique perspective to the history of traditional authority. It illustrates the reaction of traditional

⁵⁴ Musambachime, "Colonialism and the Environment in Zambia, 1890-1964)," p.12.

⁵⁵ Walima T. Kalusa, Kalonga Gawa Undi X: A Biography of an African Chief and Nationalist, p.3.

authority to colonialism in Northern Province of Zambia. It gives insights into chiefs' responses to colonial rule in other parts of the country other than Fort Jameson. Additionally, the study is important as it looks at the history of a people from the perspective of those people and not from outside. It is important in the study of African history. This is confirmed when Meebelo contends that:

the political history of a people is essentially the story of the interaction of the activities and thinking of its rulers with those of the ruled, a history of Zambia based solely on colonial policies and measures or on European activities is necessarily unbalanced and an equipoise must therefore be sought in unravelling the untold story of African participation in the country's politico-economic development.⁵⁶

Andrew Roberts' book, *A History of Zambia* was also relevant to this study as it shades light on the origin of the people who came to occupy Fort Jameson, these include the Ngoni. Roberts notes that the Ngoni came from South Africa.⁵⁷ His views on the movement of the Ngoni from South Africa related to the documentation of the same by William Rau, both scholars observed how difficult it was for the Ngoni chiefs to accept colonial instructions. Andrew Robert's study gave us the Ngoni historical background thereby informing our project about the origins of the tribe under investigation.

A Study by Richard Hall also shade light on the relationship Ngoni chiefs had with the B.S.A.C. Hall shows that before 1924, the B.S.A.C did not regard chiefs as part of the administration.⁵⁸ He suggests that its target was to undermine the authority of chiefs by making them depend on

⁵⁶ Meebelo, *Reaction to Colonialism*, p. x.

⁵⁷ Roberts, *A History of Zambia*, p. 84.

⁵⁸ Richard Hall, *Zambia* (London: Pall Mall Press, 1965), p.111.

administrative officers. Additionally, the study shows the onset of the first politicians in Northern Rhodesia.⁵⁹ It was important as it illuminated our study on the first Nationalist politicians in Northern Rhodesia. While Richard Hall suggests that the B.S.A.C undermined chiefs' power before 1924, Richard Brown argues that it actually helped to organise traditional leadership into functional political institutions.⁶⁰

Richard Browns' study further shows the inception of Indirect Rule and gives it a precise definition. He defines indirect rule as "a system by which the tutelary power recognises indigenous political institutions and assists them to adapt themselves to the functions of the local government".⁶¹ Browns' study does not resonate with other scholars such as A.M. Kanduzo who views Indirect Rule as a way to undermine chiefs' power. In Ackson. M. Kanduzo's study entitled, *Social-Economic Change in Eastern Zambia: Pre-colonial to the 1980s* which he edited, he informed us about the different ways in which the Ngoni responded to labour migrations. Additionally, Kanduzo documents Ngoni reaction to tax and land alienation. In particular, Kanduzo's Chapter, *Land and Peasant Politics in Chipata District 1890-1980*, provided our study with valuable information with regards to how the Ngoni reacted to the Federation.

In his study, *The Dual Mandate in Tropical Africa*, Lord Frederick Lugard refutes Kanduzo's claims by arguing that there was extension of imperial power when it suited the conquerors to preserve and utilise the institutions of the conquered. This was the case especially with the kingships and chieftaincies which were used as ready-made economical agencies of coherence and order. He further states that chiefs did not concern themselves much with the decay of

⁵⁹ Hall, *Zambia*, p.111.

⁶⁰ Hall, *Zambia*, pp. 111-117.

⁶¹ Richard Brown, "Indirect Rule as a Policy of Adaptation", in Raymond A. P. Thorpe, *From Tribal Rule to Modern Government.: The thirteen Conference Proceedings of the Rhodes Livingstone Institute for Social Research* (Lusaka: Government Printer,1959), p.49.

tribal authority as colonial rule provided them with an alternative form of authority and other emoluments.⁶² Lord Lugard's contention cannot escape criticism. Mwelwa Musambachime, Joseph Philip Mtisi and Sandram Henry Phiri argue in their various studies as has already been alluded to that chiefs did not side with the colonial authorities in the exploitation of their followers. They mitigated the colonial policies by applying policies that were less inimical to their followers.

Research Methodology

The study used materials from The University of Zambia main library especially the Special Collections Section. It also consulted materials from FENZA library. The University of Zambia's Institute for Economic and Social Research also provided valuable information on the Ngoni. The above sources of information yielded secondary data. The National Archives of Zambia was equally consulted for primary data. The study, in particular, relied on primary data for the purpose of originality. Interviews were also conducted for this study, mostly, I interviewed headmen, former labour migrants, indunas, sub chiefs and the staff of the Ministry of Chiefs and Traditional Affairs in Chipata. I also attended the 2015 N'cwala Ceremony in the Eastern Province to fully appreciate Ngoni culture and history. In line with the above, the study employed a qualitative approach.

⁶² Frederick J. D. Lugard. The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa, Fifth Edition (London: Frank Cass and Company Ltd, 1965), p. xxxix

CHAPTER TWO

NGONI REACTION TO COLONIAL POLICIES, 1895 TO 1964

Introduction

This chapter assesses the reactions of the Ngoni against colonial policies at the inception of colonial rule in Fort Jameson. It identifies major colonial policies that profoundly impacted on the welfare of the Ngoni people from 1895 to 1964. These policies were taxation, land alienation and labour recruitment. The chapter argues that Ngoni responses to these policies varied from overt resistance to acceptance. It argues that while in the early days of colonialism, the Ngoni were averse to paying taxes such as dog tax, they and their chiefs were more inclined to pay other taxes that they deemed not inimical. On the other hand, they responded to land alienation by refusing to leave their ancestral land unless after being forced. At times, the colonial state paid the Ngoni to leave their land. Their reaction against land alienation had the covert support of their Paramount Chief Mpezeni. Labour recruitment was the third policy introduced by the colonial state. The chapter contends that the Ngoni response to labour recruitment was largely determined by the conditions obtaining in their native reserves.

Reaction to the Taxation System

The taxation system was introduced in 1901 in Fort Jameson. This year marked the first tax collection which took place in the territory. With a collection from over seven thousand people in Bembaland, the administration was hopeful of collecting even more from the Ngoni since the Bemba were considered as one tribe who would be too reluctant to pay tax.¹

¹ Joseph Philip Mtisi, "The Economic Impact of Colonial Rule on Eastern Zambia 1900-1953: The Experience of Chipata and Petauke Districts", PhD Thesis, University of Ibadan, 1979, pp. 46-55.

According to Robert Cordrington, the administrator of Fort Jameson, tax was pegged at three shillings in 1901 and was readily paid. Contrary to what awaited the colonial state in future with regards to tax, Cordrington felt that Africans considered the tax system as something inevitable which they needed to pay for their welfare. He assumed that the Ngoni would not oppose tax payment as Africans in the neighbouring territories such as Nyasaland, Southern Rhodesia and Portuguese East Africa were paying tax.² Cordrington observed that from 1901 to 1908, tax was much more easily collected as people did not openly object to the policy. However, this positive response of the Ngoni towards tax payment was short lived because the years after 1908 showed that the Ngoni resented tax payment.

In July 1914, tax was raised from three shillings to five shillings.³ At this time, incumbent Chief Mpezeni, his sub chiefs and the general Ngoni people vehemently opposed the increase. An indaba was called and the chiefs complained to the magistrate that their people would find it difficult to pay five shillings as tax. As pointed out by Joseph Philip Mtisi, the chiefs argued that the government was not fair and was therefore inconsiderate to raise tax when the price of African produce remained low.⁴ The chiefs challenged the Fort Jameson magistrate to come up with a fair minimum price of African agricultural produce, which included livestock. According to Mpezeni, African labour was only hired at a reasonable fee whenever it was required by the European farmers.⁵

The magistrate's answer to the Ngoni was a blow in their face. He told the chiefs that their people should be reasonable in their demands as high wages could only be paid in rich

² Joseph Philip Mtisi, "The Economic Impact of Colonial Rule on Eastern Zambia 1900-1953: The Experience of Chipata and Petauke Districts", PhD Thesis, University of Ibadan, 1979, p.46.

³ N.A.Z., KDG39, Fort Jameson District Notebook, vol. 2, p.491.

⁴ Mtisi, "The Economic Impact of Colonial Rule on Eastern Zambia," p.52.

⁵ Mtisi, "The Economic Impact of Colonial Rule on Eastern Zambia," p.52.

countries.⁶ His reply was not in favour of the Ngoni. Instead, he stated that the colonial authorities could neither interfere between the employers and employees nor between buyers and sellers.⁷ Therefore, life was not easy for the Ngoni especially that the only efficient method Mpezeni could employ in addressing the needs of his people was the verbal appeal which failed.⁸

Paramount Chief Mpezeni together with his uncle, Chief Maguya, showed their discontent by appealing to Lawrence Wallace, the Administrator in Livingstone on 8 December, 1915.⁹ The two contended that it would be difficult for Africans to pay the new tax of five shillings when wages were constantly low.

Upon hearing the ongoing negotiations, the Ngoni and their chiefs reacted by maintaining their resistance and opposition to the new tax obligations. They hoped that the outcome of the negotiations would favour them. To this end, few people paid the new tax much to the annoyance of the government. The colonial state threatened that should delays in the paying of the new tax continue, tax was to be hiked further and pegged at 7.5 shillings with a 2.5 shillings as the fine for delays in tax payment.¹⁰ As Africans hoped for a better deal between the chiefs and European settler farmers who employed them, the settler farmers wrote a letter to the government imploring it to maintain the low wages and prices for African produce. The white settlers contended that:

⁶ N.A.Z., KDG39, Fort Jameson District Notebook, Vol. 2, p.492.

⁷ N.A.Z., KDG1/11/1 Indaba 19 June, 1914.

⁸ Alfred Tembo, "The Colonial State and African Farmers in Chipata District of Northern Rhodesia, 1895-1964," M.A. Dissertation, The University of Zambia, 2010, p.47.

⁹ N.A.Z., KDG1/11/1 Minutes of an Indaba held on 8 December, 1915.

¹⁰ N.A.Z., KDG1/11/1 Minutes of an Indaba held on 8 December, 1915.

The native tax would be raised to five shillings this year; it is in the interest of all employers of the native labour to cooperate and, inspite of the raising of Hut Tax (we ask that you) keep the native wages at present: Dry season labour 3/ and posho (food portion) wet season labour 4/ and posho. They (the white farmers) hope that you will help them by keeping to these rates and not forcing up the price of labour.¹¹

The news of hiking the tax to 7.5 shillings was not well-received by the Ngoni in general. Some of them, therefore, responded by migrating to Southern Rhodesia; others went to Portuguese East Africa and Nyasaland. This reaction by the Ngoni was aimed at finding other opportunities which would enable them to earn money to meet their tax obligations as well as personal exigencies.¹² The increase in tax, therefore, contributed to migrations and acted as a push factor to labour migration. Much as labour migration enabled the Ngoni to acquire personal exigencies such as bicycles, they hated paying tax with their hard-earned money. Where possible, the Ngoni avoided tax obligations.¹³

Individuals would at times fake their own death to avoid paying tax.¹⁴ This was to make sure that tax collectors never ever asked about them. The colonial administration upon noticing this development introduced burial card numbers which would serve as proof that someone had died indeed. Additionally, tax collectors requested to be shown the graves of those who died for verification.¹⁵ According to Chief Mishoro of Mishoro village, tax avoidance through faking

¹¹ N.A.Z., KDG1/7/1 Labour, North- Eastern Rhodesia Agricultural and Commercial Association to the Magistrate, 23 February, 1914.

¹² N.A.Z., KDG39, Fort Jameson District Notebook vol.2, p.522.

¹³ L. H. Zgambo, "Workers's Response to Conditions on Settler Farms of Eastern Province, 1890-1964." in A. M. Kanuza, Social Economic Change in Eastern Zambia: Precolonial to the 1980s (Lusaka: Historical Association of Zambia, 1992, pp. 82-92.

¹⁴ Interview with Induna Jabesi Chaka Zulu, 21 February, 2015. Mtenguleni, Chipata.

¹⁵ Interview, Induna Jabesi Chaka Zulu.

death was a common excuse.¹⁶ This attitude was, therefore, a clear indication that as time went by, the Ngoni were resenting tax payments.¹⁷ The administration hoped Africans would turn for work in large numbers as a way of satisfying tax obligations. On the contrary, the Ngoni were not ready to comply with every policy that was introduced by the company.

The Ngoni continued to show their unwillingness to comply with the tax policy. Mpezeni campaigned for the abolishment of tax on headmen. To support his argument, he stated that the job of headmen left them with little or no time to look for wage employment. Instead, it required them to be in the village supervising and settling their subjects' disputes.¹⁸ Paramount Chief Mpezeni sided with his people more often than with the colonial masters. He was, therefore, opposed to following the orders of the B.S.A.C officials. Additionally, he campaigned for the abolition of tax on extra wives. Mpezeni argued that the introduction of tax on extra wives was against the Ngoni tradition. In the same vein, he contended that it would lead to an increased rate of divorce cases by the people.¹⁹ His reaction showed that the Ngoni were still, as a tribe, anti-European.²⁰

Hut tax was also another form of tax which the Ngoni as well as other Africans evaded. The Ngoni responded to hut tax by moving their villages to remote places which hardened the job of the tax collectors.²¹ In this way, tax collectors could not reach certain areas to collect tax. In addition to building villages in remote places, the Ngoni reacted to tax payment by erecting huts in different villages. In such instances, tax collectors did not find them as people hid in another village upon hearing that tax collectors were collecting the taxes. The fact that the

¹⁶ Interview with Chief Mishoro, 21 February, 2015. Laweni Palace Yard, Mtenguleni.

¹⁷ Interview with Induna Jabesi Chaka Zulu.

¹⁸ N.A.Z., KDG40, Fort Jameson District Notebook Vol. 3, p.347.

¹⁹ N.A.Z., KDG40, Fort Jameson District Notebook Vol. 3, p.347.

²⁰ N.A.Z., KDG40, Fort Jameson District Notebook Vol. 3, p.347.

²¹ Mtisi, "The Economic Impact of Colonial Rule on Eastern Zambia," pp.55-76.

Ngoni would build huts in different villages goes to show the degree of resentment they had for taxation.

The 1935 tax register for Fort Jameson showed that the Ngoni were not only working in Southern Rhodesia but were in fact living there and made no contacts with the people in Ngoniland. Additionally, they were not even registered in any census as residents.²² The Ngoni despised taxation to an extent that by 1932, the District Commissioner of Fort Jameson district anticipated a drop in tax revenue from the Ngoni.²³

The tour report of 1932 by Cadet J.O Talbot Phibbs showed that between 5 June, 1932 and 20 June, 1932 tax payments by the Ngoni were not consistent.²⁴ There were a lot of names whose taxation was not paid. To this end, the Chief Secretary in Livingstone instructed all District Commissioners to warn Africans that unless they paid tax, action would be taken as from 1 September to enforce payment of taxes.²⁵ In the same year, only 6.5% of tax was collected in Madzimawe area.²⁶ This reaction by the Ngoni shows that they did not only hate the payment of tax, but they also did not hesitate to let their colonial masters know their unwillingness to pay.

The administration, seeing so many tax defaulters, started compelling them to pay taxes through labour. However, the Chief Secretary's opinion was needed before this could be implemented. In his letter to the Provincial Commissioner dated 16 September 1932, the Chief

²² N.A.Z.,SEC2/85, Eastern Province Fort Jameson District Annual Reports .Vol. 2. 1935-38.

²³ N.A.Z.,SEC2/686, Fort Jameson Tour Reports 1932-33. Report on tour made by cadet J.O. Talbot Phibbs in Fort Jameson, 28 June, 1932.

