THE COLONIAL ARCHIVE AND CONTEMPORARY CHIEFTAINSHIP CLAIMS: THE CASE OF ZIMBABWE, 1935 TO 2014.

BY

GEORGE BISHI

THIS THESIS HAS BEEN SUBMITTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN THE FACULTY OF THE HUMANITIES, FOR THE CENTRE FOR AFRICA STUDIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE.

JULY 2015

SUPERVISOR: PROF. I.R. PHIMISTER

CO-SUPERVISOR: DR. R. WILLIAMS

Declaration

I declare that the dissertation hereby submitted by me for the Master of Arts degree at the University of the Free State is my own independent work and has not previously been submitted by me at another university/faculty. I furthermore cede copyright of the dissertation in favour of the University of the Free State.

_____

George Bishi

Table of Contents

Abstract/Opsomming

This thesis focuses on the uses of the colonial archive in contemporary Zimbabwe by people and families claiming chieftaincy. It uses five selected case studies: Chidziva in Masvingo, Sanyanga and Mutsago in Manicaland, Seke in Mashonaland East, and Musaigwa in Mashonaland Central Provinces of Zimbabwe. All these cases submitted written claims reports to the Ministry of Local Government for consideration for traditional leadership positions. These claims were made after Zimbabwe's Fast Track Land Reform of 2000. At the same time, the government empowered traditional leaders to win their support against the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC). As a result of these developments, claimants to chieftaincy also emerged. To convince Local Government officials, claimants were expected to submit elaborate claims reports showing their genealogies, family trees, chieftaincies histories and territorial boundaries. It is in these circumstances that claimants resort to the National Archives of Zimbabwe (NAZ) looking for their histories in the colonial archive. Claimants hire ethnographers, archaeologists and historians to document their family or clan histories. Claimants and contracted historians both rely on colonial documents for evidence. They also use oral evidence to compliment archival evidence or to dispute it if the colonial record does not support the claimant's case.

In the light of these contemporary claims to chieftaincy, this dissertation discusses the establishment of the NAZ, not only as a site of 'national memory' but also as a strategic research institution so far as chieftaincy is concerned. It analyses the generation of archival sources, their acquisition and accessibility governed by access regimes at the NAZ and how this subsequently affects chieftaincy research. The dissertation discusses the nature and usefulness of archival sources claimants used to document claims reports. In the process, this study suggests supplementary sources within and without NAZ repositories that are overlooked by historians. The study also explores the dynamics of claims to chieftaincy in present day Zimbabwe. While some chieftaincy succession disputes predate colonialism, others are a product of colonial legacies. The study situates itself within the broader literature, the so-called indigenous historiography that emerged in the 1990s. It focuses on how indigenous peoples in countries such as Canada, New Zealand, Australia, South Africa and Malaysia filed land claims. They used customary rights, colonial treaties and archives for

evidence to justify their claims. However, this thesis argues that archives can be used for political and social benefits by claimants of chieftaincy in Zimbabwe.

Key words: colonial archive, chieftaincy claims, sources, Zimbabwe.

Opsomming

Hierdie proefskrif fokus op die wyses waarop die koloniale argief in hedendaagse Zimbabwe gebruik word deur persone en families wat aanspraak maak op opperhoofskap. Dit maak gebruik van vyf geselekteerde gevallestudies: Chidziva in Masvingo, Sanyanga en Mutsago in Manikaland, Seke in Mashonaland-Oos, en Musaigwa in die Mashonaland Sentrale Provinsies van Zimbabwe. In al hierdie gevalle is eiseverslae skriftelik aan die Ministerie vir Plaaslike Regering voorgelê vir oorweging vir tradisionele leierskapsposisies. Hierdie eise is ingedien na Zimbabwe se versnelde grondhervormingsprogram in 2000. Terselfdertyd het die regering tradisionele leiers bemagtig om hul steun teen die *Movement for Democratic Change* (MDC) te wen. As gevolg van hierdie verwikkelinge het persone wat aanspraak maak op opperhoofskap ook na vore gekom. Om beamptes van die Plaaslike Regering te oortuig, is daar van eisers verwag om breedvoerige eiseverslae in te dien wat hul geslagsregisters, stambome, opperhoofskap-geskiedenisse en territoriale grense uiteensit. Dit is in hierdie omstandighede wat eisers gebruik maak van die Nasionale Argief van Zimbabwe om hul geskiedenisse in die koloniale argief na te vors. Eisers kontrakteer etnograwe, argeoloë en geskiedkundiges om hul familie- of stamgroepgeskiedenisse te dokumenteer. Beide eisers en gekontrakteerde geskiedkundiges maak staat op koloniale dokumente vir bewysstukke. Hulle maak ook gebruik van mondelinge bewyse om argiefbewysstukke aan te vul of dit te betwis in gevalle waar die koloniale rekord nie die eiser se saak steun nie.

In die lig van hierdie hedendaagse aansprake op opperhoofskap bespreek hierdie proefskrif die vestiging van die Nasionale Argief van Zimbabwe, nie net as 'n tuiste vir 'nasionale geheue' nie, maar ook as 'n strategiese navorsingsinstelling wat opperhoofskap aanbetref. Dit ontleed die generering van argiefbronne en hoe hulle bekom word, asook hul toeganklikheid soos bepaal deur toegangsriglyne by die Nasionale Argief en watter uitwerking dit vervolgens het op navorsing oor opperhoofskap. Dit bespreek die aard en nuttigheid van argiefbronne wat deur eisers gebruik word om verslae te dokumenteer. In

die proses maak hierdie studie voorstelle oor aanvullende bronne binne en buite die argief se bewaarplekke, wat deur geskiedkundiges misgekyk word. Hierdie studie verken ook die dinamiek van aansprake op opperhoofskap in hedendaagse Zimbabwe. Terwyl sommige dispute oor opperhoofskap-opeenvolgings dateer van voor die koloniale era, is ander die produk van koloniale nalatenskappe. Die studie situeer homself binne die breër literatuur, die sogenaamde inheemse geskiedskrywing wat in die 1990's ontwikkel het. Dit fokus op die wyse waarop inheemse mense in lande soos Kanada, Nieu-Seeland, Australië, Suid-Afrika en Maleisië grondeise aanhangig gemaak het. Hulle het gebruiklike regte, koloniale verdrae en argiewe as bewysstukke gebruik om hul eise te regverdig. Hierdie proefskrif voer egter aan dat argiewe vir politieke en maatskaplike gewin gebruik kan word deur persone wat aanspraak maak op opperhoofskap in Zimbabwe.

Sleutel woorde: koloniale argief, opperhoofskap aansprake, bronne, Zimbabwe.

Acronyms

AOH	African Oral History
BSAC	British South Africa Company
CAA	Central African Archives
CNC	Chief Native Commissioner
CRAG Act	Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010
DA	District Administrator
DC	District Commissioner
DRs	Delineation Reports
ESARBICA	Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Branch of the Council on Archives
FTLRP	Fast Track Land Reform Programme
HC	High Court
IKS	Indigenous Knowledge Systems
LAA	Land Apportionment Act
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
NADA	Native Annual Department Affairs
NAD	Native Affairs Department
NAZ	National Archives of Zimbabwe
NC	Native Commissioner
NHC	National Historical Committee
NLHA	Native Land Husbandry Act

OH   Oral History

PRA   Public Records Act 1958

TLSMC   The Traditional Leadership and Spirit Mediums Committee

TTLs   Tribal Trust Lands

UDI   Unilateral Declaration of Independence

UK   United Kingdom

URHD   University of Rhodesia History Department

VIDCOs   Village Development Committees

WADCOs   District Councils, Ward Committees

ZANLA   Zimbabwe National Liberation Army

ZIPRA   Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army

ZANU PF   Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front

Chapter One

---

1. Background to the Study

1.1 Introduction

This study considers the various uses made of the colonial archive in post-colonial Zimbabwe by readers concerned with the subject of chieftaincy. It takes as case studies Chidziva in Masvingo, Sanyanga and Mutsago in Manicaland, Seke in Mashonaland East, and Musaigwa in Mashonaland Central Provinces of Zimbabwe. Each of them are recently filed applications to the Ministry of Local Government for recognition of particular chiefs and headmen. Overall, the study seeks a broader understanding of the context in which such claims evolve. The claims were submitted after Zimbabwe's Fast Track Land Reform (FTLR) programme began with the mass occupation of white owned commercial farms by landless peasants and war veterans in 2000. This resettlement exercise not only affected existing chieftainships in Zimbabwe but had far-reaching implications for the configuration of their territorial boundaries, the resuscitation of old claims and/or the emergence of new ones. While the number of such claims increased as the land reform gathered momentum, this also coincided with determined moves by the Zimbabwean government to give more powers and packages to chiefs in a move designed to win their support. This gesture together with the packages that came with the title and position of chief consequently encouraged fresh claims to chieftainships and contestations over existing ones. Some claims involved the restitution of pre-colonial territories, a matter ignored by all land reform policies to date. While many claimants undertake their own research using archival documents, internal family consultation involving oral histories, genealogies, family trees, boundaries and succession sequences to reconstruct their past, others hire professional historians. The shared interest by historians and claimants in this subject has not only increased demand for a narrow band of sources in Zimbabwe's National Archives, but invites interrogation and critical appreciation of the use of the colonial archive with implications for archival policy.

In what follows, this study offers a critique of the sources deployed by contracted historians and claimants concerned with chiefly restitution. To understand this broad aim,

the thesis raises three research questions. The first concerns the nature of colonial archival sources on chieftaincies, their production, acquisition, access and usefulness. Secondly, why do tensions over traditional leadership become more visible from 2000 onwards in Zimbabwe and what are the arguments put forward to justify claims to such positions? Thirdly, what overlooked sources may supplement the colonial archive and what impacts might these sources have on chieftaincy claims? The nature and usefulness of theses alternative sources is considered. A number of variables need to be considered, including the timing and context of these claims, as well as the agents[1] facilitating this process in trying to understand why many claims are made in contemporary Zimbabwe. Finally, this thesis examines the extent to which the National Archives of Zimbabwe (NAZ) has responded to these developments by producing and providing access to contemporary information on chiefs.

The study of the subject of chieftainship in contemporary Zimbabwe demands new approaches because the circumstance surrounding the recording and production of knowledge on this institution has changed in the post-colonial period. First it is no longer Europeans generating knowledge on or presiding over Africans through a 'native' policy but Africans interpreting themselves. Secondly, the official process of recording this information has been transformed from general correspondence of chiefs in districts by Native Commissioners or delineation of chieftaincies for Community Development to individual running files on chiefs. Thirdly the parent Government Ministry responsible for chiefs (Local Government) has transformed and is concerned with other briefings beyond simply chieftainship. Lastly, and more importantly, under the current political climate prevailing in Zimbabwe, and the rising calls for indigenisation and the proliferation of community shared ownership trusts, the office of the chief has assumed a new material status with accompanying benefits.

Yet despite all these changes the sources used for knowledge on the subject remain the same and continue to derive from canonical archival sources generated in the colonial period. Users have failed to embrace other sources generated during both colonial and post-colonial period. Even when chieftainship disputes spill into courts, the records and

---

[1] Agents – used to refer to historians, archaeologists and ethnographers documenting claims reports for claimants of chieftaincy.

information generated by the courts are generally ignored. This study works with the assumption that even under the 25 year closure period of the National Archives Act it should be possible to access information about chiefs in Zimbabwe up until 1989.

More broadly, this study contributes to the so-called Indigenous historiography that emerged in the 1990s. This was influenced by the escalating land claims made by 'natives or aborigines' in the former British Dominions of Canada, Australia and New Zealand and partly by the United Nations proclamation of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.[2] The scholarship focuses on how indigenes are claiming back their lost lands using customary rights, at times using archival material as evidence. It is a scholarship that links well with this study where it deals with how indigenous people use colonial archives to justify pre-colonial claims. In the Zimbabwean case, chieftaincy as an institution is tied to land; some of the case studies referred to in this thesis make claims for the restitution of ancestral lands.

1.2 Literature Review

A number of scholars have contributed significantly to the historiography of indigenous peoples. Much of this scholarship has focused on the means employed by indigenous peoples to reclaim lost land and discusses the nature and usefulness of historical sources used in justifying these claims. Will Hamley for example, illustrates the problems and opportunities presented in attempting to resolve land claims paying particular attention to current developments in the James Bay area of northern Quebec.[3] John Sharp deals with indigenous peoples' historical land rights in Canada, Australia, Malaysia, Belize, South Africa, Botswana, and Kenya.[4] Jeremie Gilbert argues that such land claims 'are based on the emergence of a body of law which is referred to as aboriginal or/and native title doctrine. The use of such legislation as "native or aboriginal title laws" that has evolved in Australia and Canada in the 1990s is becoming popular and is used by many

---

[2] Jeremie Gilbert, 'Historical Indigenous Peoples' Land Claims: A Comparative and International Approach to the Common Law Doctrine on Indigenous Title', *International and Comparative Law Quarterly,* p. 585.
[3] W. Hamley, 'Native Land Claims in Quebec Considered in a Canadian Context', *GeografiskaAnnaler. Series B, Human Geography,* Vol. 75, No. 2, 1993, p. 93.
[4] J. Sharp, 'Land Claims in Namaqualand: The Komaggas Reserve', *Review of African Political Economy,* Vol. 21, No. 61, Sep., 1994, pp. 403-414.

people claiming land and has attracted scholarly attention in indigenous historiography.'[5] Steven C. Bourassa and Ann Louise Strong write on the restitution of land to the Maori of New Zealand based on the Waitangi Treaty of 6 February 1840 signed between the Maori chiefs and the British Crown, but which only gained momentum as late as 1975 and subsequently with the amendment of the restitution law in 1985. They reveal that the 'the law provided for the creation of a special court, the Waitangi Tribunal, to hear claims, make findings and recommendations to the government for settling valid claims.' They further observe that of the 'over 700 claims that have been filed; those being given priority are those concerned with tribal claims for alienated land, and fishing rights.'[6] In the cases discussed by this scholarship, indigenous people use colonial writings and documents to demarcate their land boundaries. This study borrows from these works and contributes to indigenous historiography by studying the use of archival material in chieftainship claims in post-colonial Zimbabwe.

The use and value of archives as source reference where families and governments seek compensation or trial has received considerable scholarly attention. Writing on the situation in Spain, Meirian Jump describes how archives were used by families to seek compensation for their lost relatives during the reign of Franco. Jump insists that 'archives contribute to a group or nation's ability to revisit, understand and attribute meaning to the past, thereby constructing collective memory. Furthermore, archive repositories can be considered "sites of memory;" places that gain significance and as locations where remembering takes place. Yet archives are also tools and sites of resistance. Records can contain information which challenges contemporary values and pre-conceptions.'[7] Archives and records can also be used strategically at international level as evidence for various crimes committed by leaders and governments. Bruce P. Montgomery explains the circumstances surrounding the removal, custody, use, status and limits of the international laws of war regarding the capture and return of the documents and records of Saddam Hussein's war atrocities. Montgomery submits that

---

[5]Gilbert, 'Historical Indigenous Peoples' Land Claims: A Comparative and International Approach to the Common Law Doctrine on Indigenous Title', p. 585.

[6] *Ibid*. [6]S. C. Bourassa and A. L. Strong, 'Restitution of Land to New Zealand Maori: The Role of Social Structure', *Pacific Affairs,* Vol. 75, No. 2, summer, 2002, p. 227.

[7]M. Jump, 'The Role of Archives in the Movement for the Recovery of Historical Memory', *Journal of the Society of Archivists* Vol. 33, No. 2, October 2012 in Spain. La Rioja: A Regional Case Study, p.150.

'United States of America (U.S.A.) military forces seized the majority of the records in the invasion and occupation of Iraqi for intelligence exploitation. These documents constitute approximately a hundred pages of records and thousands of audio and video tapes from Hussein's various bureaucracies of repression.'[8] The above cases present examples of the relevance of archives in settling past injustices at family level and the strategic value of archives at an international level. In the same view, this study is pre-occupied with understanding the relevance of the colonial archive as a source of evidence used by claimants and historians to document claims reports in contemporary Zimbabwe.

Commenting on the role of archives in post-war Sierra Leone and the politicisation of memory, John Abdul Kargbo stipulates that 'society changes over time and there is no single text that can give a comprehensive history of a nation. Nor is it possible for any individual to come up with comprehensive and up-to-date information about a nation without referring to its memory, the archives.'[9] He further argues that 'the history of a nation should be rewritten by each generation, relevant to contemporary needs and aspirations.'[10] H. S. Cobb echoes Kargbo, explaining the short-sightedness of politicians and their inconsistence. He laments: 'how can we expect the politician to show concern for the preservation of archives as "the nation's memory", especially when one has the impression that many politicians and indeed governments, would prefer the nation to have as short a memory as possible!'[11] The politicisation of memory and creation of 'national' memory by governments forms another strategy to govern their subjects. These works are insightful in understanding the political influences on the production of chiefly histories during the colonial era. This thesis further examines how the production of archival sources on chieftainship in colonial and independent Zimbabwe continues to be shaped by the desire to re-write history and create national memories. This process entails the exclusion and inclusion of chiefly families in the official record over time and also in the claims reports.

---

[8]B. P. Montgomery, 'Saddam Hussein's Records of Atrocity: Seizure, Removal, and Restitution', *The American Archivist*, Vol. 75, fall / winter 2012, 326.

[9]J. A. Kargbo, 'Archives Management in Post-war Sierra Leone: Luxury or Necessity?', *Journal of the Society of Archivists* Vol. 26, No. 2, October 2005, p. 245.

[10] *Ibid*.

[11] H. S. Cobb, 'Politicians and Archives', *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, Vol. 15, No. 2, 1994, p. 141.

Natalie Ceeney writes on public access to archives in the United Kingdom (UK) and traces the digitisation processes of archives focusing on how changes in technology encourage the way archives are accessed by public. She states that 'The National Archives of the UK enabled 66 million electronic downloads of information in 2006–7 alone, from a zero base just seven years previously.'[12] These include a number of records accessible online such as design registers, marriage and deaths records and many others. Central to her argument is the view that digitisation of archives in the UK greatly increased public access in comparison with the 1930s when access was limited to a few privileged users and before digitisation of records and archives improved public access. Access is an important theme in this study and Ceeney's assessment of the British archives relates to this study in that the NAZ continues to be unknown by the general public although it is considered as a public institution. Access to national archives and knowledge has a bearing on the outcomes of chiefly claims. The thesis is therefore interested in how access regimes affect methodological aspects of the study of chieftaincy in Zimbabwe.

Writing about changes in public archival value in the National Archives of Australia (NAA), Miranda Johnson states that 'the value itself is subject to change, as use of certain collections change.'[13] She argues that 'archives are essential for the revitalisation of indigenous communities and cultures; yet archives of the state in particular have been formed through processes of colonisation that have not served indigenous people's interest or needs at all.'[14] Like American Indian post-colonial historiography, Johnson's works deals with the indigenous people in Anglo-phone countries such as New Zealand, Australia and Canada where indigenous people are using narratives to reclaim land and other rights. Her contributions help locate this thesis within current global post-colonial trends, especially those dealing with indigenous people claiming land. In this case, this study is concerned with uses of the colonial archive in post-colonial Zimbabwe by indigenous people seeking chiefly restitutions and claims as well as the study of chiefly history focusing on the changes in the methodological considerations.

---

[12]N. Ceeney, 'The Role of a 21st-century National Archive—The Relevance of the Jenkinsonian Tradition, and a Redefinition for the Information Society', *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, Vol. 29, No. 1, April 2008, p. 57.

[13]M. Johnson, 'Indigeneity and the Archive; Mediating the Public, the Private and the Communal', in Paul Ashton, Chris Gibson, Ross Gibson (eds.), *By-Roads and Hidden Treasures: Mapping Cultural Assets in Regional Australia*, Crawley, University of Western Australia Publishing (UWAP), p. 88.

[14] *Ibid*.

Professional archivists, former archivists and historians interested in archives in the region present their views in the *Journal of the Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Branch of the Council on Archives (ESARBICA)*. Topics covered in the past few years in *ESARBICA* focus mainly on digitisation and how to manage electronic records. For instance, Ndiyoi Mutiti focuses on challenges posed by digitisation of records. His concern is on how archivists should embrace the new technology and desist from managing paper records.[15] Similar views are raised by Brad Abbolt who discusses the challenges of managing electronic records.[16] Nicholas Vumbunu writes on disaster preparedness at the National Archives of Zimbabwe. The 2004 edition of the *ESARBICA* was concerned with records management in Eastern and Southern Africa archival institutions and universities.[17] Besides the recent scholarship on Indigenous Knowledge System (IKS)[18], there is a theme that deals with the creation of 'dark histories.' Dark histories refer to undocumented narratives on certain communities or individuals as practiced by the colonial officials for whatever reason. L. Muchefa argues that the documentation process of Zimbabwean history has been heavily influenced by politics, silencing of facts, and misrepresentation of information, poor documentation and poor access to information.[19] There is a silence regionally in Southern and Eastern Africa on the uses and abuses of archives especially by the members of the public.[20] Traditional users of archives, both historians and archivists, are now exploring how archives are used as sources to extract evidence or dispute claims to chieftainships especially in Zimbabwe. This also involves the use of alternative sources which have been growing within and without national archives repositories.

---

[15]N. Mutiti, 'The Challenges of Managing Electronic Records in the ESARBICA Region', *ESARBICA Journal* Vol. 20, 2001, p. 57.

