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A HISTORY OF LAND ACQUISITION, COMMERCIALSATION OF AGRICULTURE AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC DIFFERENTIATION AMONG PEASANT FARMERS IN A FRONTIER REGION: THE GOKWE DISTRICT OF NORTHWESTERN ZIMBABWE; c. 1945 - 1990S.

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by

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A history of land acquisition, commercialisation of agriculture and socio-economic differentiation among peasant farmers in a frontier region: The Gokwe district of northwestern Zimbabwe, post 1945-1990s.

Introduction

Until the 1950s, Gokwe was once perceived as the wild, remote and economically 'backward' domain of the 'Shangwe' people, but since the influx of immigrants from the south into this region, and the introduction of small-holder cotton production in the early 1960s, Gokwe has been represented as a miracle of agrarian transformation, a frontier of commoditization, and more broadly, as an exemplar of the transition to modernity. From the early 1960s to the mid-1980s Gokwe alone accounted for more than half the country's cotton production from the African areas, and about 15% of the national output. Today(1996), Gokwe contributes about 60 percent of the nation's cotton output and its high market price has spurred even the smallest farmer to master the art of growing the million dollar crop. The population of Gokwe has increased dramatically from an insignificant sparsely populated region of the 'Shangwe' to being one of the most populous districts in the country with a population of over 400 000.[1]

Thus, once constituted as a negation of national progress, Gokwe has miraculously asserted itself as a fecund, energetic symbol of primeval development. Its emergence as the fastest growing district in the country in terms of both population and agricultural commodity production especially since independence in 1980 has made Gokwe a palpable emblem of the economic potential of the nation. If, as many now think, Zimbabwe stands as the beacon of hope for salvaging small-scale agriculture in Sub-Saharan Africa, it is Gokwe that provides its most dramatic and compelling example.

The agricultural performance of Gokwe, just like that of many communal areas of Zimbabwe, especially after 1980, has been variously termed in Zimbabwean literature as the 'peasant miracle'or as 'Zimbabwe's Agricultural Revolution'.[2] However, less attention has been paid to the fact that increased cotton productivity and high levels of marketed cotton were achieved by only a minority of producers. I hypothesize that differential access to land was in part responsible for differential levels of production among small-scale farmers in Gokwe. Unlike other rural areas of Zimbabwe where land pressure from the 1950s on was excessive, in Gokwe land was relatively abundant for a long time after that. However, with the introduction and intensification of commodity production, especially cotton agriculture and with the increase in immigrant population especially from the south, access to land has become a critical issue.

In a study carried out by L.de Swardt in 1982 in the communal areas of Gokwe, he discovered that an informal land economy existed in Gokwe. His evidence showed that most households started with a base of approximately 10 acres allocated by the colonial state under the notorious Native Land Husbandry Act of 1951. However, by the early 1980s land had been subsequently traded to such as extent that some households had as much as 30 acres or more while others had as little as 2 acres. Since his informants insisted that land could not be bought or sold, Swardt speculates that this redistribution of land occurred through various informal transactions.[3] My observations during field work carried out recently in the Njelele area in south-eastern part of Gokwe South District confirmed some of Swardt's findings, but I must add that the land situation in some parts of Gokwe has become even more skewed in the 1990s than before. While on the one hand some households have accumulated up to more than 100 acres of land, on the other hand, a fairly large proportion of young married household heads are either landless or have as little as two acres. In fact, today, according to a recent

Herald report, out of a total population of 400 000 people in Gokwe, over 60 000 are on the waiting list for resettlement.[4] Conflicts over land have become the order of the day between village heads as people of one village have encroached on the grazing area of another village and have cut down trees, erected houses and ploughed. At three meetings that I attended in Wards 1 and 2 in Chief Njelele's area, half of the cases brought forward and issues discussed involved the registration for resettlement of young household heads who are either landless or have insufficient land; village heads selling grazing land illegally to immigrants and the deposition of village heads whose cases were considered very serious; and cases of land conflicts between village heads over grazing areas as young men of different villages compete to occupy common grazing area.

My study is an investigation of how and why this uneven distribution of land observed by Swardt and myself took place. I will examine the history of land acquisition and the landholding practices that prevailed in this frontier region since the resettlement of immigrants from the 1950s. More specifically I will focus on the interface between legal codes and the actual practices of land holding on the ground. I will argue that between the legal paradigms and the actual practice on the ground there existed many conceptual gaps. While on one hand the legal codes were unevenly enforced, on the other 'customary' paradigms were ambiguous. This situation created many conceptual gaps in which both the legal and 'customary' paradigms were manipulated by various groups of people who maneuvered to acquire access to land through various channels. My paper will focus on the various kinds of transactions, negotiations and conflict over land that occurred in this region. By doing so my paper will enhance out understanding of the way in which rapid commercialization of cotton agriculture shaped people's strategies to gain access to land and how this in turn determined patterns of socio-economic differentiation in this region.

The most important political issue in the history of Zimbabwe is land. This was true when the British South Africa Company (BSAC) colonized the country in the 1890s. It remained true throughout the early protest movements of the inter-war period and in the advent of mass nationalism. It was central to the war of liberation. And indeed it remains true for post-colonial Zimbabwe especially with the current debates on the redistribution of land to achieve 'growth with equity' in the communal areas. However, most writings on the agricultural sector and agrarian differentiation have focused on the racial division of land and on the inequalities between white 'commercial' farmers and an increasingly marginalized 'subsistence' sector; the rural population has usually been conceptualised as a 'peasantry' or 'proletariat'.[5] These conceptualizations tend to assume agrarian homogeneity with a singular class identity, which is problematic.[6] Even the new Zimbabwean leadership, while it has been acutely aware of the racial disparities and some associated rural-urban differences, has shown little awareness of differentiation or inequalities within the communal areas themselves.C. Brand has observed that "Master farmers and successful cash crop farmers are held up instead as models to be emulated, without questions being asked, for example, about how some of them managed to gain access to more arable land than others in the community."[7]

Recent writings on Zimbabwe have however, enhanced our understanding of the process of agrarian change and differentiation in rural areas. They have argued that most rural areas experienced considerable commercialisation during and after the colonial period, and that commercialization gave rise to various forms of socio-economic differentiation among rural households and communities. Scholars in this group have advanced various arguments about how rural differentiation occurred in rural Zimbabwe. They point to differences in access to land between freehold and communal area and within communal areas; differences in households' access to off-farm income; the privileged position and political maneuverings of chiefs; differences in quality of land and differential access to labor, which again is related to

various factors including access to off-farm income, polygany and various forms of co-operative labor.[8]

However, even studies that recognize patterns of differential landholdings have not shown clearly how such differences developed over time. Several scholars[9], for instance, have argued that the distribution of land in the communal areas is less skewed than that of other variables and acts as a brake on individual accumulation and on the process of differentiation. They argue that this is so because the majority of the communal areas are in semi-arid and drought prone regions and that population pressure is near ecological carrying capacity. Gokwe presents a different picture to that given by scholars cited above because Gokwe was a frontier region and therefore land was relatively abundant long after other communal areas had suffered from excessive land pressure. As noted above, in Gokwe most men have between 2 and 120 acres of farmland whereas in most communal areas of Zimbabwe the range is between 2 and 10 acres. In Kandare Village of Mt. Darwin studied by Mette Masst, for instance, most men have between 7 and 10 acres of farmland, a few have 10-15 acres, a situation that is typical of the majority of Zimbabwe's communal areas.[10] Gokwe therefore presents us with an opportunity to study the role of land differentiation in a process of sustained commercialization of peasant agriculture.

From Rhodesdale to Gokwe

Why did it become necessary to resettle large numbers of people in Gokwe in the postwar period? The land position in the Native Reserves in the post-war period was such that 7,118 200 additional acres of land were urgently required for 71 182 excess African population. This assessment was on the basis that all African families not resident in the Native Reserves or Native Areas were required to move off these areas as a result of the rapid implementation of the Land Husbandry Act of 1951. Included in the excess were those families then residing in Native Reserves or Native Areas which were considered to be in excess of the carrying capacity of the reserve or native area concerned. By the end of the Second World War it was estimated that about 78 500 families lived outside the Native Reserves, on Crown Land, Forest Areas, Unassigned Areas and in Alienated Land. The total Unassigned area was about 17 780 918 acres mostly situated in the tsetse fly belt of the Sebungwe, Gokwe and the Zambezi Valley areas. The Native Department made the request for several million additional acres to be set aside for permanent occupation by Africans because it was found impossible to meet the increasing demand for land by those Africans who were being given final notice to move from alienated land and Crown land in which they had lived for generations. Such Africans were not allowed to live on this land on a strict interpretation of the Land Apportionment Act, but had been allowed to remain on pending a solution to the land problem. But now that so much Crown Land and Alienated Land was being taken up by European settlement the position had become acute and land had to be found elsewhere.[11]

The Ad-Hoc Committee appointed by the state in 1946 to inquire into the land situation with a view to determining the sufficiency or otherwise of land set aside for African occupation, recommended, among other things, the addition of about 563 447 acres of Crown Land and 735 789 acres of "Reserved Land" to Native Reserves. One such area that was recommended for settlement was the vast Unassigned Area of the Sebungwe, of which Gokwe is a part. This area was considered by the Ad-Hoc Committee to have surplus land but this was a useless theoretical position for relieving land shortage, as vast areas in this district were tsetsefly infested and unsafe for human habitation on account of sleeping sickness. Until the tsetse fly was eliminated, the areas were practically useless. The region is also very arid and badly broken not capable of carrying any large population. Full occupation could only depend

on the development of water supplies. Settlement of Gokwe had to be done on a piecemeal basis, as each area had to developed in preparation for immigrants.[12]