²⁴ N.A.Z.,SEC2/686, Fort Jameson Tour Reports 1932-33, Report on tour made by Cadet J.O. Talbot Phibbs in Fort Jameson, 28 June, 1932.

²⁵ N.A.Z.,SEC2/686, Fort Jameson Tour Reports 1932-33, Report on tour made by cadet J.O. Talbot Phibbs in Fort Jameson, 28 June, 1932.

²⁶ N.A.Z.,SEC2/686, Fort Jameson Tour Reports 1932-33, Report on tour made by cadet J.O. Talbot Phibbs in Fort Jameson, 28 June, 1932.

Secretary stated that “as I have said before the proposal to use labour as an equivalent to or substitution for a tax is hardly in conformity with the principle laid down in article ten of the Forced Labour Convention.”²⁷ Further, he noted that he doubted if the Ngoni would voluntarily come out to work on such terms.²⁸

It should be noted that almost all Africans in Northern Rhodesia hated taxation. Out of the 368,000 taxable males in the territory in 1934, only 186,000 paid tax representing 50% of the male population.²⁹ Much as others paid tax, they, too, had arrears as stated by the Chief Secretary who recorded that “We have possibly put the average income somewhat high and we have failed apparently to clear off the heavy load of arrears”.³⁰ Tax was, therefore, not willingly paid by the Ngoni and other people.

The Ngoni paid hut tax according to the number of huts an individual had. Thus, polygamists responded by keeping two or more of their wives in one hut.³¹ This was to ensure they paid less in terms of tax since the rule was that the more huts one built the more they paid in form of tax. Much as Cordrington and other company officials underplayed the Ngoni resistance towards tax, they proved to be a problem to their colonial masters with regard to taxation.³² They reacted in various ways to show their displeasure towards it.

²⁷ N.A.Z.,SEC2/340, Employment of tax defaulters as labourers by the Acting Chief Secretary, 16 September, 1932. Native Tax General Policy Vol. One.

²⁸ N.A.Z.,SEC2/340, Employment of tax defaulters as labourers by the Acting Chief Secretary, 16 September, 1932. Native Tax General Policy Vol. One.

²⁹ N.A.Z.,SEC2/340, Native Taxation and Arrears of Taxes, letter to Provincial Commissioners from Chief Secretary, 28 October, 1935. General Policy Native Tax Amendment Ordinance 1934-1935.

³⁰ N.A.Z.,SEC2/340 Vol.2, Native Taxation Minutes of 1934 by his Excellency, Native Tax General Policy. June, 1934.

³¹ Mtisi, “The Economic Impact of Colonial Rule on Eastern Zambia,” p.81.

³² Mtisi, “The Economic Impact of Colonial Rule on Eastern Zambia,” p.69.

In 1936, the colonial state announced a reduction in taxes. The Provincial Commissioner of Eastern Province observed that the current rate of tax at six pounds per year was too high and, therefore, not a reasonable percentage of the Ngonis' earnings.³³ The colonial state came to this conclusion partly because of the failure by Africans to pay tax effectively in 1934. It was noted that high tax charges were responsible for the apathy in paying tax in the territory.³⁴ The reduction of tax in 1936 was a clear indication that the Ngoni as well as other colonial subjects were reluctant to continue paying.

In January 1937, the colonial state further announced that traditional authorities should start receiving a percentage of the collected tax for their native treasuries.³⁵ Part of the funds in the native treasury was spent on chiefs' allowances. This decision by the colonial state was arrived at to encourage traditional authorities to collect tax knowing they would benefit from it. This measure was put in place by the colonial state to improve the low tax collection among the Ngoni in the 1930s. The colonial state collected more tax in 1920 compared to 1937.³⁶ However, after 1937, tax collection started improving. Table One shows the rate of tax collection from 1927 to 1947 in the Eastern province as a whole.

³³ N.A.Z.,SEC2/178, District Commissioners' Conferences Vol. One, Eastern Province, 1936-1939. Minutes of District Commissioners' Conference, Eastern Province held at Fort Jameson on 29 April, 1936 by the Acting Chief Secretary.

³⁴ N.A.Z.,SEC2/178, District Commissioners' Conferences Vol. One, Eastern Province, 1936-1939. Minutes of District Commissioners' Conference, Eastern Province held at Fort Jameson on 29 April, 1936 by the Acting Chief Secretary.

³⁵ N.A.Z.,SEC2/178, District Commissioners' Conferences Vol. One, Eastern Province, 1936-1939. Minutes of District Commissioners' Conference, Eastern Province held at Fort Jameson on 29 April, 1936 by the Acting Chief Secretary.

³⁶ N.A.Z.,SEC2/87, Annual Report Native Affairs, Eastern Province, 1947. Annual Report on African Affairs, p.2.

Table One: Tax Collection in the Eastern Province from 1927 to 1947

Years	1927	1937	1946	1947
Number of people who paid tax	28396	25283	42739	46456
Tax collection in percentage form	65	50	60	64

Source: N.A.Z.,SEC2/87, Annual report Native Affairs, Eastern Province, 1947. Annual Report on African Affairs 1947, p.2.

On 15 April, 1937, the colonial state announced that the penalty for defaulting tax was increased on 30 November as of that same year.³⁷ This was to encourage people to pay annual tax in good time. This measure by the colonial state led to an increase in tax collection from fifty percent in 1937 to sixty percent in 1946 as shown by the table above. The Ngoni willingly paid following the reduction in taxation. Tax collection, therefore, rose after 1937. Evidence for this can be seen in 1947 when tax collection went to 64 percent.

In 1947, tax rebates to Native Treasuries increased from 2/- to 3/6 to cover the increased cost of salaries and labour.³⁸ This meant that the colonial state allocated more funds from tax collections to the Ngoni traditional authorities. Mpezeni used these funds in the way he pleased and the government did not like it. In 1940, District Officer Gardener-Brown observed that:

Mpezeni uses funds from the native treasury the way he wishes and
the system is such that government is restoring in part to Mpezeni

³⁷ N.A.Z.,SEC2/178, District Commissioners' Conferences Vol. One, Eastern Province, 1936-1939. Minutes of District Commissioners' Conference, Eastern Province held at Fort Jameson on 14 and 15 April, 1937 by the Provincial Commissioner.

³⁸ N.A.Z., SEC2/178, Eastern Province District Commissioners' Conferences,1936-1939....Minutes of a Meeting of the Central Treasury Board Held on 18 June, 1947 by Provincial Commissioner in Fort Jameson, p.26.

the tribute he formerly levied. The three chiefs Nzamane, Sayiri and Maguya are members of the Ngoni Royal Family of Jere and this relationship affects the working of the Native treasury.³⁹

The colonial state was not happy with Mpezeni with regards to how the Native treasury funds were spent, but did little to rein in Mpezeni. If government opposed Mpezeni on how he spent treasury funds, he would easily protest. Such a move would discourage him from collecting taxes from his people. Therefore, the colonial state watched him do as he pleased. Meanwhile, some Ngoni continued to evade taxation. For example in 1940, some of the men purported to have left Chief Mshawa's village to look for labour did so to escape paying taxes.⁴⁰ The Ngoni, therefore, continued to avoid tax in the 1940s and 50s. They maintained their anti-colonial attitude. District Commissioner D.J. Lewis confirmed this in 1952 when he observed that, "non-cooperation with government, is therefore, the cornerstone of the Ngoni fabric and the Paramount Chief Mpezeni always confirms with this tradition of passive hostility".⁴¹ The Ngoni were hostile to government with regards to tax. They did not like tax from the time it was introduced.

In 1952, the District Commissioner R.S. Foster observed that the government was not bothered much if the Ngoni were not paying tax as expected because tax benefited the native treasury more than government.⁴² The Ngoni still despised tax payment even when much of the tax collected went to the Native Treasury. For example, Cadet A.F. Florence found more than

³⁹ N.A.Z.,SEC2/689, Fort Jameson Tour Reports 1940- 1947. Tour Report no. 2 of 1940 by A.G.H Gardener-Brown, District Officer, 27 March, 1940.

⁴⁰ N.A.Z.,SEC2/689, Fort Jameson Tour Reports 1940- 1947. Tour Report no. 1 of 1940 by Cadet H.G. Reynolds, 11 March, 1940.

⁴¹ N.A.Z.,SEC2/694, Fort Jameson Tour Reports 1952. Tour Report no. 11 of 1952 by District Commissioner D.J. Lewis, 1 November, 1952.

⁴² N.A.Z.,SEC2/694, Fort Jameson Tour Reports 1952. Tour Report no. 6 of 1952 by R.S. Foster, District Commissioner, 2 August, 1952.

seventy tax defaulters in 1960 when he toured Ngoni villages in Fort Jameson District.⁴³ This, therefore, shows that the Ngoni continued to resent tax in the early 1960s. Throughout the colonial period, they despised tax.

Reaction against Land Alienation

The reaction of the Ngoni towards land alienation started as early as 1897 when the Ngoni were defeated by the British South Africa Company forces. This was because ten thousand square miles of land was seized from them. Additionally, ten thousand of the twelve thousand herds of cattle were seized from the Ngoni following the 1897 war between the Ngoni and the B.S.A.C.⁴⁴ District Commissioner K. G. Bradley and District Agricultural Officer R.H. Fraser attributed the 1897 war to the fact that the Ngoni were disadvantaged as they lacked European sophistication such as guns.⁴⁵ The 1897 war left the Ngoni without enough land, a situation which led to the imbalance between land and human population.⁴⁶

The B.S.A.C. after acquiring so much land in Fort Jameson decided to start selling some of it to white settlers. This move had a negative effect on the Ngoni. The land which they once occupied was the same land which was being sold by the B.S.A.C.⁴⁷ The Ngoni resented such actions by the company and they exhibited this by their unwillingness to move to the land that was designated for them, which was unfertile.

⁴³ N.A.Z.,SEC2/702, Fort Jameson Tour Reports of 1960. Tour Report no.1 of 1960 by Cadet A.F. Florence, 25 February, 1960.

⁴⁴ N.A.Z.,SEC2/176, A report on the Native Reserves of Fort Jameson District by K.G. Bradley and R.H. Fraser.

⁴⁵ N.A.Z.,SEC2/176, A Report on the Native Reserves of Fort Jameson District by K.G. Bradley and R.H. Fraser.

⁴⁶ A.M. Kanduza, "Land and Peasant Politics in Chipata District, 1890s to 1980" in A.M. Kanduza (ed.) Social-Economic Change in Eastern Zambia, Pre-colonial to the 1980s (Lusaka: Historical Association of Zambia, 1992), p.49.

⁴⁷ A.M. Kanduza, "Land and Peasant Politics in Chipata District, 1890s to 1980", P.50.

According to Greyson Peter Nyozani Mwale,⁴⁸ the Ngoni in Fort Jameson had several confrontations with the government before they were chased from their land.⁴⁹ Much as they were defeated, their response to colonial rule and dispersion from their ancestry land was coupled with extreme opposition.⁵⁰ The B.S.A.C., on the other hand, continued to lease part of the ten thousand square miles of land to the white settlers.

Ngoni sustenance was solely dependent on farming in which land was the most important resource. This meant that the more they lost land, the more the Ngoni people depended on wage employment and the better it was for both the company and the settler farmers. But the Ngoni people knew very well that the government and white settlers thrived on their shortage of land. Much African protest came to centre on land.⁵¹ The Ngoni Paramount Chief Mpezeni and his senior chiefs led their people in endless protests over grazing and agricultural land with European settlers from the turn of the century. The reaction of the Ngoni towards land alienation was, therefore, not a silent one.

In 1903, the East Luangwa Land Commission was formed. This was the first of its kind in Northern Rhodesia. Its sole purpose was to demarcate land for Africans who would be removed from the Charter Land Concession and settler farms. The Ngoni protested as they did not want to be taken to land that was known to be infertile.⁵² Evidence of Ngoni protest and resentment of the colonial state was noted by N.P. Hammond, a cadet who toured Luangeni in Chief Mpezeni's area. In 1938, Hammond recorded that:

⁴⁸ Greyson Peter Nyozani Mwale is a retired teacher in Chipata district, due to his rich history of the Ngoni he is employed by Breezy Radio Station where he, among other issues, talks about Ngoni historical events. He is popularly known as Gogo Breezy in Chipata district.

⁴⁹ Interview with Greyson Peter Nyozani Mwale, 20 February, 2015, at Breezy Radio Station, Chipata.

⁵⁰ Interview with Greyson Peter Nyozani Mwale, 20 February, 2015.

⁵¹ Kanduzi, "Land and Peasant Politics in Chipata District, 1890s to 1980", p.56.

⁵² Interview with Induna Jabesi Chaka Zulu.

Mpezeni has never been of any great assistance to the government. The reasons for this lie partly in his character which is weak and shiftless. Acute land shortage is an ever present reminder of the past, and one can only hope that an early settlement of this question may lead to greater cooperation by the paramount chief.⁵³

The Ngoni, therefore, did not remain silent over land which they well knew belonged to them. In the example above, it is clear that Mpezeni did not cooperate with the government over land. He still wanted more land to be allocated to him. Mpezeni was therefore not on good terms with the colonial state.

Hammond noted that there was extreme land shortages in Mpezeni's country. This made Mpezeni to have a bitter relationship with the colonial state. According to Hammond:

The villages in North Central Luangeni between Katandala and Nyamfinzi hills, are in a worse plight. Though these two areas are being led out for special mention, it must not be supposed that there is adequate land anywhere.⁵⁴

The shortage of land led to discontent by the Ngoni directed at the B.S.A.C. The land shortage arose from agricultural and political sources. There was need to satisfy the Ngonis' sense of political grievance, as well as their agricultural needs. Bradley, therefore, noted that satisfaction to the Ngoni was the essential basis of political contentment.⁵⁵

⁵³ N.A.Z.,SEC2/687, Fort Jameson Tour Reports 1933-1938. Report on tour no.2 of Luangeni and Katete villages by Cadet N.P. Hammond on 24 April, 1938.

⁵⁴ N.A.Z.,SEC2/687, Fort Jameson Tour Reports 1933-1938. Report on tour no.2 of Luangeni and Katete villages by Cadet N.P. Hammond on 24 April, 1938.

⁵⁵ N.A.Z.,SEC2/176, A tour report on the native reserves of Fort Jameson District by K.G Bradley and R.H. Fraser.

In 1924, a Native Reserves Commission was formed to check how the Ngoni were coping in the reserves and ascertain if there would be need for future readjustments of the reserves. The proposed adjustment and extension of the reserves took a lot of time to be carried out and the commission's report was only issued in the 1930s when the reserves were already overpopulated. The Ngoni did not like this delay and their relationship with the administration soured each time their needs concerning land were not attended to.⁵⁶

The Ngoni could only be satisfied if the land issue was sorted out. This was because the cornerstone of colonial exploitation in Fort Jameson District hinged upon land expropriation. Ngoni discontent largely centred on this aspect because they believed that land and cattle all belonged to Mpezeni.⁵⁷ They believed it was only Mpezeni who restricted when and where not cattle would graze.⁵⁸ Mpezeni, on the other hand, when confronted by the District Commissioner in 1935 over his number of cattle answered that he did not know how many cattle he had and that his cattle grazed anywhere.⁵⁹ Similarly, J .A. Barnes also observed that:

All the cattle in the country are held to belong in one sense to the Paramount Chief himself, but in as far as the cattle held by most people is concerned, there is no more to this statement than in the parallel expression that Mpezeni is the owner of the land or of the world.⁶⁰

⁵⁶ Interview with Chief Mishoro, 21 February, 2015.

⁵⁷ Sandram Henry Phiri, "Some Aspects of Spatial Interaction and Relation to Governmental Policies in a Border Area: A Study in the Historical and Political Geography of Rural Development in the Zambia/Malawi and Zambia/Mozambique frontier zone (1870-1979)", PhD Thesis, University of Liverpool, 1980, p.226.

⁵⁸ Phiri, "Some Aspects of Spatial Interaction and Relation to Governmental Policies in a Border Area", p.226.