[16]B. Abbolt, 'The State of Electronic Records Management in South Africa: An Overview', *ESARBICA Journal*, Vol. 20, 2001, p. 62.

[17]M. Mutasa and B. B. Ncube, 'Zimbabwe Refuses to Lag Behind: The Introduction of an Information Management Degree Programme at the National University of Science and Technology', *ESARBICA Journal* Vol. 23, 2004, pp. 109-117.

[18] See M. M. Tapfuma, 'Discussing indigenous knowledge and indigenous knowledge systems in Africa', *ESARBICA* Journal Vol. 31, 2012, pp. 160-171.

[19]L. Muchefa, 'Politicization of memory and the creation of dark histories in Zimbabwe', *ESARBICA Journal,* Vol. 31, 2012, pp. 125-132.

[20] The situation is changing see the forthcoming ESARBICA Conference to be held on the 8th to 12th June 2015 with a running conference theme on Archives uses, abuses and underutilisation.

The first comprehensive academic study about African administration in colonial Zimbabwe was by Frederick Holleman in 1968. He details the dictates of colonial African administration, arguing that chiefs became tightly controlled during the colonial period. Holleman submits that 'the system not only served for a cadre of European officials, it also envisaged the use of African functionaries: messengers, chiefs and headmen, all with defined duties and powers. Both chiefs and headmen on the other hand, were and still are in principle incumbents of positions of traditional and hereditary "tribal" authority that the Administration saw fit to recognise ("appoint") for the benefit of the people and administration.'[21] His study informed this thesis in understanding early colonial administration in Southern Rhodesia. It offers a detailed account of the relations between chiefs and the colonial administration although the book reflects a modified version of the Mangwende commission of inquiry.[22] The anthropological work of Holleman was followed by the sociologist, (Sister Mary Aquina) Weinrich, who further notes that the 'effective replacement of chiefs by Native Commissioners (NCs) as local rulers and the consequent decrease in prestige and power of chiefs had its origin in the suspicion and fear which Europeans had of the leaders of two "native" uprisings in the 1890s.[23] She traces how chiefs were absorbed into the "modern" government systematically since the 1890s.[24] She focuses on the relationship between chiefs and the government up to the late 1970s. This study finds the work useful in understanding the nature of archival information produced during the colonial era. These scholarly works contextualise the political and social environment within which archival documents on traditional leadership were produced. This thesis compliments these works by discussing colonial documents that continue to be used by those seeking chiefly restitution.

Many scholars have written extensively on the nature and limitations of colonial administrative documents and narratives. Some of the works on the production of knowledge by colonial officials in Southern Rhodesia are explained in chapter two below. Gerald Mazarire focuses on the politics of knowledge production about Africans in

---

[21]J. Holleman, *Chief, Council and Commissioners*, Royal VanGorcum, Assen, 1968, p. 16.
[22] See *Mangwende commission of inquiry* 1961, Holleman was one of the commissioners tasked to bring a detailed report of the Mangwende people in Murehwa after disturbances in 1960s.
[23]A.K.H. Weinrich, *Chiefs and Councils in Rhodesia; Transition from Patrichal to Bureaucratic Power*, Heinmann, London, 1971, p. 11.
[24] *Ibid*.

Southern Rhodesia by 'antiquarians', especially as regards maps and chiefdoms.[25] His article explains the role of the Native Affairs Department (NAD) in generating knowledge about chiefdoms. He laments the unavailability of information on pre-colonial chieftaincies. 'Invariably, the search for a pre-colonial society such as "Chishanga" is not an easy one in a largely colonial archive such as this'[26], he observes. Mazarire sheds light on the nature of the colonial archive by showing where there are inconsistencies in the manner knowledge about Africans was produced. Knowledge on some African societies such as Chishanga was not captured and is not found in the colonial archive. He argues that such inconsistencies are linked to the processes of knowledge production by the NAD. Diana Jeater's work examines the influence of the state, power and language on knowledge production. She observes how colonial antiquarians struggled to learn 'native' languages when establishing colonial administration.[27] While these works are important for understanding the colonial archive and chiefdoms in Zimbabwe, this dissertation sets out a broader appreciation of the use of antiquarian works in post-colonial Zimbabwe for social and political purposes in chieftainships restitutions and claims.

Phiri argues that Shona oral traditions of Eastern Zimbabwe revolve around 'the arrival and settlement of the ancestors of the Shona on the Zimbabwean Highveld and their interaction with the earlier inhabitants; the rise and fall of central and eastern Zimbabwe at different points in time, the growth and development of commercial contacts with the Portuguese, and the impact of the Nguni invasions in the 19th century.'[28] The use of oral traditions in this study is of great importance considering that archival documents on chieftainship either are or are built on recorded oral traditions.[29]

1.3 Chieftaincy/Chieftainship

---

[25] G.C. Mazarire, 'Oral Traditions as Heritage', *Historia*, 47 (2), November 2002, pp. 421-445
[26] Mazarire, A Social and Political History of Chishanga, PhD thesis, University of Zimbabwe History Department, 2010, p. 15.
[27] D. Jeater, 'Speaking like a Native: Vernacular Languages and the State in Southern Rhodesia, 1890-1935', *Journal of African History*, Vol. 42, No. 3, 2001, pp. 449-468.
[28] K. M. Phiri., 'The Oral Historiography of Pre-Colonial Southern Malawi and Eastern Zimbabwe', Conference on Zimbabwean History, Vol. 1, Department of History University of Zimbabwe, 23-27 August 1982, p. 10.
[29] For an extended discussion of the contribution of oral tradition to the study of the past see J. Vansina, *Oral Tradition*: *A Study of Historical Methodology*, Transaction, Brunswick, 2006.

The institution of traditional leadership is a product of pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial changes. The institution passed through various stages of political and social developments that altered it over time. By chieftaincy or chieftainship this dissertation means a political institution where indigenous leaders are granted the office of either headman or chief by their clansmen following the customary succession systems applicable to that particular community. The selection of chiefs in Zimbabwe follows customary principles prescribed by the *Traditional Leaders Act* of 1998 and chief's functions are customarily defined. Functions and duties of chiefs are grounded in the historical past. According to the Act, traditional leaders are supposed, *inter alia*, 'to promote and uphold cultural values among members of the community under their jurisdiction, particularly the preservation of the extended family and the promotion of traditional family life.'[30] Usually at the apex of the institution, there is a paramount chief (Mambo). Under him falls the headmen (Madzishe/Sadunhu) with the village heads (Masabhuku) occupying the lowest strata.[31] The number of headmen and village heads within each particular chieftaincy is not fixed. This structure was established in the pre-colonial era but some chieftaincies, headmenship and village heads were an invention of the colonial administration.

In many African countries the institution of chieftaincy is thought to be reflecting long-established social structures. In Ghana, Isaac Owusu-Mensah argues that 'the institution is considered to be the repository of the indigenous traditions, customs, and society of Ghana. It is further considered to be the bond between the dead, the living, and the yet unborn'.[32] Furthermore, according to the *Fourth Republic Constitution* and the *Chieftaincy Act*, 2008 *Act* 759 in Ghana, a chief is defined as 'a person who, hailing from appropriate family and lineage, has been validly nominated, elected or selected and enstooled, enskinned or installed as a chief or queen mother in accordance with the relevant customary law and usage.'[33] In Zimbabwe, customary roles are assigned to traditional leadership. Chiefs are approved by the Minister of Local Government and then

---

[30]*Traditional Leaders Act*, Government Printers, Harare, 1998, p. 364.
[31] *Idid*.
[32] I. Owusu-Mensah, 'Politics, Chieftaincy and Customary Law in Ghana', *KAS International Reports*, Vol. 9, 2013, p. 32.
[33]*Chieftaincy Act 2008*, Act 756, Assembly Press, Accra, 2008.

appointed by the President, to preside over and protect traditional values, family values, beliefs as well as other provisions espoused in the *Traditional Leaders Act*.

1.4 Definition of Key Terms: Colonial Archive

The term 'Colonial archive' in this thesis is used specifically to mean documents generated by various colonial government departments which make up the 'public archive' at the NAZ. There are also individual deposits by persons or private companies classified under 'historical manuscripts', while the 'Oral History' section was only a recent addition to the main archives composed mainly of interviews by archives staff and independent researchers with various people.[34] It is important to state that the Oral History section is in part a component of the colonial archive because it was established during the colonial era. The Oral History section was established in the late 1970s while most of the collections were mainly of influential and important Rhodesians in the country. Collections on African counterparts started effectively after independence in 1980. According to one of the Principal Archivists of the Audio-Visual Section at the NAZ, Livingstone Muchefa, 'colonial archive can also be defined to mean methods and processes of archiving that were inherited from the colonial era. This includes aspects such as methods of accessioning, description and arrangement of archives and records.'[35] Usually this is done for continuity purposes in the archival processes. From my own personal experience as an Archivist at NAZ, the process of accessioning and cataloguing documents is no different from what was done in the colonial past. Most of the documents that are accessible to the public were generated by the colonial government departments.[36] Accession registers and inventories are a continuation of the colonial practises. This does not mean there are no other archival documents generated in the post-colonial era. However, the majority of colonial documents used were mostly generated during the colonial period. However, in this thesis, the definition of colonial archive is narrowly limited to colonial documents only not technical aspect of archiving processes.

---

[34] Mazarire, 'Reading Chishanga (South-Central Zimbabwe): Some Issues of Process and Method', Paper Presented to the Centre of African Studies, University of Edinburgh, 29th June 2007, p. 3.
[35] Interview with L. Muchefa, 13 September 2014.
[36] I worked as Archivist at the Research and Public Archives Section at the NAZ, between October 2012 and June 2014.

The major focus of this thesis is the uses of the colonial archive by historians, families as well as individuals claiming chieftaincy especially in post-colonial Zimbabwe. In trying to justify their claims, usually claimants engage the services of historians, archaeologists and ethnographers to document their family histories. In turn, archaeologists, ethnographers and historians employed by the National Museum and Monuments of Zimbabwe (NMMZ) whose department deals with tangible and intangible heritage are usually engaged by the Ministry to research into chiefly claims. These researchers rely on the colonial archive for evidence and carry out some oral interviews. Therefore, this thesis merges the institutional history of NAZ and chieftaincy studies.

1.5 Methodology

This thesis is a study of the historiography of chiefly studies in Zimbabwe rather than a study of chieftainships or traditional leadership. The study examines four selected chieftaincies namely Seke, Mutsago, Musaigwa and Sanyanga as case studies.[37] They were selected because they clearly illustrate the use of the colonial archive as the houses concerned filed their reports to the Ministry of Local Government for approval of their claims to chieftaincy. Submitted reports are all based on archival documents and oral interviews. The use of these reports illustrates how colonial documents are uncritically employed as sources in documenting claims reports. Furthermore, the study makes reference to the Neshava headmanship in Manicaland province that has been involved in succession squabbles since the early 1990s to date because the author was granted access to the Neshava file at Buhera District office. Files at District offices are vital since they deal with current chieftainship matters; succession, administrative issues and governance in the district. These cases try to give a more representative survey since they are from different provinces and districts of the country. Most of the reports used in this thesis were obtained from the historians who compiled them.

To carry out this study, a number of sources were used. The researcher used archival materials retrievable from the NAZ. These included NC and Chief Native Commissioner's (CNC) files and reports. The NC and CNCs' files are crucial in understanding the nature of

---

[37] The researcher also participated in the documentation process of claims reports on part-time basis especially the Mutsago and Seke. At the time he was working for the National Archives of Zimbabwe as Archivist between October 2012 and June 2014.

the documented histories about Africans produced by officials employed by the NAD, later the Internal Affairs Ministry. Schedules of chiefs and headmen were consulted because they contain lists of appointed traditional leaders in each province starting around 1900. However, these do not cover the post-1980 period because of the change in government. Documents dealing with the administration of chiefs and headmen, their salaries, appointments and other related issues were also consulted, although they too do not cover the post-colonial period. The Native Affairs Department Annual (*NADA* 1923-1980, 57 issues) was used to appreciate how claimants and historians use selected articles on chiefs and headmen to write claims reports in contemporary Zimbabwe.

The study also examined delineation reports for Chivi, Nyanga, Seke, Guruve and Mutare districts. Delineation reports give the background information for chiefs and headmen, their origins, territorial boundaries, numbers of tax payers, villages and other issues such as infrastructural developments in each district. They are valuable because they are a collection when the government of the day actively participated by funding the delineation exercise. They are useful as primary sources collected by the Ministry of Internal Affairs officials in the 1960s. This was done to facilitate effective control of Africans, and in particular to monitor and incorporate chiefs in government structures. Also examined are the personal papers of David Beach, a leading historian of pre-colonial Zimbabwe. These provide useful information on dynasties relating to issues such as totems, land, origins and colonisation.

To further augment the archival material, the author conducted oral interviews with key informants, mainly chiefs and headmen as well as archivists. All interviews were conducted in compliance with the University of the Free State's ethics procedures. No interviewee requested anonymity. Interviews gave insights into their experiences when dealing with a colonial archive in a post-colonial environment. The author was given a letter of approval from the Ministry of Local Government, granting permission to carry out interviews with chiefs. Lastly the study used secondary sources covering colonial administration, chiefs, archives and related themes in order to situate the study. This helped to situate the research in relation to world-wide post-colonial debates and the ways indigenous people elsewhere are calling for recognition and the redress of colonial injustices.

1.6 Thesis Layout

The thesis is organised into four main chapters. Chapter one situates this study within the broader literature available and discusses methodology. Chapter two focuses on the establishment of the NAZ and discusses the nature of different archival documents that are used to document claims reports. It discusses acquisition and access regimes at the NAZ that affect research in general. Chapter three focuses on the selected claims reports paying particular attention to reasons given in support of claims to chieftaincy. These reasons revolve around pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial legacies concerning chieftaincy. Chapter four offers a critique of the colonial archive and discuss alternative sources within and without the NAZ repositories and their nature and usefulness for the study of chieftaincies in Zimbabwe.

2. The Establishment of the National Archives of Zimbabwe and the Growth of the Colonial Archival Collection on Chiefs and Headmen 1890s to 1985.

2.1 Introduction

This chapter traces the establishment of the National Archives of Zimbabwe (NAZ). It deals with the acquisition and access regimes of archival documents. These include Native Commissioners reports (NC), delineation reports, Assemblies of Chiefs manuscripts, Councils of Chiefs files, *NADA* publications (published primary material), Schedules of Chiefs and Headmen as well as Provincial Executive Reports (PER/5). These documents were produced during different periods, some as early as the 1890s, by successive settler regimes in Rhodesia. Most of these archival documents and colonial publications were produced by the Native Affairs Department (NAD) officials the NCs, later Internal Affairs Ministry. Subsequently, this chapter traces how the NAD produced knowledge mainly on traditional leaders. It analyses the nature of these sources describing their relevance to chieftaincy studies. The same sources were used not only in the colonial but also in the post-colonial era, latterly consulted by claimants to chieftaincy, hired historians and government officials working with chiefs and headmen as reference sources.

2.2 The Development of the Archives Department in Colonial Zimbabwe

The need for an archives department in Southern Rhodesia was mooted in the context of the impending end of the British South Africa Company's rule (BSAC) in 1922. A. G. Tough argued that 'the established of archives and archival services in Southern Rhodesia rose from the question of the custody of the BSAC records in 1922, and the efforts of Mr Dugald Niven, a librarian at the Bulawayo Public Library, to establish an archives office in the country.'[38] Niven's efforts to establish an archives office further gathered momentum as a result of the exhibition carried out during the fortieth anniversary of the conquest of

---

[38] A. G. Tough, 'Archives in Sub-Saharan Africa Half a Century After Independence', in *Archival Science,* 8, 3-4, 2009, pp. 187-201, see also I. Murambiwa *et al*, 'Archival Development In Zimbabwe 1935-2010: Setting the Scene' in P. Ngulube (ed.), *National Archives 75@30: 75 Years of Archiving Excellence at the National Archives of Zimbabwe*, Harare, National Archives of Zimbabwe, 2012, p. 2.

Matabeleland in 1933. Baxter and Burke state that 'the exhibition comprised a showcase of historical books, pictures, private manuscripts and public records organised by V. W. Hiller, who later became the first Chief Archivist when the archives department was finally established on the 1st of September 1935.'[39] Soon after the exhibition, a National Historical Committee (NHC) was formed in 1933. The Committee was given the task of educating the public on the relevance of archives and the need to form a permanent archives department in the country.[40] The Archives Act of 12 April 1935 gave the Chief Archivist authority to inform all government departments on proper methods of record preservation, destruction, keeping and providing access to the same records. When the Central African Federation was formed in 1953, archival services were also automatically amalgamated into Central African Archives (CAA). When it broke up in 1963, each territory took charge of its archives and records. With the exception of Benin, Burkina Faso, Namibia, Senegal, South Africa and Zimbabwe, most sub-Saharan countries established national archives only after the Second World War. This could be attributed to the fact that Rhodesia and South Africa had significant numbers of white settlers concerned with keeping records in their respective colonies. However, the process of the establishment of the National Archives of Rhodesia (the National Archives of Zimbabwe after independence) in the 1930s is not different from how other archives departments were created some years later in other countries such as Malawi and Zambia.

The Archives Act of 1935 was superseded by the 1958 Archives Act as a result of the Central African Federation, which necessitated the amalgamation of the Northern Rhodesia, Nyasaland and Southern Rhodesia archives. The 1964 Act passed after the dissolution of the Federation allowed the National Archives of Rhodesia to function as a stand-alone institution. The 1964 Archives Act was eventually repealed and replaced with the 1986 Archives Act that now governs NAZ operations. The National Archives Act of 1986 outlines the functions of the department in promoting proper records management, preservation of the country's documentary heritage and providing access of information to the public, among other provisions.[41] The Act also provides for the 25 years closure

---

[39] T. W. Baxter, (ed), *Guide to the Public Archives of Rhodesia*, Salisbury, National Archives of Rhodesia, 1969, p. xxxviii.
[40] *Ibid.*, p. xxix.
[41] *National Archives of Zimbabwe Act* 1986, Government Printers, Harare.

period of records before they are made available to the public. The Act continues to be the guiding legislation for the departments' functions and its archival activities in the country.

After the archives department was establishment in 1935, the government Archivist circulated a questionnaire to all government departments, including NCs stations, because:

> he wanted to check the status of public records and their custody and to give recommendations on filing and storage conditions. The inquiry helped to establish what records existed, their distribution, bulk, state of preservation, order and accessibility, the vicissitudes they had suffered and the measures taken by the various offices for their care and arrangement.[42]

These records also covered many subjects on African people of the colony. For instance, those from the Buhera district comprised of African tax registers and concomitant books relative to collection of tax, chiefs and headmen, records of criminal and African civil cases, general correspondence relating to administration of African affairs, circulars from chief NCs, treasury, department of justice and internal affairs and finally government gazettes.[43] The results of the survey showed a mixed state of good and bad conditions of the records in various districts and offices. For example, the NCs of Belingwe, Bikita, Bulawayo, Charter and Chibi Districts noted that many documents had been destroyed by rodents and white ants, dampness, unsuitable storage facilities while others affirmed that records in their offices were in a stable condition.[44] The inquiry helped the government archivist to ascertain the condition of records in the country at large, especially in the wake of neglect by the BASC administration.

After the survey, the archivist discovered that 'many documents were in a terrible mess, while a good many of them reportedly had been kept under damp conditions during the wet season that resulted in some discoloured and mouldy.'[45] Baxter and Burke submit that 'these [records] had been gradually accumulating for forty years, many of them in offices with the most primitive storage facilities; no one had taken much care of any but

---

[42] T. W. Baxter, (ed.), *Guide to the Public Archives of Rhodesia*, p. xxix.
[43] NAZ, S2328/F6/B/51 Replies to Questionnaires, Native Commissioners 24 December 1935.
[44] Ibid.
[45] NAZ, A3/28/5-7 Archives, Shipment of Company Documents to London 7 May 1923.

the current records.'[46] The fact that the government funded the archival operations in the country at this stage reveals that it began to change its attitude towards record preservation. Archiving locally was not an immediate question considered either by the Administrator or by BSAC, resulting in some of the Company's records being taken to the London Office for safe keeping. Later, efforts were made to have some of the Company's records returned to Southern Rhodesia but it was fruitless as it proved to be a costly venture the new administration was not prepared to take on. In 1937, the government archivist visited the Company's London Office but was told the official position of the Company that 'the government could not have any of the Company's files, but that if it wished, copies could be made provided the government would bear the cost.'[47] It was apparent that the company was not interested in repatriating its records back to Southern Rhodesia. To make things worse, it left the responsibility of bringing them on the shoulders of the colonial administration.

Among the various files collected by the government archivist, of importance to this study were the chiefs and headmen documents. These are files generated by NAD concerning traditional leaders' affairs in the country. When they were acquired, they were stored for posterity as documents of enduring historical value in the archives repositories. Chiefs and headmen colonial documents that survived the harsh storage environment in various government offices and departments became more useful in the 1970s when traditional leaders previously dethroned were being reinstated, as will be discussed in chapter three. Their accessibility soon depended on the access regimes of the NAZ as defined by successive Archives Acts from 1935 up until the most recent Act passed in 1986.