The post war period witnessed an increase in the implementation of the Land Apportionment Act (1930), as the State removed 'squatters' from Crown Land to give way to ex-servicemen. The people who were immediately affected by this policy were the Rhodesdale inhabitants who were to be moved to Gokwe and Sanyati. About 7 000-10 000 Africans lived on Rhodesdale but ex-servicemen were taking up farms there under the Government Settlement Scheme. Rhodesdale was owned by the Lonrho(a British multinational Company) as a Ranch. After the war this land was bought by the Government and was surveyed into farms and ranches and the Africans living on them were moved off into unsurveyed portions. As the surveys progressed, the Africans with their stock became more crowded on the remaining Crown Land. Congestion reached the stage that something had to be done to control the situation.The new white onwers of land felt strong resentment to the continued residence of Natives on Rhodesdale. Africans did not move from Rhodesdale without resistance. For instance, "it is rumoured" that Africans on Rhodesdale had engaged "legal assistance in readiness for any action by the Department." Africans on Brigadier Dunlop's farm, for instance, declared that "they would only move to Gokwe if their Headman and all his people moved with them this year; otherwise they would remain on Brigadier Dunlop's Ranch; but they would be troublesome next year."[13] Rhodesdale people were assisted by B. Burombo of the African Voice in their efforts to resist eviction.[14] However, the CNC insisted that it was "politically necessary to remove all Rhodesdale Natives as planned . . ." The letter of the law had now to be followed. The Rhodesdale residents were loaded into lorries on short notice and transported into the hot malarial lowlands of the Sanyati and Sebungwe districts. The immigrants were called "Madheruka" by the people in whose territory they were settled, an onomatopoetic word intended to evoke the sound of lorry engines that brought them.[15]

Among the first victims of Rhodesdale were 1 100 families under Headmen Myambi and Selima who were to be dumped in Gokwe Special Native Area. Another group comprised of 470 families under Chief Whozhele and his Headman Mudzingwa who were dumped in the Sanyati Reserve. Expert opinion was that people could only survive in Gokwe on the basis of 300 acres per family, being 30 acres per beast with 10 beasts per family. The Native Department refused to go along with this opinion because it wanted to squeeze many more people than would be permissible on the basis of expert advice. Instead, it was said people would be settled in Gokwe on the basis of 150 acres per family with 7 head of cattle, and that would allow 1 530 families to be squeezed into Gokwe. With that the Department proceeded to give notice to the people living in Rhodesdale to get out by December 11,1952. It was agreed that "all families had to be moved from Rhodesdale would by force of circumstances have to be accommodated in the areas mentioned even if the size of what was regarded as an economic unit had to be reduced."[16]

The area allocated to the first group was the Kana Block between the Lutope and Kana river and was about 250 000 acres, of which 30 000 acres was waste land on account of the tsetse fly. Available acreage was 220 000 acres. The area fell into a medium rainfall area, which could not be classified as high agricultural producing. 10 acres was considered to be the economic unit for each family. Pasture was poor in the 'gusu' kalahari sand which is predominant.[17]

Many of the early *Madheruka* immigrants were settled in villages under their own village heads and headmen, but formally under the ultimate jurisdiction of indigenous chiefs. In such areas they often constitute a majority of the population in the chief's territory. The advent of the *Madheruka* immigrants who had been church members, town-labourers, and

Master farmers refigured the sense attached to the name *VaShangwe* (indigenous) in terms that I will gloss as "anti-modern." To refer to the *VaShangwe* was to draw not only a portrait of the Other, of people who were living, as some immigrants recalled, "naked like animals", but it was also to implicitly characterize a *MuShangwe* as someone who is everything that the speaker is not: ignorant, and even defiant, of the culture of modernity.[18]

Land allocation for the immigrants was undertaken under the Native Land Husbandry Act of 1951.[19] Essentially, the Act was an attempt to attack the problems of erosion, land fragmentation and tenure, migratory labour and tradition. It enabled the legal registration of negotiable rights to land and grazing after a full survey of potential land use. By this Act a 'standard area' or economic unit of land was allocated per family unit(defined as a man, his wife and three children) by the Native Commissioner(NC) under the direction of the Chief Native Commissioner(CNC) as primary allocative authorities, thus abolishing the allocation of land by chiefs.Widows with dependent children were eligible for one-third of the standard area, while married women were not eligible at all for land. Men received more land up to three times the standard area for each additional wife. Men could also buy titles of others, but no one could hold more than three times the standard area. No plot could be sub-divided thereafter below the standard unit except with the permission of the NC.

The NLHA attempted to put an end to what were perceived as 'traditional' practices of land tenure by introducing 'ownership' in its place. The architects of the Act hoped that individual ownership of land would reduce land fragmentation and give incentives to the peasant farmer to undertake improvements on the farm which in turn would help check soil erosion and increase agricultural productivity. Another important consideration for the colonial state was the attempt to systematize land distribution in order to check African competition against white settler farmers while at the same time injecting some sort of egalitarianism which was perceived to be an aspect of African 'traditional' landholding practice.

V. Machingaidze has made some useful observations about the NLHA.[20] One is that the Act sought to recreate and maintain rural class divisions under desirable ecological conditions for instance the Act gave NCs powers to grant the chiefs and headmen more than the standard arable holding and to graze more cattle than those prescribed for the commoners.Indeed the negotiability of arable and grazing rights enshrined in the Act was explicitly designed to produce different classes of farmers in the Reserves. It was hoped that once implemented, the traditional customs regarding land use and land transfer in African society would give way to market forces. As Yudelman pointed out "The use of land was to be regulated in accordance with the economic principles in practice elsewhere in the capitalist world." It is no wonder that the World Bank provided a loan of over 3 million pounds to help finance the scheme. Another observation that Machingaidze makes is that under the NLHA, land rights, the major form of social security for the vast majority of Africans, ceased to be a birthright. A new generation would grow up cut off from the possibility of ever owning land, yet young men still aspired to having their own holdings on getting married.

It is in this light that we should understand why the immigrants of Gokwe who were allocated land in Gokwe were given a standard area of 10 acres per family unit. Each family was allocated half an acre residential site, a pegged 10 acre agricultural block and was allowed about 160-190 acres of communal grazing. They were also allowed 7 herd of cattle per family. It must be admitted that 10 acres of arable land were not enough for most of the families. Even the Provincial Native Commissioner(PNC), Gwelo, admitted to this inadequacy by noting that "the people who were moved to the area (Gokwe) were accustomed to relatively large herds and cultivation uncontrolled(in Rhodesdale Estate), so that their standard of income was probably considerably higher than could possibly be allowed in the new area", a

point that was emphasized by many of my informants. The PNC went further to add that whether the 10 acres is an economic unit is debatable. "The position is governed by the policy regarding communal occupation. Necessity seems to dictate that these areas should be a compromise between an economic unit and a subsistence one."[21]

Several scholars have documented the widespread resistance against the NLHA. Burombo's African Voice, among other nationalist groups, aggressively campaigned against the NLHA. Opposition took the form of physical attacks on agricultural demonstrators and threats to white land development officers as well as those who co-operated with implementation. More often it took the form of derision of chiefs and members of the Native Department Affairs, refusal to dip, "freedom ploughing" (ploughing in disregard to NLHA allocations and regulations) and refusal to communicate with the regime's field workers.[22] Resistance to NLHA allocations in many parts of Gokwe took these forms especially freedom ploughing. The immigrants did not readily accept the 10 acre allocation for they considered this 'economic unit' inadequate. The fighting spirit against eviction from Rhodesdale was carried onto Gokwe. Commenting on the new immigrants' attitude to the limitation of arable land, the NC Gokwe said that "Most of the natives who moved from Rhodesdale are too well remembered to need description. The Natives defied the movement order, prosecutions were instituted and in most cases were lost on some technical ground. In due course the movement {from Rhodesdale} was carried out under supervision of a strong force of Police."[23]

This fighting spirit was clearly manifested when the immigrants were resettled in Gokwe. At a meeting held with the NC in 1952, the ex-Rhodesdalites in the Kana Block complained about the limitation of arable land to10 acres. In fact, some people had already chopped trees in the timber strips and others had ploughed and cultivated lands well away from their ten acre plots.[24] It appears that many were cultivating the so-called gardens at or near their homestead. According to the NC, "this is but an invasion, an endeavour to increase their holdings. It will result in the gardens getting out of hand and becoming unauthorised lands with resultant destruction of timber in the vicinity of their residential areas. I instructed that this practice stop and that I would prosecute any person cultivating other than their own ten acres."[25]

At that meeting, the plotholders requested for gardens in which to grow vegetables. Given the limitation of 10 acres of arable land, it is clear that the vegetable 'gardens' were an excuse to allow of ordinary cultivation of additional land. The garden plot would soon become a land of many acres, in the midst of the village lines or grazing areas. The NC argued that vegetable gardens must be near water and must be plots of very limited areas. Each individual was requested to make an application to the Land Development Officer(LDO) for a vegetable garden, undertaking that he would grow vegetables only. If the LDO was satisfied he would then mark out a small area where the establishment of a garden would not be a nuisance. A list would be kept of all gardens and the Agricultural Demonstrator would visit occasionally to see that only vegetables were grown. 'Genuine' vegetable growers would receive a quarter of an acre for vegetable gardening but their total holding were not to exceed the standard arable area for the district. It was not an extra allocation. While there was no objection to small vegetable patches, the cultivation of field crops or the creation of new fields around huts as an extension of arable holdings was prohibited.[26] However, plotholders defied this ruling by continuing to plough large gardens.

In 1955, within five years of being resettled, "some 8 of the hostile section" in the Matame Special Native Area decided to defy the rules of occupation. Some chopped part of the timber break wind, others ploughed some 25 acres additional land." The NC Gokwe, reporting to the PNC, said that he sent officers to investigate but the "hostile elements refused to obey the order and threatened to assault the agricultural demonstrator." He then asked the

police to prosecute these 'recalcitrant natives' for defying section 49 of the Natural Resources Act. On appearance in Court, the leader, Kesiya(passed away in 1996), local representative of the African Voice, asked for a remand to brief the Advocate. Remand was granted and bail of 5 pounds fixed. However, most of the accused elected to remain in goal. Kesiya went to Bulawayo to raise money for the defense. He contented that Benjamin Burombo, in view of all the subscriptions he had received, should put up the 100 pounds for the defense. However, the money was not forthcoming.