⁵⁹ Phiri, "Some Aspects of Spatial Interaction and Relation to Governmental Policies in a Border Area", p.226.

⁶⁰ J. A. Barnes, "The Fort Jameson Ngoni", in Elizabeth Colson and Max Gluckman (eds.) Seven Tribes of British Central Africa (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1951), p.205.

Therefore, much as the Ngoni owned cattle individually, it collectively belonged to the king and he had to protect it. This meant that Mpezeni would side with his people whenever land issues came up because land, too, belonged to him.

The reaction to land alienation by the Ngoni was unique. Generally, they did not want to share land with the white settlers.⁶¹ For example, Reveland Schalkwyk reported that one woman, Mgurui, had complained to him that a white farmer by the name of Page was putting too much restriction on where she could cultivate. Additionally, she complained that Page's cattle strayed on to her door step. Therefore, she wanted to move out of the farm and go to the reserve.⁶² Her feeling was shared with Chief Mpezeni who in 1913 postulated that "it is good that we should have our own land where the white man cannot come".⁶³ Headman Malawo also observed that there was always a spark between the Ngoni and the Europeans. This was because the colonialists looked at the chiefs' authority pertaining more to his subjects than over the land.⁶⁴ To this end, they denied that a chief was the custodian of the land.⁶⁵ Mphanza Mvunga echoed headman Malawo's assertion when he noted that "the chief is therefore in no sense to be considered the landlord of the land in which he exercises jurisdiction over the natives of his tribe".⁶⁶

Another example of the negative reaction of the Ngoni towards land alienation took place in 1932. It involved two farms in Fort Jameson district which belonged to the late K. Brown. These are farms number 22 and 31.⁶⁷ The Ngoni encroached on these two farms without protest

⁶¹ Interview with Chief Madzimawe, 21 February, 2015 at Mtenguleni.

⁶² N.A.Z.SEC2/16, A tour report on the natives of Fort Jameson District by K.G Bradley and R.H Frase, 1948.

⁶³ N.A.Z.,BS3/73, Establishment of Native Reserves... Extracts from notes used by the administrator when interviewing the chiefs at Fort Jameson,13 June ,1913.

⁶⁴ Interview with Headman Malawo, 22 February, 2015, at Laweni Palace, Mtenguleni.

⁶⁵ Mphanza P. Mvunga, "Colonial Attitude on Land Law and Policy in Zambia," The University of Zambia Institute for African Studies, Zambian Paper No.17, p.2.

⁶⁶ Mvunga, "Colonial Attitude on Land Law and Policy in Zambia," p.2.

⁶⁷ N.A.Z.,SEC3/340, Native Reserve Acquisition of farms for Native Settlement in Fort Jameson District.

from the owner during the time he was alive.⁶⁸ It was estimated that there were two thousand Africans resident in villages on the land in question. The government, therefore, wanted to purchase the two farms from the Brown family so that they could be handed over to Africans for their occupation.⁶⁹ The government planned in this manner not because it genuinely wanted to serve the Ngoni's interest. It was prompted to act this way because of the protest the Ngoni would put up if they were to be asked to vacate the land.

Land alienation caused the Ngoni so much poverty. For example, Cadet H.G. Reynolds during his tour of the Msandile reserve on 11 March, 1940 observed that:

Throughout Msandile reserve, there is only one area which is not short of food. That is Chanje's area. The soil is poor and it was also extremely difficult to find meat. I was trying to buy goats or sheep but these animals appear to have been finished. Every village among the Ngoni refused to sell one because of "njala".⁷⁰

The Ngoni, therefore, were suffering from the time land alienation was introduced in Fort Jameson. The poor soil alluded to in Reynold's report was undoubtedly as a result of the infertile reserves the Ngoni were subjected to. Their livestock too had no pasture to graze on. This contributed to their hatred towards the colonial state.

In 1941, the government acquired land for Ngoni resettlement in accordance with the recommendations of the Native Reserve Commission of 1924.⁷¹ The commission had concluded that more land was needed to decongest the reserves. By 1947, the Ngoni settled in the new

⁶⁸ N.A.Z.,SEC3/340, Native Reserve Acquisition of farms for Native Settlement in Fort Jameson District.

⁶⁹ N.A.Z.,SEC3/340, Native Reserve Acquisition of farms for Native Settlement in Fort Jameson District.

⁷⁰ N.A.Z.,SEC2/689, Fort Jameson Tour Reports 1940-47. Fort Jameson Tour Report no.1 of 1940 by Cadet H.G. Reynolds, 11 March, 1940.

⁷¹ N.A.Z.,SEC2/87, Annual Report Native Affairs 1947, Eastern Province (District Reports). Annual Report on African Affairs 1947, p.2.

settlement blocks which, unfortunately, lacked water. Though the government promised to sink water wells, it did not successfully complete them.⁷² Evidence from Table Two shows that the government abandoned 25 wells and 10 wells were incomplete. It only managed to complete 2 wells, this was appalling and showed a lack of seriousness towards addressing water challenges for the Ngoni. The Ngoni continued to suffer like in the 1920s. Table Two below shows the water wells by the government in Fort Jameson District in 1947.⁷³

Table Two: Water Wells in Fort Jameson District Ngoni Reserve 1947

Abandoned Wells	Uncompleted Wells	Old Wells Cleared	Wells Constructed
25	10	2	2

Source: N.A.Z.,SEC2/87, Annual Report Native Affairs 1947, Eastern Province (District Reports). Annual Report on African Affairs 1947, p.2.

The water situation made some Ngoni to react by moving into land which the colonial state alienated from them. For example, in 1947, District Commissioner O.B. Hall stated that Chief Mnutwa moved his entire village into restricted land. The reason was lack of water in his reserve.⁷⁴ Additionally, the Ngoni moved their villages out of their chiefs' area. Such villages became nobody's business and they caused disputes between Europeans and Africans as the Ngoni encroached on settlers' estates which had water.⁷⁵

⁷² N.A.Z.,SEC2/87, Annual Report Native Affairs 1947, Eastern Province (District Reports). Annual Report on African Affairs 1947, p.2.

⁷³ N.A.Z.,SEC2/87, Annual Report Native Affairs 1947, Eastern Province (District Reports). Annual Report on African Affairs 1947, p.2.

⁷⁴ N.A.Z.,SEC2/689, Fort Jameson Tour Reports 1940-1947. Fort Jameson Tour Report no.17 of 1947 by District Commissioner O. B. Hall, 23 December, 1947.

⁷⁵ N.A.Z.,SEC2/689, Fort Jameson Tour Reports 1940-1947. Fort Jameson Tour Report no.16 of 1947 by District Assistant. 22 December, 1947.

Between 1945 and 1948, the Ngoni occupied farms number 22 and 31 owned by J. Innes without permission from the colonial state.⁷⁶ The government was once again forced to purchase the farms for the Ngoni like they did with farms number 22 and 24 already discussed.

The Standing Finance Committee Secretary stated that:

Farms in the Fort Jameson District be purchased for the Ngoni. These are farms numbers 22 and 31 owned by J.C. Innes. The two farms are already occupied by the Ngoni and they cannot move out. In fact, the farms are over cultivated and their purchase will not improve the situation but if they are stopped from occupying the farms, the land situation will be worse. These farms will provide land for the much overcrowded Mpezeni reserve for which there is no other outlet.⁷⁷

By the 1940s and 1950s, the conditions obtaining in the reserves were so bad that the colonial state tried to come up with alternatives. In addition to buying farms for the Ngoni, the state wanted some of the Ngoni to move to Chipangali Resettlement Scheme in 1951, which had tse tse flies and poor soils.⁷⁸ 7,702 people were identified for resettlement but only 200 people moved there. By 1953, all the cattle they moved with them had died of trypanosomiasis.⁷⁹ The Ngoni reacted to land alienation by doing what they could to help themselves. For example, in 1952, District Commissioner R.S. Foster complained of Ngoni encroachment on European land, but when asked, Mpezeni claimed it was actually Europeans who encroached on African

⁷⁶ N.A.Z.,SEC3/336, Additional land required in Fort Jameson Area for Native Purposes. (Purchase of Privately Owned farms). Minutes of a meeting by the Standing Finance Committee Secretary, 26 November, 1945.

⁷⁷ N.A.Z.,SEC3/336, Additional land required in Fort Jameson Area for Native Purposes. (Purchase of Privately Owned farms). Minutes of a meeting by the Standing Finance Committee Secretary, 26 November, 1945.

⁷⁸ Kanduza, "Land and Peasant Politics in Chipata District, 1890s to 1980", p.60.

⁷⁹ Kanduza, "Land and Peasant Politics in Chipata District, 1890s to 1980", p.60.

land.⁸⁰ In the same year, some Ngoni people of Chief Tereka left the chiefdom because of land shortages.⁸¹

In 1955, District Commissioner R.S. Burles reported that Chief Nzamane's chiefdom was the most populated of all Ngoni chiefdoms.⁸² It had a population of 21,000 people. During his visit in March 1955, the DC was met with hostility and a lack of cooperation.⁸³ This reaction by the Ngoni was due to the feeling that the colonial state cared less about their land shortages.⁸⁴

In the same year, District Officer M.R. Seal Clerk, also visited Chief Nzamane's area and observed that:

Nzamane's area has very poor land, the soil is thin, poor bush regeneration and grass stunted or non-existent. On top of this is a heavy cattle population and a relatively dense human population, and the resulting bad crops and thin cattle are stimulants to active opposition to European ideas of soil conservation methods.⁸⁵

The reaction against land alienation and soil conservation had an impact on the agricultural methods of the Ngoni. The government, being aware of the extreme land shortage among the Ngoni in 1954, encouraged them to practice contour ridges and conservation farming methods. However, most Ngoni people did not like this idea altogether. Instead, they wanted more land, if that failed, they would rather be left alone to practice agriculture as they knew it. For

⁸⁰ N.A.Z.,SEC2/694, Fort Jameson Tour Report 1952. Fort Jameson Tour Report no.6 of 1952 by R.S. Foster, 2 August, 1952.

⁸¹ N.A.Z., SEC2/694, Fort Jameson Tour Report 1952. Fort Jameson Tour Report no.3 of 1952 by District Officer D.J. Lewis, 19 July, 1952.

⁸² N.A.Z.,SEC2/694, Fort Jameson Tour Report 1955. Fort Jameson tour Report no.1 of 1955 by District Commissioner R. S. Burles, 3 August, 1955.

⁸³ N.A.Z.,SEC2/697, Fort Jameson Tour Report 1955. Fort Jameson tour Report no.1 of 1955 by District Commissioner R. S. Burles, 3 August, 1955.

⁸⁴ N.A.Z.,SEC2/697, Fort Jameson Tour Report 1955. Fort Jameson tour Report no.1 of 1955 by District Commissioner R. S. Burles, 3 August, 1955.

⁸⁵ N.A.Z.,SEC2/697, Fort Jameson Tour Report 1955. Fort Jameson tour Report no.1 of 1955 by District Officer M.R. Seal Clerk, 28 June, 1955.

example, the Ngoni wanted to practice mbunde,⁸⁶ while the government preached the practice of mizera.⁸⁷ The people, however, hated mizera so much that they would not practice it.⁸⁸ In one incident in 1954, a letter was written to the DC by the Administrative Assistant notifying him that the people perceived contour ridge with mixed feelings. The Administrative Assistant wrote that the land messenger Neckson Banda reported that people at Lembani's village refused to make contour ridges and mizera. They said that they were taught how to hoe by God and that they would not heed any advice from anybody.⁸⁹ Zizwe, a headman, man also refused to do contour ridges and stated that the District Commissioner may do what he pleased because he was not ready to listen to him.⁹⁰

The land problems of the Ngoni continued up to the early 1960s, the colonial state did not manage to solve these problems.⁹¹ A tour of Chief Chinyaku's area in 1960 by Cadet P.F. Neve shows that soil erosion affected the Ngonis' crops and contributed to their hostility. The land was too small and the chiefdom was the smallest among the Ngoni with only seventeen villages. Additionally, the colonial state was, in 1963, still forcing the Ngoni to move into Chipangali area. The Ngoni, therefore, despised the colonial state till Zambia's independence in 1964.

⁸⁶ Mbunde is a system of cultivation in which soil is heaped together before planting the seed.

⁸⁷ This is a system of cultivation in which mounds are made and seeds planted on top of the mounds. This leaves some form of structure in the cultivated area as these mounds usually exist in a straight line.

⁸⁸ Interview with Induna Kasamba Mulopa, 23 February, 2015, at Mtenguleni Palace yard.

⁸⁹ N.A.Z.,EP4/7/15, Paramount Chief Mpezeni. Letter to District Commissioner from administrative Assistant, 25 October, 1954.

⁹⁰ N.A.Z.,EP4/7/15, Paramount Chief Mpezeni. Paramount Chief Mpezeni. Letter to District Commissioner from administrative Assistant, 25 October, 1954.

⁹¹ N.A.Z., SEC2/702, Fort Jameson Tour Reports 1960. Tour Report no.2 of 1960 by Cadet P. F. Neve, 12 February, 1960.

Response to Labour Recruitment

Other than their reaction against land and tax policies, the Ngoni also responded to labour recruitment. The Ngoni were supervised to work by their chiefs, who received instructions from colonial authorities. They mostly responded to labour or wage employment in three ways. The first mode of response to labour recruitment by the Ngoni were desertions and absenteeism, these were common in Ngoniland. In 1917, the magistrate of Fort Jameson complained in a letter to the Secretary in Livingstone that “loafing by the Ngoni had become a menace on the farms . . . to beat desertions, farmers as a rule would sign twenty percent to thirty percent more juveniles than would actually be required.”⁹² One should, therefore, note that due to desperation and the need for farm labourers, white farmers resorted to recruiting juveniles to work in their farms because Ngoni adults deserted work. This was a clear indication that the Ngoni reacted to wage employment negatively. They despised working for the government as well as the settler farmers thereby forcing farmers to start recruiting juveniles in their place.⁹³

As earlier noted, the major reason for the desertions were wage-tax issues fuelled by the mutual agreement of the settler farmers and the Government.⁹⁴ In order to reduce desertions by the Ngoni, the Chief Secretary to observe in 1946 that:

The number of deserters shows no signs of decreasing. Since it is the general practice for a deserter to destroy his identity certificate and apply for a new one, am requesting all District Commissioners to instruct

⁹² N.A.Z., BS3 /230, Magistrate East Luangwa to the Secretary in Livingstone, 30 March, 1917.

⁹³ Interview, Peter Nyozani Mwale. 20 February, 2015, at Breezy Radio Station.

⁹⁴ N.A.Z., KDG1/7/1. Labour North Eastern Rhodesia Agricultural and Commercial Association to the Magistrate, 23 February, 1914.

registration clerks to note in tax registers the names of men posted as deserters.⁹⁵

This shows that the Ngoni resented wage employment. In situations where the Ngoni failed to desert labour, they were absent. They did this even when government declared absenteeism a punishable offence. The Chief Secretary, H.A. Watimore, confirmed this in 1946 when he stated that:

Government made emergency power regulations making desertion and absenteeism a penal offence but it was continuing despite jail sentences given to Africans. Though the sentences given were enough, were not, in fact sufficient to deter Africans from absenting themselves.⁹⁶

To further curb desertions, the Northern Rhodesia government enacted an ordinance which was meant to eradicate desertions in the territory. The Native Registration Ordinance Number 12 was passed on 1 September, 1930. It required Africans in some selected districts to have certificates of identity. Fort Jameson and Petauke were among those districts whose people were to have certificates.⁹⁷ Punitive measures enacted to deter deserters by the government, however, did not yield the desired result in that the problem was not about absenteeism or desertions but conditions of work. To this end, desertions continued and only 44 of them were convicted by 1947.⁹⁸ The government and white farmers in trying to curb desertions came to an agreement that the fields planted by employees should be reduced, but this did nothing to

⁹⁵ N.A.Z.,SEC1/1323, Native Labour Desertions and absenteeism, District Circular no.5 of 1946 by the Chief Secretary, 12 July, 1946.