2.3 Acquisition of and Access Policies to Records and Archives at the NAZ

The NAZ derives its mandate from the *National Archives Act* Chapter 25:06 of 1986. The Act provides for the storage and preservation of public records and public archives for the declaration and preservation of protected historical records and for matters incidental or connected with the foregoing.[48] The mission of the NAZ is to 'acquire, preserve and

---

[46] T. W. Baxter, and E. E. Burke, *Guide to the Public Archives of Rhodesia*, p. xxix.
[47] NAZ S1846 Archives Commission Proceedings 1935-47, 16 September 1937.
[48] *National Archives Act,* 1986, Government Printers, Harare.

provide public access to Zimbabwean documentation in whatever format in an efficient and economic manner.'[49] The NAZ currently acquires archives records through transfers from Council Departments, Records Management Centres, donations, indefinite loan and purchase.[50] Further to that, the Public Archives Section through the research office acquires records by means of statutory obligations and powers itemised in the National Archives Act; by responding to ad hoc approaches from owners and custodians of documents for their deposit or donation; by active outreach, including planned and ad hoc survey work. This activity is defined annually within the Research Unit Work Plan and by occasional purchase by private treaty or at auction.[51] This is a continuation and has not altered from initial services as provided by the colonial archive of advising departments on records management. However, some institutions such as universities are reluctant to deposit their records at the NAZ records centre, choosing to retain custodianship of their own records. According to the Chief Archivist at the Records Centre at the NAZ, Ms Mamvura, 'some of our stakeholders no longer deposit their records probably because they are no longer sure about the safety of their records following decline of standards.'[52] For example, the audio-visual unit cold rooms no longer function. Moreover, at some institutions such as the University of Zimbabwe, plans are in place to establish their own institutional records and archives repositories.[53]

The effective use of archives and records depends on accessibility, which in most cases, is determined by the access regimes put in place by archival institutions. Most policies and regulations relating to access of archives and records in Africa have their roots deep in their colonial past. In most Commonwealth countries, policies regulating the access to records and archives were influenced by the United Kingdom (UK) access policies. Dagmar Parer argues that 'regulatory powers conferred by legislation in most

---

[49] *National Archives Act 1986*.
[50] NAZ Research and Public Archives Procedures Policy 2014.
[51] Ibid.
[52] Interview with the Chief Archivist Records Centre, Ms. B. Mamvura, 12 September 2014.
[53] Working Document, Preserving institutional memory: Creating a University of Zimbabwe Archive, History Department, 2015.

Commonwealth countries is often strongly influenced by the Public Records Act 1958 aimed at prohibiting the destruction of records without prior approval.'[54]

The Southern Rhodesia High Commissioner in London responding to an inquiry regarding access to public records in 1956 in Commonwealth countries explained that 'UK authorities were anxious that Commonwealth governments should not publish archives containing documents of UK origin or documents which were joint property with the UK without first consulting the latter.'[55] This included also records from the Commonwealth Relations Office, government departments including the Foreign Office and the Colonial Office. Members of the public were granted access to all records up to and including those created in 1902.[56] Regardless of their security category, papers created in 1903 and beyond were not open to the public. The High Commissioner further reiterated access would not be granted unless it was considered desirable on public or official grounds or for some good reason of academic research. 'Researchers were expected to provide proof that they had exhausted all the published secondary material, submit their proposed work before access was granted, and most importantly, to submit their manuscript for prior approval if they wanted to publish it.'[57] It is not clear why the British government was not willing to open the records created since 1903 to the public even when they had passed the 30 years closure period.

Access to records was subject to strict vetting and screening with certain documents declared classified unless other conditions exempted them because of the closure policies influenced by the UK. For example, in 1957, the High Commissioner passed a verdict of access to public records to all provincial archivists in Northern Rhodesia, Nyasaland and Southern Rhodesia. He stated that 'members of the public were not entitled to and could not be granted access to <u>ANY</u> official records subsequent to the year 1903. Applications received were to be forwarded to his office with full details of the applicant, and of the nature, extent and purposes of the inquiry to be undertaken.'[58]

---

[54] D. Parer, *Archival Legislation for Commonwealth Countries, Association of Commonwealth Archivists and Records Managers (ACARM)*, Cairns, Australia, p. 2.
[55] NAZ S2442/A3/2/5 Access to records, United Kingdom Policy on access to official records 22 March 1956.
[56] Ibid.
[57] Ibid.
[58] NAZ, S2442/A3/2/5 Access to records, Circular minute C/4305/2, Public access to official records 27 August 1957.

These access regimes applied even to cases when government officers wished to use official records for private research on their own account. Technically, the use of closed files by government officials would infringe the standing instructions guiding archival preservation and undermine the credibility of the department. After the Federation dissolved in 1963, Southern Rhodesia's relations with the Colonial Office and the High Commissioner became polarised especially after the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) in 1965. A new Archives Act had been enacted in 1964 which made the Southern Rhodesia archives access policies independent of UK policies.

At the NAZ, access policies crafted in the colonial period largely endured, even after the attainment of independence. The 1986 NAZ Act slightly amended the closure period of archives from 30 to 25 years, applied from the date of creation of the record. The rule exempted records to do with adoption cases, personal files and health records, which are closed indefinitely.[59] The closure period in Zimbabwe is slightly different from that of South Africa and the UK. The National Archives of South Africa Act 1996, the Free State Provincial Archives Act 1999 and the Mpumalanga Archives Act 1998 make records publicly available after 20 years.[60] In the UK for example, Public Records Act 1958 (PRA) initially 'provided that public records selected for permanent preservation were to be closed not later than 30 years after their creation. When they had been in existence for 50 years they were to be available for public inspection, unless action was taken to withhold them for longer.'[61] The Act was amended in 1967 to reduce the closure period from 50 to 30 years. 'Section 45 of the Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010 (CRAG Act) amended PRA s3 (4) by reducing the deadline for transfer from 30 years to 20 years.'[62] Noticeably, the NAZ closure period is five years longer.

At the NAZ, it is the mandate of the Research Section to enforce the legal provision of the Act. Although an increasing number of people have had access to archives since

---

[59] Government of Zimbabwe, *National Archives Act,* 1986.

[60] D. Parer, *Archival Legislation for Commonwealth Countries,* Association of Commonwealth Archivists and Records Managers (ACARM), p. 48, see also *State of the Archives: An analysis of South Africa's national archival system*, 2014, pp. 124-125.

[61] The National Archives, Access to public records: A toolkit for practitioners involved in the sensitivity review and transfer of public records to the National Archives and other archives services, July 2012, p. 5, http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/information-management/access-to-public-records.pdf, accessed 19 June 2015.

[62] Ibid.

independence, they have remained a 'closed institution'. This is confirmed by one archivist who said that 'whenever I mention that I work as a government archivist, even among other civil servants; people are quick to ask what that is or simply say is that part of government?'[63] The Chief Archivist at the Records Centre, Ms B. Mamvura, stated that 'NAZ is only limited to a selected users such as academics and of late individuals mainly chiefs searching for their genealogies.'[64] Similarly the then Principal Archivist, Public Archives and Research, L. Muchefa noted that 'the NAZ receives same users on a daily basis mainly academics, students studying archives and records courses and of late, people researching about their genealogies such as chiefs, white and coloured Zimbabweans.'[65] Indeed, the NAZ remains a closed institution in relative terms, especially if one considers the categories of people using archives. The bulk of documents at the NAZ are not accessible online. It is difficult for most users to access them unless they physically visit the institution.

The closure period of 25 years is a major obstacle to access and research as it limits the availability of sources.[66] As a result of the strictness in the closure period and access to unprocessed files, more recent documents such as African Councils' files are not easily accessible despite their usefulness. The exception comes with Oral History files that can be accessed easily even if they are very recent because they do not require a closure date.[67] Those interested in the subject of chieftaincy are bound to limit their studies to a date determined by the availability of sources. Elsewhere, the closure period is more reasonable. For example, in Malawi, there is no fixed time for permission to consult records.[68] Some of the limitations to access of archives at the NAZ are institutional. A clear example is the question of backlog, lack of space and shelving material for processed material. After processing, archives are supposed to be boxed and then shelved but due to limited space and material some processed files are put on the floor.[69]

---

[63] Interview with A. Chikomba, Archivist Public Archives and Research Section, NAZ, interviewed on 22 September 2014.

[64] Interview with B. Mamvura, NAZ Records Centre, interviewed at the NAZ 12 September 2014.

[65] Interview with L. Muchefa, Archivist, Audio-Visual Section, NAZ, interviewed at the NAZ on 12 September 2014.

[66] See C. Moyo, 'Access to Archives at the National Archives of Zimbabwe', p. 79.

[67] Interview with Rudo Karadzandima, Oral History Archivist 12 September, interviewed at the NAZ.

[68] See E. Ketelaar, *Archival and Records Management Legislation and Regulations: A RAMP Study with Guidelines,* UNESCO, Paris, 1985, p 83.

[69] Personal experience as archivist at the NAZ.

The chances that some of the materials researchers are looking for are not yet processed are high. Contributing to the challenges involved in accessing relevant sources.

2.4 Native Affairs Department and the Production of Chieftaincy History

Most colonial archival documents on chiefs and headmen produced in colonial Zimbabwe were produced by the NAD, later Ministry of Internal Affairs. It should be acknowledged here that the politics of knowledge production in Southern Rhodesia about Africans has received critical attention elsewhere.[70] Here attention is given specifically to those aspects that relate to chiefs and headmen. The NAD was founded by the provisions of the Southern Rhodesia constitution in 1902 to oversee African Affairs. The Department was directly under the control of the High Commissioner. This came after the 1896/7 *Chimurenga/Umvukela* uprisings which the Company suppressed ruthlessly. As a result, 'all Administration appointments, including that of the permanent head, were made by the Governor-in-Council. All salaries, removals or suspension of officers were subject to the same approval, and further, the Chief Native Commissioner (CNC) could not be removed from office without the approval of the Secretary of State.'[71] The Secretary of Native Affairs was the chief executive officer of the Department. The NAD had many branches such as African education, agriculture, marketing, African area administration, labour engineering, among other branches.[72] The CNC was aided in the administration of the Department by a deputy CNC and two secretaries, and by NCs working in each of the colony's districts. However, the most important aspects of NAD so far as this study is concerned were the division of Chiefs and Headmen and the Departments' *NADA* official journal.

All chiefs and headmen were appointed and removed by the Governor-in-Council and would hold their office according to the Native Affairs Act (chapter 72).[73] In recommending appointments to the Governor-in-Council, the African law of succession

---

[70] See Mazarire, 'Oral Traditions as Heritage: The Historiography of Oral Historical Research on the Shona Communities of Zimbabwe. Some Methodological Concerns', *Historia*, 47(2), November 2002, pp. 427-434; Ranger, 'The Mobilization of Labour and the Production of Knowledge', pp. 507-524; Beach, "NADA" and Mafohla', pp. 1-11; Jeater, 'Speaking like a Native', pp. 449-468; Worby, 'Maps, Names, and Ethnic Games', pp. 371-392.
[71] *Official Year Book of Southern Rhodesia*, No. 4, 1952, p. 102.
[72] *Ibid.*
[73] *Ibid.,* p. 105.

and the wishes of the people were followed unless there were good reasons to the contrary. It was the duty of the local clansmen to choose a man of their choice according to customary laws of that particular community and submit the candidate to the Governor-in-Council, a system that continued to be in place during the colonial era. After independence, the Minister of Local Government became the one who approves a selected chief by the clansmen and the President appoints him.[74] Chiefs were required and expected to 'notify the NC of all matters relating to crime, deaths, disease, newcomers in the district or matters calculated to disturb public peace, and to assist the NC in collecting taxes and apprehending offenders against the law.'[75] Chiefs were required to supply men for the defence of the Colony or for the suppression of disorder or uprising. This had its roots in 1896/7 uprisings. Falling under chiefs were their headmen whose assumption of office depended and still depends upon their chiefs. They acted as constables of their chiefs. Below headmen there were village heads which is the lowest rank of traditional leadership, their assumption to office depended on the headman of that area. The majority of traditional leaders received subsidies from the government. In addition, chiefs were *ex officio* members of the Native Councils established in the 1930s in their areas, and exercised jurisdiction in civil cases between Africans in courts constituted in terms of the Native Law and Courts Act of 1937. The role of chiefs in Native Councils was a subtle way of presenting a 'progressive native policy' to the Colonial Office considering that chiefs had no meaningful role to play.

The incorporation of chiefs and headmen in to the colonial administration under the NAD created new administrative problems. Although NCs were not allowed to interfere with succession politics, they would on occasion end up heavily involved. Such a case was that of the Mangwende chieftaincy in the 1960s when the NC in Murehwa district was implicated for allowing the accession to the throne of an unpopular Munhuwepayi candidate. The NC breached customary succession systems of the Mangwende people by favouring the 'educated' Munhuwepayi who allegedly later disobeyed government authority and Native Land Husbandry (NLHA) programmes, causing disturbances in the Tribal Trust Land (TTL).[76] The involvement of NCs in selection process of traditional

---

[74] *Traditional Leaders Act Chapter 29: 17.*
[75] *Official Year Book of Southern Rhodesia*, pp. 105-106.
[76] *Report of the Mangwende Commission of Inquiry* 1961, pp. 131-134.

leaders also created problems in post-colonial chieftaincy squabbles. Debates on chieftaincy became more visible as families sought a redress of what they understood as colonial imbalances.

From the start, NAD officials worked to produce knowledge about African people but they relied on chiefs and headmen as their informants. It is this knowledge gathered by NCs and missionaries that was accepted as the 'official truth,' the version of the history of Africans that found its outlet in the *NADA*. The journal's mission was clear from its inception but this changed after independence. It was last published in 1980. For example, the editor of the first *NADA* issue in 1923, observed that the journal had been initiated 'to foster the desire for a broader knowledge on which to base the study of 'natives' and 'native administration', and to lead to a more general appreciation of the problems that confronted the country, the government, officials of NAD, missionaries and others who dealt with 'natives'.[77] Ranger explained how white Rhodesians became 'experts' in the production of African societies, customs and conduct they presided over although many of these colonial officials were not formally trained as anthropologists, historians or sociologists to undertake this responsibility.[78] He further notes that in the absence of a cluster of anthropologists and intellectuals in Southern Rhodesia, unlike in South Africa, 'the men who administered Africans, mobilized them for employment and kept them working were also the men who produced the authorized versions of the African past, of their customs and of African "personality".'[79] Ranger regards the existence of *NADA* to be mainly for labour recruitment, if employers needed to know about their workers they could do so by opening the pages of the journal. This view was disputed by Beach who stated that although NAD was concerned with labour mobilisation, *NADA* did not actually reflect that same concern, only 20 per cent of the articles had a direct relationship to the political and economic situation at the time of writing.[80] He concluded by observing that 'in all, 34 per cent related to history and archaeology, 31 per cent to anthropology and sociology, 15 per cent to administration

---

[77] *NADA*, No. 1, 1 December 1923, p. 3.
[78] Ranger, 'The Mobilization of Labour and the Production of Knowledge: The Antiquarian Tradition in Rhodesia', p. 507.
[79] *Ibid.*
[80] Beach, '"NADA" and Mafohla: Antiquarianism in Rhodesia and Zimbabwe with Special Reference to the Work of F.W.T. Posselt', p. 2.

and politics, 7.3 percent to language, 7 per cent to fiction and poetry, 3.7 per cent to anecdote and reminiscence, and 2.5 per cent to law cases.'[81] Within these categories, many articles also made reference to chiefs and headmen. For example, between 1923 and 1978, about 137 articles were published specifically of chieftaincy.[82] Some of these articles are used as reference by hired historians to write claims reports as will be discussed in chapter four.

Eric Worby observes that it was 'within the primary mandate on colonial officials to discover the most expedient mechanisms through which tax could be collected, and control maintained, that some minimal ethnological knowledge was required and therefore sought.'[83] Further to that, 'tribal genealogies, histories, customs and folk-tales were reported [by colonial officials] partly as a means of exhibiting a specialised, insider knowledge of one's subjects, using a rhetorical style designed to suggest a degree of intimacy achieved with the [African] around the camp-fire.'[84] Worby presents a situation where the colonial state used its privileges to place African people in specified ethno-maps. However, he also observes how the informants 'almost exclusively chiefs, headmen, and government messengers, and always men – undoubtedly used these opportunities strategically, making history retrospectively in ways that might enhance their political futures as intermediaries between the colonial power and their own constituencies.'[85] Similarly, both DCs and chiefs relied on colonial documents for evidence to submit claims reports for reappointment in the 1970s. It came after several chiefs and headmen had been demoted in 1950 by the government of the day because they were considered less able to carry out government community development projects in the wake of the Native Land Husbandry Act. This set a precedent for what followed after independence, that is, reliance on the same colonial canonical maps and ethno-histories in order to substantiate chieftaincy narratives by claimants against their rivals. These developments are explained in greater detail in chapters three and four.

---

[81] *Ibid*.

[82] M.E. Hayes, *Index to Articles and Authors,* Volumes I-XI 1923-1978, pp. 527-551.

[83] Worby, 'Maps, Names, and Ethnic Games: The Epistemology and Iconography of Colonial Power in North-western Zimbabwe', p. 380.

[84] *Ibid.,* p. 384.

[85] *Ibid.*, p. 385.

In Northern Rhodesia, Kate Crehen recorded how 'the administration demanded that colonial officials were supposed to understand the African subjects; this also gave the authorities to use the concept of "tribe", as a central terminology in their analysis of the African clans.'[86] British colonial officials in Africa were influenced by European ideas of 'tribes'; 'tribe' was familiar category that these early administrators had encountered in their studies in classical mythologies of Ancient Greeks, Barbarians, Britons and Germanic tribes.[87] Colonial administrator's conflated African cultures, customs and beliefs with the ways Europeans had lived in the ancient past, in doing so were implying that Africans occupied the lowest ranks in terms of human civilisation. In the process, these men were responsible for producing the files that constituted the colonial archive in Africa. The NAD officials and missionaries who contributed articles to *NADA* gave rise to 'antiquarian' scholarship whose influence spanned the periods from colonial to post-colonial Zimbabwe.[88] While it is important to understand how the NAD functioned, its branches and shortcomings, it is equally relevant to appreciate how some of *NADA*'s articles were used during the colonial and most importantly post-colonial era as sources of primary evidence for competing narratives on chieftaincies.

2.5 The Nature of Selected Archival Documents on Chiefs and Headmen at the NAZ

A background understanding of the nature of these files will help us to appreciate why they are the most sought after records and archives by claimants of chieftaincy. Most of the documents referred to in this discussion are paper based and are retrievable at the NAZ upon request. To fully understand the nature of archival material produced by the colonial government in Zimbabwe, it is important to first understand the British system of indirect rule. Indirect rule entailed the process of ruling African communities through their own chiefs. The NAD was initially under the control of the Chartered Company Administrator, but the situation changed after 1923 when the colony was granted Responsible Government. Michael Crowder explains that 'the system of indirect rule left some executive powers with African chiefs with the ultimate aim to encourage self-

---

[86] K. Crehen, 'Tribes and the People who read Books: Managing History in Colonial Zambia', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, No. 23, Vol. 2, 1997, p. 206.
[87] *Ibid.*, p. 206.
[88] This matter has been given wider attention elsewhere, see Beach, 'NADA and Mafohla' 1986.

government through indigenous political institutions.'[89] Although traditional institutions were thus made use of, British colonial administrations hoped to eventually 'modernise' African chieftaincies.[90] 'Modernisation' of African institutions was set to make changes in the practice rather than in the structure of political organisation which had itself deep-seated roots in tradition.[91] This entailed transforming the operations of chiefs to fit colonial endeavours without destroying the institution of chieftaincy itself. Arguably for a colonial state, 'modernising' African chieftaincies involved turning chiefs into officials working for the government to incorporate their communities into the colonial political economy at the expense of their traditional customary beliefs and values. In this way, modernity was to operate as a *given* European way of conduct by the colonial government to a supposedly static chieftaincy institution. This was to be carried out under the rubric of the civilising mission of colonialism to 'backward' African cultures, traditions and practices.

In Southern Rhodesia, British colonial conquest initially depended on the experience of Chartered Company rule in colonies elsewhere in Asia and subsequently in Africa. But colonial rule was also influenced by the BSAC's brutal suppression of the 1896/7 uprisings. Successive regimes relied on using traditional leaders. NCs produced administrative histories on Africans they presided over giving rise to colonial archival collections housed at the NAZ repositories. Colonial writings housed in many African archival institutions reflect power relations that existed in a colonial society. However, the same administrative writings were to be used for other reasons by the conquered people in the post-colonial era, for example, as sources of evidence to settle chieftainship disputes in Zimbabwe.

Files on traditional leaders are discussed according to their categories and classification. These documents relate to the relationship between chieftaincy and the state. For the purpose of this study, the focus will be on the archival files of traditional leaders only. The

---

[89] M. Crowder, 'Indirect Rule – French and British Style', *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, Vol. 34, No. 3, 1964, p. 198.
[90] *Ibid.*
[91] 'Indirect rule in West Africa', *The Round Table: The Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs*, 39, p. 127.

production of colonial files on chieftaincies was not intended to create a knowledge base on chieftaincies to be used later by Africans.