Meanwhile Kesiya and 'his lieutenants' held meetings to whip up support. Some 2000-3000 plotholders were involved in varying degrees. The NC Gokwe issued a written order to all the accused plus 100 onlookers after the court. All refused to accept the written order except Kesiya who accepted a copy of the order for purposes of appeal. The order listed all the dos and don'ts for the plotholders: (i) That you and your family shall only cultivate the ten acre plots which have been allocated to you by the agricultural demonstrator; (ii) that you and your family shall not increase the area of your ten acre plot by cultivating beyond the beacons, pegs, or boundaries of such ten acre plot; (iii) that the protective timber strips bordering your ten acre plot in no way be damaged, destroyed or removed; (iv) that should your ten acre plot be increased to an area exceeding ten acres by cultivating beyond the beacons, pegs or boundaries of such plot, you and your family shall immediately cease to cultivate, tend or protect such land in excess of your allocated ten acres; (v) you are warned of prosecution for failing to obey these orders; and (vi) you are entitled to appeal to this office under section 49 sub-section 4 of the Natural Resources Act 1950.

The plotholders sent a deputation of five representatives to appeal against these restrictions and produced 800 names of people they represented. Their basis for the appeal was that: (i) the 10 acres agricultural plot was inadequate to provide food and income for the average family; (ii) the rule that no land is available for growing sons, except on the edge of the fly area was unreasonable; (iii) widows should be given agricultural land in their own right and (iv) extra land should be allocated to plural wives.[27]

It is not quite clear what happened after the appeal, but what is clear is that "freedom ploughing", which disregarded the allocations and prohibitions of the NLHA, became the most effective weapon used to blunt implementation of the NLHA in many parts of the country. In January 1961 the under secretary for native agriculture and lands lamented country-wide 'freedom ploughing": "people were ploughing all over the place, disregarding the land allocations."[28] The Kana Block situation described above had ripple effects in many parts of the Gokwe district. Several of my informants in Njelele area confirmed the widespread practice of freedom ploughing during this period as some people who were located near forest areas extended their acreages far beyond the 10 acre limit. One village head of Rhodesdale origin admitted that he advanced from his initial location near the borehole and added another 5 acres by ploughing in the wind breaker.He waited for a while to see if the law would catch up with him. Nothing happened and he ploughed another 5 acres. Many of my informants had similar stories of freedom ploughing. However, not every plotholder extended their landholdings for some were sandwitched and therefore could not extend their plots.[29]

One of the most debated issues by colonial officials was that of widows' rights to land. In 1951, the NC Gokwe complained of a number of widows, "actual and otherwise who have joined the Rhodesdale movement. Some have a number of minor children and I cannot find an adult male who should shoulder the care of the women." These widows were asking to be allowed their own agricultural plots in their own right. The NC concluded by saying that "if they have no one to keep them, their request would seem reasonable but the grave danger is that the request from the so-called widow is but a blind to hide an Alien or undesirable."[30] In another report to the PNC, the NC reported of "many widows, genuine and so-called who

are clamouring for land" and that the position had become more acute. With the population pressure that was now being felt in newly resettled areas, the NC argued that, "Where we have insufficient land to cope with our local problems, it follows that there is no land available for widows and plural wives."[31] The general official attitude towards widows was that "widows will at present get no land and will share in the land of their guardians."[32] Although some of the women were genuine widows, it appears that some married women posed as widows in order to benefit from the 3 acre allocations that were made to widows by the NLHA.

Widows were not the only problem presented by the movement from Rhodesdale into Gokwe. The initial movement involved mainly registered adult taxpayers. The older sons had mostly gone to seek work and so were not part of this movement. Most of these young men disliked to move to Gokwe then for it was an uninhabitable forest area. However, in due course, when it was seen that after all Gokwe was not such a bad place there was a flood of applicants from hundreds of "sons, relatives and followers" who then were anxious to join their fathers. By then there was not sufficient land to allocate them. Approved relations were allowed to move in and join their parents, but on the condition that they did not get land, because according to the NC "there was none to give them. Most of these young people only wanted a place to live their wives so that they could return to their employment." One such person was a Mandishona who, according to the NC, "moved in as a belated follower and knew that there was no land for him." In 1955 he ploughed unallocated land in defiance of the general order that no unallocated land should be cultivated. He was charged, with many others.The following year, he again cultivated land in defiance on the NC's order. He was again charged and fined 10 pounds. Mandishona was so determined that he continued to cultivate land 'illegally'. He even went to see the NC to press his claim to land. He produced documents to the NC to support his claim, one of which was that he had inherited his widowed mother and had to keep her and her children. The NC gave up and gave him 30 acres in the non-stock area on the Fly front. He refused this offer.[33] It is not clear whether or not Mandishona was eventually allocated land, but what is clear is that there were many more young men who found themselves in a similar situation. Young men who were at work during the period that land husbandry allocations were made had no place in the reserves, according to the architects of the NLHA.

By 1958 the total acreage where the LHA had been applied in Gokwe as a whole was 219 574 with about 12 500 arable land. However, with the escalation in resistance to the NLHA in the late fifties and early sixties, there was a general slow down in the implementation of the Act. The CNC Report cited, among other reasons, shortage of field staff and the activities of the Nationalist organizations, for this radical change of policy.[34]

By the mid 1960s several areas of Gokwe had been settled not only by Rhodesdale people, but also by people from other parts of the country particularly from the south - Gutu Chilimanzi, Fort Victoria, Belingwe where land pressure had become excessive as a result of the increased implementation of the LAA. In the area that I am doing field work, Chief Njelele's people were moved off Ngondoma Crown Land and Chemagora Native Purchase Area in 1956 to the south as well as Rhodesdale. By the late 1960s NC Gokwe complained of "many bus loads of Africans were moving into the TTLs to settle and yet insufficient preparation had been made to accommodate them."[35] The Land Tenure Act of 1969 also contributed to the large influx of immigrants into Gokwe as many more 'squatters' were evicted from European land. By the end of 1968 there was a steady exodus of 'squatters' from European farms to Gokwe especially from Bushy Park No. 2 where some 2 500 'squatters' were given notice by the new onwers of the property to quit by the end of 1969.[36] This influx of people into Gokwe was to continue until an embargo on entry into Gokwe was

imposed in the early 1970s for security reasons as the nationalist war was beginning to escalate. Gokwe was regarded as having "a rather frightening list of carded nationalists" since it was an isolated area.[37] Even then, people continued to move into Gokwe, but it was not until independence in 1980 that another large wave of immigrants was experienced.

As a result of the large influx of immigrants the population of Gokwe registered a significant increase since the 1960s. In 1962 the district had a defacto population of 46 090 but by 1969 the population had risen by 189 % to 133 490. During the same period the population of Africans in Rhodesia increased by 33% from 3 618 150 in 1962 to 4 817 950. During the intercensal period (1962-69), the average annual growth rate of population was 15,4%. From 1969 on the population of the region was increasing at 4,6% per annum, 1,5% more than the national average. The population grew to 226 842 by 1982, an increase of 80,2% in 13 years. The density of population also increased from 3,2% persons per square km in 1982. The population increase in Gokwe has therefore been largely as a result of in-migration. Since 1982 migration into the region has continued unabated and the population density must also have increased considerably.[38]

The coming of *madheruka* in the 1950s and 1960s coincided with the introduction of an extension program in Gokwe to encourage small-holder cotton production and it was mostly immigrants who quickly took advantage of the introduction of cash crop farming. While for the most part the indigenous did not readily accept new methods of farming, most of the *madheruka* were keen and prepared to co-operate with the agricultural officers. The first demonstarion plots began in Gokwe in the 1963/64 season. Since then cotton production in Gokwe registered a significant increase, and after 1980 this increase was even more phenomenal.[39]

The sense of difference that the immigrants imported upon their arrival in Gokwe was partly a result of their exposure to the brunt of the disciplinary program devised by the Native Department over a period of 3 decades beginning in the mid-1920s. Long before the implementation of NLHA many of the aventual immigrants to Gokwe had already been exposed to the modernization regime of the Native Department - a regime aimed at sifting out the "forward" from the "backward" 'natives'; and many had already adopted new identities within the hierarchy of achievement and practice laid out by Alvord: they became "Co-operators", then "Plot-Holders" and eventually "Master Farmers."[40] In Gutu, a major source of Gokwe immigrants in the early 1960s, the activities of the Dutch Reformed Church provided another institutional apparatus for the imposition of modern disciplined habits and dispositions. Between 1949 and 1934, thousands of young people were drawn into mission schools. Some became teachers of preachers, withdrawing themselves firmly from the net of social obligations enforced by community leaders, which they came to regard as "demanding". Others became an unpaid labour force under the rigid command of the missionaries themselves.[41]

In contrast, most of the indigenous inhabitants of Gokwe had not even seen one of Alvord's demonstrators before 1960, when the *Madheruka* began immigrating to the area in droves. The first mission school opened in Gokwe by the Baptist in 1963. For the Shangwe the agricultural extension workers and later the teachers who came from areas outside Gokwe, were the embodiment of everything *Madheruka*; they bore the same discourse of progress and development, the same conceit of living in advance of those they had come to live among.The arrival of *Madheruka* heralded the beginning of the regimentation of agrarian practice under the banner of "development." In fact, the thinking of the colonial officials, which was repeatedly echoed by one Delineation Officer, was that the introduction of settlers in Gokwe would "be one method of attack {on *Shangwe* backwardness} . . . This has the combined effect of bringing in capital investment, 'settler capital', bush clearing by the settlers as a

detterent to fly, and perhaps of most importance, the introduction of people with fresh ideas and more sophisticated demands into the areas where a catalist is needed."[42]

What impact did the large influx of immigrants and the introduction and success of cotton agriculture have on the process of land acquisition and subsequent land conflicts in the region?