⁹⁶ N.A.Z.,SEC1/1323, Native Labour Desertions and absenteeism, District Circular no.5 of 1946 by the Chief Secretary, 12 July, 1946.

⁹⁷ N.R.G. Annual Report, Department of Native Affairs, 1930-Livingstone Government Printers, 1931. p.22.

⁹⁸ N.R.G. Northern Rhodesia African Affairs Annual Report, 1947 (Lusaka: Government Printer, 1948), p.56.

stop the deserting Ngoni.⁹⁹ Other forms of negativity towards labour included drunkenness, damage to property through negligence, abusive language and refusing to work. The Ngoni, therefore, continued to react negatively to tax, land alienation and labour throughout the colonial period.

The second mode of response was shunning wage labour. This meant staying away from wage employment.¹⁰⁰ The Ngoni thus retained their labour in the traditional economies where they worked for themselves. This method, though less common, was largely practised by the Ngoni in the early stages of colonial rule before a number of reserves were formed. Prior to the 1920s, a lot of Ngoni were still occupants of much of the fertile land. They relied on farming to meet their exigencies and therefore saw no need of selling their labour to the B.S.A.C.¹⁰¹ However, the Ngoni did not always withhold their labour from the B.S.A Company on their own. They mostly refused to work for the colonial state with the blessings and support of their chiefs. For example, Chief Msoro in 1918 appeared in court for discouraging his people from hiring out their labour to the colonial administration.¹⁰² However, this attitude of the Ngoni towards wage employment was practiced by other Africans in Northern Rhodesia until after the 1920s.

The Ngoni responded to labour recruitment by refusing to work for the colonial state but instead using their labour to work for themselves. Ian Henderson supports this assertion by noting that shunning labour by the Ngoni only reduced towards the end of the First World War after a

⁹⁹ N.R.G. Northern Rhodesia African Affairs Annual Report, 1950 (Lusaka: Government Printer, 1950), p.71.

¹⁰⁰ L.H. Zgambo, "Workers Response to Conditions on the Settler Farms of the Eastern Province, 1898-1964" in A. M. Kanduzi (ed.), Social- Economic Change in Eastern Zambia Pre-colonial to the 1980s (Lusaka: Historical Association of Zambia,1992), p.77.

¹⁰¹ Zgambo, "Workers Response to Conditions on Settler Farms of the Eastern Province", pp. 77-78.

¹⁰² Joseph Philip Mtisi, "The Economic Impact of Colonial Rule on Eastern Zambia 1900 1953: The experience of Chipata and Petauke Districts", PhD Thesis, University of Ibadan, 1979, p.185.

number of reserves had been created.¹⁰³ This was because the reserves did not have fertile soil, a situation which forced the Ngoni to look for wage employment.¹⁰⁴

Once their productive capacity was undermined, the Ngoni began to migrate to those labour markets with comparatively more appealing wages and working conditions. Migration was the third response to labour recruitment and became common when it was increasingly difficult for the Ngoni to meet basic needs in the reserves. Africans who never wanted to migrate had few options but to do so. The conditions of the reserves, therefore, played a significant role in ensuring the Ngoni migrated in search of wage employment, the poor soils in reserves made the practice of subsistence agriculture by the people difficult.¹⁰⁵

In addition to the poor conditions of the reserves, wages, too, contributed to migrations by the Ngoni. Since different wages were offered by different territories, the Ngoni travelled to those territories with comparatively higher wages than were offered at home. For example, recruits of the Witwatersrand Native Labour Association had already passed through Southern Rhodesia in 1905 and painted such a glowing picture of the conditions of employment in South Africa.¹⁰⁶ This was true in that by 1935, Fort Jameson was paying five shilling while South Africa was offering five pounds for the same type of work, five pounds was equivalent to one

¹⁰³ Ian Henderson, "The Growth of a Wage-Earning Labour Force in Colonial Zambia", (Memeo: 1975), p.5.

¹⁰⁴ Interview with Chief Mishoro.

¹⁰⁵ See p.66.

¹⁰⁶ Zgambo, "Workers Response to Conditions on the settler Farms of the Eastern Province, 1898-1964" in A. M. Kanduza (ed.) Social-Economic Change in Eastern Zambia: Pre-colonial to the 1980s. Lusaka: Historical Association of Zambia, 1992 p.79.

hundred shilling.¹⁰⁷ Therefore, South Africa had better wages and this contributed to labour migrations.¹⁰⁸

Migration by the Ngoni did not start in 1935. Evidence in a report given by cadet J.O. Talbot Phibbs who toured Chief Pembamoyo's village in 1932 shows that there were only 31 males working within the village and 166 were working outside the territory.¹⁰⁹ This shows that migrations from Fort Jameson had started much earlier than 1935. Chipasha Luchembe also confirms this when he notes that in 1922 to 1931, there were more than 45,000 Northern Rhodesians engaged in mine and farm labour outside the country.¹¹⁰ Alfred Tembo also observes that the Zambezi boys were labour migrants in South Africa as early as 1870.¹¹¹

Apart from poverty, other reasons for labour migration included the need for better wages to acquire commodities such as bicycles and clothes, satisfaction of personal desires such as the need to marry and adventure and tax obligations. The Ngoni, like other groups of Africans such as the Bemba and the Lozi, migrated because they needed commodities not offered by the immediate environment. For example, those who migrated came back with goods such as bicycles, nice clothes and many other necessities. The luxuries of previous years had, therefore, become the necessities of the present.¹¹² This gave those who remained at home the desire to also migrate for greener pastures and better opportunities.

¹⁰⁷ Annual Colonial Reports of Northern Rhodesia, 1935 (Lusaka: Government Printers, 1936), p.22.

¹⁰⁸ Hobert Houghton, *The South African* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), p.238.

¹⁰⁹ N.A.Z.,SEC2/686, Fort Jameson Tour Reports 1932-1933. Tour of Chief Mishoro and Tindi area on 20 June, 1932 by E.H.L. Poole.

¹¹⁰ Chilufya Chipasha Luchembe, "Finance Capital and Mine Labour: A Comparative Study of Copper Miners in Zambia and Peru, 1870-1980," PhD Thesis, University of California, 1980, p.247.

¹¹¹ Alfred Tembo, "The Colonial State and African Farmers in Chipata District of Northern Rhodesia, 1895-1964", M.A. Dissertation, The University of Zambia, 2010.

¹¹² N.A.Z.,SEC2/85 Social Impact of Colonial Rule, p. 21.

Further, some Ngoni migrated because they had personal needs such as wanting to marry. These could leave home to go for work in environments where their goals could easily be achieved.¹¹³ Others migrated due to the fact that they heard stories about the bright lights of South Africa, Southern Rhodesia and the attractions of town life. Such stories made them to go and work in the brighter city which was some form of adventure to them. In addition to adventure, some Ngoni went to South Africa so that they could easily satisfy tax obligations.¹¹⁴ Taxation was among the reasons for emigrations though it was not a stand-alone factor as there were many others as has been mentioned.

From the above reasons that led to migrations of the Ngoni, it should be emphasised once again that conditions of economic life in the reserves constituted a major reason for migrations. This is because almost every aspect of Ngoni life was hinged upon what they produced in the reserves. For example, the Ngoni sold their agricultural produce to pay tax obligations before they were moved to the reserves.¹¹⁵ However, the failure of the reserves to support Ngoni agriculture sufficiently forced them to seek other means of meeting their obligations and survival in general.

By 1932, labour recruiters in Eastern province recruited labour under conditions despised by the Ngoni. There were two methods of recruitment, the ration system and the posho system.¹¹⁶ The Ngoni however, preferred the posho system to the rations.¹¹⁷ The posho system was a

¹¹³ N.A.Z.,SEC2/304. Additional Land required in the Fort Jameson Area for Native Purposes (Reports etc.), Volume One.

¹¹⁴ Interview with Joseph Mwale, 20 February, 2015, at Muzeyi Rural Health Centre, Chipata.

¹¹⁵ N.A.Z.,SEC2/687, Fort Jameson Tour Reports 1933-1938. Report on tour no. 2 of Luangeni and Katete villages by Cadet N.P. Hammond on 24 April, 1938.

¹¹⁶ N.A.Z.,SEC2/687, Fort Jameson Tour Reports 1933-1938. Report on tour no.2 of Luangeni and Katete Villages by Cadet N.P Hammond on 24 April, 1938.

¹¹⁷ N.A.Z.,SEC2/687, Fort Jameson Tour Reports 1933-1938. Report on tour no. 2 of Luangeni and Katete villages by Cadet N.P. Hammond on 24 April, 1938.

mechanism which the labour recruiters did not maintain the labour after having it recruited, workers had targets and they left on successful completion of their targets.¹¹⁸ The posho system therefore, made the Ngoni work for specific targets and left them with time for themselves. The ration system, on the other hand, was a strategy in which the labour recruiters maintained their labour once they recruited it.¹¹⁹ To further reduce migrations, pass laws were put in place. To this end, the Ngoni migrated mostly when chance permitted. Even so, the colonial state mechanised a strategy to ensure the workers abroad had their wages sent home. This was in an effort to ensure tax was collected from workers outside the territory and in turn avoid unnecessary migrations. Even with such strategies at labour recruitment and sustenance, the Ngoni continued to migrate. In 1933, in Chief Mishoro's area, forty percent of the adult population was working outside the territory while only eight percent was working at home.¹²⁰ This shows that there were many people who migrated due to deliberate colonial policies such as ration payments and tax.

Table Three is a census showing the population of three districts and the migration level of the taxable population in Fort Jameson in 1912.

¹¹⁸ N.A.Z.,SEC2/687, Fort Jameson Tour Reports 1933-1938. Report on tour no. 2 of Luangeni and Katete villages by Cadet N.P. Hammond on 24 April, 1938.

¹¹⁹ N.A.Z.,SEC2/687, Fort Jameson Tour Reports 1933-1938. Report on tour no. 2 of Luangeni and Katete villages by Cadet N.P. Hammond on 24 April, 1938.

¹²⁰ N.A.Z.,SEC2/686, Fort Jameson Tour Reports 1932-1933. Tour of Chief Mishoro and Tindi area on 20 June, 1932 by E.H.L. Poole.

Table Three: Census Summeries 1911 To 1912

Gender	Fort Jameson district (Chipata) population	Lundazi district Population	Petauke district population	Total population in the three districts by gender
Males	40000	12000	16000	68000
Females	45000	16000	18000	79000
Total male and female population per district	85000	28000	34000	147000
Number of Taxable Population per District				
	Fort Jameson	Lundazi	Petauke	Total Taxable Population By Gender
Males	22885	6603	7495	36983
Females	2000	782	1053	3853
Total Taxable Population Per District	24885	7385	8548	40818

Source: N.A.Z.,KDG39, Fort Jameson District Note Book vol. ii (1912), p.251.

From the table above, the total of taxable males for Fort Jameson and Petauke was 30,380 men in 1912. It was reported that five thousand of these men had migrated to Southern Rhodesia. In the same year, South Africa attracted three hundred men.¹²¹ On the other hand, the Ngoni who worked within their territory were split as follows: Broken Hillman mines had 2,580 men,¹²² B.S.A.C. had 600 labourers, African Lakes Company had 366 workers, N.C.E.C. attracted 2,243, and the rest had 400 workers. In all, a total of 6,243 able bodied men were working locally that year. Therefore, the total of able-bodied men who were engaged in work

¹²¹ N.A.Z., KDG 1/1 North Eastern Province District Note Books, pp. 263-271.

¹²² Zgambo, "Worker's Response to the Conditions of on the Settler Farms of the Eastern Province, 1898-1964", p.84.

outside the territory as of that year, was more than those who were in the territory.¹²³ Most of the Africans left in search of employment in either Southern Rhodesia or South Africa.¹²⁴ The above evidence shows that from the 1912 up to the 1930s, there were many Ngoni people working outside the territory than those working within the territory.

Chipata tour report of the 1940 to 1947 indicates that the population of able bodied men working outside the province increased from 35 percent to 39 percent as of 11 July, 1947.¹²⁵ This shows that the trend of labour migration had continued from 1912 through to the 1930s and 1940s. Labour shortages due to migration were even more pronounced during the rainy season when the Ngoni, in addition to migrations, were busy in their own fields. For example, Labour Officer S. Grimst Vedt in 1956 observed that “as usual when plenty of rains have fallen. Africans get very busy with their own fields and some European farmers have complained of labour shortages.”¹²⁶ In another incidence, the Tobacco Extension Officer in an interview with the Labour Officer stated in the same year, 1956 that “with regular occurring labour shortages on farms, farmers would do well to reduce on the acreages accordingly.” The above evidence shows that labour shortages continued up to the late 1950s. The Ngoni were not willing to work for the farmers at home hence the challenges faced by the European farming communities.

L.H. Zgambo notes that the rate of migrations from Fort Jameson was constant and not reducing in the early 1960s, arguing that:

In 1960, nearly 50 percent and 47 percent of the able bodied people of the Chipata and Petauke Districts, respectively, were working outside the province. In 1961, out of a total of 108,275 taxable males in the

¹²³ N.A.Z., KDG5/1 North Eastern Province District Note Books, pp. 263 and 271.

¹²⁴ Annual Report, Department of Native Affairs, 1936 (Lusaka: Government Printer, 1937), p.75.

¹²⁵ N.A.Z., SEC2/689, Chipata Tour Reports, 1940 to 1947.

¹²⁶ N.A.Z., EP4/2/49, Labour Reports Office, Department of Labour.5 January, 1956.

whole Eastern Province, 65711,933 were working for wages and 34933 of that number were working outside the territory...the pattern and degree of migration did not change until after the Unilateral Declaration of Independence by Southern Rhodesia in 1965.¹²⁷

Therefore, the Ngoni continued to be labour migrants even at the eve of Zambia's Independence. This trend was only stopped by the fact that Zambia got independence in 1964. At this time, the Ngoni felt part and parcel of the ruling government.

Conclusion

This chapter aimed at showing the reactions of the Ngoni towards tax and land alienation in the colonial period in Fort Jameson. The chapter has shown that in the early years when taxation was introduced, the Ngoni paid tax without much hesitation. However, with the progression of time the Ngoni started resenting tax payment much to the annoyance and surprise of the colonial state. The Ngoni evaded tax by building villages on both sides of the border. Thus, they crossed to another country when tax collectors came to collect tax.¹²⁸

In addition to their reactions against tax, the Ngoni hated land alienation, they resented it so much that their attitude towards the administration could be classified as anti-European and anti-colonial.¹²⁹ Their reaction against land alienation was at the centre of the Ngoni and this determined the relationship they had with the Administration. The Ngoni resented the fact that fertile land was taken away from them and this led to poverty as they had little or no land to practice peasant farming. Further, their responses towards labour recruitment is another aspect that has been considered by the chapter. The Ngoni chiefs and their subjects resented hiring

¹²⁷ Zgambo, "Worker's Response to the Conditions of on the Settler Farms of the Eastern Province, 1898-1964", p.87.

¹²⁸ Interview, Induna Kasamba Mulopa.

¹²⁹ N.A.Z., KDG40, Fort Jameson District Notebook Vol. 3, p.347.

their labour to the administration. Instead of working within the territory, they would rather go and look for wage employment in other countries such as South Africa and Southern Rhodesia. The colonial government together with the settler farmers could not easily recruit African labour because the Ngoni wanted better conditions of service than was offered locally. It was not until the introduction of reserves that the colonial state and settler farmers began to easily recruit the Ngoni. The chapter has shown that the reactions of the Ngoni against colonial rule and its policies was mainly negative. This is because the instances the Ngoni and the colonial administration got along were fewer than those they opposed each other.