2.5.1 Native, Chief Native Commissioners' Reports, Chiefs and Headmen Files

These archives were produced by the NAD, later the Internal Affairs Ministry. They were generated throughout colonial rule. The Southern Rhodesia High Commissioner preferred the appointment of NCs over chiefs in terms of the administration of African people. This resulted in the stripping of chiefs of many of their powers, especially after the 1896/7 risings. Holleman noted that the High Commissioner argued that Africans 'were accustomed to chiefs and required a form of personal government…they should be accustomed to rely on local NCs as the supreme authority in all matters'.[92] Between the years 1890 and 1923, the Company administration was concerned with a number of issues such as labour recruitment for mining and farming ventures of the minority European settlers. Archival material from this period shows how the administration consolidated power and controlled chiefs. The administration sought knowledge on chiefs and headmen in Mashonaland and Matabeleland provinces. Several documents with lists of chiefs and headmen in these two provinces of the period between 1890 and 1923 are held at the NAZ. In order to facilitate effective administration, chiefs were asked to register their names with the nearest NCs. Weinrich observes that several chiefs refused to present themselves, while by contrast, some local leaders who were not recognised as chiefs by their neighbours registered as chiefs.[93] This colonial distortion sowed seeds for future succession disputes in modern-day Zimbabwe.

NC's files also reveal the early administration's fears of a further uprising. After the first *Chimurenga/Umvukela* uprisings of 1896/7 in Matabeleland and Mashonaland, the administration wanted to prevent any further insurrection. The settlers believed the spirit mediums of Nehanda (Charwe) of the Hwata lineage and Kaguvi (Gumboreshumba) of the Rozvi people were the epicentre of the uprisings. NCs reports reveal that in 1904, to guard against any potential recurrence of the so-called 'rebellions', the government was

---

[92] J. F. Holleman, *Chief, Council and Commissioners*, Royal VanGorcum, Assen, 1968, p. 16, see also A.K.H. Weinrich, *Chiefs and Councils in Rhodesia; Transition from Patrichal to Bureaucratic Power*, Heinmann, London, 1971, p. 11.
[93] See Weinrich, *Chiefs and Councils in Rhodesia*, p. 11

determined to know the composition of the Rozvi people in each District.[94] In the process, Tumbare, of Charter District, was mentioned as head of one branch of the Royal family; and Mutinhima, of the Victoria district head, of the other.[95] Considering that Shona-speaking people constituted the bulk of people in the country, colonial officials feared for another uprising based upon the pre-1896/7 political order. Additionally, the Hwata chieftainship in Mazoe valley was abolished after the outbreak of the uprisings in 1896 and was relocated to Muzarabani District to avoid any resurgence of the uprisings.[96] The Hwata chieftaincy was prominent during the uprisings and it was initially located in the Mazoe Valley which was the headquarters of the medium of Nehanda (Charwe) who was also of the Hwata lineage.

As a result of the early colonial Administration's desire to control chiefs, many official colonial documents centred on chiefs' subsidies, deaths and appointments of chiefs and headmen and how to settle traditional leadership disputes to its advantage.[97] For example, in 1917, the Superintendent of Natives explained how the Zimunya chieftainship in Manicaland was plunged into a state of unrest due to succession disputes.[98] In order to settle the dispute, the colonial administration split the chieftaincy into two, thus creating the Zimunya and Muradzikwa chieftaincies. Both chiefs were granted a subsidy of £2 per month.[99] While the Administration resolved this dispute, this case reflects the tendency of the state to manipulate such cases in its favour. The fact that a new chieftaincy was created meant that the state wanted first to resolve the dispute, secondly the newly created chieftaincy would show its allegiance to the state. This remained the characteristic of colonial administration regarding disputes over chieftainships successions.

Since many chieftaincies were fragmented during the period between 1890 and 1920s, the early colonial administration considered amalgamating these chiefdoms for easy

---

[94] NAZ N3/33/8 Mashona History Rozvi, Marondera NC to the CNC 1 January 1904.

[95] NAZ, N3/33/8 Mashona History Rozvi, Marondera Native Commissioner Responding to the Chief Native Commissioner on 1 January 1904.

[96] Chief Hwata and others, letter to the Secretary for Local Government, Public Works and National Housing, 23 October 2007. The collection is in authors' possession and the reference used was generated by the author.

[97] NAZ, A3/10/18/14 Appointments of chiefs, Executive Council 1910 to 1915.

[98] NAZ, A18/18/1 Chiefs and Headmen Umtali, Chieftainship of the Jindwe tribe, NC Umtali to CNC Salisbury, 11 June 1917.

[99] Ibid.

governance. For example in 1910, the Administrator approved the amalgamation of three clans in Bulalima district.[100] It was also suggested that an amalgamation of the clan under the late chief Mambizo, with the clan under chief Nhlukaniso, Matobo district was desirable.[101] In addition, early colonial officials separated chiefs and headmen. The Administrator in 1910 suggested that all chiefs should be separated and that allowances should be fixed for each grade and accordingly, all chiefs should receive some remuneration.[102] Consequently, circulars were issued to all NCs to compile lists of chiefs and headmen in each district, arranged according to order of importance and stating the subsidies drawn by each.[103] It turned out that there were many so-called chiefs in Mashonaland who were not chiefs in the sense understood by the administration, but sub-chiefs. For purposes of 'native administration,' they were to be officially regarded as 'headmen', as defined in Sub-section (3) Section 2 of the Rhodesian Chiefs and Headmen Act of 1913.[104] Chiefs were expected to collect taxes and promote colonial interests. These developments were subsequently captured in chiefs and headmen archival documents showing how traditional leaders receiving a monthly allowance were involved in the colonial government structures. Furthermore, a register was created showing lists of chiefs and headmen stating their province, district and allowances as of 1911.[105] However, the lists produced were subject to changes that took place during the course of the administration. Some districts, such as Darwin were considered to be of less value, and only names of the most important chiefs were submitted.[106]

When Company rule expired in 1923, the settlers were granted Responsible Government. The 1922 referendum results favoured the establishment of a Responsible Government instead of joining the Union of South Africa. Settlers wanted to consolidate their power and establish a country where they would control police, army, judiciary and economy. Settlers needed the support of chiefs to harness cheap labour and extract taxes from

---

[100] NAZ, A18/18/1 Chiefs and Headmen, Disposal of Native Tribe formerly under chief Mdilizelwa, the Secretary Department of Administrator, 17 November 1915.
[101] Ibid.
[102] NAZ, A3/18/18/14 Chiefs and Headmen, Correspondence between the Administrator and the CNC, Separation between Chiefs and Headmen, 11 March 1910.
[103] NAZ A3/10/18/14 Chiefs and Headmen, Appointments of chiefs, 1 January 1910.
[104] NAZ, A3/18/18/14 Chiefs and Headmen, Correspondence between the Administrator and the CNC, Separation between Chiefs and Headmen, 16 May 1913.
[105] NAZ, A3/18/18/14 Chiefs and Headmen, Separation between Chiefs and Headmen 1913-15.
[106] Ibid.

Africans. At the same time, chiefs were expected to accommodate the implementation of land policies such as the 1930 Land Apportionment Act.[107] This period saw the creation of the Native Boards and later Native Councils. According to Weinrich, 'these boards consisted of chiefs and sub-chiefs who represented Africans considered to be traditionally oriented by the government, and of an equal number of elected Africans, who were thought to represent educated section of the African population.'[108] By 1950, about 57 Native Councils had been established consisting of members nominated or elected by the inhabitants of the council areas and appointed by the Governor, chiefs and headmen *ex officio* and the NC of the district as the chairman.[109] Councils taxed Africans to provide for development and improvement of services. They had the power to make by-laws for the local government of their respective areas. Under the Native Affairs Act, chiefs had power to hold court and adjudicate on civil matters and disputes between 'natives'.[110] NC reports, chiefs and headmen archives produced in the 1920s to early 1960s reveals how chiefs were expected to participate in agrarian reforms in Tribal Trust Lands (TTLs).

The Land Apportionment Act of 1930 (LAA) and the 1951 Native Land Husbandry Act (NLHA), altered the boundaries of chiefdoms, sometimes resulting in the creation of new chieftaincies altogether. For example, the Fish chieftainship in Buhera was created by people who had been moved from Matabeleland in the 1930s.[111] Chieftainship boundaries were reconfigured as the government appropriated land on a racial basis in 1930. It allocated 51 per cent of the land for white use, and 30 per cent was allocated for the African Reserves and for private African purchase, while most of the remainder was unallocated. This became more practical after the promulgation of the NLHA, which specified a limited number of beasts to be owned and introduced 'scientific' farming methods: crop rotation, soil conservation mechanisms such as digging of contour ridges and destocking among other activities, and chiefs were expected to play a role in mobilising their people to adopt these new policies in TTLs.[112] Some chiefs, initially did

---

[107] See J. Alexander, *The Unsettled Land: State-making and the Politics of Land in Zimbabwe, 1893–2003*, Harare, Weaver Press, 2006.

[108] H. Weinrich, *Chiefs and Councils in Rhodesia*, p. 14.

[109] *Official Year Book of Southern Rhodesia*, No. 4, 1952, p. 106.

[110] NAZ, S2583/542 Chiefs General, Chiefs and Councils and Chiefs Powers, Secretary of Native Affairs to Secretary of Native Affairs Nyasaland, Zomba 13 March 1950.

[111] NAZ S2929/1/1 Buhera District Delineation Report, 1964.

[112] For example see Alexander, *The Unsettled Land.*

not cooperate, such as chief Nhema in the then Selukwe District (Shurugwi) who reasoned that the Native Reserves was too small to accommodate his people, and that more territory was desired. While non-cooperation usually risked eviction from office, Nhema survived eviction after demonstrating his understanding of the new policies.[113] The reconfigurations as a result of the LAA and NLHA inform claims to chieftaincy in 1970s and after independence. Weinrich argues that the CNC's report for 1940 reveals that chiefs showed a complete lack of initiative and that one chief had to be removed from office.[114] She further submits that in 1941, it was reported that several chiefs had provided men for the Second World War and that this had increased the chief's prestige among their own people. Yet some chiefs had defied the law and that year one had been deposed for misconduct and a third in 1942.[115] A reading of the CNC reports shows that the government had changed its perceptions of chiefs. In the 1930s and early 1940s traditional leaders' relations had improved to an extent that efforts were made by government and its officials to familiarise themselves with origins of Africans, their ethnicity and totems.[116] The 1943 Report recorded that, by and large, chiefs had preserved peace among their people, but they lacked leadership qualities.[117] The 1946 Report bluntly, stated that 'our aim is to eliminate many of the old diehards and replace them in time by fewer and better chiefs'.[118] Those who resented government orders were seen as uncooperative and termed diehards such as 'Chief Wozhele who was moved from Rhodesdale to Sanyati under the NLHA 25 of 1950/51, after acts of arson.'[119] The 1949 Report commented more favourably pointing out that some chiefs had 'showed progresses' in adjusting to colonial administrative duties amidst tribal disunity.[120] The reports discussed here represent part of material produced at the time, which was later deposited to form part of the archival collection at the NAZ.

---

[113] NAZ, S1007/7, NC, Selukwe to Superintendent of Natives, Bulawayo, 17 July 1930, Centralisation of Lands, Selukwe Reserve.
[114] Weinrich, *Chiefs and Councils in Rhodesia,* p. 13.
[115] *Ibid.*
[116] NAZ, MS663/9 Chiefs and Headmen, NC Sipolilo 1933.
[117] NAZ S1563, Chief Native Commissioner Annual Report 1945 p. 217.
[118] NAZ S1563, Chief Native Commissioner Annual Report 1946 p. 27.
[119] M. Nyandoro, 'Zimbabwe's land struggles and land rights in historical perspective: The case of Gokwe-Sanyati irrigation (1950-2000)', *Historia* 57. 2. November 2012, p. 307.
[120] NAZ S1564 Chief Native Commissioner Annual Report 1949 p. 27.

The late 1950s witnessed the increase in African nationalism while the drive for the formation of the Central African Federation gathered momentum. This had a profound impact on the nature of chiefs and headmen archives that were produced, since chiefs were caught between a difficult situation of either supporting nationalists or the government that fed them. It is unsurprising therefore that those NCs archival reports of this period contain information about increasing the power of chiefs.[121] The year 1951 was crucial in chieftaincy institution; it saw a complete restructuring of African chieftainships as well as depositions of chiefs and headmen.[122] In 1951, 26 chiefs were down-graded to headmen.[123] Of the 323 chiefs, who had registered their chieftainships in 1914, 89 were abolished, 11 were pensioned off, and 37 lost rank altogether.[124] Those who remained had their salaries increased to lure them against nationalist agitators infiltrating into the TTLs where chiefs had jurisdiction. A reader of the chiefly colonial archives would come across demotion of many chiefs in 1951 resulting in reconfiguring of several chieftaincies.

2.5.2 African Councils and Assemblies Manuscripts

These manuscripts were generated from African Councils and Assemblies of Chiefs formed in the late 1940s for rural administration and are part of the colonial archive. After the 1950s African Councils and Assemblies received opposition in the NAD. Patrick Fletcher, one time Minister of Native Affairs, in an interview in 1978, argued that 'the department was violently opposed to the establishment of the Chief's Assemblies on the grounds that chiefs, the Mashonaland chiefs particularly, were all doddering old men.'[125] He added that 'it was so because of the clan system of the appointment of chiefs, it was only an old man that could accede to office, were uneducated, and seen as a complete waste of time.'[126] However, most of Garfield Todd's policies were unpopular among the white electorate and even within his own Cabinet. Nathan Shamuyarira argues that 'when he [Todd] became premier in 1954, he pressed for a vast increase in school places

---

[121] NAZ S1562, Chief Native Commissioner Report 1950 pp. 20, 6.

[122] NAZ, S327/1 chiefs and headmen Recommendations, abolishment of redundant chiefs 26 March 1950.

[123] NAZ, S3700/74 Recognition of tribal leaders 1951.

[124] Weinrich, *Chiefs and Councils in Rhodesia,* p. 118.

[125] NAZ, ORAL/FL1 Oral Patrick Fletcher interviewed in 1978, Former Minister Department of Native Affairs, 1954-7.

[126] Ibid.

for Africans; he wanted to integrate Africans quickly into an industrial society on an equal basis.'[127] Todd's Cabinet opposed Assemblies because his polices were not popular with other white elements in the country. He was described as too liberal towards Africans, thus, Fletcher's sentiments on African chiefs as 'old doddering men' was a subtle way of concealing the differences harbored towards chiefs in the 1950s.

Some of the archival documents on chieftaincy covering the 1950s are Chiefs' Assemblies' Manuscripts. In Assemblies of Chiefs, traditional leaders discussed various subjects affecting them and the meetings were chaired by a government official. These manuscripts cover subjects such as education of chiefs, squatter questions in the TTLs, ownership of cattle and caring capacity regulations, juvenile delinquency in communal areas, chieftaincy collateral and bilateral succession systems, problems of Africans staying near townships and the running of townships, trade union activities, duties and responsibilities of chiefs, payment of lobola and other social related issues.[128] These archival manuscripts highlight how the colonial government had vested much responsibility in chiefs through Native Councils and Chiefs Assemblies in the 1950s. As a result of these duties, the office of a chief became more of class category than a traditional office because of the status it assumed. Some archival manuscripts on African Councils relating to how chiefs were involved in community development are not yet processed; they can be accessed upon request because they are due for public access. These manuscripts cover minute books and points of discussion covered by Councils up to around 1970s.[129] They also cover chieftaincy disputes such as Nyashanu-Chamutsa squabble over boundaries.[130] In the dispute, Nyashanu argued that he was the owner of Buhera and the rival Chamutsa chieftaincy was a creation of the early colonial administration, therefore should not have jurisdiction in Buhera District. The matter was arbitrated amicably by dialogue. These manuscripts are useful in highlighting chieftaincy disputes during the colonial era and how NCs and later District Commissioners (DCs) arbitrated these squabbles.

---

[127] N. Shamuyarira, *Crisis in Rhodesia*, London, Heinemann, 1965, p. 23.
[128] NAZ, S2796/2/1 Assemblies of Chiefs General, Minutes of Fourth Chiefs Assembly Midlands Province Held at Gwelo 28th June 1954.
[129] NAZ, Unprocessed Manuscripts, African Councils Handbook and Amendments Vol ii, 1958 to 1979.
[130] NAZ, Unprocessed Manuscripts, Notes on Nyashanu-Chamutsa dispute, this can be accessed from the Public Archives Section upon request from the archivists.

2.5.3 Delineation Reports

The most elaborate archives on traditional leadership institution are the Delineation Reports (DRs) produced between 1962 and 1965. DRs were a result of the process of delineating of African communities by government putting them into marked and known boundaries. The process was initiated by the Rhodesian Front (RF) government on its assumption of power in 1962. The delineation exercise was influenced by the RF's desire to maintain white hegemony in the country against the British idea of majority rule. It needed the support of African chiefs to convince the British government that African people were in support of Southern Rhodesia gaining independence under white rule. As a result, the government began to move towards 'liberalism' by advocating the incorporation of chiefs, through demarcating, allocating and in some cases creating new areas of jurisdiction for chiefs. In this way, the government led by Ian Smith hoped to gain the credibility from traditional leaders in the country. In 1977, the *Executive Intelligence Review* magazine commenting on economic and political developments globally, observed that 'Smith wanted to undercut the position of the Rhodesian nationalist Patriotic Front and pre-empt expected new British interventions to bring about a peaceful transition to majority rule in Rhodesia.'[131] The RF administration worked with chiefs for its own political reasons: negotiating independence with Britain and using them as a bastion against guerrilla insurgence from the late 1960s by starving guerrillas from food and support by peasants in rural areas. The other reason behind the delineation exercise was for the implementation of community development projects.[132] Delineation of communities was necessary for understanding the desired needs of the people. For example, delineation officers would report to the government on infrastructural needs of each community such as schools, hospitals, dams, roads after delineating a community.[133] The government had an elaborate understanding of chieftaincies in each district, villages, number of tax payers, boundaries and general histories of each chieftaincy in the country.

---

[131] *Executive Intelligence Review*, 'Smith Tries To Look Liberal', New Solidarity International Press Service, 29 February 1977, Vol. IV, No.9.

[132] M. Bratton, *From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe: Beyond Community Development*, DEFA Research APEX, London, 1978.

[133] See for example Bindura District S2929/2/1 1964 Nov 26-1965 April. They are arranged according to province and district.

The delineation of communities resulted in reports on chieftaincies in Zimbabwe containing valuable information on origins, boundaries and family trees. They start with the name of the chief *mambo*, headmen (ishe/sadunhu*)*, totem (mutupo*)*, laudatory name (chidawo), his 'tribe' (dzinza) and his territory (nyika). As the process of delineation was hurriedly done, this means there are errors and in some cases, interviews were done only once. Furthermore, the delineation process was a cumbersome project that required time. Some chieftaincies were left undocumented. The net effect of the shortcomings of the delineation exercise was that they are not a complete representative of all chieftaincies in the country. Delineation reports' authenticity has been challenged by claimants to chieftaincy and other users of the colonial archive as discussed in chapter four. Even so, DRs are heavily used in post-colonial Zimbabwe by people seeking the history of their chieftaincies. They are used to reconstruct chiefdoms.

2.5.4 PER/5 and Chiefs' Councils Files

These files were generated by the Rhodesian government between 1960 to early 1980s so they are part of the colonial archive. They are different in many regards with other records such as the ones already deposited at the NAZ in that they are more elaborate and well researched. They are different from delineation reports in that they cover a longer period. Moreover, they show the relationship between the state and chiefs in the last stages of colonial rule in Zimbabwe. Since they were produced by the Internal Affairs Ministry from around 1960s, there were many changes in the country as far as traditional leadership was concerned. The government, as explained earlier, was keen to work with chiefs for its political reasons. As result, these files reveal how the state used chiefs to run rural administration. Their nature shall be discussed in greater detail in chapter four that deals with supplementary sources that claimants and researchers could use to enhance their understanding of chieftaincy.

Besides PER/5 there is also a collection of Chiefs Councils in Southern Rhodesia mainly containing minutes of meetings proceedings covering the period up to 1978. These files tackle various subjects related to chiefs, rural development, debates, and meetings among other provisions. These have not yet been used by the public researching

chieftainships. They can be accessed upon request from the archivists at the NAZ. These manuscripts are due to be processed and accessioned.

2.5.5 Schedule of Chiefs and Headmen

In addition to all other sources discussed earlier, the Schedule of Chiefs and Headmen manuscript is another useful source on traditional leadership at the NAZ. It was compiled by J. D White who worked for the Internal Affairs and for the Ministry of Local Government, lately as secretary of the Ministry. He contributed immensely to the generation of archival documents on chiefs in his capacity especially in the areas around Zvishavane, Mberengwa in the Midlands province where he was stationed as District Commissioner. When he became the secretary of Ministry of Local Government in the early 1980s, he finished his project of compiling the schedule of chiefs and headmen in the country. He relied on a number of other colonial documents at the NAZ on traditional leaders such as NC reports, delineation reports, chiefs' registers, minute books and other manuscripts on chieftaincy since 1900.

The manuscript shows a list of all chiefs and headmen who ruled up until 1985. The main body of the schedule is divided into five columns which are used when a line of succession is followed. The schedule does not offer general histories of chieftainships themselves. It states the name of the chief and his totem, his headmen and their totems, the province and the district each chieftaincy is found in. Besides that, it lists all chiefs, headmen and village heads who ruled, showing when and how they got in the office and how the office was abolished. If the chief died or was deposed, the manuscript gives details or estimate dates when the incumbent died or was deposed. It can be used for reference in succession disputes. Further to that, the schedule lists a number of files on chiefs and headmen at its beginning for further reference.[134] The key difference between the schedule of chiefs and headmen and delineation reports is that DRs give histories of chieftaincies. The schedule diagrammatically presents a list of all chiefs and headmen that assumed office in Zimbabwe until 1985 when the project ended. Since then the schedule was not updated. However, the Ministry of Local Government has a list of all

---

[134]NAZ, MS746 Schedule of chiefs and headmen Zimbabwe 12 December 1985. Some of the listed files include A3/18/18/1 period 1917-23, A3/18/18/2 period 1914 -15, A3/18/18/3-4 period 1918-19, A3/18/18/13 period 1910-11, 1915-17, A3/18/18/14 period 1913-15, list of chiefs at 16/05/13.

chiefs and headmen in the country in their databases. The schedule is another useful source that claimants use to trace the line of succession of their chieftaincies in the colonial archive.