Land politics and conflicts in the 1960s and 1970s

The suspension of the NLHA in 1963 was followed by the Tribal Trust Land Bill (TTLB) (1965) which only became effective in 1967.[43] The Bill took over three years to prepare on account of constitutional difficulties, particularly the interpretation of the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Constitution dealing with land and the determination of the various provisions contained in the declaration of Rights. Broadly speaking the Bill recognized and set up the traditional Tribal Authorities as Tribal Land Authorities(TLA)*(Majengetavhu)* to control the use and occupation of land in the communal areas by Africans and gave powers to do so either under customary law enforceable in the local courts or in terms of by-laws which they could make enforceable in the ordinary courts. It gave the Minister of Internal Affairs very wide powers to regulate for any matter he considered should be controlled which the TLA was unwilling or unable to control effectively. The Bill set up the TLA, their functions and powers. A TLA consisted of the chief and headmen of the area and any other people nominated by the chief. The Act also dealt with the safeguarding of existing rights under the NLHA. Existing rights would continue to be maintained and dealt with as in the past and would only fall away when they were renounced or cancelled. In short, the Act recognized the position of the chief and his traditional land authority and in fact gave recognition to what had long been 'tribal' law. It should be noted that the TTLA was intended to pose as a restoration of traditional powers and hence, rather cynically, as a means of appeasing rural discontent with the Rhodesian state.

The suspension of the NLHA was followed by a period of *laissez-faire* with indiscriminate opening up of new lands by individuals and households.[44] At a Midlands Tribal Trust Land Board meeting in 1967 chaired by the PC to explain the TTLB, chiefs expressed concern over the erosion of their powers in matters of land allocation. They complained that people who moved into Gokwe during this period were under the impression that they could move in without permission. One chief complained that chiefs were powerless to eject these people.The tendency was on the increase to disregard the TLA and there was common talk in the African areas along the lines of *"Nyika yaka zarurwa - Nyika Ngeyedu."* In other words, with regard to the land there was freedom.This was with reference to the abandonment of the NLHA which brought the feeling that people could do as they pleased in as far as land allocation was concerned. This resulted in the tendency to ignore tribal authority and to plough anywhere, anyhow. In any case traditional authority was disregarded and disrespected since some of the functions of the TLA included the much hated conservation measures. Land Husbandry allocations had also led people to believe that the chief was no longer an authority and this was why chiefs were experiencing difficulty in their areas as some people would say chiefs had no authority over them since they did not allocate the land. One chief raised the point that Land Husbandary allocations had been issued free of charge, but he wondered why holders should be allowed to sell their rights to others. Chiefs argued that no person who held Land Husbandary allocations should be allowed new lands unless they surrendered their LH allocations.[45]

Not only were there several draft bills of the TTLB until the final Act in 1967, but even after the Act became operational, it took some time to establish local TLA. In Gokwe, for instance, the first TLA were established in 1969, two years after the suspension of the

LHA. During this hiatus, there was uncontrolled 'free-for-all' land grabbing.The Midlands PC was quite aware of this reality and even suggested that DCs be appointed Land Authorities during the interim period until TLA were established, a suggestion that was unpopular with DCs for this would mean a lot of work for them.[46]

What the provisions of the TTLA did was to perpetuate land husbandry rights indefinitely as did the right to sell such rights and indeed some people sold their LH allocations to those who wished to extend their holdings. Some people were extending their land holdings illegally taking advantage of the long transition from the LHA to the TTLA. For example, in 1969 DC Gokwe wrote to the PC about some Africans who were contravening section 8 of the TTLA, i.e. occupying and cultivating land without permission of the TLA. The persons concerned had registered land husbandry allocations. In 1963 the then acting headman had permitted them to extend their holding. The new headman, however, instructed them to cease ploughing the additional land and remain with their LH allocations. They refused to obey and continued to plough. The point was that in terms of section 15 of the TTLA these people were deemed to have had the permission of the TLA, and the question was whether that authority could subsequently limit their lands to the LH allocations, or in any way restrict acreages other than LH allocations, without first making by-laws. The DC asked for an opinion from the PC who replied that in his opinion he did not feel that there was a case because the areas of land that these men were cultivating were protected by the provisions of section 15(1) of the TTLA. They could not have those areas reduced until regulations had been made in terms of section 12(1) of that Act.

Although it was apparent that the men were cultivating areas in excess of their registered arable areas under the LHA and so could be prosecuted in terms of section 30(3) of that Act, having regard to section 16 of the TTLA, the PC however, doubted if such a prosecution would succeed as it was also apparent that the additional land which the men were cultivating was in effect allocated to them, tacitly or otherwise by the previous headman.[47] There was therefore a real problem of interpreting the TTLA on the part of officials with regards to the allocation of land, a situation which several people who were aware of this confusion took advantage of to increase their acreages.

Since the advent of settlement by vast numbers of immigrants in Gokwe, there was a corresponding increase in boundary conflicts between village heads, headmen and chiefs as well as individuals and little could be agreed among them. In addition, there was also a significant rise in cases of land conflicts as well as cases of headmen and village heads receiving immigrants without the knowledge of the DC. The situation had become so critical that the PC voiced his concern in a circular to the DC. He noted that the law as it stood concerning the allocation of land was seriously hampering development, undermining the administration and affecting security in the TTL. He called for steps to be taken to incorporate further safeguards to prevent the situation from deteriorating more rapidly. He further noted that it was necessary to suspend some TLA for not following the law to the letter. For instance land was being allocated to persons without the village head affected consulted or for that matter those village heads in the surrounding area. Where village boundaries were disputed complications arose and whilst one village head might agree with the TLA over one allocation others would not. After the collapse of the NLHA moves were taken, authorised in come cases by chiefs, by village heads only and in others by individuals. In some cases a TLA would give permission to settle but generally the people of the area might be opposed to the move. For example a chief and his TLA in one case fixed a new boundary without discussing it with the village head himself or others directly affected, but did this unilaterally to legalise the occupation by Africans who were favoured by the Authority.[48]

A case in point was the dispute between one villager, Meta, and a village head, Hunu, in Nembudzia.. Meta had been allocated land by the Chief and had built a 5 roomed house worth about $180. In 1971, whilst at work in Bulawayo, he received a phone call from his family that they were in the process of being evicted from their house by village head Hunu. Hunu had been removed from an area designated as a Game reserve and had been squeezed into this area, but perhaps because Hunu was a village head, a leader of the TLA, as well as a member of the House of Senate, he took advantage of his positions to expand his land to encroach on Meta's. According to Meta, "Hunu did not only move next to my kraal but went further to cut across my village putting some of his huts and people under his jurisdiction, and disregarding the boundary." It is not clear how the dispute was resolved, by whom and in whose favour, but the fact is during this period there was a noticeable increase in land conflicts.[49]

During the embargo on entry into Gokwe, village heads continued to admit immigrants illegally and received substantial payments for the allocation of land. As T.O. Ranger has noted, "when powers over land allocation were given to chiefs under the 1967 Act, they could not use them. . . to regain a 19th century arbitrary power. But many chiefs used them instead to extract fees and gifts, often bringing aliens onto the land."[50] In his 1971 annual report, the DC reported an increase in the acquisition of Gokwe registration certificates by providing false information. He gave an example of a Gokwe village head who introduced two young men as his sons and registered them in his village, whereas in fact they were both Belingwe taxpayers who had managed to get themselves crossed off the Belingwe books by getting their village head to advice the Belingwe DC that they had died. They then had themselves introduced by a Gokwe village head as original applicants for registration certificates. This was obviously done to circumvent the ban on entry into Gokwe.[51]

Another similar case occurred in the area that I am doing field work. Taurai Dube wrote to DC Gokwe to tell him about

> what is happening here by the Headman John Nyambo. He is taking people from other districts and giving them new RCs. From their districts they are said to be dead and then he gives them a new father and a new certificate. If you want to make sure, sent your police. The Headman is selling field at $7 each and get this certificate for $12-50. Please send police here we are suffering from this headman.[52]

Chiefs, headman and village heads were persuaded by money, 'gifts' and other devices to make allocations of already occupied land without the slighest consideration for those in occupation.

In one case, a Sgt. Chimure wrote to the DC Bikita about what was happening in Gumunyu area of Gokwe.The Headman was holding courts without elders(TLA) because, the Sgt. alleged, he was demanding money from people who transferred to his area from other districts. For this reason the Headman feared that if he sat with elders at his court the elders would discover his corruption and release the information to authorities. In 1972 when the Sgt. was on leave at his home in Gokwe, he went to see the Headman after hearing that the latter was demanding money from widows living in the area. The information was that each widow paid $3. "On arrival I saw a number of widows paying the money, but when the Headman heard (he is blind) that I had arrived, he dismissed all the widows shouting to them why they had brought mone." The Sgt. further complained that he was allocated land by the Headman in 1972 and when he went home to erect houses, he was surprised fo find that his land had been allocated to someone else. This confirmed his suspicion that the Headman was collecting money from people who came to settle in his area. [53]

The fact that it was mostly widows who were making payments for land allocation is significant in that widows, for that matter immigrant widows as we mentioned earlier on, were

not allocated land at all. They could only acquire access to land in their own right through outright purchase.

Mazhawidza of Chief Jiri's area also complained to the DC in 1970 about the Chief whom he alleged to have taken his land and gave it to someone else whilst he was at work. According to him, "the Chief likes money very much. He do not like to rule his country without money." The problem was that the Chief received money from both people for the same piece of land and this generated a bitter dispute.[54]

Other cases errupted into violence. A bitter confrontation occurred in Headman Myambi's area involving several village heads. Village heads Siyaguma, Mwene together with 21 of their people assaulted village head Makamba and violence followed. Makamba was assaulted by the two village heads and when the Headman tried to sought out the matter, he left the place with people in hot pursuit. The land dispute arose when people removed from the Forest area were allocated land in Makamba's village. The DC simply dismissed the dispute as "one of these Batonka/Rhodesdale fights and will not be solved by Myambi(a Rhodesdale) or Mkonka(a Batonka)." [55] Such 'enthic' fights were not uncommon where immigrants settled among the indigenous. It is not clear exactly what caused the conflict, but it appears that the increase in the number of immigrants was a major factor.