CHAPTER THREE

THE CHANGING ROLES OF Ngoni TRADITIONAL AUTHORITIES IN THE COLONIAL PERIOD, 1924 TO 1964

Introduction

This chapter attempts to assess the changing roles of traditional authority during the colonial period from 1924 to 1964. While the previous chapter ascertained the reactions of the Ngoni towards colonial rule, this chapter will show that with the coming of colonialism and the defeat of the Ngoni by the British South Africa Company (B.S.A.C), the structure of Ngoni traditional leadership changed. The Paramount Chief Mpezeni started ruling his people with interference from the B.S.A.C and later from the colonial state that replaced the company-government in 1923.

In the precolonial era, the Ngoni Paramount Chief determined how Ngoniland was ruled. Being the Paramount Chief, there was no one above him. He was the king to whom all animals, land and people belonged. However, the establishment of colonial rule meant that the chief had to serve the interests of the colonial state simultaneously with those of his subjects. The Ngoni traditional authorities had to maintain their popularity with their people as well as remain loyal to the colonial state. The two roles, however conflicting, were carried out by the Paramount Chief Mpezeni and other Ngoni chiefs. The chapter will analyse the changing roles of the Ngoni traditional authorities by first considering the extent of control the colonial administration exercised on them. This is important as it will show how much the colonial state compromised the affairs of traditional leadership. Secondly, the chapter will show the resilience exhibited by the Ngoni traditional authorities (chief Mpezeni and sub-chiefs) in maintaining their values and ensuring political stability and popularity among their subjects. The chapter will also show that

Mpezeni sometimes cooperated and at other times challenged colonial policies to defend his followers' interest.

Colonial Influence on the Ngoni Traditional Authority

After defeating the Ngoni, the colonial state introduced a policy known as the Indirect Rule in 1929. This was a rule by the colonial authorities through Ngoni Chiefs. Ngoni chiefs were carrying out instructions given to them by the colonial state. It was done to preserve the outward form of traditional leadership while undermining its power. The colonial state started interfering with how the defeated were to be governed. Under this interference, the Paramount Chief Mpezeni was obliged to escort District Commissioners on their tours to inspect villages.¹ For instance, in his tour report of 1933, N. P. Hammond observed as follows:

I took Chief Mpezeni with me on the part of the tour in the Ngoni reserve. He was however only able to do one day's travelling, iam (*sic*) of the opinion that further tours of the Ngoni reserve will have to be made without him. Apart from any habits of his which may not be conducive to being in good training Mpezeni is not fit at all, after going ten miles he was coughing blood and was forced to stop . . . as he needed medical attention.²

The above quotation shows that the colonial state wanted to exercise control over the Ngoni paramountcy. In another incidence, the Paramount Chief was informed about Chief Tereka's dethronement. Much as he had powers over succession, he no longer exercised this power without interference from the colonial state.³ In the past, the Ngoni traditional custom of

¹ Interview with Ester Banda, 20 February, 2015 at Misholo Village, Chipata.

² N.A.Z.,SEC2/687, Fort Jameson Tour Report no.10 of 1938, Tour of Mpezeni, Tereka and Maguya Villages by Cadet N.P. Hammond.

³ Interview with Chief Madzimawe, 21 February, 2015, Laweni Palace Yard, Mtenguleni.

succession was properly followed with regards to succession. Whenever a chief died, his son in accordance with patrilineal succession would be installed as the new chief. However, this changed as the Governor interfered in the traditional affairs concerning succession. For example, in 1956 M.J.S.W. Priestly, the DC for Fort Jameson informed Mpezeni that:

The governor had decided that chief Tereka must cease to be a chief due to lack of corporation (*sic*). We must therefore decide quickly who will succeed him. I would like if possible to put it before the full Ngoni meeting which we decided to have on 22 June. Would you please try to have all preliminary discussions about his successor before then so that we can make a decision at the meeting.⁴

The outcome of the meeting was that Chief Tereka was dethroned. In an ideal situation, the Ngoni Paramount Chief was supposed to dethrone Chief Tereka and not the Governor. The above situation indicates that the colonial state actually exercised political control over the Ngoni traditional affairs.⁵ As for Mpezeni, he was not significantly involved in the process of dethroning Chief Tereka much as he was the Paramount Chief. This was an indication that his role and duty had indeed changed; his powers, being equally reduced.

In addition to dethroning Chief Tereka, the colonial state also showed their influence when they demanded that Chief Madzimawe stop being chief due to old age.⁶ This demand by the colonial state was not in line with Ngoni tradition in that the tradition did not require chiefs to retire. Chiefs could only stop being chiefs if they died or if Mpezeni dethroned them.⁷ Much

⁴ N.A.Z.,EP4/7/15, Letter to Mpezeni from District Commissioner M.J.S.W Priestly dated 26 May, 1956.

⁵ N.A.Z.,EP4/7/15, Letter to Mpezeni from District Commissioner M.J.S.W Priestly dated 26 May, 1956.

⁶ N.A.Z., EP1/ 1 /12, Recognition of chief Madzimawe, letter from the Secretary of cabinet to resident secretary C. A. Russell.

as Ngoni tradition was against the retirement of chiefs, the colonial state was granted their wish which showed how influential they became in Ngoni traditional affairs.⁸

Other than withdrawing recognition of Ngoni chiefs without consultation with Mpezeni, the colonial state continued to prove their control of the Ngoni traditional affairs. In 1934, Paramount Chief Mpezeni was provided with robes of European origin by the government. Initially, Mpezeni could only wear Ngoni traditional robes but from that time, he started wearing robes of a European origin yet he was an African chief representing Africans.⁹ Evidence shows that even if Mpezeni and his sub-chiefs wore the uniforms, they did not like them as they had pill box hats usually worn by domestic and personal servants.¹⁰ Additionally, the chiefs complained that the uniforms had a colonial badge which reduced them to servants of the colonial state and ignored their superior status.¹¹ The table below shows the details of the ceremonial robes Mpezeni and his sub chiefs were given.

⁷ N.A.Z.,EP1/ 1 /12, Recognition of Chief Madzimawe, letter from the Secretary of cabinet to resident secretary C.A. Russell.

⁸ N.A.Z., EP1/ 1 /12, Recognition of Chief Madzimawe, letter from the Secretary of cabinet to resident secretary C.A. Russell.

⁹ N.A.Z.,EP4/7/1, Letter from Provincial Commissioner to Chief Secretary dated 31 October, 1934.

¹⁰ N.A.Z.,SEC2/1234, Uniforms for Chiefs' Robes, 1940-1949.

¹¹ N.A.Z.,SEC2/1234, Uniforms for Chiefs' Robes, 1940-1949.

Table Four: Ceremonial Robes for Ngoni Chiefs in 1934

District	First class robes	Second class robes
Fort Jameson	4	24
Lundazi	3	12
Petauke	3	14

Source: N.A.Z.,EP4/7/1, Letter from Provincial Commissioner to Chief Secretary dated 31 October, 1934.

In 1935, Mpezeni was awarded a medal by his Royal Highness Prince George during his visit to Ngoniland. The award recognised Mpezeni's loyalty to the colonial state.¹² In his every day dealings with the colonial state, the Ngoni Paramount Chief would make a mistake and apologise whenever he was disobedient to the colonial state. For example, in 1954, Mpezeni showed how much the colonial administration was in control of his chiefdom when he wrote an apology letter to the Provincial Commissioner. In the letter, he plainly showed how dependant he was on the colonial state. The letter shows how Mpezeni related with the colonial state:

I refer to the message from secretary for native affairs, which you sent to me, sir (*sic*). I humbly beg to apologise for my misbehaviour and opinion of insolence I have previously acted. I am certain that I will obey all instructions given to me by all government officials, and associate with them. I can also remember and agree that, all what I have been doing during past days was very, very bad indeed, and I know what caused me to behave in such a manner, it is because some people have been misleading me and

¹² N.A.Z., EP4/7/1, Letter to Provincial Commissioner from Chief Secretary dated 12 August, 1935.

making me not to obey government rules and lead my people well. I promise that I will not behave like that again. I therefore beg your kindness of forgiving me for all the nonsenses I have been doing, such behaviour was entirely very bad sir. (*sic*)

Yours servant, Mpezeni.¹³

Paramount Chief Mpezeni's letter to the Provincial Commissioner shows that Mpezeni could go to any length to ensure he was in good terms with the colonial state.

To fulfil the wishes of the administration, the Chief could even go on tours alone. For example, a 1932 report by J.O. Talbot shows that Chief Mpezeni undertook a tour of the Ngoni reserve. The object of this tour was to warn all court members against irregular practices in connection with their courts. Additionally, Mpezeni wanted to stimulate voluntary labour in connection with a water development scheme.¹⁴ This, therefore, indicates Mpezeni's changed role in the sense that he carried out the demands of the colonial state. It should also be noted that forcing people to work was not a thing he himself cherished as it made him unpopular.¹⁵ Be that as it may, it was a duty he carried out.¹⁶

¹³ N.A.Z., EP4/7/15, Paramount Chief Mpezeni. Apology letter from Mpezeni 111 to District Commissioner dated 24 November, 1954.

¹⁴ N.A.Z., SEC2/686, Fort Jameson Tour Reports (1932-33). Report on tour made by J.O. Talbot to Chief Tereka and Maguya on 13 September, 1932.

¹⁵ Interview with Induna Jabesi Chaka Zulu 21 February, 2015. Mpezeni Laweni Palace yard, Mtenguleni.

¹⁶ Interview with Induna Jabesi Chaka Zulu.

Other than going on tours alone, chiefs at times helped the colonial state in the collection of tax and in return they would get tax rebates in the early stages.¹⁷ It should be noted that such arrangements made chiefs unpopular as they seemed to side with the colonial state.¹⁸

The Ngoni Traditional Authorities and their Resilience against Colonial Rule

Although Ngoni chiefs were often displaying conformity and obedience to the colonial authorities, they sought to be independent in the way they ruled their subjects. To this end, there were constant clashes between the Paramount Chief Mpezeni and the colonial state.¹⁹ Mpezeni could at times show resistance and a degree of independence contrary to the will and wish of colonial agents.²⁰ The manipulation and control the colonial administration imposed on the Ngoni was therefore limited.²¹ This means that there was some level of autonomy enjoyed by the Ngoni much as they were under the B.S.A.C. and later the colonial state. This part of the chapter therefore discusses Ngoni resilience against colonial control and manipulation.

Mpezeni showed his unwillingness to cooperate with the colonial state.²² His sub-chiefs equally behaved like him. For example, Headman Zizwe showed his resentment for colonial rule by refusing to practise contour ridging in 1955. The District Commissioner was, therefore, disappointed and wrote a letter to Mpezeni informing him of the situation. Headman Zizwe

¹⁷ Interview with Induna Jabesi Chaka Zulu.

¹⁸ Interview with Induna Jabesi Chaka Zulu 21 February, 2015. Mpezeni Laweni Palace yard, Mtenguleni.

¹⁹ Interview with Chief Madzimawe.

²⁰ Interview with Chief Mishoro, 20 February, 2015. Laweni Palace yard, Mtenguleni.

²¹ Interview with Chief Madzimawe.

²² Interview with Chief Mishoro.

stated clearly that he was not ready to carry out the wishes of the Boma.²³ This situation was indicative of the fact that Ngoni traditional authorities would not do everything they were asked to do by the colonial state.

Paramount Chief Mpezeni, as already noted, did not always agree to do what he was asked to do by the state. At times, he refused to escort District Commissioners on their tours.²⁴ As alluded to in the previous chapter, District Commissioner R.S. Foster experienced this incidence when he requested Paramount Chief Mpezeni's presence on 22 September, 1952. In his letter to Mpezeni, R.S. Foster indicated that he did not see any proper reason for Mpezeni's refusal to escort him. Paramount Chief Mpezeni, on the other hand, replied by stating in the local language that "*ndilibe nthawi yoyenda pamodzi ndi inu bwana...*"²⁵ which is equivalent to saying that "I have no time for escorting you on tour, sir."

However, certain policies such as cleanliness were not bad in themselves. If a policy enhanced development and supported the wellbeing of the Ngoni populace, Paramount Chief Mpezeni supported it. For example, Mpezeni stimulated voluntary labour in connection with the water development scheme as earlier noted.²⁶ He did this when he toured his villages and encouraged people to work hard towards water development.²⁷ In a similar example, Mpezeni helped Kenneth Bradley to organise local villagers in cleaning up dirty villages.²⁸ As a District Commissioner, Kenneth Bradley asked Mpezeni to organise villagers. A lot of people felt

²³ N.A.Z.,EP4/7/15, Paramount Chief Mpezeni,

²⁴ Interview with Gogo Breezy, Breezy radio station, Chipata, 18 February, 2015.

²⁵ N.A.Z., EP4/7/15, Letter to the Paramount Chief Mpezeni from the District Commissioner R.S. Foster on 22 September, 1952.

²⁶ N.A.Z.,SEC2/686, Fort Jameson Tour Reports 1932-33, Report on tour made by J.O. Talbot Phibbs to Chief Tereka, Sayiri and Maguya Villages on 13 September, 1932.

²⁷ N.A.Z.,SEC2/686, Fort Jameson Tour Reports 1932-33, Report on tour made by J.O. Talbot Phibbs to Chief Tereka, Sayiri and Maguya Villages on 13 September, 1932.

²⁸ Kenneth Bradley, Once a District Officer (London: St Martin's Press, 1966), p.49.

infuriated by this except for the school headmaster and the traditional leadership. It is clear that the Ngoni traditional leadership was fair in terms of its approach and supported policies that were beneficial.²⁹ They reacted against those that were not favourable to the Ngoni community.

In 1938, the dog tax was introduced. Hammond noted that this tax was not popular and people resented it. They did not feel like they had to be paying for what they thought as merely keeping dogs.³⁰ Paramount Chief Mpezeni did not like this policy either. Therefore, there was less emphasis on the collection of this tax. Eventually, in July 1938, Cadet Hammond notified the Provincial Commissioner that most chiefs were not serious with their jobs.³¹ The Provincial Commissioner agreed with the Honourable Chief Secretary at a conference that half the recommended emoluments of the chiefs should be paid to them from their tax collections.³² This meant that if chiefs placed less emphasis on tax collection which included dog tax, they would be paid less in emoluments because half of their allowances came from collected taxes. This decision was arrived at due to the fact that chiefs did not concern themselves so much with collecting the dog tax, fishing fees and other charges the central government had imposed. The traditional authorities knew such measures were unpopular among their subjects.³³

Chiefs feared alienating themselves from the rural populace.³⁴ They depended on the rural populace for popularity. The chiefs did not apply the colonial laws to their fullest extent.³⁵

²⁹ Interview with Chief Mishoro, 20 February, 2015. Mtenguleni.

³⁰ N.A.Z.,SEC2/687, Fort Jameson tour reports 1933-1938, Tour Report no. 8 of 16 September, 1938 by Cadet N.P. Hammond, visited 22 Mpezeni and 28 Sayiri villages.

³¹ N.A.Z.,SEC2/687, Fort Jameson Report 1933-1938, Tour Report no. 8 of 16 September, 1938 by Cadet N.P. Hammond, visited 22 Mpezeni and 28 Sayiri villages.

³² Samuel N. Chipungu, "African Leadership under Indirect Rule in Colonial Zambia", in Samuel N. Chipungu (ed.) *The Guardians in their Time: Experience of Zambia Under Colonial Rule, 1890-1964*. (London: The Macmillan Press Limited, 1992), p.56.

³³ Chipungu, "African Leadership under Indirect Rule in Colonial Zambia", p.56.

³⁴ Chipungu, "African Leadership under Indirect Rule in Colonial Zambia", p.61.

³⁵ Chipungu, "African Leadership under Indirect Rule in Colonial Zambia", p.61.

Additionally, they increasingly redefined the duties of the courts in an attempt to strike a balance between their perceived traditional loyalties and the legal requirements of the state.³⁶ For example, Chief Tereka deliberately did not order the court in his village to pursue Amon Banda for failure to pay dog license fee in 1934.³⁷ In this way, he redefined the law by not fully applying it so that he could maintain his popularity with his people.