2.6 Conclusion

Documents produced by the NAD since the early 1890s constitute part of the archival collection at the NAZ on chiefs and headmen. Most of these documents attract researchers interested in the subject of chieftaincy and by claimants of traditional leadership positions in modern-day Zimbabwe. Chieftainship claims reports compiled by historians are partly based on these colonial documents and oral evidence. The accessibility of these files depends on the access and policy regulations of the institution. Of the documents discussed in this chapter, delineation reports, NCs reports, schedule of chiefs and headmen manuscripts are all accessible at the NAZ. They are bound and accessioned each with a reference number as accessioned in the Public Archives and Historical Manuscripts Inventories. They are not accessed online. Users have to physically visit the NAZ to use these sources. Some of the manuscripts mentioned such as Chief's Assemblies are due to be processed but can be accessed upon request. PER/5 files are also available but in limited supply to cover the whole country due to financial woes affecting the NAZ. Uses of these files are discussed in greater detail in chapter four.

Chapter Three

3. From Colonial to Post-Colonial: Dimensions of Claims to Chieftaincy in Zimbabwe

3.1 Introduction

The focus of this chapter is on the dimensions of chieftainship claims in contemporary Zimbabwe but it also makes reference to those claims made during the colonial era. It examines the major sites of struggles and addresses questions surrounding the recent rejuvenation of interest by families, individuals and governments in the institution. It draws comparisons with other African countries, specifically in terms of how post-colonial governments worked with traditional leaders, and how the institution of chieftaincy has plunged in succession wrangles. This chapter offers a background to the process whereby colonial archival documents were used in compiling evidence during the colonial period and later the post-colonial era. It looks at specific case studies where claims reports to chieftaincies were submitted to the Ministry of Local Government for approval. These are the Seke, Mutsago, Sanyanga, Chidzivo and Musaigwa chieftancies. These cases were selected because they were compiled using archival documents and oral evidence by historians and ethnographers.

3.2 Traditional Leaders and Post-Colonial Governments in Africa

To understand how the post-colonial government in Zimbabwe related to chieftaincy, it is necessary to draw some comparisons with other African governments' experiences with the institution. Arguably, how Zimbabwean government dealt with chiefs is not unique, other African countries passed through the same experiences in the way they worked with chiefs. Post-colonial governments in Africa were faced with the task of whether to incorporate traditional leaders or not, since many chiefs were part of the colonial administration. In Ghana, for example, after the attainment of independence in 1957, 'the government of the day even considered totally abolishing the institution because of the role chiefs had played by aiding the colonial regime to oppress the indigenes.'[135] Chiefs had been incorporated by the British colonial officials under indirect rule in West Africa. Later, President Kwame Nkrumah 'eventually endorsed the institution despite his

---

[135] Owusu-Mensah, 'Politics, Chieftaincy and Customary Law in Ghana', p. 38.

resentment of chiefs because they had supported the opposition party during the struggle for independence which fuelled hostility.'[136] The government realised that traditional leaders were very important in representing traditional and cultural aspects of the community. In Uganda, the office of chief was reinstated in 1986, albeit without any political power, after the 1966 Constitution had abolished the institution when kings and kingdoms were dumped.[137] It was a time when the country faced human rights abuse in the 1960s soon after independence. The Foundation of Human Rights observed that 'during much of its post-colonial history, Uganda had been characterised by repressive and authoritarian regimes such as that of Idi Amin and Milton Obote.'[138] In other words, as the government became authoritarian, chieftaincy was abolished in a move to destabilise all potential centres of power considering that traditional leaders command a big rural following. At the same time, they had participated during the colonial regime. Elliot Green draws our attention to Tanzania in 1963 'when President Nyerere's one-party state philosophy went unopposed allowing him to permanently abolish the traditional leadership institution and promoted nationalisation of land.'[139] Arguably, most post-colonial governments in Africa resented chieftaincy because traditional leaders had participated in colonial administration. However, in Zimbabwe, as elsewhere, some chiefs had refused to participate and had risked demotion.

After the attainment of independence in Zimbabwe, the Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU PF) government was caught in the same dilemma of whether to incorporate traditional leaders in nation-building or not. The government's position was contradictory. On the one hand, socialist policies excluded traditional leaders, but on the other, officials wanted chiefs to participate in national reconstruction.[140] Ngwabi Bhebhe and Terence Ranger argue that 'at independence, the government adopted

[136] Ibid.

[137] Ibid., p. 31.

[138] Foundation for Human Rights Initiative, 'Uganda: a situation of systematic violations of civil and political rights', Alternative Report To the Government of Uganda's First Periodic Report before the United Nations Human Rights Committee, February 2004, p. 5, http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/46f1469c0.pdf, accessed 13 April 2015.

[139] E. Green, 'The Political Economy of Nation Formation in Modern Tanzania', *DESTIN*, London School of Economics, 26 September 2009, p. 11.

[140] *The Herald,* 3 October 1980.

socialist policies that excluded the roles of the traditional leaders.'[141] Tompson Makahamadze *et al* note that 'the roles of the chiefs, including that of allocating land, were transferred to District Councils Ward Committees (WADCOs) and Village Development Committees (VIDCOs).'[142] These new government structures stripped chiefs of their control over communal areas and reduced their participation in the nation-building process after independence. The government's policies did not accommodate chiefs. Considering that chiefs had worked with the settler government, initially the new regime was not willing to work with them. However, some chiefs had supported the guerrillas during the armed struggle, vehemently resisting colonial rule. Chief Tangwena, for example, was known for his heroic refusal to leave his ancestral lands when instructed to do so by the settler government. He was also known for smuggling Robert Mugabe and Edgar Tekere into Mozambique in the 1970s.[143] The government was quite aware of the relevance of the institution of chieftainship in rural communities where traditional leaders were regarded as custodians of the land and the spirituality of people in communal areas.[144] The ambiguous and conflicting roles chiefs had played during the colonial period left the new regime in doubt about whether to trust them.

In the late 1990s, the ZANU PF government changed its attitude towards traditional leaders. It adopted a more accommodating policy. This happened when the then Minister of Local Government, John Landa Nkomo, announced in 1999 plans to create new ward and village assemblies that would be led by chiefs and headmen.[145] Following these developments, the government started to increase the allowances for traditional leaders to win their support. The President apologised for neglecting traditional leaders for almost 18 years after independence and vowed to recognise their powers. Chiefs were given powers to participate in the Fast Track Land Reform. A number of them, however, subsequently complained later that they had been side-lined in the land distribution process. The sudden decision by government to support chiefs it had previously

---

[141] N. Bhebe and Ranger (eds.), *The Historical Dimensions of Democracy and Human Rights in Zimbabwe: Volume One: Pre-Colonial and Colonial Legacies*, Harare, University of Zimbabwe Publications, 2001.
[142] T. Makahamadze et al., 'The Role of Traditional Leaders in Fostering Democracy, Justice and Human Rights in Zimbabwe', *The African Anthropologist*, Vol 16, Nos. 1&2, 2009, p. 40.
[143] A. S. Mlambo, *A History of Zimbabwe*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2014, p. xxx.
[144] *The Herald,* 6 September 1980.
[145] *Ibid.,* p. 41.

neglected was arguably influenced by the need to gain goodwill in the context of the political and economic hardships characteristic of the late 1990s.

The government realised that traditional leaders could be used to promote development in the rural areas. In 2003, the Minister of Local Government Ignatius Chombo expressed the government's position as regards chiefs during an installation ceremony of chief Mahenye in Chipenge. He reiterated how 'chiefs were regarded as the entry point for government support initiatives in communities and also as full representatives of the local people whose concerns they were better qualified to deal with.'[146] He further argued that 'traditional leaders were linchpins in the community development machinery as they were closest to centres of activity where they were best placed to effectively interpret people's views and aspirations.'[147] Chiefs were to work with the Rural Councils in the interest of development and had their judicial powers increased. Most of these changes come well after 2000 when the government started to recognise traditional leadership. In Gokwe, for example, Rural Councils proposed naming streets after chiefs as a way of recognising them.[148] This clearly indicates how the government was now honouring chiefs. In some cases the reinstating of chiefs was influenced by top leaders in government. For example, the then senator of Bulilima and Mangwe, Eunice Sandi, in 2007 expressed her dismay at the official delay in reinstating several chiefs who had been demoted to headmen during the colonial regime for allegedly supporting the liberation struggle.[149] She further argued that 'the slow process of restitution was impeding development in the two districts.'[150] In the months that followed, the government reinstated several chiefs, including Kandana, Masendu and Madlambuzi, who had been dethroned by the Rhodesian government because they had supported the liberation struggle.[151] These were important attempts by the government to restore colonially deposed chiefs, asked to be reappointed some time earlier. This argument supports the view that chiefs were not passive recipients of government's benevolence; instead, they showed their agency by claiming the resuscitation of their authority.

---

[146] *The Manica Post*, 3 August 2003.
[147] *Ibid.*
[148] *The Herald,* 21 September 2003.
[149] *The Chronicle,* 11 February 2007.
[150] *Ibid.*
[151] *Sunday News,* 20 May 2007. See also *Guardian,* 20 May 2007, *Sunday News* and *Guardian* 27, May 2007, *The Chronicle,* 2 July 2007.

The formation of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) in 1999 posed the first serious political threat to ZANU PF since independence. The MDC had strong urban support and the ZANU PF government realised that it needed to survive the political threat ahead of the 2000 parliamentary and 2002 presidential elections. To win, ZANU PF needed the rural electorate. Looming defeat in the 2000 parliamentary election persuaded the government immediately to win back chiefs to its side. Philip Chidavaenzi commented that 'the government ostensibly pulled the long-neglected chiefs from the side-lines of national politics, and found in them willing 'pawns' to ensure that Robert Mugabe's power base in the rural areas is maintained.'[152] This is in sharp contrast with views expressed by the Minister of Local Government that the change was meant to ensure that chiefs were awarded their true status in society. The move by the government was also criticised by other learned people such as the sociologist Gordon Chavhunduka. He noted that 'the attempts to bring chiefs into party politics have not worked in the best interest of both the chiefs and the communities they lead…the chief is no longer a chief but an official of a political party.'[153] Generally speaking, traditional leaders are expected to be independent from partisan politics because they are representatives of the ancestors and are supposed to look after all the people under their jurisdiction. Chavhunduka argues that 'since the rejection of the government-sponsored draft constitution in the February referendum and the subsequent violent compulsory acquisition of white-owned commercial farms, most of the chiefs have folded their arms and watched developments from the side lines.'[154] These sentiments resonate with views that, as custodians of land, chiefs should have been more vocal critics of the FTLRP.

On the other hand, chiefs raised their own concerns involving land, as they demanded from government a share in the process of land distribution. Traditional leaders reasoned that their land had been taken by colonial regimes and that they needed to participate in the FTLRP. In Matabeleland North, chiefs were reported as having urged the government to provide them with the resources to effectively carry out their roles in the new era ushered in by the land reform programme.[155] It can be argued that chiefs also started to

---

[152] *The Daily Mirror,* 27 July 2003.
[153] *Ibid*.
[154] *Ibid.*
[155] *The Chronicle,* 18 June 2003.

put pressure on the government to be recognised by openly supporting President Mugabe to be the president for life. Some chiefs, such as chief Serima from Gutu area, reiterated that President Mugabe should rule forever: *'vaMugabe rambai muchitonga kusvika madhongi ava nenyanga'*, (Mugabe, sir, keep ruling until donkeys grow horns!).[156] While the government was beginning to recognise chiefs, traditional leaders also actively sought recognition and support for the new roles in acting as the guardians of the land by helping Mugabe to secure victory in the 2002 election.[157] Again in 2008, chiefs endorsed Mugabe's candidature as the only candidate they wanted to contest for the presidency.[158] While the government was restoring the powers of chiefs, chiefs were ready to support the ruling party; hence they also registered their stand as political players in the country.

Government recognition of traditional leaders was interpreted by some observers as duplication of the Rhodesian policies in the 1970s. Chidavaenzi mentions that 'in the 1970s during the liberation struggle, the Rhodesian government gave chiefs salaries and radios so that they would pass on to their subjects the propaganda of the government of the day.'[159] The ZANU PF moves after 2000 to reward chiefs with allowances, the installation of electricity in their homesteads, and the promise of cars and phones to assist them in their duties, have delivered political results desired by the government. Chavhunduka concludes that 'chiefs would reward Mugabe by turning their villages into political flash points where opposition suspected and perceived opposition supporters and sympathisers were ruthlessly purged.'[160] Chief Murinye from Masvingo raised concerns that the government would decide when to incorporate chiefs and when not to depending on the state of political affairs.[161] He further claimed that 'government will

---

[156] *Ibid.* see also *The Herald,* 31 January 2003, and *The Daily News,* 25 January 2003.
[157] *The Financial Gazette*, 8-14 May 2003. President Mugabe had promised to give chiefs vehicles when he addressed them in January 2003 at the chief's annual council meeting. The then president of the Chiefs Council, Jonathan Mangwende, confirmed that there was a growing agitation among the chiefs who were worried by the delayed delivery of the promised vehicles. See also *The Standard* 2 February 2003, *The Herald* 30 January 2003, *Herald* 1 January 2002 and 17 April 2002.
[158] *The Herald,* 3 July 2007.
[159] *The Daily Mirror* 27 July 2003.
[160] *Ibid.*
[161] Interview with chief Murinye, 17 August 2014.

grant some favours like vehicles and packages to lure chiefs when it feels it needs them especially after 2000 when the opposition seemed to offer a real political challenge.'[162]

The decision by the government to recognise chiefs resulted in fresh claims to chieftaincy being made. In 2003, the Minister of Local Government Ignatius Chombo, observed that 'squabbles over chieftaincy were a result of the fact that aspiring chiefs were now more obsessed in the material benefits which go with the office instead of the honour and dignity of the institution of traditional leadership.'[163] The Deputy District Administrator of Buhera district explained that some claims were influenced by greed and the benefits that now go with the position of chief.[164] The economic decline of the 2000s, characterised by high inflation, price increase and food shortages, created social and political unrest.[165] Political and economic developments after 2000 had far-reaching effects not only on ordinary people, but also as regards chieftaincy. Economic hardship and the political fraught situation, help to explain why chieftainship claims also increased. Yet, claims to chieftaincy in post-colonial Zimbabwe were not only a result of the harsh political and economic challenges of the 2000s. In most cases, claims to chieftaincy had more to do with pre-colonial and colonial imbalances. Arguably, economic and political developments from the late 1990s catalysed traditional leadership claims to became more visible and active.

In much the same period, a number of African governments also began to recognise traditional leaders. Janine Ubink argues that 'many post-independence African governments at first saw chiefs as impediments to modernisation and nation-building and tried to curtail their role in local government and national politics but in the 1990s they recalled chiefs back.'[166] Constitutional passages were carved to allow traditional leaders to have a role in the national political and economic faculties. The renewed interest in traditional leadership has attracted several academic discussions. Popular views highlight the functioning or malfunctioning of post-colonial states. 'One of these explanations is

---

[162] Ibid.

[163] *The Herald,* 23 June 2003.

[164] Interview with Mr Zidya Buhera District Assistant Administrator, 14 August 2014.

[165] For the economic decline in Zimbabwe, see Brian Raftopoulos and Alois Mlambo, (eds), *Becoming Zimbabwe. A History from the Pre-colonial Period to 2008*, Harare, Weaver Press, 2009.

[166] Janine Ubink, 'Traditional Authority Revisited: Popular Perceptions of Chiefs and Chieftaincy in Peri-Urban Kumasi, Ghana', *Journal of Legal Pluralism*, 2007, Vol. 55, p. 124.

connected to notions of 'failed states', unsuccessful nation-building and internal conflicts and civil wars, and poses the idea that chiefs fill the gap of collapsed states.'[167] Other explanations relate to the position chiefs had been playing in the realm of tradition, settling disputes in customary courts that were relatively cheap and accessible by the communal people. On the other hand, chiefs were also fighting for recognition in public political space. Traditional leaders have been seen as instrumental in effecting community development initiatives, and hence their co-option by governments in recent years.

The renewed interest in chieftaincy in African countries had had undesired results. It created unrest, disputes and fights over the office of the chief. Some people emerged with new claims to chieftainship. Others even tried to invent new chieftaincies. As governments empowered chiefs through land allocations and material benefits, this improved position of the chief attracted many claimants to the office of the chief, allegedly for the material benefits. Referring to Ghana, Mensah argues that 'the position of a chief in modern Ghana is a prestigious enterprise because of the social, political and cultural powers they possess.'[168] Usually in such circumstances, 'the affluent members of the community who are educated and politically connected are the ones who make such claims against the legitimate bona fide members of the royal lineages.'[169] Control over resources emerges as another site of chiefly disputes. Mensah further argues that 'in Ghana, the primary source of inter-ethnic conflicts has been the question of the control over land.'[170] Moreover, the role played by the state officials should not be understated in interfering with either selection process of chiefly candidates, restitution processes and even creation of fresh chiefdoms despite government officials condoning interference with the customary selection of candidates.[171]

In some instances, customary patterns of succession were ignored as other chiefs were appointed using written wills. This was the case of one Chikowi whose selection was

---

[167] *Ibid.*
[168] Owusu-Mensah, 'Politics, Chieftaincy and Customary Law in Ghana', p. 44.
[169] Ibid.
[170] Ibid, p. 43.
[171] For more information see *All Africa* 10 December 2013, Malawi: Chieftainship Wrangles a Worry.

rejected by other members of the royal lineage in Malawi.[172] Indeed, the then president Joyce Banda actually defied a court order on this chieftainship. The chieftainship had been plagued and embroiled in succession dispute, while the president knew the lineage very well; she ignored the plea of the family. These anomalies highlight the problems affecting the institution of traditional leadership. While attention in this chapter has been on understanding the broader dynamics influencing chieftaincy, it must also situate the dimensions of claims, restitutions or succession disputes involving chieftaincy in Zimbabwe within these broader developments. In what follows below, chieftaincy disputes are traced by paying close attention to claims made during the colonial and post-colonial periods in Zimbabwe to see the continuities and changes over time.

3.3 Claiming Chieftaincy in Colonial Zimbabwe

This section shows that claims to chieftaincy made during the late 1970s were specifically targeting those chiefs and headmen that were demoted between 1950 and 1951. It discusses the use of colonial documents by District Commissioners (DCs) and claimants to legitimise and validate their claims as required by the authorities. Claims made during this period were promoted by the settler government as it tried to win the support of chiefs against the guerillas and internal settlement politics as shall be explained.

The advent of colonial rule saw the strategic elimination of those chiefs who did not support settler endeavors. This dethronement was done within three frameworks. The first involved removal from exercising jurisdiction after failing to submit to the colonial authorities. The second involved cases of Africans living in areas perceived to be suitable for European urban space. The third concerned areas designated for settler farming land.[173] Removal from traditional and ancestral land usually resulted in some chiefs being completely erased from the government list of traditional leaders. Those chiefs, who cooperated with it, were usually rewarded by the colonial government in different ways. For example in Makoni, 'after refusing to take part in the first wars of resistance against colonialism in 1896, the Muruko house was rewarded by continuously having members of its lineage selected as Makoni for an unbroken period spanning for more than 60

---

[172] *Times Media,* July 26, 2013.
[173] NAZ, A18/18/1 chiefs and headmen, 17 November 1915.

years.'[174] By contrast other chieftaincies were displaced or eliminated. In the Manicaland province, chief Chiendambuya, a clansman of the Makoni chieftainship was a late victim of colonial machinations. He was downgraded to headmanship status as late as 1976, because he was seen as having failed to dissuade his people from supporting the guerrilla war. The colonial authorities thought Chiendambuya was too supportive of the cause of fighting for independence cause.[175] In the 1950s, the government introduced a series of community development projects supposedly to improve rural development.[176] It is from these colonial developments that indigenous people tried to gain their lost chieftaincies during the colonial period and post-colonial era.

In 1957, Roger Howman expressed his dismay over the use of 'history'- narratives in colonial writings, by Africans in Southern Rhodesia to justify claims to chieftaincies that never previously existed. They achieved this through using colonial documents. He observed that:

> in the last few years Africans have started to lacking [sic] additional names and glories on the chieftainship trees compiled by the [NAD] although it was always a problem to distinguish fact from fiction, it is now a problem of separating indigenous legend from imported legend of European origin.[177]

Thus, the use of colonial sources to justify claims started during the colonial period in Southern Rhodesia. Africans compiled family trees using colonially generated narratives. Various dynasties made claims to historical ties to lost 'empires' and 'kingdoms' using Portuguese documents as sources of reference. Howman expressed his disquiet stating that:

> indigenous legends were speaking of "great and powerful kings", of "empires stretching from the Zambezi to the Limpopo", of the "builders of Zimbabwe" – and made these ideas their own; stating them as facts. You may remember the newspaper quoted Samuriwo as saying, "the re-creation of the Varozvi Empire would take in all the Africans in the Colony with the exception of the Matabele".[178]

---

[174] See Ranger, 'Tradition and Travesty: Chiefs and the Administration in Makoni District, Zimbabwe, 1960-1980', *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, Vol. 52, No. 3, 1982, pp. 20-41.