During the liberation war especially from 1974 onwards there was increased lawlessness in the rural areas and some people took advantage to extend their acreages. Most people developed what A. Cheater has described as *madiro*(we do as we like), an ideology of individual freedom to counter technocratic control.[56] The nationalist war preached against local authority and this rendered chiefs, headman and village heads ineffective as Land Authorities responsible for land allocation and conservation measures. Individuals self allocated land where land was available. Some people were also taking advantage of the security problem posed by the war which made it impossible for officials to keep a close watch on 'illegal' immigrants and on the cultivation of land anywhere, anyhow. In 1976 the DC Gokwe, complained to the PC about 21 men, some aliens, some from other districts and others from within the district who had established themselves in the 'Congress' village(so-called because the village was resettled by ANC ex-detainees in the early 1960s) of Chief Njelele's area. All these people were allocated land (5-7 acres) by the village head after paying substantial amounts of money for this privilege. The village head had since been deposed for a number of illegal activities. Some of those concerned claimed that they had been allocated their land by a former acting chief although this was denied by the former incumbent of the acting appointment. Prosecution was difficult for it was considered that the land had been legitimately allocated by an agent of the TLA, albeit a corrupt one. These men had occupied a grazing area which was shared by numerous other village heads and whom they did not approach to secure their position. The PC called for caution in dealing with the matter for he did not think that these people had acted in bad faith as they had followed the right course of action to acquire land, i.e. they approached a village head and in due course paid him money for rights he allegedly conferred. He argued that these people were innocent victims of a corrupt administration and that it was important to arcetain if "we are dealing with deliberate evaders of the law or dupes as if these people are ejected these is bound to be an outcry from someone."[57] In any case these men had secured the services of lawyers to assist them to fight against eviction which they successfully did.

However, the movement into this area affected the security position and political activity was very high. At one time in 1976 when the Chief was forced to become involved in the dispute he received a threatening annoymous letter signed from "the sons of Zimbabwe" disproving of his action in attempting to move people from the area and saying "us Magandangas, sons of the soil of Zimbabwe are coming there to see you. We are fighting day

and night for you and the sands of the soil. There is nobody who can chase people but you should be chasing the Europeans who have a troubling government who are asleep. . . we want to chase you now, we are on our way to you." In 1973 Watyoka, the deposed village head, refused to allow the Chief's TTA members to investigate movements into the area and threatened assault with a crowbar. Watyoka was tellling people to disobey the Chief and the village heads. In 1975 there were reports of political meetings involving several prominent nationalists and it was reported that Watyoka was among them. In October, 1975 Watyoka waylaid the new village head on his way to a TLA meeting and assaulted him, breaking one of his legs and blinding him in one eye.[58]

One village head in one of the villages where I am doing field work was killed by ZIPRA forces in October 1979 for selling *ivhu re-Zimbabwe* (the soil of Zimbabwe) to immigrants. He allocated about 10 acres or more each to over 30 people in the grazing area after receiving payments of $10 for each 10 acre allocation. My informant's father(a Mudheruka from Manicaland who came in 1969) in the same village currently has over 100 acres which he acquired during this period. He spent over $100 for the 100 acre field located in different parts of the village. Another man bought 30 acres of land from the same village head in 1975 and he was told that *"kana uchida mumwe munda, dondo iguru mwanangu, unza imwe mari."* ("if you want additional land, the bush area is unlimited, just give me more money.") However, the village head found a letter in his house whose origins he did not know. The message of the letter was to the effect that "you are selling land. We are coming there. Beware." Within two months of the letter, he was killed. The village head sold so much land in the grazing area that the current village head (since 1980)(a Shangwe) wants these people out of the grazing area but there does not appear to be any hope that this will happen.[59]

The war period also witnessed incidences of especially immigrants who were evicted from their land because they were accused of harbouring 'terrorists'. In one long drawn case, Mqibelo Dube, (originally from Lalapanzi) of Dzaramba village in Chief Njelele's area was forbidden to cultivate his land because he was accused of harbouring a 'communist intelligence agent' who had entered the country illegally from Zambia. He is alleged to have allowed the agent to build a hut in the village without the knowledge or permission of authorities. The village head no longer wanted Dube as a member of his village as a result. Dube was forbidden to plough his fields and this decision was supported by the DC, Tapson. Dube however, defied the village head's ruling and not only ploughed his old fields but actually increased the size of his land. The TLA decided to punish Dube by driving the village head's cattle into Dube's fields. This was done with the full backing of the DC. The cattle were driven into Dube's field but not without a fight, for Dube's wife "came out of a hut with an assegai, knobkerrie and sticks. She threatened to attack the messengers and the kraalhead. She was disarmed and the cattle driven into the land. Whilst disarming the woman she asked the messenger and the District Assistant what they were doing as her 'son'(the intelligence agent) had set the country free and that they, the messengers should not listen to what they were told to do." The messengers not only drove cattle into Dube's field but also assaulted him with fists and "made him to hurry faster than normal" as they rode their bicycles. [60]

This case generated a lot of heat and correspondence between the DC, the PC and Dube's attorneys. The PC was sympathetic to Dube because Dube was lawfully occupying and using land in Njelele's area. He was deemed to have obtained the necessary consent of the TLA in terms of the TTLA, to occupy and cultivate land. The Njelele TLA had no authority to forbid Dube to cultivate land and to destroy his crops. The PC's feelings were shared by the Law Officers who argued that there was nothing in the TTLA which forbade Dube from continuing to cultivate his land. Meanwhile Dube's lawyers demanded compensation to the tune of $4 750 for assault and damanged crops.[61] I interviewed the Agricultural Officer,

Justin Masewa, who assessed the damage to Dube's crops. His assessment was based on "plant population and yield per acre. . . The damage was 100% because the cattle spent three days grazing in the field.The victim was assisted by his 'Coloured' in-laws to raise money to hire attorneys."[62] In the end compensation was set at $1 500 which the Government Treasury reluctantly agreed to pay. Tapson, the DC, was immediately transferred to another district because of the embarrassment he had caused to the state.[63]

Dube's future in Njelele's area remained obscure but the Chief allowed him to cultivate for the following season on condition that he would move to another village after that season. The village head remained adamant that he did not want Dube as a member of his village. However, the village head later changed his mind and allowed Dube to remain in his village. This change of mind was brought about by witchcraft. What happened is that the wife of the village head went to Gutu to fetch the body of Headman Nhlalambi to bring it back to Gokwe. Some distance from Dzaramba village the radiator of the car began to boil. Whilst cooling down the wife of the village head collapsed and died within moments. Although it was apparent that she had had a heart attack, Dube's wife was blamed for the death. Dube's wife was a minor witchdoctor and the village head was convinced that she had caused his wife's death. The village head was afraid that further tragedy would befall his family if he continued to insist that Dube should move from his village. As a result Dube continued to occupy and cultivate his fields.[64]

The land issue, 1980 and beyond

The relative peace in the communal areas after the war[65] as well as the Government's desire to redistribute population in some parts of Midlands (Shurungwi and Chirimumhanzi) brought a new wave on immigrants to Gokwe. A new trend in in-migration emerged after 1984 when other districts outside Midlands, especially Mashonaland West and Manicaland started to export. After 1984 there was no longer any definite pattern as people migrated from all over the country.[66]

After 1980 the two most important pieces of legislation which governed land use and allocation in the communal areas were the District Councils Act(1981) and the Communal Land Acts(1981,1982). The former set up elected councils as key institution of rural local government. The latter vested ownership of 'communal' land in the President and gave the District Councils power to allocate land. It was announced that "existing land rights would be preserved, but new permits to occupy land would have to be given by the District Council . . . District Councils granting land for residential or agricultural use would have to have regard to customary law and grant land only to those people who have a customary right to it." The determination of customary law had already been transferred from chiefs' courts to new local bodies appointed by the Ministry of Justice under the Customary Law and Primary Courts Act of 1981. Not only chiefs and headmen but also villages and households were replaced by the new institutions of district councils and primary courts.[67] According to Cheater, the Communal Lands Act may be seen as an extension of the colonial drive toward state control, "surbodinating custom to state control" and ignoring the significant individualistic elements within the tenure system."[68]

However, I contend here that between the operation of the lagel paradigms as legislated by the state and the actual practice on the ground, there existed many conceptual gaps. The 'communal' tenure system, far from being the system which the state envisaged, was a terrain for a complex interplay of factors. The 'Communal tenure system' must be located at the juncture of different ideologies including those of state imposed legal codes and of the various interpretations of 'custom' which individuals advanced in defence of their claims

and that a comprehensive understanding of the process of acquisition of and access to land can only be gained by focusing on these different ideologies.