Chiefs to a large extent were not harsh with their people when implementing certain policies. Duties such as tax collection were not seriously handled by the chiefs and taxes were not collected as expected. To strike a balance between the protesting rural masses and the Government, Native Authorities collected less controversial taxes, fines and levies and ignored the most resented ones.³⁸ When this behaviour was rampant, one government official lamented that the “Ngoni peasants suffer considerably from their useless and degenerate chiefs . . . the fact that Ngoni authorities are making no effort to collect their tribe revenues is a measure of their selfishness and incompetence.”³⁹ The colonial state expected Ngoni chiefs to be on their side in the maximum exploitation of the local Africans.⁴⁰ What the state did not realise were the ambiguous roles placed upon the traditional leaders and the fact that the chiefs did not owe their loyalty to the colonial state alone but to serving their tribesmen as well.

Apart from the Paramount Chief Mpezeni, other Ngoni chiefs such as Chief Nzamane, Maguya and Madzimawe worked in such a manner that their subjects were not neglected. In 1920, the Ngoni wanted wage increment which the administration and settlers did not see fit.⁴¹ To this

³⁶ Chipungu, “African Leadership under Indirect Rule in Colonial Zambia”, p.61.

³⁷ N.A.Z.,EP4/7/1, Native Chiefs and Headmen, An indaba with the Angoni chiefs held at Fort Jameson on March 2, 1934 by A.W.M.S. Griffin.

³⁸ Chipungu, “African Leadership under Indirect Rule in Colonial Zambia”, p.51.

³⁹ Alfred Tembo, “The Colonial State and African Farmers in Chipata District of Northern Rhodesia, 1895-1964,” M.A Dissertation, The University of Zambia, 2010, p.58.

⁴⁰ Interview with Nelson Sakala, Chief affairs officer, Chipata, 20 February, 2015.

⁴¹ N.A.Z.,KDG1/11/1, Minutes of an indaba held on 8 December, 1915.

end, the Ngoni chiefs raised concern with the Secretary for Native Affairs Coxhead when he visited Eastern Province in 1926.⁴² The chiefs' fight for their people did not yield the desired results, be that as it may, their efforts to maintain political stability and preservation of the traditional belief did not go unnoticed. With the progression of time, it became widely known to the colonialists that chiefs would do anything to maintain their popularity with their people.

Similarly, Mpezeni spoke on behalf of a citizen in 1955 by writing a letter to the Northern Rhodesia Police Commanding Officer.⁴³ In this case, a Ngoni citizen was injured during work and wanted compensation from the colonial state. However, the District Commissioner wanted him to continue working without being compensated.⁴⁴ Therefore, Mpezeni took it upon himself to ensure his people were not exploited.⁴⁵ This in itself was a sign that the Ngoni traditional authority did not do away with their people as they served their interests alongside those of the colonial state.

Mpezeni strongly spoke on behalf of his people when African tax was raised.⁴⁶ As noted in the previous chapter, the Paramount Chief appealed to the Administrator for Northern Rhodesia in Livingstone in an effort to raise African wages. The Administrator Lawrence Wallace, however, castigated the Ngoni by stating that they were lazy.⁴⁷ In 1938, he complained when tax was pegged at ten shillings.⁴⁸ He contended that an increase in tax made married men to

⁴² N.A.Z.,KDG1/11/1, Minutes of an indaba held on 8 December, 1915.

⁴³ N.A.Z., EP4/7/15, Paramount Chief Mpezeni, letter from Mpezeni to the Police Commanding Officer dated 11 October, 1955.

⁴⁴ N.A.Z., EP4/7/15, Paramount Chief Mpezeni, letter from Mpezeni to the Police Commanding Officer dated 11 October, 1955.

⁴⁵ N.A.Z.,EP4/7/15, Paramount Chief Mpezeni, letter from Mpezeni to the Police Commanding Officer dated 11 October, 1955.

⁴⁶ N.A.Z.,KDG1/11/1, Minutes of an indaba held on 8 December, 1915.

⁴⁷ N.A.Z.,KDG1/11/1. Minutes of and indaba held on 8 December, 1915.

⁴⁸ N.A.Z., KDG39, Fort Jameson District Notebook Vol. 2, p. 522.

look for labour elsewhere leaving their women at the villages. The above situation resulted in immorality on the part of the women left home.⁴⁹ This action by Mpezeni much as it did not yield the desired results, showed how much Mpezeni cared for his people. It is clear that he was working for the interests of the Ngoni populace and did not put the colonial state at the expense of the Africans.

Paramount Chief Mpezeni, other than speaking for his people on tax-related issues, kept the Ngoni traditions especially those that were despised by the colonial state. One such tradition was beer-drinking which was common during Nc'wala traditional ceremony, an annual event. Therefore, Paramount Chief Mpezeni Pontino was seen to be one such paramount chief consistent with the above habit. As earlier alluded to, beer drinking had a considerable traditional significance with the Ngoni and the European views on drunkenness were certainly not shared by the Ngoni.⁵⁰ The Ngoni general populace felt that their leader was consistent with keeping tradition much as the colonialists expected him to favour them.⁵¹ The colonial masters however were aware that Pontino's unco-operative attitude towards the government had been the one consistent aspect of his behaviour.⁵² Thus, it can be concluded that much as they were ruled by the colonial state, the Ngoni were still, as a tribe, anti-European.⁵³

⁴⁹ N.A.Z., KDG39, Fort Jameson District Notebook Vo.1 2, p. 522.

⁵⁰ N.A.Z.,KDG40, Fort Jameson District Notebook Vol. 3, p.346

⁵¹ Interview, Chief Madzimawe.

⁵² N.A.Z., KDG40, Fort Jameson District Notebook Vol. 3, p.347.

⁵³ N.A.Z., KDG40, Fort Jameson District Notebook Vol. 3, p.347.

The Ngoni and the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland

The proposal for the formation of the Federation took place at a Lancaster House Conference in April 1952.⁵⁴ It was spearheaded by Roy Welensky who was born in Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia in 1907. He served as the Director of Man power in Northern Rhodesia and became the most prominent representative in the Legislative Council.⁵⁵ Roy Welensky, after consultations with Oliver Stanley, a Colonial Secretary in Churchill's Government, was opposed from going ahead with amalgamation of the Rhodesias and Nyasaland.⁵⁶ Additionally, the Federation was not accepted by the Labour Government in England. Roy Welensky turned to the overseer of Southern Rhodesia, T. Huggins, with intentions of forming the Federation. After convincing Godfrey Huggins with the proposal for amalgamation, a conference was held which had Huggins, Roy Welensky and two Africans representing Southern Rhodesia.⁵⁷ This meeting lacked African representation from Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. Therefore, it made extremist Africans from these regions to be against from the onset.⁵⁸ Many Africans from Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland threatened protests at the formation of the Federation.

The Federation made the Ngoni like any other Africans in Central Africa to despise its formation. The Federal Government was despised more by the Ngoni and other Africans in general as it adopted the Southern Rhodesian Constitution which had discriminatory or white supremacist practices.⁵⁹ For example, post offices were racially segregated. Additionally, a law

⁵⁴ Kenneth Young, Rhodesia and Independence (London: J.M Dent and Sons Ltd., 1969), p.39.

⁵⁵ Walima T. Kalusa, "The Killing of Lillian Margaret Burton and Black and White Nationalism in Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) in the 1960s", in Walima T. Kalusa and Megan Vaughan, Death, Belief and Politics in Central African History (Lusaka: The Lembani Trust, 2013), p.206.

⁵⁶ Young, Rhodesia and Independence, p. 38.

⁵⁷ Young, Rhodesia and Independence, p.39.

⁵⁸ Young, Rhodesia and Independence, p.39.

⁵⁹ Thomas Franck, Race and Nationalism: The Struggle for Power in Rhodesia-Nyasaland (New York: Fordham University Press, 1960), p.151.

existed which restricted Africans who joined the Federal Army from having access to arms. African schools were not allowed to have cadet platoons like European schools.⁶⁰ Further, the Federal Government held the view that African masses had no intellectual basis for political choice and conviction.⁶¹ This view was not true in that most Africans had organised political institutions such as the Ngoni under Mpezeni, the Bemba under Chitimukulu and the Lozi under the Litunga.

The Ngoni further showed how they did not want anything to do with the Federation at a meeting with the Provincial Commissioner held on 7 December, 1950. At this meeting the Ngoni Paramount Chief supported by his sub-chiefs stated that:

We do not want the Federation as in Zimbabwe because Southern Rhodesian chiefs have no power and their courts have been dissolved. Even the smallest case must be taken to a white man. The Africans in Southern Rhodesia have had their land taken away. The pass laws in Southern Rhodesia are strict and the police are always asking Africans for their Chitupa and they are imprisoned if they do not have them. Southern Rhodesia is a Whiteman's country. We do not want all these undesirable effects to come in Northern Rhodesia. Therefore, we do not want any closer political union.⁶²

On 26 January, 1951, the District Commissioner for Fort Jameson P. Shawn wrote a letter to the Eastern Province Commissioner telling him that the Ngoni had no interest in the Federation. The District Commissioner contended that:

⁶⁰ Franck, Race and Nationalism, p.151.

⁶¹ Franck, Race and Nationalism, p.151.

⁶² N.A.Z.,EP4/20/22, Federation.

The Ngoni are angry and have no interest in the Federation because they think the Federation issue was brought with new names to cheat people. The Ngoni asked what was hoped for from closer association. This was answered by others who said the Europeans wanted to remove the two African members from the Legislative Council. While others said that they wanted to diminish the powers of the chiefs and the Native Courts. Africans feel these are the reasons why the Europeans persisted with the Federation idea even when Africans have so often said they do not want it. The Ngoni have taken the discussion to personalities. They are saying that Mr Welensky supported amalgamation because he was a South African. They went on to say that South Africans are cruel to Africans. Therefore, the Africans would be cruelly treated under the Federation.⁶³

The majority of the Ngoni did not support the Federation. Much as it was widely held that the Federal constitution would institute an African Affairs Board which would block any bill purporting to discriminate Africans,⁶⁴ the Ngoni did not feel the colonial state would stick to its promise and for this reason, they spoke strongly against it.⁶⁵ The state in trying to convince the Ngoni and other Africans in Northern Rhodesia advanced that a strong British State in Central Africa was important as it would balance off the influence of South Africa which was slowly extending the ideas of apartheid.⁶⁶ Even if they were assured by the colonial state, the Ngoni including their representative still despised the Federation. For example, Sir Stewart Gore Brown, a member of the Legislative Council representing Africans' interest openly stated

⁶³ N.A.Z.,EP4/20/22, Letter from the District Commissioner Shawn to the Eastern Province Provincial Commissioner dated 26 January, 1951.

⁶⁴ Interview with Chief Madzimawe.

⁶⁵ Interview, Chief Madzimawe.

⁶⁶ Interview, Chief Madzimawe.

the position of Africans on 21 March, 1950 by remarking that “Africans will not consider the Federation . . . it is ushered with too great a blare of publicity- in view of the secrecy later imposed.”⁶⁷

Ngoni protests had the blessings of their Paramount Chief in that Mpezeni also showed how much he despised the formation of the Federation.⁶⁸ Mpezeni requested from the colonial state that he should visit England to discuss the Federation. Therefore, in 1952, Mpezeni visited England for three months and protested against the formation of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland.⁶⁹ The Ngoni traditional ruler and the general populace showed their stance and opposition to the oppression that they anticipated would come with the Federation.

During the time Chief Mpezeni visited England in protest of the Federation in 1952, his views resonated well with those of Nationalists back home. Three leading members of the African Minority Nationalist Democratic Party sent a letter to the British Secretary of Commonwealth arguing that the Southern Rhodesian Constitution which the Federal government adopted be set aside and a more democratic one be substituted for it.⁷⁰ This situation gave a new impetus to the desire for independence. By 1957 and 1958, nationalists such as Kenneth Kaunda, K. Banda, H.B. Chiperebe and Joshua Nkhoma had already started making serious calls for nationalism and some of their followers were ready to use violence.⁷¹ Roy Welensky, therefore, saw that almost all Africans of any level at education believed that they ought one day to rule themselves. This was the situation in Northern Rhodesia where from chiefs such as

⁶⁷ N.A.Z.,EP4/20/22, Federation.

⁶⁸ N.A.Z., KDG40, Fort Jameson District Notebook Vol. 3, p.346.

⁶⁹ N.A.Z., KDG40, Fort Jameson District Notebook Vol. 3, p. 346.

⁷⁰ Young, Rhodesia and Independence, p.49.

⁷¹ Young, Rhodesia and Independence, p.50.

Mpezeni to the local businessman, clerk or carpenter, the African in this sense was a nationalist.⁷²

Conclusion

The chapter has argued that Ngoni traditional authorities were not passive in their dealings and relationship with the colonial administration. The first part of the chapter has shown how the colonial state tried to undermine the autonomy of the Ngoni traditional rulers. The colonial state wanted the Ngoni traditional leaders to side with them even if it meant the traditional leaders losing their political, economic and social touch with the people. However, the Ngoni traditional authorities made their services available to the local people on a daily basis.⁷³ Despite the ambiguous duties placed upon them, Ngoni chiefs managed to carry out the administrative role of serving the colonial state and the traditional role of serving their subjects. The Ngoni Paramount Chief also showed his love for his people by siding with them and collectively fight against the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland prior to 1953. In an effort to serve his people's interest, Mpezeni went to England to protest against the Federation.⁷⁴ Finally, this chapter has argued that in the midst of colonial rule, the Ngoni Paramount Chief and traditional leaders maintained a cordial and warm relationship with those they ruled. The Ngoni Paramount Chief willingly implemented less resented colonial policies and avoided those that would make his followers protest. In this way, Paramount Chief Mpezeni was able to strike a balance between the oppressors and the oppressed.

⁷² Young, *Rhodesia and Independence*, p.49.

⁷³ Chipungu, "African Leadership under Indirect Rule in Colonial Zambia," p.52.

⁷⁴ N.A.Z., KDG40, Fort Jameson District Notebook Vol. iii, p.346.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE IMPACT OF COLONIAL RULE ON THE Ngoni

Introduction

This chapter is an assessment of the impact of colonial rule on the Ngoni in the colonial period. It assesses ways in which colonial rule undermined the Ngoni traditional authorities over their followers. Firstly, it shows colonial support of early Ngoni agriculture before colonial rule was deeply rooted. Secondly, it explores how colonial rule undermined the authority of chiefs by abolishing tribute which was earlier given to chiefs by their subjects. The abolishment of tribute interfered with the superior status earlier enjoyed by the Ngoni traditional authorities. Additionally, the chapter argues that with extreme land shortages discussed in Chapter Two, tribute could not be sustained hence the colonial authorities' abolished it. Ngoni subjects had either infertile land or no land at all to grow their food and keep their cattle which they would, subsequently, offer as tribute to their chiefs. To this end, the colonial authorities announced an end to tribute and, alternatively, offered to annually compensate the Ngoni chiefs with money. Thirdly, the chapter assesses the impact of the abolition of unpaid labour offered by Ngoni subjects to their chiefs. During the early years of colonial rule, Ngoni subjects offered their labour to their chiefs for free. This was according to tradition and custom. However, colonial authorities later abolished unpaid labour offered to chiefs. This shift in the balance of power adversely affected the authority and privileges enjoyed by the Ngoni chiefs. Further, the Ngoni traditional authorities were undermined by the introduction of village amalgamation which led to a loss of some chieftainship. The chapter posits that much as the above colonial policies undermined the Ngoni traditional authorities, Ngoni chiefs and their subjects salvaged, with political prowess, they rose above colonial challenges and contributed to the ousting of colonial rule to pave way for Zambia's independence in 1964.