[175] See for example, Ranger, *Peasant consciousness and guerrilla warfare in Zimbabwe*: *A Comparative Study*, London, James Currey, 1985.

[176] See for example, Michael Bratton, *From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe*: *Beyond Community Development in Southern Rhodesia,* CCJP, Harare, 1978.

[177] R. Howman, 'The effects of history on the African', *Rhodesiana* Vol. 2, 1957, p. 2.

[178] *Ibid.*, p. 2, See *Daily News*, 11 February 1957, The Murehwa people made their claim to chieftaincy in 1957; they gathered evidence from various colonial sources for evidence.

Howman identified what he thought was at the core of the problem. The problem could be traced to history text books.[179] He observed that 'these books were written in simple direct style without much regard to historical arguments, or to the many "perhaps" and "it is possible-s" of serious historians, and without any allowances for the Portuguese practice of magnificent description.'[180] Africans were nonetheless not passive consumers of colonial knowledge production. Instead, they used the same sources to derive evidence of their genealogies and family trees to advance their social and economic gains in a colonial society. Africans demonstrated their agency by utilising colonial documents for their own purposes despite the fact that the same colonial records were not produced for their use.

There were many claims to chieftaincy during the colonial period especially after the 1950/1 exercise. In 1950s, a number of chiefs were demoted to headmen because they were considered less important to the government programmes of community development. Later in the 1970s, efforts were made to upgrade the downgraded chiefs. In 1976, these numbered 26 as 33 had already been upgraded.[181] The colonial government had given the subject of recognising chiefs great thought since 1971 but there was no definite answer found. This was mainly because many people emerged claiming chieftaincy without solid evidence to justify their claims. Since the 1960s, the Rhodesian Front administration wanted to work with chiefs for political reasons. At the same time, chiefs and headmen were putting pressure on the government to increase their allowances because all civil servants had their salaries increased.[182] The CNC instructed all DCs to forward to his office the names of demoted chiefs due for upgrade. In a letter to the Provincial Commissioner in 1976 the Secretary for Internal Affairs stated that the DCs were to provide in each claim:

> the reason why the headmenship should become a chieftainship (history, previous status, current practice and so on); confirmation that the responsible persons in each of the areas concerned desired the upgrading; confirmation that the current substantive headman was accepted tribally as the right person to be appointed as

---

179 Howman, 'The effects of history on the African', p. 2.
180 *Ibid.*
181 NAZ, S3700/74 Recommendation of Tribal Leaders 26 March 1976.
182 Ibid.

chief; confirmation of an updated family tree; when facts permit, confirmation that the boundaries were known and agreed on by the prospective chiefs concerned and lastly cleared vetting's (for crime and security) for the prospective chiefs (and deputy chiefs, if any).[183]

The selection process to chieftaincy was rigid but it faced little resistance because the government wanted to work with chiefs. Such developments meant that people who did not deserve to be chiefs were appointed. This also created problems after the colonial period when colonially disadvantaged members sought to have their abolished chieftaincies reinstated made claims for restoration.

The DCs and claimants both relied on colonial documents and oral traditions to substantiate evidence of claims to chieftaincy. In 1976, for instance in the Darwin district, the DC stated that 'headmenships that sought upgrading were autonomous polities with divergent tribal history who were all placed under chief Rusambo who was identified as one of the recent immigrants into the area and could not have political control on them.'[184] A number of headmenships had been placed under chief Rusambo by the colonial regime in the previous years. Similarly, in the 1975 *NADA*, Latham had observed that 'the Rusambo chiefdom was an artificial amalgamation of various autonomous units into one chieftainship. Ironically too, Rusambo was the most recent settler in the area, some of his so-called headmen having been resident in the area for centuries before his arrival.'[185] To support this claim, further evidence was derived from the 1964 Darwin delineation report. It stated that one headman, Gwangawa, in the area was traditionally a chief in the eyes of his own people while Rusambo had never been regarded as a senior chief in the tribal hierarchy.[186] Thus, not only the 1951 exercise was to be repealed with reappointments based on contemporary reasons for upgrading, it also involved pre-colonial reasons. Colonial records and oral traditions were used to provide evidence. It was the task of people due for upgrading to produce family histories, genealogies and chiefdom boundaries to the DCs who would forward the file to the Provincial Administrator. In some cases NCs and later DCs were implicated in the customary

---

[183] Ibid.
[184] Ibid.
[185] C. J. K. Latham, 'Rusambo Chiefdom', *NADA,* Vol. X1, No 2, 1975, p. 68.
[186] NAZ S2929/2/2 Darwin District Delineation Report 1964 November 8- 1965 January 11.

selection thereby affecting the outcome.[187] The presence of DCs meant that candidates favoured by the officials could be appointed even if other family members disagreed with the appointment.

While the 1970s upgrading targeted demoted chiefs and headmen, new chieftaincies were also invented. The creation of new chieftaincies had various reasons mentioned by the authorities, besides the fact that the government wanted to combat the Zimbabwe National Liberation Army (ZANLA) and Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA) guerrilla insurgency in the countryside. Guerrilla infiltration gathered momentum in the 1970s, the same time the government started recognising demoted chiefs to win their support. Nevertheless, not all chiefs supported the government's counterinsurgency policies. Other reasons cited included the vastness of the land size under one chief, weak judgement on passing decisions and the desire to have youthful vibrant chiefs coping up with government development projects.[188] For example, in 1976 in Chibi, headman Matsveru was motioned to be upgraded to the rank of chief. He was under the jurisdiction of chief Chibi who was considered old and unpopular with the government. Chibi DC reasoned that:

> Chief Chibi, as you know is very weak, and not fair in his judgements, whereas headmen Matsveru is very popular with his people. Furthermore, his [Matsveru] area is well conserved and he has built his own dam…Chibi's area is too big [it consisted of eleven headmanships]…this area under Chief Chibi is impossible to be controlled by one man, and it is for this reason that conservation is suffering.[189]

The government was keen to restore all chieftaincies affected by the 1950s polices. It was successful in enthroning affected chieftaincies but an interesting dimension is how narratives in colonial records and oral traditions were used to justify legitimacy to chieftaincy. Chiefs saw the relevance of utilising constructively colonial documents to further their economic and social interests in a settler society. Claims to chieftaincy continued in post-colonial Zimbabwe based on pre-colonial and colonial reasons to justify the claims.

---

[187] *Report of the Mangwende Reserve Commission of Inquiry 1961.*
[188] NAZ, S3700/74 Recognition of Tribal Leaders, District Commissioner to the Provincial Commissioner, 13 April 1976.
[189] Ibid.

3.4 Claims to Chieftaincy in Post-Colonial Zimbabwe

In this section attention is given to those claims that are made in contemporary Zimbabwe. These claims are different to Rhodesian government engineered restitutions of the late 1970s for political reasons by the government of the day. Arguments raised in contemporary Zimbabwe by claimants cite pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial reasons to advance their cases for restitution. Four out of the five cases to be discussed all cite pre-colonial and colonial justifications in advancing their claims to chieftaincy in contemporary Zimbabwe.

3.4.1 Soko-Chidziva Restitution Claim (2010) Mashonaland Central Province

The Chidzivo claims report is generally the shortest of all five case studies. This is because the report is short and straight to the point. Moreover, there were not contestations involved in the claim as the elders agreed on what they wanted. In the Soko-Chidzivo case, pre-colonial and colonial legacies are raised involving their claim to chieftainship filed in 2010 from Mashonaland Central. The Chidziva claim that they are the autochthons of the area and have a right to chieftainship. They identify themselves as descendants of Nyamhandi who came into the area with Chingowo and are considering having their separate chieftainship with their own badge.[190] Surrounding chiefs are said to have supported the move by the Chidziwo clansmen to have their chieftaincy resuscitated.[191] They claim that at one point the colonial government recognised that the Soko-Chidziwo clan had a chieftaincy. The clan was asked to collect the moon badge but they did not send a representative because they feared the white men.[192] Restitution claims were launched in 2010 and the matter is currently under consideration by the government.

3.4.2 Kuvhirimara Succession Dispute (2011) Masvingo Province

The Kuvhirimara case involves colonial legacies centered on succession politics. The headmanship was created by the colonial government with Musipambi as the first headman to be elected by the colonial regime representing the Vangowa dynasty around

---

[190] Report, A Historical Investigation into the Soko-Chidziwo Clan, December 2010, p. 13.
[191] Ibid.
[192] Ibid.

1900.[193] The headmanship rotates between two house; that of Musipambi and Masvina. Some of the descendants of Musipambi were Zenda, Bare, Chitare, Davira, Madhobhi, Choga, Mavhiye and Mhike who became the first headman under the title Kuvhirimara.[194] Most of these people who took over the headmanship were from the Masvina house. According to oral testimonies from the Chishaka house, Madhobhi, Davira, Chishava Chimbwa and Sungayi Chimbwa met under the leadership of Mharire, the then Chief Chivi, to deliberate on the change of name from Musipambi to Kuvhirimara.[195] There was a need from all houses descended from Kuvhirimara to alternate the headmanship. Most leaders of the Kuvhirimara headmanship had been dominated by representatives of the Masvina house and the change of name to Kuvhirimara in 1964 meant that the headmanship was to be alternated between the two houses of Masvina and Zengeya. Following the death of Tapera in 2006 of the Masvina house, the headmanship had to move to the eldest surviving son among of Zengeya. There was consensus among the elders that Makayi Chishaka was the eligible candidate to take over the headmanship.[196] Ranganai Chigume was crowned the new headman Kuvhirimara on the 17th March 2010, contrary to what was agreed during the selection process and this became the bone of contention in the family.[197] Upon realising the un-procedural crowning of Chigume Ranganai, Makayi Chishaka appealed to the High Court to nullify Ranganai Chigume's election.[198] Tapera Dzingayi, of the Masvina house, has been the acting headman between 2006 and 2009 following a vacuum left by the death of Tapera Mazenge his father.

On 11 February 2009, a meeting was held to choose a Kuvhirimara substantive headman. It is worth noting that the two rivals Ranganai Chigume and Makayi Chishaka were present at the meeting all representing Zengeya house.[199] The Zengeya house unanimously chose Makayi Chishaka as the representative. The District Administrator (DA) decided to overturn the first position agreed at a properly constituted meeting held

---

[193] NAZ S2929/8/2 Chibi District Delineation Report 1965.
[194] NAZ N9/1/1 NC Chibi, Chilimanzi, Musipambi to CNC Salisbury, 31 August 1895.
[195] An inquiry into the Kuvhirimara Headman ship of Dziva Musaigwa Dynasty in Chivi District of Masvingo: A historical Rejoinder, early 1900 to 2011, p. 2.
[196] Ibid., p. 5.
[197]Ibid., p. 10.
[198] Ibid.
[199] Ibid.

in accordance with the procedures of choosing a headman under the *Traditional Leadership Act* and their traditional customs. During the first meeting Ranganai Chigume did not qualify on the basis that there were two surviving elders in the Zengeya house after him, Dambudzo Chanana and Makayi Chishaka (being the eldest). It is from these recent developments that gave rise to claims to the redress of the colonial legacies and post-colonial perpetuation of the Masvina dominance.

3.4.3 Claims to Resuscitate the Sanyanga Chieftaincy (2013 to present) Manicaland Province

The Vanyanga people lost their lands to Cecil John Rhodes at the beginning of the 1890s with their land becoming the first ever to be designated as national parks and estates. As early as 1899, Nyanga and Matopos were already designated as land belonging to Rhodes and he had already listed them as part of his estate in his will. All the land placed under the Rhodes Estates in Nyanga was designated as a National Park some of the land that fell under it was demarcated into several farms and plantations. The Vanyanga people were forced to leave their lands in the process and were left with a small on which piece to reside. After 1980, some of these farms were placed under the land resettlement program; the remaining land was occupied in 2000. As a result of this scenario, Sanyanga and his Vanyanga people regard themselves as the traditional owners of the land. They also started to ask the government to be considered for resettlement as well as a resuscitation of their traditional leadership structures.[200]

In laying their claim for the resuscitation of the Sanyanga chieftainship, the Vanyanga elders are seeking a redress of colonial and historical legacies and distortions. The Sanyanga elders believed that distortions started with the historical misrepresentations by Tendai Mutasa, the leader of the Mutasa people in Manicaland province, when he signed the Mutasa treaty with the British in 1890. According to that version Sanyanga people were declared to be always under Mutasa without their independent chieftaincy. This misrepresentation gave rise to a false claim that Sanyanga was subject to Mutasa

---

[200] There are letters written by Edward Sanyanga to various government departments stating his claims of resettlement and resuscitation of the Sanyanga Chieftainship.

when in actual fact, their chieftainship had pre-existed that of Mutasa in the region.[201] A return to their ancestral lands will not only be an act of restoration but will also cement the relationship they have had with their ancestral land. Fortunately for the Vanyanga, the symbolic relationship between them and their land was the only thing that colonial legacies failed to erase. They are always consulted whenever traditional rituals are preferred in the area. The recent Pungwe water project for Mutare city can be cited as an example. The Sanyangas were consulted after the construction company had encountered several mishaps during construction.[202] The Pungwe Falls are found in the Sanyanga area in Nyanga. According to Makoni, the current Nyanga DA, the Sanyanga had been allocated a small piece of land in their ancestral lands where they can build their house for rituals (*zumba*) and perform rituals.[203]

There are contested traditions and narratives in laying the claims of the Sanyanga people. Some traditions reveal that there was no Chief Nyanga before colonisation while the second view expresses that Sanyanga was a sub chief under Mutasa not a full chief.[204] Whilst it is true that Mutasa signed a treaty with the British, the late chief Mutasa disagreed with the representations made by the Vanyanga elders. One of the elders Barnabas Mutasa denied that Sanyanga even had a position of authority in the concerned area. According to him, 'the only position resembling authority that Sanyanga had was that of divine healing, he cured Chief Mutasa around the late nineteenth or beginning of the twentieth centuries.'[205] When asked about where the name Nyanga was derived from, he said that the name Nyanga meant the highest point in Mutasa's area (Nyanga ya Mutasa). On the other hand, the late Chief Mutasa was courteous in his approach and suggested that such a problem could only be solved by analysing the records of chiefs and headmen kept at the DA's office. Headman Muponda indicated that 'Sanyanga indeed pre-existed Mutasa but not in the capacity of a substantive chief at that time, he was only a sub chief under Chief Muponda. When the Mutasa dynasty came, they overpowered

---

[201] The fact that Sanyanga had pre-existed Mutasa was also supported by Headman Muponda who alleges that Sanyanga had been a subchief during the reign of the Mupondas before the coming of the Mutasa dynasty.

[202] E. Chipashu and B. Magadzike, A Historical Investigation of the Lost Sanyanga Chieftainship of Nyanga. District, Eastern Zimbabwe, p. 3

[203] Ibid.

[204] Ibid., p. 13.

[205] Ibid., p. 14.

Muponda and Sanyanga became a sub chief under Mutasa.'[206] Headman Muponda under Chief Mutasa also cited the colonial Land Apportionment Act as the document that had ended Sanyanga's headmanship status.

At the recommendation and instigation of chief Mutasa and his headmen, headman Mandeya was also interviewed. In his response, Mandeya is said to have reiterated the same facts that had been given by headman Muponda that 'Sanyanga existed before Mutasa but was under Muponda not as chief.'[207] Apart from restating that Sanyanga was under Mutasa, he also further indicated that the area under Muparutsa was previously not his. The Muparutsas moved into Sanyanga's area after having some disagreements with their clansmen at Bingaguru before the coming of colonialism. On the other hand, the late Chief Saunyama's wife gave a completely different version. She stated that the area under concern was under Saunyama's jurisdiction and also stated that she had never heard about a Sanyanga chieftainship as having existed before.[208]

The evidence gathered from Chiefs Katerere and Tangwena totally contradicted the views of Barnabas Mutasa, headmen Muponda and Mandeya. Chief Katerere indicated that Sanyanga had existed as a substantive chief before settler rule. In his own submissions, Chief Tangwena supported the fact that Sanyanga had existed as a substantive chief before colonialism.[209] He further stated that the interference of the Mutasa chieftainship in the affairs of other chieftainships was not only synonymous to Sanyanga's case. After the late national hero Chief Rekayi Tangwena left to join the liberation struggle in 1975, the colonial regime asked the then Chief Mutasa to preside over Tangwena's area.[210] The situation changed after the attainment of independence, and according to him, had the situation not changed in 1980, Mutasa could have continued governing his area.

The return to their ancestral lands and restoration of the chieftaincy for the Sanganga people appears to be the reason of their chieftaincy claims. The claims are made ironically at a time the government is occupied in land redistribution. It is a move meant

---

[206] See also, proceedings at the Chiefs Council for Mutasa district meeting held at DC Mutasa, 1 July 2011.
[207] Interview with Ester Chipashu Ethnographer National Museum and Monuments of Zimbabwe (NMNZ), 16 August 2014.
[208] Ibid.
[209] Chipashu and B. Magadzike, A Historical Investigation of the Lost Sanyanga Chieftainship of Nyanga District, Eastern Zimbabwe, p. 17.
[210] Interview with Chipashu, 14 September 2014.

to benefit the ordinary peasants previously affected by colonial land alienation policies. One can argue that these are desperate moves to gain land and material benefits that now goes by the office of chief. This argument is interesting when trying to understand why the claim is made when the government is recognising chiefs and land redistribution. The conflicting traditions raised in the Sanyanga narration serves to inform the broader debates surrounding chieftaincies where traditions are invented and twisted to justify the claim. What emerges as a fact is that, the Sanyanga people lost their lands but it is not clear whether they existed as outright chiefs.

3.4.4 Claims for the Restitution of the 'lost' Mutsago Chieftaincy (2013 to present) Manicaland Province

The Mutsago claim dates back to the eighteenth century developments in Bocha between Marange and the Mutsago houses. Colonial accounts argue that the Marange group emigrated from Seke area near Harare under the leadership of Mutetwatetwa together with several of his relatives in the eighteenth century.[211] The party come originally on a hunting trip. It found the area so much to it satisfaction that they decided to stay. During that time, the only inhabitants in the area were the Chipindirwe group.[212] The Chipindirwes were the autochthons of Bocha area but they were overpowered by the descendants of Mutetwatetwa who later identified themselves as the Maranges according to this version. At some point during the eighteenth century, a Shava (eland) group left Bocha and travelled to the north-west to settle in the land of Harava and founded the Seke dynasty. In Seke, there was a civil war that erupted and many people were displaced. As a result of the civil war, a group under the leadership of Ushanga made its way back to Bocha and settled in the southern parts of Bocha.[213] Beach suggests that 'the good lands in the northern part had been occupied by the Marange people, the group moved further south to Dema Mountain that was under Chipindirwi but soon there were intermarriages and the Ushange group got control of the southern part.'[214] The group under Ushanga become known as Mutsago, and there is a kinship between

---

[211] NAZ, S2929/1/8 Marange Delineation Report 1965.
[212] Beach., *A Zimbabwean Past: Shona dynastic histories and oral traditions,* Mambo Press, Gweru, 1994, p. 31.
[213] NAZ S2929/3/3 Goromonzi Delineation 1965 April-July.
[214] Ibid.

Mutsago and Marange.[215] These movements during the eighteenth century left some gaps that became a bone of contention later. The descendants of Ushanga claim that they first moved into Bocha area before Marange entered in, they subdued Chipindirwe and offered Marange a place to rule in the northern area of the territory.[216] Mutsago traditions submit that during the pre-colonial set up, Mutsago chose to settle in the southern parts of Bocha while Marange occupied the northern area with each house ruling itself but Marange was supposed to report to his elder brother Mutsago.[217]

Mutsago elders blame the colonial government for perpetrating the extinction of the Mutsago chieftaincy by supporting the Marange group. It is alleged that the early administration recognised Marange as the paramount chief of Bocha and reduced Mutsago to a sub chief under Marange. They argue that the moves by the early administration to place Mutsago under Marange were an invention.[218] It is alleged that Marange took advantage of his proximity to Mutare City where the NCs' office was located and registered as the ruler of the whole of Bocha. Yet, he was supposed to report to his elder brother Mutsago in the southern part of Bocha.[219] The other version states that Mutsago was initially recognised as chief. He was demoted to headman in 1951 because he refused to support colonial polices.[220] It is under these circumstances that the Mutsagos are claiming for the restitution of their chieftainship which was allegedly usurped by Marange.

The Mutsago chieftainship is an example to mention where there is controversy enshrined in pre-colonial and colonial politics and misunderstandings between Marange and the disgruntled Mutsago house. Traditions from both sides are not clear and are confusing to follow. Some of these narratives are invented or modified to justify the claim. Factually, both Mutsago and Marange people are not the autochthons of Bocha. However, they share the same Shava totem and have similar narratives and traditions about their origins. Colonial documents discredit Mutsago to be a chief but that he was a

---

[215] NAZ, S2929/1/8 Marange Delineation Report 1964.
[216] Interview John Mutsago 10 July 2013.
[217] Interview with Solomon Mutsago, 10 July 2013.
[218] Interview with Fungai Mutsago 11 July 2013.
[219] Interview with John Mutsago 14 September 2013.
[220] NAZ *Umbowo,* 12 October 1951.

headman under Marange.[221] Marange in his own right, decline the Mutsagos as rightful chiefs. The Mutsagos raised inflammatory allegations that Beach's collection, who was residing at chief Marange's quarters when he was doing his research, carries the same biased argument.[222] Mutsago oral traditions shift their focus to a number of landscape variables such as caves, trees and graves of allegedly Mutsago chiefs appointed by the Rozvi as sites of memory and evidence to advance that they were rulers of their lands before.[223] It is in these summarised circumstances that the Mutsagos are seeking restitution of what they believed to be their rightful destiny to be established as a separate chiefdom independent of Marange.