As Ranger has noted, during this period, there was an absence of effective central control. Despite the enactments of the District Councils, the Primary Courts, and the Communal Land Acts, the new structures took time to become at all effective. He goes on to argue that "In practice, what was experienced was a relaxation of central control for the first time in decades. In these years there was a revival of all the old possibilities of action within flexible communal tenure. Chiefs and headmen and entrepreneurs and village committees and peasant households were all involved in the process of land allocation, appropriation and use in the communal areas."[69] Meanwhile, despite these renewed flexibilities, a series of official inqueries were repeating the old colonial fallacies of communalism, traditionalism, and archaism. The state became convinced that it had to move away from communal tenure but not because it knew what was occurring on the ground.[70] In fact, According to Ranger, "the actualities of land allocation, title, and land holding vary greatly from place to place in Zimbabwe's communal areas, according to the balance of power between chiefs, headmen, councillors, 'squatters', and politicians"[71], and if I may add, and individual households. According to Ranger, three themes emerge about the action of chiefs during this period:

> One of these is that chiefs have been able to represent themselves as spokesmen for popular defense of "tradition" against unpopular state policies. Another is that chiefs and headmen were allocating land in return for fees and bribes. A third is that there has been increasing conflict between chiefs and councils over land allocation.[72]

In the ensuing confusion, many peasant households took advantage to extend their holdings especially in Gokwe where land was still relatively available. In fact, this period witnessed the re-emergence, albeit in an invigorated state, of the *madiro* ideology, this time the feeling was that independence had been won and everyone was free to grab as much land as was available. In Gokwe, the land grabbing spree was largely stimulated by two factors: one was the tremendous increase in commodity production; and the second was the relative availability of good land in most parts of Gokwe. Commodity production especially cotton and maize production in the communal areas in general and in Gokwe in particular received a big boost after independence. There were a number of reasons for this phenomenon: increased producer prices, increased access to marketing facilities, expanded agricultural services, agricultural credit and use of commoditised seasonal inputs and the expansion in the number of producers and the area of cultivated land.[73]

Anticipating academic work on differentiation among the Zimbabwean peasantry by a good 15 years, M. Reid wrote that as a result of the cotton extension program, the Gokwe community was "developing recognizable social and economic strata which are not traditional." He lists five such "strata": At the top, (1) is that "capitalist, the large scale cash crop producer who has men in his employ for 12 months of the year. He earns a considerable profit and emerges as a man to be admired and envied by his neighbours." Then comes (2) the "above average farmer who makes a good living and will employ part time labour to spray and pick cotton and may employ one to two men permanently"; In the middle one finds (3) the "average cotton grower, who will be making more money than three or four years ago and may employ pickers." Then there is (4) the small grower (who) will limit his crop to what he and his family can cope with. He may share labour with friends and neighbours and he may brew beer at certain times to attract labour." And finally there is "the non-cotton grower," who "in most cases is not a man of ambition and will follow his traditional methods of subsistence agriculture. He may work occasionally for (1), (2) or (3). He may work permanently for (1) or (2) and leave his traditional subsistence agriculture to his wife or wives. [74]

Reid, however, did not adequately explain the reasons for such differentiation among the Gokwe peasantry. In this paper, I maintain that to a large extent, the disparities in landholdings have played a major role in the differentiation process. As E. Worby has argued, "Gokwe's cotton boom generated its own regionally based class of aggressive entrepreneurs who were crossing residual historical boundaries in land tenure and labour markets to constitute a nascent class of large-scale black agrarian capitalists."[75] In the following pages I draw heavily on my field work findings from Wards 1 and 2 in the Njelele area of Gokwe to illustrate how and why holdings have differed so significantly in Gokwe than in other areas and what implications this development has had on socio-economic differentiation among the peasantry.

In the two village that I first carried out field (Mtanhaurwa and Madhara) in Njelele, both *madheruka* and the 'indigenous' were allocated 10 acres each family in sandy soils close to the main Gokwe-Kwekwe road. The soils here have since got exhausted due to continuous use. Even with the repeated use of heavy fertilizer inputs, the yields per acre have dropped. However, since the early 1980s some households managed to extend their holdings into the *chidhaka* soils[76], a lowlying area with very heavy black rich soils in what was formally a grazing area. Not everybody has managed to acquire land in the *chidhaka*. It appears that it is mostly the more powerful and well placed people in the villages who have managed do so. Below I will give some case studies of such individuals who have managed to acquire land in the *chidhaka* soils and why.

One is an 'indigenous' young man of about 40 years old but has turned out to be a very prominent tomato and cotton grower, earning himself between $30 0000-$60 000 a year from his agricultural enterprise. He is the youngest bother of the current village head(a Shangwe). His story is that after working briefly as a garden boy and later in the South African mines he returned home to start a small agricultural plot in 1977. He was allocated a small garden plot of 3 acres in the *chidhaka* by his parents. It was immediately after 1980 during the *madiro* period that he extended his holdings to more than 30 acres by clearing the nearby bush area. He claims that many people were still scared to work the *chidhaka* because the soil is very heavy and requires more than sufficient draft power. He has made a fortune out of his farmland. Today he owns more than 50 acres in the area and so much property like TV, a solar panel, TV, a refrigerator, 2 cars, 2 good houses with metal sheet roofs and has over 30 cattle and a number of modern farm implements which have ben acquired over the yeras. He re-invests his income back into agriculture. He employs three men full time to herd his cattle, attend to tomato and cotton crops. At peak periods during the agricultural season he employs as many as 20 part - time workers to pick cotton especially. He regularly produces 30-40 bales of cotton a year. He also grows green mealies and vegetables for sale at Gokwe and in Kwekwe and a little maize.[77]

The second case involves a very powerful and well respected rainmaker, who originally lived in the 10 acre "lines" in the same village, but in 1983 his original home burnt down. The explanation was that the *mudzimu* did not want him to stay there anymore. He got possessed and in that state allocated himself a 50 acre plot in the *chidhaka* soils which he has since extended to more than 70 acres. He grows about 40 acres of cotton every year and produces more than sixty bales. He has three wives and on most occasions uses the labour of his patients some of who come from as far as Bulawayo and spend 3-4 months. At times he has more than 10 able patients. He owns 30 cattle. One of my research assistants has been employed by this rainmaker since 1987. In turn for his services the young man is allocated an agreed number of cotton lines every season. The rainmaker provides the necessary cotton inputs.[78]

I came across a similar case in another village of a prominent female rainmaker who self allocated more than 30 acres of rich soil on the banks of the Mudzongwe River in a similar fashion. But when the women died three years ago, the people in the village, especially those whose fields are close to the rainmaker's have lost respect for the husband and want him out of the area because he no longer serves any purpose for the village. The villagers claim that the man is occupying land within 30 metres of the river bank.[79]

Not every households has managed to occupy land in the *chidhaka* soils. One old widow(of Rhodesdale origin and therefore a mudheruka) complained bitterly that her married sons are either landless or have been denied access to land in the *chidhaka* area. Her explanation for this is that they are Madheruka. She came in this village in 1974 and her husband was only allocated about 2 acres of residential land. She has since distributed that land to one of her sons. She insists that "Indigenous people have land in the *chidhaka* but my sons do not have land anywhere because my husband was a Mudheruka." Her being a mudheruka is the main cause of her sons being landless.[80]

Her claims are partly true for a quick survey of the landholding situation in the village reveals that most of the madheruka who form a minority in the two villages have less than average land. The majority of the 'indigenous' have extended their landholdings far beyond the 10 acre allocation made in the 1950s. It appears that the majority of 'indigenous' are related in one way or another to the chiefly lineage(Njelele). Some of them, as noted above, have been able to extend their holdings into the rich *chidhaka* soils where much of the cotton is grown.

Madherukas who came much earlier and also those who were prepared to pay substantial payments for allocation of land appear to have acquired reasonably large acreages in the village. One businessman(at Njelele shopping centre) who came from Inyanga in 1966 was allocated land by Chief Njelele when land was still relatively abundant. He in fact chose very rich land for himself close to a stream for irrigation purposes. He started with 10 acres(for this was the standard allocation) in 1969 when he established his home and after independence, during the *madiro* period, he extended his land to 26 acres. He has since acquired 10 additional acres by clearing more bush area.. He was lucky because there was a forest area close to his original 10 acre plot so that he was free to clear the bush as his land requirements increased. Ever since, he rotates maize with cotton. He grows an average of 15 acres of cotton a year. Much of his income from agriculture is invested in the business which has grown from an eating house in 1969 to include a general dealer and a bottle store after 1980. The business also generates income which is used to buy agricultural inputs when necessary. His property includes 20 cattle, 50 sheep, a lorry and he is planning to buy a tractor. He has since acquired water rights to use the stream for irrigation purposes. He employs two permanent men and several part time villagers to pick his cotton.[81]

There are several cases of men who have paid substantial amounts of money in order to acquire land in the chidhaka area. As most of the village heads in the two villages that I first studied are related to the Chief, most of them own large landholdings which they have over the years reserved and allocated to their married sons. In one village the village head literally owns a farm of more than 100 acres, half of which has been allocated to his sons, including an unmarried 18 year old. Part of this land was sold to several people who were retrenched from Zisco in the early 1990s at varying undisclosed amounts. Those who paid more were allocated 5 acres each in the *chidhaka*. Not only do the village heads receive large amounts of money in exchange for allocation of land, but they demand an initial payment called *masvevadowa*, a payment to enable the prospective buyer to have the village head avail himself and show him the land for sale. I interviewed a former village head who was recently deposed for illegally selling land to immigrants and he admitted to having committed the offense. It is alleged that between the early 1980s until his deposition in 1996, he admitted more than 30 such

immigrants from whom he received payment. His advantage was that he was both a village head and chairman of VIDCO.[82]

Land pressure and struggles over land

As there is now an awareness that land shortage is eminent, there is some panic in the villages. Two groups most severely affected by the shortage of land are especially the young married men and single women who are either landless or have very little land. Young men descending from "immigrants" have very little chance of ever securing access to farmland in the villages studied. They may inherit the land belonging to their fathers. The pressures against *madheruka* is greatest in the villages that have good soil and where cotton production can give a good cash income provided one has enough farmland. In one of these villages the village establishment has developed an almost hostile attitude towards the *madheruka*. In the early 1980s, the village head and other powerful members of the village chased away three *madheruka* brothers with their wives and children, on the ground that one of the brothers had an affair with a married woman in the village. The village establishment took the opportunity to chase away all three households, and distribute their land among young, landless sons of the village lineage. One of the key beneficiaries was the son of the (then) village head.[83]