Colonial Support of Early Ngoni Agriculture

The beginning of colonial rule did not immediately lead to the abolition of tribute. The colonial authorities had a gradual strategy in its effort to ensure the Ngoni chiefs lost grip of their traditional power. This strategy can be seen through their promotion of African agriculture. Therefore, a brief discussion of their promotion of African agriculture is given before exploring their impact on tribute in the 1940s. From 1899 to around 1910, African agriculture was a major source of their food. The Ngoni of Fort Jameson received seeds from the British South Africa Company (B.S.A.C.) to promote and diversify their peasant agriculture.¹ Among the seeds the Ngoni received included Irish potatoes and vegetables. African farmers, therefore, grew these crops and sold them at a cheaper price to the incoming white settlers. Cotton seed was also given to the Ngoni as a cash crop.² However, it was observed that the Ngoni were not growing cotton as expected partly because they were still suspicious of the colonialists. This was confirmed by Robert Cordrington, the administrator, who contended that:

It seems that the Angoni do not grow cotton well. Perhaps it is the soil . . . You Angoni who cannot grow cotton, I want you to try to improve your livestock. . I want the Angoni to be rich in cattle again as they were before the war.³

From the above statement, it can be concluded that the B.S.A.C. did not come with an outright intention of thwarting Ngoni agricultural system or undermining the Ngoni traditional authorities. For a time, they worked to stir progress in peasant farming. The Ngoni eventually yielded to the advice by the

¹ Alfred Tembo, "The Colonial State and African Agriculture in Chipata District of Northern Rhodesia, 1895-1964," M.A. Dissertation, University of Zambia, 2010, p.20.

² Tembo, "The Colonial State and African Agriculture in Chipata District of Northern Rhodesia, 1895-1964", p. 21.

³ N.A.Z., KDG38, Fort Jameson District Notebook vol. I, 1907.

administrator and from 1914 onwards, there was a discernible increase in herds of cattle by the Ngoni.⁴

Table Five below shows the steady rise in African cattle population.

Table five: African Owned-Cattle 1900 To 1937.

Year	1900	1910	1915	1925	1930	1935	1937
Number of cattle	1200	4090	7230	17870	22490	24880	27080

Source: N.R.G., *African Affairs Annual Report for the Year 1962* (Lusaka: Government Printer, 1963). See also Alfred Tembo, "The Colonial State and African Agriculture in Chipata District of Northern Rhodesia, 1895-1964", M.A. Dissertation, University of Zambia, 2010, p.36.

From the above table, one can conclude that indeed the cattle population among the Ngoni rose steadily from 1900 despite the Ngoni losing about ten thousand herds during the war.⁵ It is also clear that even when colonial rule disadvantaged the Ngoni, cattle population did not stop increasing. Evidence for this can be found in the years after 1920. Despite the land shortages and overcrowding that characterised Ngoni livelihood in later years, cattle population rose steadily. This was also true for some Africans, who were able to compete with settler farmers despite the challenges African agriculture later faced.⁶

In 1924, the British South Africa Company handed over the administration of Northern Rhodesia to the colonial state. By 1929, the colonial state decided to employ a method of indirect rule on the Ngoni by passing of the Native Authority Ordinance and the Native Courts Ordinance.⁷

With the proclamation of the two ordinances, Ngoni traditional authorities were formed and arbitrated over criminal and civil matters. Additionally, Ngoni traditional authorities held

⁴ N.R.G., *African Affairs Annual Report for the Year 1962* (Lusaka: Government Printer, 1963)

⁵ N.R.G., *African Affairs Annual Report for the Year 1962* (Lusaka: Government Printer, 1963)

⁶ N.R.G., *African Affairs Annual Report for the Year 1962* (Lusaka: Government Printer, 1963)

⁷ N.A.Z., SEC2/398, Native Authorities Extension of Indirect Rule, 1935-1940.

meetings once a month to discuss issues that affected them. The minutes of the meetings would then be forwarded to the District Commissioner.⁸ At face value, this seemed to empower Ngoni chiefs when in fact, it was only done to preserve the outward form of the indigenous system. In fact, it undermined the authority of the chiefs as they depended on the District Commissioner who was the administrative officer, and sole executive representative of the colonial state.

Much as Ngoni traditional authorities prescribed over cases in their courts, they reported their judgements to the DC as per requirement. For example, the District Commissioner for Fort Jameson wrote a letter to Chief Mishoro on 24 January, 1959 that, “many people in your area did not do *mizera* and you are not giving them cases despite their coming to court. Please, be serious and give them cases, send me a record of the cases after you do so.”⁹ In another incidence, the District Commissioner wrote another letter to Chief Mishoro in 1955 stating that, “I want you to come to the Boma immediately. I want to talk to you about the work of your court which you are not doing nicely”.¹⁰ To prove that reporting to District Commissioners was compulsory for chiefs, Chief Mpezeni wrote a letter to the District Commissioner and Provincial Commissioner dated 24 November, 1954, in which he apologised for refusing to obey orders. Part of the letter read as follows, “am asking for your forgiveness for my failure to obey orders, I promise it will not happen again.”¹¹ Therefore, the responsibility which came with the Native Authority Ordinance and the Native Courts Ordinance of 1929 did not maintain or increase the powers of Ngoni traditional authority. Instead, it reduced chiefs to mere employees of the colonial state.

⁸ N.A.Z.,SEC2/398, Native Authorities Extension of Indirect Rule, 1935-1940.

⁹ N.A.Z.,EP4/7/21, Chief Mishoro. Letter to Chief Mishoro from District Commissioner dated 24 January, 1959.

¹⁰ N.A.Z.,EP4/7/21, Chief Mishoro. Letter to Chief Mishoro from District Commissioner dated 1 July, 1955.

¹¹ N.A.Z.,EP4/7/15, Paramount Chief Mpezeni. Apology letter from Mpezeni 111 to District Commissioner dated 24 November, 1954.

In 1936, the colonial state enacted the Native Treasury. The purpose of the native treasury was to act as a bank which saved money collected from the Ngoni subjects.¹² In addition to the responsibility of Native Courts Ordinance and Native Authority Ordinance, Ngoni chiefs were given an additional responsibility of collecting money from their subjects such as beer permits, dog licenses, travelling fees and any other form of payment the Ngoni subjects made to the colonial state. However, the Ngoni chiefs did not collect native tax at that point.¹³ The chiefs were to start collecting native tax in 1940 after the proclamation of the Native Tax Ordinance of 1938 which had the necessary legal provisions for chiefs to collect tax.¹⁴

By 1940, Ngoni chiefs started collecting tax.¹⁵ This responsibility put the Ngoni chiefs in an awkward situation with their subjects. As employees of the colonial state, they collected taxes. This situation undermined their popularity and authority over their subjects. The new responsibility was not an embryonic rural local government. Instead, it put the Ngoni chiefs and their followers on two antagonistic sides. The decision of the colonial state put the chiefs on one side and the Ngoni subjects, who are the reasons and basis for the chiefly positions on the other. This undermined the authority of chiefs towards their subjects as collecting taxes had the potential to make them unpopular to their followers.

Native treasuries impacted negatively on chief's authority as they (chiefs) at times used the Native treasury funds for their personal needs and were taken to court by the colonial state. For example, the District Commissioner, R.S. Foster wrote a letter to the Provincial Commissioner on 27 October, 1951 informing him that chief Nzamane has misappropriated Native treasury funds.¹⁶ The District Commissioner stated that, "I forward to you the case of Chief Nzamane

¹² N.A.Z.,SEC2/398, Native Authorities Extension of Indirect Rule vol.11

¹³ N.A.Z.,SEC2/398, Native Authorities' Extension of Indirect Rule vol.11

¹⁴ N.A.Z.,SEC2/398, Native Authorities' Extension of Indirect Rule vol.11.

¹⁵ N.A.Z.,SEC2/398, Native Authorities' Extension of Indirect Rule vol.11.

¹⁶ N.A.Z.,EP4/7/7, Chief Nzamane.

who was reported as having misappropriated Native treasury funds.”¹⁷ The result of this case was that Chief Nzamane was severely warned and told that he would not receive his allowance until the funds were recovered.¹⁸ This situation presented chiefs as little more than domestic servants of the colonial state. In another case, Chief Nzamane was taken to court for issuing personal receipts to Ngoni subjects who bought beer permits in his chiefdom. Chiefs issued beer permits on behalf of the colonial state. Thus, they were given receipts which had official stamps. The receipts were given to Ngoni subjects who brew beer upon payment for permit.¹⁹ However, Chief Nzamane made his own receipts which he issued. When the colonial state got wind of it, Nzamane, despite being a chief, was taken to court. The District Commissioner, through an interpreter Amos Mwemba contended that:

Government issued beer books but you issued your own tickets leaving the Boma tickets so that you could keep the money, why did you do it? It is very wrong for you to steal from the government when it is the government that feeds you by paying you your allowance.²⁰

The impact of colonial rule on the Ngoni traditional authorities was that it undermined the superior status once enjoyed by chiefs. In the presence of his subject Amos Mwemba, Chief Nzamane was humiliatingly questioned without the state considering and respecting his chiefly position. Chiefs, in this regard, were a tool used by the colonial state to advance and champion its cause and desire for colonial satisfaction. As far as the colonial authorities were concerned, chiefs were not a mark of authority by virtue of being at the helm of traditional indigenous systems.

¹⁷ N.A.Z.,EP4/7/7, Chief Nzamane.

¹⁸ N.A.Z.,EP4/7/7, Chief Nzamane.

¹⁹ N.A.Z.,EP4/7/7, Chief Nzamane.

²⁰ N.A.Z.,EP4/7/7, Chief Nzamane.

By 1940, the colonial state announced the abolition of tribute in Fort Jameson. This was announced by the Provincial Commissioner who agreed with the Honourable Chief Secretary in Lusaka Province. The move, according to the Provincial Commissioner was necessitated by the proposed subsidy increase to be awarded to chiefs. In his letter to the Chief Secretary dated 12 December, 1939, the PC informed chiefs that:

I have to inform you that the increased subsidies which will come into effect in this province on 1st January 1940 are very adequate for the chiefs. It is a reasonable form of compensation for any tribute...It is therefore okay to abolish tribute to chiefs.²¹

This was another way the colonial state undermined the Ngoni traditional authorities. Tribute formed an integral part of the Ngoni custom and tradition. Stamping it out was an infringement on tradition.

In fact, the PC, after announcing the abolition of tribute to the Ngoni realised that tribute was more important to them than he earlier perceived.²² He almost changed his mind with regards to abolishing tribute. In 1940, he wrote another letter to the Chief Secretary telling him its importance. The Provincial Commissioner stated that:

Tribute exists to enable chiefs to provide the customary entertainment of litigant in their courts. It is difficult to estimate its value in cash terms and it has been suggested that increased subsidies are not adequate as well as a suitable replacement of tribute. The increase in subsidies cannot be considered a suitable

²¹ N.A.Z.,SEC2/322, Abolition of Tribute to Chiefs.

²² N.A.Z.,SEC2/322, Abolition of Tribute to Chiefs.

form of compensation and to consider them in this light might tend to break down the custom and the existing tribal organisation sooner than the natural process of evolution warrants.²³

The PC gave an honest and true opinion in his letter to the Chief Secretary as tribute was indeed important to Ngoni chiefs and their followers. The PC' view of tribute resonated well with Chief Mpezeni's observation. Mpezeni posited that, "in scattered areas where money is scarce, distance great and agricultural methods backwards, increase in subsidy is inadequate as well as unsuitable for the purpose of compensation".²⁴ One wondered how cash would be applicable as a form of tribute to a people who did not depend solely on a cash economy to meet their exigencies. The colonial states' operational structure was a kind that perpetually distanced the Ngoni chiefs from their followers. In instances where the Ngoni chiefs and their followers met to stir their custom and tradition, as in the case of the practice of tribute, the colonial state subtly stood in their way. Their aim was to dilute the observance of tradition thereby undermining the authority of chiefs as well as the importance for their existence.

Chief Nzamane equally expressed his resentment with regards to the abolition of tribute. The chief noted that tribute was a savour of hospitality in Ngoni culture. Therefore, no amount of compensation or increase in subsidy would replace it.²⁵ The colonial state in addition to abolishing tribute among the Ngoni made another pronouncement with regards to ivory. The colonial state announced that tribute in form of Ivory given to chiefs should equally be abolished. This statement was contained in the minutes of the PC' conference held in 1941.²⁶ The Provincial Commissioner stated that, "it was decided that all tribute paid to chiefs be abolished, but that where the Native authority wishes, it may be reintroduced in form of licenses and the fees credited to the native

²³ N.A.Z.,SEC2/322, Abolition of Tribute to Chiefs.

²⁴ N.A.Z.,SEC2/322, Abolition of Tribute to Chiefs

²⁵ N.A.Z.,SEC2/322,Abolition of Tribute to Chiefs.

²⁶ N.A.Z.,SEC2/322,Abolition of Tribute to Chiefs.

treasury.”²⁷ This turn of events meant that the once free gifts in form of ivory enjoyed by Ngoni chiefs by virtue of their being leaders were over. Chiefs required a license if they wanted access to ivory.²⁸ Once again, the colonial state successfully undermined Ngoni traditional authorities. It can be observed that since the inception of colonial rule, chiefly privileges were gradually stamped out by the colonial state. Traditional customs and practices suffered a setback as they were increasingly replaced by colonial models. Chiefs’ influence over their followers was radically suffocated by the colonial state.

In 1941, another pronouncement was made by the colonial state which undermined the traditional relations of Ngoni chiefs and their followers.²⁹ In their consistent strategy of drifting the chiefs away from their followers, the colonial state announced that free labour enjoyed by the chiefs from their subjects be withdrawn. This was equally a form of tribute enjoyed by chiefs before the inception of colonial rule. Campaigns to make this enactment into law dated back to 1927 but the colonial state were just reluctant in passing it.³⁰ In protest to this new enactment, Chief Sayiri complained that, “abolishing free labour given to chiefs deprived chiefs’ capacity to grow food with which to feed the numerous suppliants and visitors to their villages and, in some cases, it deprives them of the labour to feed even their families.”³¹ The complaint by Chief Sayiri was genuine and honest because chiefs’ palaces received a lot of visitors. Some of the visitors needed food while others would go there to attend meetings. Therefore, the palace would provide food in such occasions hence the need for a chief not to lack food.

The incidence above was not the only one Chief Sayiri protested against the abolition of free labour. In another incidence Chief Sayiri said that, “salaries were not increased enough to meet the loss of free labour offered by chiefs’ subjects. The right of chiefs to ground tusks have also been

²⁷ N.A.Z.,SEC2/322, Minutes of Provincial Commissioners’ Conference.

²⁸ N.A.Z.,SEC2/322, Minutes of Provincial Commissioners’ Conference.

²⁹ N.A.Z., SEC2/313, Chiefs Headmen unpaid Labour.

³⁰ N.A.Z., SEC2/313, Chiefs Headmen unpaid Labour.

³¹ N.A.Z.,SEC2/322,Minutes of Provincial Commissioners’ Conference.

withdrawn.”³² The complaint by Chief Sayiri was a genuine one as the colonial state’s alternative replacement for free labour would not much the benefits chiefs accrued. Chiefs were not ready to do away with free labour even after it was prohibited. The case of Chief Nzamane provides evidence for this assertion. In much 1949, Chief Nzamane was using villagers to work in his field. The villagers worked for a period of two weeks until Chief Nzamane was summoned by the DC.³³ The DC warned Chief Nzamane of the enormity of his crime and told him that if an instance like that happened again Chief Nzamane would be prosecuted.³⁴

The conflict between the chiefs and the state over the use of free labour went on throughout the 1940s.³⁵ It was not easy for chiefs to refrain from the use of free labour which they enjoyed before colonial rule. This is because abolishing free labour reduced the status of chiefs and their position within chiefdoms. It undermined their authority. On the other hand, the government assumed that chiefs abused their subjects through free labour. This was echoed by the Chief Secretary for Native Affairs when he observed that:

There is no slightest doubt that the right to unpaid labour was abused and was an instrument of grave oppression. Government therefor refused to recognise the right any longer...chiefs should face the fact that economic and social changes which we are powerless to check have eventually put an end to a system which involves freemen giving their labour to others without payment.³⁶

The Chief Secretary for Native Affairs clearly showed that the colonial officials did not regard chiefs to be above their subjects. Therefore, they needed not use their followers for labour without paying

³² N.A.Z.,SEC2/322, Minutes of Provincial Commissioners’ Conference.