The Mutsago claims are interesting due to a number of reasons. Firstly, the claim was launched after the Fast Track Land Reform in 2000. Bocha area was not affected by land invasions because it lies in the arid area despite its close location to the Natural Region One. It is located in the leeward side of the Eastern Highlands rendering it prone to dry hot winds from the Indian Ocean causing it to be a semi-desert. Apart from that, during the colonial period, the area suffered from serious cases of land shortage. In 1938, the Umtali NC lamented that land given to Chief Marange and Zimunya was insufficient. He hoped that Marange would be able to cope with any over-spill, though parts of his original choice for the reserve had been cut up into farms.[224] The recent claims can be seen as an attempt to ease pressure on land in Bocha which is infertile by having a share in the political sphere of the country. This comes to play considering that chiefs receive allowances and enjoy some benefits such as siting in parliament that comes with a status. Another observation is that Mutsago area is located near diamond fields. This would entitle the Mutsagos to a share in the Community Share-Ownership Trust Schemes championed under the auspices of Indigenous Empowerment by the government. 'Community Share-Ownership Trusts were introduced as a panacea to rural poverty in the country.'[225] The government gave the prerogative for companies involved in diamond mining to build houses for chiefs in Bocha as part of ploughing back to the community.

---

[221] G. Bishi and E. Chipashu, A historical Analysis of the Mutsago Chieftainship: A Reconstruction, p. 11.
[222] Interview with Solomon Mutsago 17 September 2013.
[223] Interview with Herbert Mushunje 17 September 2013.
[224] NAZ S1542/L4 Native Commissioner Umtali to Chief Native Commissioner, 29 September 1938.
[225] M. Matsa and T. Masimbiti, 'The Community Share Ownership Trust Initiative as a Rural Development Solution in Zimbabwe: The Tongogara Experience in Shurugwi District', *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* Vol. 4, No. 8(1), 2014, p. 151.

Chief Marange emerged as the main beneficiary with his headmen such as Mukwada, Chiadzwa and the current Mutsago faction aligned to Marange ruling house.[226] Should Mutsago be recognised as chief in southern Bocha, Marange diamond fields will fall under his jurisdiction. More importantly, not far away from the Mutsago Business Shopping Center, there are rumors that there are deposits of alluvial diamonds.[227] This would place Mutsago's chiefdom in the heart of the diamond mining enterprise in Bocha. The running candidate for the chieftaincy, Fungai Mutsago, works for Mbada Diamond Company involved in diamond mining in Marange. It is one of the most paying jobs currently in the country; therefore, he can afford to run for chieftaincy by financing the process.

Circumstances surrounding the Mutsago-Marange disputes in Bocha illustrate major trajectories involving claims to chieftaincies. To say that Mutsago has or no legal rights for restitution is not part of discussion for this study, but understanding arguments surrounding the claims sheds more light on manipulations of traditions, narratives, and how colonial documents present or represent them. Marange enjoys the position of colonial archival documents' support of his position as chief of Bocha while Mutsago feels aggrieved with the same documents that reduced him to sub chief under Marange. It remains the business of the government to look into the matter with a critical approach considering that the Mutsagos have already submitted their full report to the Ministry of Local Government for the rectification process.

3.4.5 Seke Chieftaincy Succession Dispute (2013-2014 August) Mashonaland East Province

Another example of chieftainship dispute where colonial legacies are raised is the Seke chieftaincy. The matter was finally settled on the 1st of August 2014 when the Chimanikire faction won at the expense of other contending houses. The Seke case is interesting in that the Sekes share the same Eland (*Mhofu/Shava*) totem with the Mutsagos and the Maranges but the Sekes has a different praise name *Mvuramayi* while the Marange-Mutsago runs with the *Museyamwa Mhofuyemukono* praise name of the entire Eland/Shava people. The Mutsago migrated from Seke to Bocha in what seemed to be their second migration.[228] However, the bases of their claims to chieftainship are

---

[226] G. Bishi and E. Chipashu, A historical Analysis of the Mutsago Chieftainship: A Reconstruction, p. 15.
[227] Ibid.
[228] NAZ S2929/1/8 Marange Delineation Report 1965.

different although colonial legacies recur in both cases. In terms of location, the two chieftaincies are in different provinces, Marange-Mutsago is in Manicaland to the south-east while Seke is in Mashonaland East province close to Harare.

The Seke chieftaincy is rotated between two houses, the Sonono and Mosti respectively that are all descendants of Seke Mutema. In the 1850s, the succession system did not work perfectly as the succession to the Seke title came to be dominated by the house of Sonono. Beach argues that Motsi's house supplied only two candidates although the house was strong.[229] Nemasanga, the daughter of Seke, ousted the Mosti house from power with the aid of the Rozvi and Ndebele in the 1850s.[230] At the time, the Rozvi power was still dominant in the pre-colonial politics before the Ndebele eventually overtook the primacy after 1850. Rozvi leaders were crowning chiefs loyal to them. From the 1850s onwards, however, the Seke succession politics become unclear with the Ndebele and Rozvi playing a part in the selection of Seke rulers. This came to surface when Chawuruka was killed by the Rozvi after a plot was mastered by the Zhakata house and the Rozvi.[231] This act did not go well with the Chawuruka house because it was supposed to assume the throne. To mitigate this case, the Zhakata house paid ten cattle and a woman in compensation for the murder of Chawuruka.[232] The fine was paid by Mori who was the Seke (probably 1977 or 78, when the interviews were recorded).

The act set a bad precedence in the Seke chieftainship in the preceding years. According to Beach, the Zhakata house and three descendants of Sonono are said to have ruled up to the 1890s.[233] Donhorere, the son of Njiri, was ruling when the first Chimurenga war broke out in 1896. The Zhakata house convinced the administration that a new ruler was required and their verdict proved fruitful when the Kaguvi medium echoed the same judgement after the war.[234] In July 1897, a candidate from the Zhakata was advanced to the Seke title and Campbell was the NC who presided over the coronation.[235] However, the scenario changed so fast that one of the Donhorere candidatures was enthroned in

---

[229] D. N. Beach, *A Zimbabwean Past*, p. 97.
[230] NAZ S2929/3/3 Goromonzi Delineation Report.
[231] NAZ AOH/34, p.14.
[232] Ibid.
[233] Ibid., p. 98.
[234] E. Chipashu et al, A Survey of Seke Genealogy, 2013, p. 2.
[235] NAZ S2929/3/3 Goromonzi Delineation Report.

1910. The Seke succession system from the late nineteenth century has never been smooth. The dominant feature throughout its history shows that Sonono house supplied more than one candidate who assumed the Seke title than that of Motsi that is alleged to have provided only two candidates.

Until June 2005, the Zhakata house was ruling with one Mori Zhakata as Seke before he died and Smart Zhakata took the substantive role.[236] He was of the Sonono lineage. After the death of Mori, the Seke chieftaincy was supposed to be handed to the Motsi house that had ruled twice only. However, the question of who should assume the title became a battlefield with three main claimants rose to claim the mantle. This dispute was among the siblings of Chimanikire, Gandashang/Donhorere, Chuzu/Magwenzi, Tinhidzke and Mudyiwa.[237] Each house had their own arguments to support their claim and had complete moral virtues and patriarchal clemency to the Njiri house of Motsi lineage.

From this narration it is clear to note that pre-colonial politics of power perpetrated into the colonial era and beyond until the simmering tensions rose to surface right after 2000. The Motsi house instead of choosing the candidate for the throne to what was their rightful turn to rule; they could not peacefully provide the candidate as power struggles emerged over who was the eldest in the lineage of Mosti. The post-colonial government was then patient to have the Motsi house plea heard and was willing to reconcile the legacies. However, the succession tensions were resolved with the house of Chimanikire emerging victorious over all other contending half-brothers when he was enthroned on the 1st of August 2014.

Some claims to traditional leadership involved academics that enjoyed their expertise in archival research and marshalled out evidence to support their claims. For example, the Mubaiwa headmanship in Hwedza District where the former Minister of Education and Governor of Mashonaland Mr. Aeneas Chigwedere, was involved in the wrangle and won the case that eventually dragged to the court. It is reported that:

> Chigwedere…dug deep from the national archives records in a bid to convince the court he never wrested the headship as alleged by his relative. The Mashonaland east governor spent the whole day giving evidence at the high court…outlining the chronological order of events prior to him taking over as headmen of the

---

[236] G. Bishi et al, A Survey of Seke Genealogy, p. 5.
[237] Ibid.

Mubaiwa dynasty. Chigwedere…produced huge documentary evidence showing the headmenship of the Mubaiwa dynasty alternated between the Chipango and Munzverengi families. According to the family tree records obtained from the national archives compiled on October 15 1972, which were produced in court as exhibit, the headmanship falls within the Chigwedere family.[238]

He won the case following his academic prowess over the other contending candidate who could not match Chigwedere's academic knowledge of archival research. A similar case where one's intellect in understanding the colonial archive involves the Murinye chieftainship in Masvingo where the current chief used colonial archival research to advance a claim and won the case against his family members.[239] Chief Murinye submits that he was not aware that his family belonged to the royal lineage until he knew about the existence of the colonial archive. When he visited the archive, he was surprised to note that his family was also part of the royal lineage and he then pushed his candidature and was crowned.

3.5 Conclusion

Most post-colonial African governments were reluctant to work with chiefs because of the past colonial relationship between the institution of traditional leadership and colonial regimes. However, by the 1990s many Africa governments realised the importance of working with chiefs and promised to retain their authority. Chiefs made tremendous efforts to have their authority returned in Zimbabwe. They openly declared their frustration towards the government. At the same time, the government needed chiefs to win over support for the rural electorate in the face of stiff political competition from MDC. As a result of this combined interest, many people who felt previously disadvantaged by the colonial regime voiced their plight by claiming their lost chieftaincies. Some of the chieftaincies were allegedly lost during the pre-colonial era while others in the colonial period. To convince the government authorities, claimants need strong documented evidence supporting their claims. It is out of this need for evidence that claimants rely on colonial documents. The use of these records did not only start in the post-colonial era, however, during the colonial period families and individuals

---

[238] *Newsday* 22 March 2012.
[239] Interview with Chief Murinye, 17 August 2014.

relied on the same documents to advance their claims to chieftaincy too. In other words, there is a continuity of the use of the colonial archive to settle chieftaincy wrangles.

4. Documenting Chieftaincy Claims Reports in Present Day Zimbabwe: Some Methodological Concerns.

4.1 Introduction

A reading of the colonial archive reveals that there is an information gap in the colonial archive itself. This is because of the fact that from the 1960s to the present, there are relatively few documents as far as chiefs and headmen are concerned. As a result, researchers of chieftaincy or claimants to chieftaincy are faced with a frustrating challenge of limited sources. It is against this backdrop that this chapter first offers a critique of the colonial archive. Secondly, it analyses the sources that are used by hired historians to document claims. This looks beyond the colonial archive as it also explores the use of oral evidence at times to compliment or to counter colonial documents. Thirdly, the chapter discusses alternative sources within and without the NAZ repositories. It discusses their nature and usefulness as far as traditional leadership is concerned in contemporary Zimbabwe. While this chapter justifies the continued use of colonial archive by historians, claimants and Local Government officials, it also recommends the use of alternatives sources on chieftaincy.

4.2 The use of the Colonial Archive: A Critique

Archives and records are useful primary sources to researchers but readers should not accept what they find in the colonial record as the 'truth'. Archives and records are not dusty neutral documents kept somewhere in a national repository. Terry Cook and Joan M. Schwartz observed that 'archivists have long been viewed from outside the profession as 'hewers of wood and drawers of water,' as those who received records from their creators and passed them on to researchers.'[240] They further argue that 'inside the profession, archivists have perceived themselves as neutral, objective, impartial. From both perspectives, archivists and their materials seem to be the very antithesis of power.'[241] This means archives, records and archivists are symbols of power and are not

---

[240] Cook and Joan M. Schwartz, 'Archives, Records, and Power: The Making of Modern Memory', *Archival Science* Vol. 2, 2002, pp.1-2.
[241] *Ibid*.

innocent as they would want to appear. Cook and Schwartz further argue that archives 'are not passive storehouses of old stuff, but active sites where social power is negotiated, contested, confirmed. By extension, memory is not something found or collected in archives, but something that is made, and continually re-made.'[242] Regarding the creation of archives and records, Verne Harris revealed that archives 'do not act by themselves. They act through many conduits - the people who created them, the functionaries who managed them, the archivists who selected them for preservation and make them available for use, and the researchers who use them in constructing accounts of the past.'[243] National archival institutions do not only serve as sites of 'national memory', there is selected memories colonial governments wanted their subjects to remember and also what archivists chose to preserve and destroy. In that regard, Ann Laura Stoler encouraged:

> scholars to move from [seeing] archive as source to archive as subject. They should view archives not as sites of knowledge retrieval, but of knowledge production, as monuments of states as well as sites of state ethnography. This requires a sustained engagement with archives as cultural agents of "fact" production, of taxonomies in the making, and of state authority. What constitutes the archive, what form it takes, and what systems of classification and epistemology signal at specific times are (and reflect) critical features of colonial politics and state power.[244]

Post-colonial governments were caught up in that dilemma of wanting to preserve 'national memory' but the memory was shaped by colonial knowledge production politics. Philip Curtin observed that new African states as they emerging in the 1960s 'were interested in preserving their "national" history, and the only national history they have is often that of the colonial regime.'[245] This situation changed as nationalist governments produced their own archives at the same time as African History changed, with new themes and debates emerge. Although new archives were generated by post-colonial regimes, the role of state in producing selective documents for preservation should not be ruled out. Access regimes on many African archival institutions were

---

[242] Cook and Schwartz, 'Archives, Records, and Power: From (Postmodern) Theory to (Archival) Performance', *Archival Science* Vol. 2, 2002, p. 172.
[243] Verne Harris, 'The Archival Sliver: Power, Memory, and Archives in South Africa', *Archival Science* Vol. 2, 2002, p. 65.
[244] Ann Laura Stoler, 'Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance', *Archival Science* Vol. 2, 2002, p. 87.
[245] P. D. Curtin, 'The Archives of Tropical Africa: A Reconnaissance', *Journal of African History*, Vol. 1, No. 1 1960, p. 130.

changed upon the attainment of independence but that does not entail liberalisation or democratisation of the archival documents themselves.

Premish Lalu offers a critique of the colonial archive covering the killing of Hintsa, the Xhosa King, by the British forces in 1835 although colonial rule in Africa was not homogeneous. He argues that 'the historian trying to understand the killing is confronted with officialdom of the archive, shortcomings and limitations of official narratives.'[246] He further observes that 'the unexpected encounter between the colonial forces and the colonised populations shaped what colonial authorities created as narratives of the vanquished. Resistance of indigenous people to colonial encounters had far-reaching consequences on how memory was to be built by colonial officials on the very same acts of either resistance or conflicts.'[247] In essence, colonial resistance shaped how events, narratives or traditions were to be suppressed, resuscitated and renewed over time. However, not all archival documents were a product of resistance to colonial encroachment since settler rule was never homogenous in colonial societies.

It is critical to appreciate circumstances surrounding the production of archival files when using them. In colonial Zimbabwe, as observed in chapter two, colonial officials responsible for their production had agendas other than producing histories. They were concerned with labour mobilisation, collection of taxes and how best to control their subjects and the best way was to gather knowledge about "natives".[248] Interestingly, their collections are used not only for academic research purposes; rather they are consulted to extract or counter colonial accounts of the administration on chieftaincy. In some instances, the colonial archive has gaps where certain chiefdoms are not properly covered or not even recorded at all. In his search for the Chishanga history, Mazarire faced a difficult task of locating it in the colonial archive. Because of the fluid nature of Chishanga 'it failed to fit specific descriptions that these early administrators considered to be "states", "tribes" or "chieftaincies". It therefore escaped their attention and was

---

[246] P. Lalu, *The deaths of Hintsa: Post-apartheid South Africa and the Shape of Recurring Pasts*, p. 32.
[247] *Ibid.*
[248] See Ranger, 'The Mobilization of Labour and the Production of Knowledge' pp. 507-524; Beach, "NADA" and Mafohla: Antiquarianism in Rhodesia and Zimbabwe with Special Reference to the Work of F.W.T. Posselt', pp. 1-11; Jeater, 'Speaking like a Native: Vernacular Languages and the State in Southern Rhodesia, 1890-1935', pp. 449-468; Worby, 'Maps, Names, and Ethnic Games: The Epistemology and Iconography of Colonial Power in North-western', pp. 371-392.

not readily available in this public record'.[249] This is one of the examples where researchers failed to locate specific files on chieftaincies. Arguably, the colonial archive does not offer a true representation of 'national' history or fit the definition of a 'national memory' site. According to Gwangwawa, who identified himself as the spirit medium of the Rozvi, 'people who were interviewed during the delineation process were biased; some of them were chiefs who supported the colonial regime.'[250] Julian Maodza, who claims to be a descendent of Nehanda, argues that 'delineation reports are corrupt and contain nothing because they were documented by Europeans.'[251] Fungai Mutsago, a leading member of the Mutsago family fighting for the resuscitation of their 'lost' chieftaincy, argues that 'in some cases, names are misspelt and some are even missing in the delineation reports especially the Marange delineation report deliberately reduces the Mutsago chieftaincy to a headmenship and names are not in order'.[252]

Reading the colonial archive provides insights into Zimbabwe's administrative history. Firstly, chiefly and headmen archival files produced during company and settler rule in Zimbabwe inform the reader about the early structure and nature of colonial officials as it grappled with 'native' administration. Archival documents on chiefs and headmen were a product of the top-down knowledge production of the colonial society with chiefs occupying the lower level. Arguably, African agency in the processes involving archival generation was not given full attention it deserved by the NCs. When knowledge on chiefs and headmen was required colonial officials collected traditions, customs and beliefs over their conquered subjects for the government. However, this study is of the opinion that vanquished African subjects were not passive in the production of their histories. Instead, those who were in advantaged positions especially chiefs and headmen, used their political and social standing in a colonial economy to submit narratives that fitted their goals.

Some of colonial documents are not accurate in presenting general histories of chieftaincies owing to the way they were generated by settler officials. As Beach observed, 'when it comes to quotations from colonial officials obsessed with conspiracies

---

[249] Mazarire, 'Reading 'Chishanga' in The Colonial Archive: Some Issues of Process And Method', p. 45.
[250] Interview with Gwangwawa, 20 August 2014.
[251] Interview with J. Maodza, 2 September 2014.
[252] Interview with F. Mutsago, 5 July 2013.

and 'superstition', there is a danger that the author may get too close to the evidence and unconsciously accept basic assumptions that should have been questioned.'[253] Some archival documents on traditional leaders have inconsistencies and inaccuracies that are expected. For example, in the Schedule of Chiefs and Headmen, some dates are estimates, since some records used in its compilation do not have accurate dates. The question of spellings of names also posed a problem the author had to deal with as he explains later in the schedule.[254] Some chiefs and headmen are not recorded since it was developed from chiefs' registers, minute books, chiefs and headmen files, NC's files among other archival documents which are not all consistent.[255] The time frame covers the periods between 1890 and 1985. This observation confirms the gap in the colonial archive from the 1960s explained above; doing research on chieftainships in Zimbabwe is affected by limited archival material on this period. The attainment of independence did not directly translate to the decolonisation of the archive. It continues to stand as a symbol of colonial prejudice of the brutal colonial past in written canonical texts. The use of such records requires a critical attention and researchers must read colonial records and archives against the grain by critically using archival documents.

4.3 Writing Claims Reports: Sources

Many claimants' reports discussed in chapter three are assembled by hired historians, ethnographers and archaeologists for subsequent Ministry of Local Government consideration.[256] Research teams rely on oral and archival sources especially delineation reports in order to document claims reports. At the beginning of each report, the research team begins by briefly explaining sources used in producing the final document for their clients. A closer look at the sources used in compiling these documents reveals that the teams relied on archival document and oral interviews, as well as academic publications by historians. For example, in the Sanyanga report, the team noted that 'to kick start the research program, a tentative list of would be oral informants and key

---

[253] Beach, *War and Politics in Zimbabwe 1840-1900*, Mambo, Gweru, 1986, p. 120.

[254] NAZ, MS 746 Schedule of chiefs and headmen Zimbabwe 12 December 1985.

[255] Mazarire, 'Reading 'Chishanga' in the Colonial Archive: Some Issues of Process and Method', p. 45. The author expressed his dismay of over failing to locate Chishanga in the colonial archive.

[256] Ester Chipashu Bachelor of Arts Honours Degree in History (UZ), MA Heritage Studies (UZ), Blessed Magadzike MA History (University of Western Cape, South Africa).

stakeholders were drawn up.'[257] In the Sanganga case, most of the oral interviews were conducted with local chiefs and headmen in the Nyanga area. To support oral evidence, the research team referred to archival documents pertaining to the area kept at the NAZ, the Africa University Library in Mutare, as well as at the Museum of Human Sciences Library in Harare.[258] *NADA* articles on chieftaincies, totems and related traditional leadership topics were heavily used as well.[259] To augment *NADA* articles and the delineation report, academic publications of historians such as S.I.G Mudenge's *A Political History of Munhumutapa*,[260] Beach' *Zimbabwean Past*[261] and Ranger's *Peasant Consciousness*[262] were consulted by the research team. However, these texts were not used critically; instead, they are used to support a claim if the author makes reference to a particular chieftaincy. Lastly, 'in order to augment these two research methodologies and to have a better understanding of the area under discussion, site visits were also conducted in specific areas.'[263] Visiting these places served to validate the claim by inserting pictures of important cultural sites such as burial caves as evidence showing that Sanyangas were once chiefs in their own right.