In one of the villages, there has been for almost 15 years, some friction between leading members of the lineage(Shangwe) and the household of a highly successful commodity producing *mudheruka*. The *mudheruka* was allocated land in the 1970s by a previous village head along the river bank. The current village head since 1980 has attempted to mobilise the Natural Resources Board, the local agricultural extension officer and the District Council to force the man to abandon his 50 acre farmland on the grounds that the land is near the river. He has also attempted to get these insitutions's support to reduce the size of his land and reallocate part of it to some other village, but without success. It appears in this case that this particular *mudheruka* household has managed to withstand the pressure from the village head by mobilising support from other institutions. The male household head is a holder of a master farmer certificate, has very good relations with the agricultural extension officer and generally commands respect from government officials due to his farming achievements. Moreover, his wife is a strong personality who holds positions in ZANU-PF at district level and generally commands respect in the community. The family has therefore, fairly successfully compensated for their lack of lineage-based social resources with well above average command over cultural and material resources and social resources and linked to the modern state system.[84]

The few lucky ones who have been allocated land through inheritance or through allocations by the VIDCO and village heads tend to have much smaller holdings than those who got their land when land was still abundant. One such lucky inheritor inherited land when his father died in 1985. The father had 50 acres and this young man being the eldest son, inherited 20 acres where he regularly grows 12-15 acres of cotton. I attended a *humwe* work party[85] on his 13 acre cotton field which he organized for picking cotton. About 30 people of all ages (6-35 years) attended the *humwe*. He prepared goat meat, bread and butter and tea with milk, mahewu and sadza. The young man also inherited a lorry which he uses to ferry bales of cotton to the CMB. He has himself managed to buy a sola panel, TV and to build a good house.[86]

However, most of the young men in the village have not been as lucky as the above mentioned. At a meeting I attended at the village head's, the main topic of discussion was the issue of 2 acre plots that were recently allocated to young married men in the bush area. These men were being considered for registration for resettlement in Copper Queen 2 Scheme established by the Government in the late 1980s in northeastern Gokwe.The youths have

reached frustration point as a result of inadequate land and this is clearly manifested by cases of bitter conflicts over grazing area. Competition over common grazing areas between young men of one village with those of the neighbouring village has become rife in the villages that I studied. The current disputes between two villages in Ward 1 for instance, involve competition between young men over occupation and cultivation of grazing areas. In these villages young men of one village went as far as slashing crops belonging to the people of the other village who had occupied and cultivated land in the grazing area. The case has already been taken to court and will be heard in June this year.

Besides documenting land hunger among young households, the Njelele data also confirm that households headed by single women is the other main group of land hungry in the communal areas. Of the 5 widows that I interviewed, 4 of them had less than 5 acres.Those who held slightly more land were not able to utilize all of it because they were short of other means of production. One widow was allocated 3 acres by her brother in the 1970s after she divorced. She used to grow cotton but has since stopped because of lack of labour. She now grows enough maize to see her through the year and a bit of sunflowers.[87] In another case two widows of a polygymous husband had their land seized by the eldest son on the death of their husband in 1985. They have been ploughing about 5 acres since then. [88]Only one of the female headed households controlled and used more than nine acres.

Renting and borrowing

The households who have been renting or borrowing in the villages that I studied represent two very different social groups.One group is made up of landless households who usually are of fairly young age below 31. The other group consists of relatively wealthy petty commodity producers who have farming as their primary source of income. These households already hold comparatively large landholdings of medium to good soil quality. Their access to all the other means of production is sufficient to expand farm output, provided they can get access to more land. These expansive commodity producers attempt to obtain more land through borrowing and renting, as well as through manipulating and bending the rules of the communal land tenure system. The most common arrangement is for households who have fairly large landholdings which they cannot utilize is to rent out land to the land hungry households. The landless buys seeds for the season and in turn gets allocated land for that season. Arrangement can be renewed every season.The same applies to households with land but have no draft power. They lease a portion of their land in exchange for draft power. In fact many landless households in the villages studied have survived on these strategies over the years. A few households have land in the *chidhaka* soils. They enter into such arrangements with households who do not have land in this area but who wish to grow cotton. These arrangements have been popular especially with recent immigrants who were retrenched at ZISCO. These recent immigrants used their terminal benefits to buy cattle but they have insufficient land. They were so desparate that they were allocated 2 acre residential stands at $500 each but they were not allocated fields. They plough for households without draft power and in turn get allocated land.

Contrary to studies carried in many parts of Africa that play down commercial transaction, I found that renting and other land transactions which involve commercial exchange appear to be quite significant in Gokwe. Although access to farm land in the communal areas is primarily obtained through membership in the village group, my data from Gokwe indicates that commercial exchanges especillay involving non-kin are quite significant. Although "land - rent" transactions between non-kin might be paid in commodities and labour services, large cash transactions are significantly involved. For instance, one *mudheruka* bought his 10 acre field from the village head in 1995 for $2 000(He already had another 100

acres of land). In 1996 a headmaster at a nearby school rented it for $700 just for one season to grow cotton. If the headmaster wishes to use the land for another season he has to pay another $700 if not more.[89]

In another village, the village head is a very successful farmer who had won several prizes for his farming achievements. He was allocated 7 acres of land by his father who was then a village head in 1975. He continued to clear the bush until he had 40 acres in the mid-1980s. In addition, he inherited his father's fields as he is the eldest son. All in all he currently holds about 70 acres of land. He grows maily cotton, maize and sunflowers. He boosts of having 3 wives and 21 children but also uses hired labour at peak periods. In 1988 he produced 100 bales of cotton. He has since acquired about 49 cattle, a TV, sola panel, and 7 good houses. He has held a number of influential positions in the village and at district level including district treasurer in ZANU in the 1970s, treasurer of the School Board and he is currently vice chairman of the School Board.

The secret of his succes is that he makes a fortune from *chimbadzwa*, i.e. he advances loans to needy households($700 this season) for the purchase of inputs. In return he gets a bale of cotton (for every $700 given)which he sells at more than 50 % profit (A bale of cotton last season was about $1 600). He has so many cattle that he loans out to households without cattle for ploughing for a whole season. In exchange, he gets 2 bales for each cattle loaned out. This means that for a span of oxen, he gets 4 bales which he sells to the Cotton Mmarketing Board.[90]

While the limited above case studies are not adequate for us to make any firm conclusions about the nature of land distribution and its effect on socio-economic differentiation among the Zimbabwean peasantry in the 'communal' areas, my preliminary investigation indicates that land distribution in Gokwe is highly skewed compared to the majority of communal areas in Zimbabwe. The communal land tenure system has not prevented the emergence of vast disparities in landholdings as has been generally argued. To understand this rather unique phenomenon, one needs to delve into the history of land acquisition in this frontier region since the 1950s. The influx of immigrants and the success of commodity production, especially cotton, had the combined effect of making land a highly politicized resource. While legal codes that regulated access to land were unevenly enforced, the laws governing land rights in the 'communal' areas were ambiguous (leaving room to interpret 'customary' rights in different ways) and were unevenly enforced. In addition, the authority to allocate land has been transferred several times from one state agency to another between the state and 'traditional' local authorities. These conditions helped to create a social arena in which both 'communal' and legal paradigms were manipulated to serve the interests of various groups of people who maneuvered to acquire access to land through various channels. In the process, land disparities emerged, with a significant effect on soci-economic differentiation. Today, landholdings in Gokwe range from 2 acres to more than 100 acres. Landlessness has become a common phenomenon as there is a growing number of 'squatters' in many villages of Gokwe.

Footnotes

[1] For statistics on cotton production in Gokwe during this period see M. Blackie, "Case Study: The Zimbabwe Cotton Marketing Board." Department of Land Management, Working Paper no. 2, 1983; K.A. Muir, "Crop Production Statistics", & The Herald , 28 January, 1997.

[2] R.Rukuni & C.K. Eicher, eds.Zimbabwe's agricultursl revolution. Univeristy of Zimbabwe. 1994.

[3] L.de Swardt, "Agricultural production in the Gokwe farming area." Research Paper, Department of Land Management, University of Zimbabwe, 1982,p.3.

[4] The Herald, 28 January, 1987.

[5] Among others, see H. Moyana, The Political economy of land in Zimbawe. Gweru: Mambo Press, 1984; Report of the commission of inquiry into the agricultural industry. Under Chairmanship of G. Chavunduka,1982; R. Riddell,The land problem in Rhodesia. Gweru: Mambo Press, 1978.
[6] M. Neocosmus, "Homogeneity and differences on Swazi Nation Land." In M. Neocosmos, ed. Social relations in rural Swaziland: Critical analyses. Manzini: University of Swaziland, 1987.
[7] C. Brand, "Communal Lands Reorganisation Program in Zimbawe". Review of Rural and Urban Planning in Southern and Eastern Africa. Vol.1, 1994.
[8] See L Phimister, "Commodity relations and class formation in the Zimbabwean countryside, 1898-1920".Journal of Peasant Studies. 13:4(1986); T.O. Ranger, Peasant Consciousness and guerilla war in Zimbabwe: A comparative study. Harare: ZPH, 1985; A. Cheater, Idioms of accumulation:Rural development and class formation among rural freeholders in Zimbabwe. Gweru: Mambo Press, 1984; S. Moyo, The land Question in Zimbabwe. Harare: SAPES, 1995.
[9] Ian Scoones & K. Wilson, "Households, lineage groups and ecological dynamics: Issues for livestock development in Zimbabwe's Communal Lands." In B. Cousins ed. People, land and livestock. University of Zimbabwe, CASS, 1989; Moyo, The Land Question in Zimbabwe; N. Amin, "Peasant differentiation and food security." Working Paper No. 1 SSRC Project on African Agriculture, New York, 1989, among others.
[10]M. Masst, "The Harvest of Independence: Commodity Boom and Socio-economic differentiation among peasant in Zimbabwe." PhD, Roskilde University, 1996, 309.
[11] S1194/190/1: Land for Native Occupation 1946-47: Reports of the Ad-Hoc Committee.
[12] ibid.
[13] See Ranger, Peasant Consciousness.
[14] For more information on the activities of B. Burombo in the rural areas in general and in Rhodesdale see N. Bhebe, B. Burombo: African Politics in Zimbabwe 1947-1958. College Press, Harare, 1989.
[15] E. Worby, "Remaking labour, reshaping identity: Cotton commorditization and the culture of modernity in northwestern Zimbabwe." McGill University, PhD, 1992, 321; Informants interviewed recently in the Njelele area of Gokwe.
[16] S1194/190/1: Report of a meeting held in September, 1950.
[17] ibid.
[18] For a comprehensive study of *Shangwe* identity, see E. Worby, "Remaking labour, reshaping identity", chapter 7.
[19] For more information on the Native Land Husbandry Act of 1951, see B. Floyd, Changing Patterns of African Land Use in Southern Rhodesia. Lusaka, 1959; W. Duggan, "The Native Land Husbandry Act of 1951 and the rural African middle class of Southern Rhodesia" Africa Affairs, 79(1980. M. Bulman, The Native Land Husbandry Act of Southern Rhodesia. A Failure in Land Reform. Salisbury, 1975.
[20] V. Machingaidze, "Agrarian Change from above: The Southern Rhodesian Native Land Husbandary Act and African Response." Journal of Southern African Studies.14(3) 1991, pp.557-588.
[21] S1194/190/1: Provincial Native Commissioner to Chief Native Commissioner, 10 Aug.1950.
[22] Machingaidze, "Agrarian change from above.", p.583.
[23] S1194/190/1: NC Gokwe to PNC, 10 March, 1955.
[24] LAN/15/5/55: Control of Native Areas in terms of the Natural Resources Act, 1955: NC to PNC, 4 March 1952.