³³ N.A.Z.,EP4/7/7, Chief Nzamane.

³⁴ N.A.Z.,EP4/7/7, Chief Nzamane.

³⁵ N.A.Z.,EP4/2/313,Chiefs-Headmen unpaid Labour.

³⁶ N.A.Z.,SEC2/313, Chiefs-Headmen unpaid Labour.

them. This was in itself an indication of how the colonial state undermined the status of the chiefs. To emphasise the governments' position concerning free labour, the judge wrote a letter to all Provincial Commissioners in Northern Rhodesia stating that:

The policy of government was very clearly laid down. As a matter of policy, chiefs should refrain from making their subjects work for them for free . . . even if working for a chief is a native custom, it cannot be upheld by the colonial government because it is contrally to natural justice, equity and good governance.³⁷

The colonial state was fully aware that, for the Ngoni people, working for their chiefs was a custom. However, it was ready and willing to put to an end such a custom even if it was observed for a long time. The colonial state had no regard for custom especially if such a custom was perceived to raise the status of a chief hence the abolition of tribute and free labour. The state aimed at reducing chiefs to employees of the colonial state without any form of status.

The relationship of the colonial state and the Ngoni was not a cordial one. Evidence shows that government did not wish for the Ngoni to have so many chiefs. As early as 1912, it, at a meeting attended by Chief Mpezeni and his subjects announced the need for small villages to come together.³⁸ The reason given was that it was difficult for the government to administer the Ngoni if they were dispersed. This situation led to village amalgamation and some villages headed by chiefs were abolished. For example, Chief Kapatamoyos' village was abolished in 1944.³⁹ Evidence for this is contained in a letter from the Provincial Commissioner to the Honourable Chief Secretary, the former stated that:

In view of government policy to reduce the number of chiefs, I recommend that chief Kapatamoyo's chieftainship be abolished. It should

³⁷ N.A.Z., SEC2/313, Chiefs- Headmen unpaid Labour.

³⁸ N.A.Z., KDG, Fort Jameson District Notebook (1912), p.485.

³⁹ N.A.Z., SEC2/306, Chiefs' Recognition of Eastern Province.

be combined with other Ngoni villages such as chief Madzimawe. The man Hezekiah (chief Kapatamoyo) is not inspiring and not royal to the government. He should therefore be added to the list of chiefs to be abolished. Madzimawe should amalgamate this area with his own even if the European farming block splits the area and makes effective administration difficult.⁴⁰

Among the chiefdoms that government proposed to be abolished those under Chief Nzamane, Tereka, Maguya and the newly established Chiefdom of Chief Kapatamoyo.⁴¹ From this evidence, the colonial authorities did not only want to undermine the authority of the Ngoni chiefs but also to reduce their number for effective administration. This affected the Ngoni political setting in that some villages headed by chiefs disintegrated. Additionally, village amalgamation led to overcrowding as a lot of people were grouped together on small pieces of land.⁴² Furthermore, it resulted in extreme shortage of arable land leading to food shortages. Yizenge Chondoka further notes that village amalgamation led to witchcraft as people fought for land.⁴³ Therefore, the above clearly showed that colonial rule had adverse effects on the political setting of the Ngoni. In this regard, chiefs were rarely beneficiaries of the largess of the colonial state. This is because their existence and authority was under threat throughout the colonial period.

In the 1950s, there was a shift in the relationship between the Ngoni and the colonial state. The Ngoni chiefs and their followers showed their resentment of colonial rule more than they did in the early years.⁴⁴ This is because calls for nationalism were becoming more serious. In fact, agitation started as early as the 1930s but seriousness from the Ngoni was less evident. The Ngoni chiefs

⁴⁰ N.A.Z.,SEC2/306, Chiefs' Recognition of Eastern Province.

⁴¹ N.A.Z.,SEC2/306, Chiefs Recognition of Eastern Province.

⁴² N.A.Z.,SEC2/306, Chiefs Recognition of Eastern Province.

⁴³ Y.A. Chondoka, "Government Technical Assistance to African Farmers with Special Emphasis on Mazabuka District, 1924-1954", M.S Muntamba (ed.) Zambian Land and Labour Studies Vol.3, History Department Occasional (Lusaka: History Department, University of Zambia, 1983),p.39.

⁴⁴ N.A.Z.,EP4/1/37, Native Authority Minutes-Fort Jameson.

joined the African National Congress (A.N.C.), a liberation movement formed to unite the African people and spearhead the struggle for fundamental political, social and economic change. On 5 August 1953, the Provincial Commissioner was surprised that chiefs sent kapasus to call people to attend meetings organised by the A.N.C.⁴⁵ The main aim of the A.N.C was to champion the African dream of nationalism. Therefore, the attitude of chiefs clearly showed that they supported the idea of nationalism and wanted to be free from colonial manipulation.

In another example, Chief Sayiri wanted to hold a meeting with the A.N.C without permission from the DC on 21 March, 1961.⁴⁶ The District Commissioner M.J.S.W Priestly got wind of the incidence and wrote a letter to Chief Sayiri stating that, “am the one who gives permission about meetings you hold with the A.N.C. Therefore, you should not go ahead with the meeting unless you write to me and ask for permission.”⁴⁷ At that moment, Chief Sayiri wrote to the DC to ask for permission. However, before the District Commissioner could give Chief Sayiri permission, he (Chief Sayiri) went ahead and held the meeting much to the dismay of the DC.⁴⁸

On 18 December, 1961, a similar situation happened which involved Chief Mishoro whom the DC was not happy with concerning a meeting with the A.N.C. At this meeting, Chief Mishoro together with his assessor showed tenacity and political prowess when he contended that:

We also seek respect and that is why chiefs are in England seeking our freedom which was taken by the white men . . . we the Ngoni seek freedom and that is why even now our people are in England seeking our old respect and freedom. They fight hard to ensure we retain what we had before the white men came.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ N.A.Z.,EP4/1/37, Native Authority Minutes-Fort Jameson.

⁴⁶ N.A.Z.,EP4/7/22, Chief Sayiri.

⁴⁷ N.A.Z.,EP4/7/22, Chief Sayiri.

⁴⁸ N.A.Z., EP4/7/22, Chief Sayiri.

⁴⁹ N.A. Z., EP4/7/21, Chief Mishoro.

The scenario obtaining in the late 1950s and early 1960s indicated that chiefs were trying to rise above colonial challenges. They salvaged their way through the colonial period and started fighting to end colonial intrusion. In this particular instance above, Chief Mishoro together with his assessor preached hope and showed that chiefs were not idol to the manipulation and mistreatment which came with colonial rule. In fact, the Ngoni united in their fight against the colonial government. When the District Commissioner heard of the meeting chaired by Chief Mishoro as indicated above, he wrote a letter to the chief on 20 January, 1961. The DC postulated that, "Iam very disappointed to see that at an African National congress meeting held at Kaluma Kalinya Village on 18 December, 1961.You said very unpleasant words to the attendants of the meeting. You dent the image of government"⁵⁰ The District Commissioners did try to stop the Ngoni chiefs and their people from rising against the government but this did not make the Ngoni give up their aspirations.

It should be noted that Chief Mishoro and Chief Sayiri were not the only ones who challenged the colonial state and paved way for its ousting. Other chiefs showed this attitude in the 1950s. For example, the DC wrote a letter to Chief Madzimawe on 28 May, 1959 that:

I have heard that there is another meeting by the African National Congress in your area. However, I ask that you should be mindful of what you say about the government. Do not make people see the government in a bad way. However, these people should not speak at the meeting, J.J Mwanza and P.J.T Nyoka. They speak so badly about the government.⁵¹

Most Ngoni chiefs were not in support of the colonial regime. In this context, they saw the African National Congress as an umbrella through which they would air their grievances against the colonial state. However, chiefs did not openly encourage their people to denounce the colonial state but were assured

⁵⁰ N.A.Z., EP4/7/21, Chief Mishoro.

⁵¹ N.A.Z.,EP4/7/36, Chief Madzimawe.

that most of their followers resented colonial rule in preference to the African National Congress. The colonial authorities discouraged the Ngoni by denouncing the A.N.C that it never built any schools for them as the colonial state did.⁵² However, the Ngoni continued to fight for their freedom under the banner of the African National Congress.

The Ngoni continued to show their desire to rule themselves. In March, 1964, the DC noted that, “a group of UNIP youths Brigade and the A.N.C in Chief Madzimawe’s area were asking for UNIP cards at the cooperative store. They were stopping people from buying their requirements and hindering them from conducting business unless they had a UNIP card.”⁵³ The desire to take power from the colonial state was growing day by day among the Ngoni. The chiefs and the people united in ensuring that the colonial state was ousted.

Conclusion

The chapter has explored the impact of colonial rule on the Ngoni traditional authorities and their followers. It establishes that land alienation, taxation and labour migration discussed in the previous chapters were not the only policies that impacted on the Ngoni. Colonial rule impacted negatively on them too as it abolished tribute earlier enjoyed by Ngoni chiefs. Additionally, it undermined the power of the Ngoni traditional authorities by abolishing free labour which constituted the Ngoni tradition and custom. Free labour and tribute earlier paid to the Ngoni chiefs ensured that the chiefs had food resources which would be redistributed to the lacking members of the chiefdoms. Through tribute and free labour, the Ngoni chiefs were providers for their people. When these privileges were stamped out, the Ngoni chiefs lost their superior status.

It has also been noted that colonial rule introduced village amalgamation. It was government policy to see to it that the number of chiefs and chiefdoms reduced for effective administration. Therefore, some

⁵²N.A.Z., EP4/1/37, Native Authority Minutes-Fort Jameson.

⁵³ N.A.Z.,EP4/7/36,Chief Madzimawe.

villages such as that of Chief Kapatamoyo were abolished and chieftainship was lost. This undermined the authority of the Ngoni traditional authorities and their followers. In the 1950s, the relationship between the Ngoni and the colonial authorities changed. This was because calls for nationalism became more pronounced. The Ngoni under the banner of the African National Congress showed their resentment of the colonial state. The chiefs and their followers started making demands that were against the wishes of the colonial state. For example, they wanted their freedom back. They participated in meetings organised by the African National Congress. Paramount Chief Mpezeni himself went to Britain in 1951 to oppose the Federation thereby paving way for independence. They therefore, sent a strong message to the colonial state that they wanted to rule themselves. In this regard, the Ngoni chiefs and their followers rose above colonial challenges and salvaged thereby contributing to the ousting of colonial rule in 1964.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

This study has outlined the history of the Ngoni chiefs and their followers in Fort Jameson under colonial rule, 1895-1964. The study had three objectives. The first one was to assess the reactions of the Ngoni at the inception of colonial rule. Secondly, the study examined the changing roles of the Ngoni traditional authorities in the colonial period. The third chapter assessed the impact of colonial rule on the Ngoni chiefs and their followers.

The study has had several conclusions depending on the chapter, chapter one has shown that the Ngoni reactions to the policies of colonial rule were not passive. The Ngoni reacted against the policies which they despised. For example, they did not respond to taxation as expected by the colonial state. They opposed taxation vehemently and mostly paid tax by force. Additionally, the Ngoni built huts on both sides of the border in an attempt to evade tax payment. This clearly showed that the Ngoni were not passive in their reactions to colonial policies.

The Ngoni also hated land alienation as it was another colonial policy which perturbed their traditional set up. In showing their discontent, they voiced together as one with the Paramount Chief Mpezeni. As a result, it was not easy for the colonial state to remove the Ngoni from their land. At times, the Ngoni had to be compensated for them to give up their inherited land. The study has noted that land alienation caused so much misery among the Ngoni in that it had both political and economic impacts. Firstly, it reduced the Ngoni's arable land which in turn had a negative impact on their food basket thereby leading to poverty. Secondly, land alienation led to village amalgamation which in turn led to some chiefs losing their political titles as their villages were dissolved through amalgamation.

The theme of labour among the Ngoni has shown that not every Ngoni was easily compelled to sell their labour to the colonial masters in Fort Jameson. This is because most of the Ngoni preferred to meet their exigencies including tax payments through their peasant farming. However, when the Ngoni got employed, most of them reacted negatively towards labour by deserting work. Others went to other territories such as South Africa where conditions of work were better.

The other conclusion to be noted was that the Ngoni traditional authority did not always obey every order given to them by the colonial state. They showed autonomy and a degree of independence in dealing with the colonial state. Unlike the underdevelopment theory which portrayed traditional leadership to be passive to colonial manipulation, this study has shown that traditional leadership acted as a mediator between the oppressed Africans and the colonial state. Much as the chiefs were placed in a conflicting position, they were able to provide their services to the rural population simultaneously with carrying out the duties of the colonial state.

In times when the colonial state passed policies that were inimical to the people, the chiefs had a way of mitigating such policies and not apply them to the fullest. In fact, they at times only applied the less resented ones and avoided those that would bring protests as was the case with dog license fees.

The study has also taken note that colonial rule had several impacts among the Ngoni. Firstly, the colonial authorities brought with them seeds such as cotton and Irish potatoes to support Ngoni peasant agriculture. The colonialists at the same time provided the Ngoni with a market for their peasant produce. Much as the Ngoni lost cattle during the war, they managed to steadily raise their cattle population throughout the colonial period. Secondly, colonial rule led to development of agriculture technology among the Ngoni.

The Ngoni started using ploughs that brought them discernible benefits as far as peasant farming was concerned.

On the other hand, colonial rule introduced policies that undermined Ngoni traditional authorities. For example, the formation of the Native Authority Ordinance in 1929 was only done to preserve the outward form of the indigenous system of chiefs. Internally, it undermined the authority of the chiefs as they depended on the District Commissioner. Additionally, the Native treasury of 1936 equally put chiefs in an awkward position as it led to public humiliation whenever a chief was found with a case to answer as in the case of Nzamane. It also forcefully realigned Ngoni chiefs from being protectors of their subjects to instruments that fostered the much hated taxes and fees imposed on the Ngoni by the colonial state.

The abolition of tribute was a blow to the Ngoni chiefs as it led to chiefs losing their once superior status. Tribute was a custom and its practice insured that the Ngoni adhered to their tradition. However, the abolition of tribute hindered chiefs from continuing to be providers for their people. Additionally, colonial rule abolished free labour offered to chiefs, another privilege chiefs enjoyed. This also undermined chiefs' power in that it reduced the ability of chiefs to have enough food. It was tradition that a chief had huge tracts of cultivated land for their crops. The abolishing of free labour, therefore, led to a reduction of crops produced by chiefs as they did not manage with their individual families to grow a lot of food. Consequently, this reduced the chiefs' ability to help their subjects.

In the 1950s, the relationship between the Ngoni and the colonial state changed as chiefs started making demands that they wanted their freedom back. To this end, they joined the African National Congress which championed their political desire for independence and

self-rule. Thus, the Ngoni chiefs held and organised meetings with the African National Congress aimed at overthrowing the colonial state. In 1951, Chief Mpezeni Pontino went to Britain to oppose the Federation thereby paving way for independence.

Lastly, the study has observed that much as the Ngoni in Fort Jameson were disturbed by colonial rule, they remained strong as agents of their own destiny. When colonial authorities undermined the Ngoni traditional authorities, the Ngoni chiefs and their followers salvaged and actively involved themselves in the emergent political parties such as UNIP to stamp out colonial rule in 1964. The nationalists such as Kenneth Kaunda knew that they had support from the Ngoni in their independence struggle.

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