[25] ibid.
[26]ibid, Acting Director, Native Affairs to PNC, 14 May 1952.
[27] ibid, NC to PNC, 14 Aug. 1956.
[28] See Machingaidze, "Agrarian change from above", p.583.
[29] Interview with Village Head George Choga at his home at Choga village, 21 April, 1997.
[30] LAN/15/5/55: NC Gokwe to PNC, 11 Aug 1951.
[31]ibid, NC to PNC, 1 March 1955.
[32]ibid, Land Development Officer to Assistant NC, 8 Sept. 1951.
[33] ibid, NC to PNC, 2 June 1956.
[34]See Machingaidze, "Agrarian change from above", p. 583.
[35] LAN/9: Gokwe Tribal Trust Land Authority Meeting 1969-1970: D.J.S. Wilson to Secretary for Internal Affairs, 25 Sept. 1969.
[36] For a critical view of the Land Tenure Act of 1969 see A. K. Mugova, "The Rhodesia 1969 Land Tenure Act: Implications and Impact." BA Hons dissertaion, University of Zimbabwe, 1985.
[37] LAN/16/9: Resettlement of Squatters in Gokwe Area, 1969-73, K.C. Bloore to Sec. for Internal Affairs, 4 Sept. 1973.
[38] For statistics on the population of Gokwe during this period I relied on K.J. Mombo "Population in-migration into Gokwe-Cheziya district between 1965-68 to 1975-78". University of Zimbabwe, Geography Department, BA dissertation, 1987; F. Mehlo, "The Changing face of Ngomeni Area in Gokwe TTL", BA dissertation, University of Zimbabwe, 1970; J. Chizororo, "In-migration into Gokwe east: occupation of a frontier region." University of Zimbabwe, BA dissertation, 1988.
[39] Statistices on cotton production in Gokwe are found in M. Reid, "Gokwe cotton: Major events sequence." Unpublished Report. Department of Conservation and Extension, Gokwe, 1966
[40] R.W.M. Johnson, "African Agricultural Development in Southern Rhodesia: 1945-1960." Food Research Institute Studies 1945-1960. 4, 1964, gives the following definitions: "Cooperator, any farmer who uses manure or fertilizer, carries out some rotation, and plants his crops in rows; Plotholder, a farmer who is under tuition by a demonstrator in order to become a Master Farmer, and whose cropping program is recorded; Master Farmer, a plotholder who has reached certain minimum standards of crop and animal husbandry laid down by the Agricultural Department.", p.181.
[41] B. Davis & W. Dopcke, "Survival and Accumulation in Gutu: Class Formation and the Rise of the State in Colonial Zimbabwe, 1900-1939." Journal of Southern African Studies, 14(1) 1987, pp. 75-80.
[42] S2929/7/3: Gokwe District Delineation Reports, 1963-1965: C.J.K. Latham, Delineation Officer, 26 Oct. 1963.
[43] See the Tribal Trust Land Act, 1967.
[44] A. Cheater, "The Ideology of 'Communal' land tenure in Zimbabwe: Mythogenesis enacted?" Africa 60:2(1990).
[45] LAN/2/TTLA:1966-1968: Minutes of a conference of DCs, Midlands held in Gwelo, 6 Feb. 1967.
[46] ibid.
[47] LAN/2/TTLA: Disputes, PC to DC, 17 Feb 1969.
[48] ibid, PC to all DCs, Midlands, 9 Feb. 1976.
[49] INVI/8/71, Meta to Mr. & Mrs. Paul, Bulawayo, April 1971; Mr. Paul to DC Gokwe, 15 Sept. 1971.
[50] T.O. Ranger, "The Communal Areas of Zimbabwe." in T. Basset & D. Crummey. eds.

Land in African Agrarian Systems. Wisconsin, Madison, 1993, 357.
[51] Annual Report of Gokwe DC for the period ended 31st Dec. 1971.
[52] INV/1/8/72: Taurai Dube to DC Gokwe, 1 May 1971.
[53] LAN/16/VINE/74, Sgt. Chimure to DC Bikita, 30 July 1974.
[54] ibid, Mazhawidza to DC Gokwe, 9 Feb. 1970. In fact Chief Jiri and his Headman Gumunyu were moved into this area from Bikita in 1966.
[55] JUD/16/9/74, Myambi to DC, 10 July 1974.
[56] A Cheater, "The Ideology of communal land tenure in Zimbabwe."
[57] AGR/9/36/TTLA: Disputes 1973-1976, PC to DC.
[58] ibid, DC to A .J. A. Peck, 18 Oct. 1974.
[59] Interview with John Chipfupa, Hore Village, Nyarupakwe, 24 May 1997.
[60] AGR/9/36/ TTLA: Disputes, Tapson to PC, 14 Oct. 1971.
[61] ibid, Tapson to PC, 9 June 1972; PC to Sec. for Internal Affairs, 29 June 1972; Ben Baron Partners to Attoney General, 16 April 1973.
[62] Interview with John Masewa, an Agricultural Extension Officer, at Nyarupakwe shopping centre, 23 April 1997. He has been an extension worker in Gokwe since 1960
[63] AGR/9/36, Ben Baron Partners to Attorney General, 16 April 1973.
[64] ibid, Tapson to PC 23 Nov. 1973.
[65] Not long after 1980, Gokwe was plunged into another war, the 'dissident' war.
[66] J. Chizororo, "In-migration into Gokwe east: occupation of a frontier region."
[67] Communal Lands Acts 1981 and 1982.
[68] Cheater, "The idelogy of 'Communal' land tenure", 22.
[69] Ranger, "The Communal Areas of Zimbabwe.", p.369.
[70] A series of official inqueries on 'communal' land tenure during this period include Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Agricultural Industry, June, 1982; Communal Lands Development Plan: A 15-Year Development Strategy", Harare, 1985.
[71] ibid, 363.
[72] ibid.
[73] For more details on the reasons for the expansion of agricultural commodity production in the communal areas after 1980, see Rukuni & Eicher eds. Zimbabwe's Agricultural Revolution.; D. Rohrbach, "The Growth of Smallholder Maize Production in Zimbabwe: Causes and Implications for Food Security." PhD Michigan State University, 1988.
[74] M. Reid, "An agricultural programme at Gokwe." Rhodesia Agricultural Journal. 60:3, 1971, p.6.
[75] E. Worby, "Remaking labor, reshaping identity", 214.
[76] *Chidhaka* are rich heavy black clay soils. The soils hold misture for long periods of time, enabling plants to successfully endure the mid-season droughts that plague the lowlands annually. Their typically rich nutrient content fosters rapid plant growth; cotton plants often grow to the height of an average adult in the richest *chidhaka* soils. These soils are technically classified with the siallitic group of calcimorphic soils. The parent material is based on the plateau and triassic grits and mudstones in the lowlands. See Thompson (1965) for background on soil classification in Zimbabwe.
[77] Interview with Madhemu Madwara at his home in Madwara Village, 18 April, 1997.
[78] Interview with Learnmore Dube at Njelele shopping centre, 18 April, 1997.
[79] Interview with Kesari at his home in Hore Village, 24 April, 1997.
[80] Interview with Rebecca Sibanda of Madwara Village, 18 April, 1997.
[81] Interview with Claude Mandeya, a businessman at Njelele shopping centre, 16 April, 1997.
[82] Interview with Learnmore Dube, 15 April; interview with deposed village head

Mtanhaurwa,15 April, 1997.
[83] Interview with Learnmore Dube, 19 April, 1997.
[84] Interview with Mupfugami, a prominent farmer, 23 April, 1997.
[85] For a comprehensive study of *humwe* work parties and their role in the differentiation process among Gokwe peasantry, see E. Worby, "What does agrarian wage-labour signify? Cotton, commoditization and social form in Gokwe". Journal of Peasan Studies. 23,1(1995), 1-29.
[86] Interview with Jabulani Siziba in his cotton field, 21 April, 1997.
[87] Interview with Sophi Karara of Mtanhaurwa Village, 18 April, 1997.
[88] Interview with Eddie Marenga and Juliet Mpofu, 18 April, 1997.
[89] Interview with John Chipfupa, Hore Village, 24 April, 1997.
[90]Interview with Zebedia Makore, a prominent farmer, 23 April, 1997.