As in the Sanganga claims report, the authors relied on archival material on chieftaincies and oral interviews carried out in Guruve with senior Chimbwerere elders in order to extract evidence and to probe the history and genealogy of the Soko-Chidziwo clan.[264] Archival documents used include Sipolilo (Guruve) and Sinoia (Chinhoyi) delineation reports as well as NC's reports in the NAZ.[265] They draw upon because they relate to the origins of the Chidziva/Chimbwerere chieftaincy and other chieftaincies found in these districts. These archives and colonial publications were used to establish the Chidzivo

---

[257] A Historical Investigation of the Lost Sanyanga Chieftainship of Nyanga District, Eastern Zimbabwe, p. 4.
[258] Ibid, p. 5.
[259] See for example J. Machiwenyika, 'A History and customs of the Manyika people', *NADA*, Volume XI, 1976, p 305, L Cripps, 'The Umtasa Treaty: A study in the empire building and other things', *NADA* ,1933, p 93; NAZ S2929/1/8 Umtali delineation report 1964.
[260] S. I. G. Mudenge, *A Political History of Munhumutapa c. 1400-1902*, Zimbabwe Publishing House, Harare, 1988.
[261] Beach, *A Zimbabwean past: Shona dynastic histories and oral traditions*, Mambo Press, Gweru, 1994.
[262] Ranger, *Peasant Consciousness and Guerrilla War in Zimbabwe: A Comparative Study*, London, James Currey, 1985.
[263] Sanganga report, p. 5.
[264] Ibid., p. 2
[265] NAZ S2929/2/7 1965 Sipolilo District Ministry of Internal Affairs, S2929/2/6 1961 Sinoia District Report on the Chirau Chieftainship and Community: Zvimba TTL (Tribal Trust Land), Posselt F.W.T *A Survey of Native Tribes of Southern Rhodesia*, Salisbury, Government of Southern Rhodesia, 1927.

people as a documented chiefdom. Similarly, in the Musaigwa report, the research team claims that interviews were carried out in the Chivi district of Masvingo Province, under Chief Chivi. The authors briefly state that 'archival and oral and structured interviews were carried out in order to probe the history and genealogy of the Kuvhirimara clan.'[266] Most of the narratives were derived from the Chivi and Victoria (Masvingo) delineation reports where the headmanship is located.

In the Seke claims report, where this researcher participated as one of the research team, the team 'conducted oral interviews in Seke communal lands with various families interested in the conflict that surrounded the chieftaincy and relied on archival research.'[267] Archival materials on chieftainships in Zimbabwe were extensively used during the research and a lot was acquired from colonial records such as delineation reports, oral histories and NCs' reports from the NAZ in Harare.'[268] In this report, most of the narratives were derived from the Goromonzi delineation report and some Oral History files, making it the first report where such files were used. As in the Seke case, the researcher was also involved in the documentation of the Mutsago claims report together with two other colleagues.[269] As in other reports, the research team relied on oral interviews and archival documents such as the Marange, Goromonzi and Umtali delineation reports.[270] Delineation reports describe the origins of Mutsago and their pre-colonial settlement in Bocha area and provided evidence for their original territorial boundaries. The Goromonzi delineation report was used for cross-reference because of the kinship relationship between Seke and Mutsago people. NC Umtali reports were also used to understand the colonial land problems in Bocha area.[271]

An important observation to take into consideration is the fact that almost all the claims reports discussed were compiled by the same people. As a result, it is difficult to anticipate a different methodology used. In most cases, research teams would use the

---

[266] Chipashu, An inquiry into the Kuvhirimara Headman ship of Dziva Musaigwa Dynasty in Chivi District of Masvingo: A historical Rejoinder, early 1900 to 2011, p. 1.
[267] G. Bishi *et al*, A Survey of Seke Chieftainship Genealogy, p. 1.
[268] NAZ S2929/3/1 Goromonzi delineation report April –July1965; MS746 Schedule of Chiefs and Headmen 1985; AOH/5, AOH/35, AOH/18, AOH/9, AOH/34; N1/2/1-4 Chiefs and Headmen, Marandellas, see also A3/18/18/13, Joseph Savanhu, 'The Waharava History' *NADA*, No 3, Salisbury, 1925, p. 59.
[269] The team included Chipashu and Bishi BA. Hons History (Archivist at NAZ) at the time of writing.
[270] NAZ S2929/1/8 Marange Delineation reports, S2929/3/1 Goromonzi, MS756 Schedule of Chiefs and Headmen 1985, A3/18/18/1 Chiefs and Headmen 1915.
[271] NAZ S1542/L4 Native Commissioner Umtali to Chief Native Commissioner, 29 September 1938.

previous experience to document a different report. This explains why all five claims reports have the same methodologies used and often written in the same language and expression. In other words, there is cutting and pasting of methodological sections from one claims report to another. Research teams use one case study as the model where all other claims reports draw upon. Usually this compromises the quality and outcomes of claims reports. What differentiates these claims reports are different names of chieftaincies and circumstances which each claim is made.

Another methodological point to mention is the fact that the key source used in writing claims reports are the delineation reports. This is because of the information they contain about chieftaincy boundaries, genealogies, family trees and general histories. They were used to extract evidence of some debates over the pre-colonial and colonial developments among African chiefdoms or colonial subjects. At the end of each report an appendix is attached with photocopied archival documents as proof that thorough research was done and also for Ministry of Local Government officials for reference. In other words, submitting a claims document without archival reference may be taken as an indication that the report was less thoroughly researched. This also helps them also to know the colonial position regarding the concerned chieftaincy, as delineation reports usually describe the problems concerning each chieftaincy.[272] For example, the Utali delineation report explains the dispute between Mutsago and Marange houses in Bocha. As explained in chapter two, delineation reports cover genealogies, family trees and boundaries of chieftaincies making them more useful. This explains why delineation reports are the most sought after archival documents despite the fact that they were last generated in the 1960s. Apart from using archival documents and oral interviews, claims reports include photographs of the sacred places visited during the fieldwork.[273] At times, artifacts and relics were used to justify the claim that chieftaincies under consideration existed in the pre-colonial times.

Most of the archival colonial documents used in documenting claims reports were not critically analysed and interrogated. There is continuity in duplicating colonial documents

---

[272] NAZ S2929/1/8 Umtali delineation report 1964.
[273] Chipashu, A historical investigation into the Soko-Chidziwo clan, pp. 7-11.

uncritically, a practice that Beach defined as 'antiquarianism.'[274] In some cases it is difficult to reconcile archival documents and oral interviews collected. This emerged in those cases where a written colonial document contradicts claimants' cases. Some hired historians find it difficult to distance themselves from the persuasive narratives of colonial records. At times, the client's history as presented in the colonial documents will not be supporting the clients' claim such as in the case of Mutsago. The delineation report places Mutsago as a headman under chief Marange.[275] This is contrary to the claims by Mutsago elders who believe that they were chiefs and in fact Marange was under control of Mutsago in the pre-colonial times. Moreover, Beach supported the same observation; his analysis was vehemently rejected by some of the Mutsago elders who argue 'that he falsified their history and alleged that when he did his fieldwork he was residing at chief Marange.'[276] In such circumstances, the research team drew upon oral sources to produce a version of the clients' counter narrative or may even 'invent' a preferable narrative to justify the claimant's argument.[277] Such developments will lead to evidence being excluded simply because it does not fit the narrative which the client wishes to have established. Faced with such conflicting narratives, it became problematic to reach a justifiable conclusion.

The Ministry of Local Government also wants proof of archival research although there are mixed feelings to the position of archival files. The Assistant District Administrator of Buhera District, Mr. Zidya, stated that 'colonial documents at times help to give a starting point but they are not always accurate. It is difficult to abandon them completely. So at times we have to rely on oral traditions which are equally problematic too.'[278] These are some of the methodological problems historians face when they document claims reports. At the end, a compromised conclusion favouring the client is inevitable to reach.

In the Seke case, contracted historians used Oral History files at the NAZ narrowly. Most of the consulted OH files were recorded in the 1970s by the then Oral Historian covering

---

[274] Beach, *War and Politics in Zimbabwe 1840-1900*, p. 120.
[275] NZ S2929/1/8 Umtali Delineation report 1964.
[276] Interview with Solomon Mutsago, 17 September 2013.
[277] There is one chieftaincy, name withheld for security reasons, myself and a colleague, Victor Gwande, we were strictly told to supress anything not that did not support our clients' claim. The claim involved 'big' names in the mainstream politics of Zimbabwe.
[278] Interview with Mr. Zidya, 16 September 2014.

the Seke chieftaincy. These files were useful in providing detailed narratives about the Seke people, their history of origin and genealogy. They were used to supplement and at times they were disputing the narratives in the delineation report especially on the origins of the Seke people and succession politics since pre-colonial times. OH files helped greatly to cover the period after the 1960s which the delineation report did not cover. However, OH has limitations in chronology of events. Some of the Seke people disputed them arguing that 'OH falsified the Seke history and greatly misplaced some of the important facts.'[279] Again the research team faced a similar challenge of reconciling conflicting oral traditions in the archive and those the team gathered. This methodological challenge was worsened because of narrow archival documents historians relied on when documenting claims reports. Generally there is limited archival material on traditional leadership institution in the public archives at the NAZ of the period after 1960s.

As noted above, chieftaincy claims reports turned to oral interviews to augment colonial documents. Yet, most of the archival documents on chiefs and headmen, especially delineation reports, were themselves compiled from oral traditions recorded and transcribed into written documents. Gleaning elements of fact in oral testimonies and traditions helps historians to reconstruct the past. In documenting the reports, most of the interviewed elderly people were selected by the claimants themselves.[280] This greatly compromised the quality of the final outcome report because most of the people interviewed usually supported the claimant's argument. Because of factionalism among competing houses, oral traditions and oral histories usually contradict each other. This predicament befalls the Seke chieftainship where several sub houses gave different narratives each supporting their claim.

Authors of many claims reports are seemingly caught up in the 'myth' of the archive. Archives have all the primary evidence although they complement with photographs and images of sites visited. This follows the argument by Cook and Schwartz who submits that 'documents are viewed as records of "simple truth."[281] The bulk of the hired historians,

---

[279] These views were expressed by the Gandashangs house that lost to Chimanikire faction that was enthroned on the 1st of August 2014.
[280] In most cases we relied on interviewees directed to us by our clients.
[281] Cook and Schwartz, 'Records of Simple Truth and Precision': Photography, Archives, and the

ethnographers and archaeologists are 'ardent' and 'faithful disciples' of a rigid empiricist archival tradition.[282] They are graduate products of the University of Zimbabwe specifically from History Department where they did their Honours and Masters Degrees based on empirical archival and oral research.[283] When their services are required, they rush to the NAZ to familiar sources they have known since their college days when they were doing their dissertations or assignments.

4.4 Alternative Sources on Chieftaincy in Zimbabwe, their Nature and Usefulness

Other than drawing primary evidence to justify chieftaincy claims from canonical colonial documents and oral traditions from senior members of the families there are other alternative sources within and without archive. These sources include manuscripts and oral histories. Some of the materials referred to in this section are under the possession of the author unless otherwise specified. The use and availability of these sources on the subject of chieftaincy should change the way people understand this institution. The nature of the sources shall be explained, showing that chieftaincy institution has many dynamics. These sources highlight not only traditional leadership and contemporary issues, but also cover national problems and challenges facing the country at large since independence. However, this does not mean they all fit in the definition of the colonial archive. Most importantly, these sources cover the period since 1960s to present bridging the information gap in the colonial archive. Usually, there are limited sources of this period in the colonial archive.

4.4.1 Provincial Executive Reports (PER/5) Files

As has been briefly stated in chapter two, PER/5 files are different to other records on chieftaincy at the NAZ. They are well researched and elaborate showing how the state tried to understand chieftaincy during the last stages of colonial rule. G. C. Mazarire observed that 'Beach used them in the 1970s working in Chibi, Chilimanzi, Charter and Hartley districts with a "tribal" thrust influenced by the delineation reports, *NADA* and

---

Illusion of Control', *Archivaria,* 50, Fall 2000, pp. 1-40.

[282] I am one product of the University of Zimbabwe History Department who strongly believed in archival research because I was taught about the importance of archives.

[283] For example Chipashu Bachelor of Arts Honours Degree in History (UZ), MA Heritage Studies (UZ), B. Magadzike MA History (University of Western Cape, South Africa), G. Bishi, Bachelor of Arts Hons History (UZ).

the PER/5 chiefs' files that had given him this political slant.'[284] At the time he was working for the Internal Affairs ministry gathering oral traditions among Shona communities using a 'tribal' approach that led eventually to the introduction of dynastic histories. Dynastic histories however assumed that all Shona communities were in one way or another organised and settled in dynasty which was not always the case among Shona communities. His involvement with the Internal Affairs Ministry allowed him the privilege to use PER/5 files and he got political favours to do research for the government giving him a 'political slant'. His Ministry of Internal Affairs project of the 1970s culminated in the writing of *The Shona and Zimbabwe 900-1850.* [285] Mazarire further states that 'part of the space in the publication is dedicated to illustrating the mechanics of dodging the Ministry of Internal Affairs which he saw as impractical and ineffective to a regime so much convinced that African rule will never come in a thousand years and so desperate for information of the sort Beach would so expertly provide.'[286] Considering that Beach was working for the Internal Affairs Ministry he had early access to the PER/5 chiefs' files but the number of researchers privy to these files has generally remained small. These files were under the closure period and they were due for public access by 1985. However because of the financial limitations at the NAZ, it was difficult to scan these documents housed in various district offices of the country.

When Ranger accessed them in 1981, he had special permission from the Ministry of Local Government. He observed that 'these files – far fatter than any that had survived from an earlier period in the National Archives – covered the period 1960 to 1980, with a scattering of earlier material.'[287] He continued; 'they were full of elaborately researched precolonial histories of the chiefdoms…they were also full of equally elaborate chiefly genealogies, often covering a dozen or so pages.'[288] Ranger summarises that 'it was piquant to find such rich material for these particular decades of interaction between administrators and chiefs. For one thing they were certainly the last two decades of Rhodesian "native" administration and, almost certainly, the last two decades of

---

[284] G. C. Mazarire, 'Oral Traditions as Heritage: The Historiography of Oral Historical Research on the Shona Communities of Zimbabwe. Some Methodological Concerns', *Historia*, 47 (2), November 2002, p. 438.
[285] *Ibid.*, 439.
[286] *Ibid.*
[287] Ranger, 'Tradition and Travesty: Chiefs and The Administration in Makoni District, Zimbabwe, 1960-1980', *Journal of the International African Institute*, Vol. 52, No. 3, 1982, p. 20.
[288] *Ibid.*

chiefship as a significant institution.'[289] In other words, these files reveal chieftaincy as a dynamic institution and the relationship between chiefs and administrators in Makoni. The most striking feature about these files is that they cover the period between 1960 and 1980s, a period where there are less significant archival records at the NAZ serve some selected articles in *NADA*s.

For Ranger, these documents were secondary to, and dependent upon, the relationship which the files really documented.[290] Another scholar who made reference to these files was Jocelyn Alexander in her 2006 publication *The Unsettled Land*. Besides relying on colonial records at the NAZ, she traced officials' interactions with African leaders through reports of political meetings, records of councils, and chiefs' and headmen's meetings, some of which she found within district offices of the Ministry of Local Government.[291] She further informs her readers that post-independence debates among officials and local leaders from district records regarding chieftaincy and the minutes of council, district development committee, squatter control committee and other meetings were useful to her in understanding state politics on land and chieftaincy since 1890.[292] These are some of the few academics who were able to realise the usefulness of the records held in district offices that were not accessible to the public. They used their research permits to access these files considering that they were still under the Ministry of Local Government that had not yet deposited at the NAZ. Most importantly, PER/5 files cover interesting issues such as resuscitations of chieftaincies for example the Musara chieftaincy in Masvingo.[293] The Musara people were launching a claim to their abolished chieftaincy in the 1930s when their land was divided into commercial farms by the government of the day. They sought recognition from the government in the 1970s but were told that there was no land for them to be settled on. Upon the attainment of

---

[289] *Ibid.*

[290] *Ibid.*, p. 20.

[291] J. Alexander, *The Unsettled Land: State-making and the Politics of Land in Zimbabwe 1893-2003*, Oxford, James Currey, 2006, p. 126.

[292] *Ibid.*, p. 14, see also PER5/18/82 Resettlement of Makumbe people, the Settlement Officer to the Ministry of Local Government, 7 April 1982, PER5/14/82 Claim to chieftainship/Headman Gurajena, Undersecretary for Development to the Ministry of Local Government, 21 September 1982, PER5/28/82 Chiefs and Headmen Functions, circular by J. D. White, for Secretary for Local Government and Town Planning to all District Administrators, 23 November 1982.

[293] See NAZ PER5/12/81 Musara Chieftainship, letter by to the Ministry of Local Government by the Under Secretary Victoria district, 22 October 1981.

independence they revived their claim again in the early 1980s. It was later recognised as a headmanship but was upgraded to chieftaincy in 2014 amidst contradictions and fierce criticism from the nearby chiefs whose land was parcelled to accommodate the new Musara chieftaincy in Masvingo.[294]

The NAZ has made strenuous efforts to bring the documents from the DAs' offices covering few chieftaincies for researchers as part of its archival collection. Notable to the collection are Hwedza, Mutoko districts of Mashonaland Province, Gurajena in Masvingo and Lupane in Matabeleland respectively. Tribute should be paid to the tireless efforts of some individual users of the archives such as Dr. G. C. Mazarire who secured funds to scan these documents for the NAZ. But much still remains to be done in collecting such useful information on the part of the NAZ. It must be mentioned that at this early stage not much has been brought to the public archive partly due to the access regimes at the NAZ that is, the 25 years closure of records after creation before being released to the Public Archives for users to access. The NAZ itself also has limited resources for scanning PER/5 documents held in various DA's offices across the country dealing with chiefs and land related issues. Researchers must apply for permission to consult documents under the custody of the DA's offices.

4.4.2 Oral History Collection (OH)

The development of the oral history collection at NAZ dates back to the 1970s when the section was established.[295] This makes some of the OH files to fit the definition of the colonial archive because they were produced by the settler regime as it tried to understand African people for its purposes. Some of the information collected includes chieftaincies oral traditions such as Seke, Nyashanu, Makumbe, Hwata, Svosve, Nembudziya among others. It was an initiative to collect African histories that were not documented because most of the archival documents in the public archives were generated by the government and other oral histories were of white Rhodesians. Kenneth Manungo, one time the Chief Archivist at Oral History at the NAZ in the early

---

[294] *The Mirror*, 7 August 2014.
[295] See K. D. Manungo, 'Oral History As Captured By The National Archives of Zimbabwe over the Years', in *National Archives 75@30: 75 Years of Archiving Excellence at the National Archives of Zimbabwe*, 2012, pp. 64-67.

1980s, recalls how he was responsible for collecting African oral histories especially in the rural communities.[296] The programme was initially started by the government in the late 1970s because it was saying, in the words of Manungo 'we don't know much about Africans so let's get more ideas; let's get more of their experiences too.'[297] Dawson Munjeri was the first Oral Historian working for the NAZ in the 1970s who started the collection of African histories, traditions and customs and interviewed other leading people in the communities such as chiefs and political leaders. Most of the African Oral History files (AOH) constitute interviews conducted with various chiefs and some elderly people. After independence the African prefix was dropped to Oral Histories (OH) as the former had racial underpinning remarks. Oral histories are available in Shona and English languages while those recorded in Matabeleland are in Ndebele and are accessible at the Bulawayo NAZ station.[298]

Currently the section is gathering various histories of individuals or clans covering many subjects of the history of Zimbabwe. These include the liberation struggle oral histories which the institution collected in association with the University of Zimbabwe History Department under the theme 'capturing a fading national memory' started after 2000. The project aimed at collecting oral histories of people who participated during the liberation struggle. Some of the recorded oral histories and oral traditions cover many aspects of Shona and Ndebele customs, chieftaincy succession systems, colonial experiences and changes. OH files also cover several subjects such as the Iron Age, first Chimurenga, colonial rule, and colonial land policies and how influential people interviewed expressed their opinions about the Rhodesian days. Some discusses chieftaincy matters showing how the institution changed over time. Should OH be used by claimants of chieftaincy and historians, claims reports would explore more dynamics the institution passed rather than producing a narrow version of who should rule and not. It will also save time by providing a starting point on any chieftaincy inquiry since a number of chiefdoms were covered. Most importantly, OH files are transcribed into English and Shona. They are also found in audio-visual format to see and hear the original

---

[296] K. Manungo and S. Peet, 'We Have a Tradition of Story-Telling': Oral History in Zimbabwe, *Oral History*, Vol. 16, No. 2, 1988, p. 69.
[297] *Ibid.*, p. 68.
[298] Information on these files is found at the NAZ Public Inventory of Public Records.

version of the interview. This could be useful to researchers who would want to listen to the original tape. The availability of OH at the NAZ means that the way people understand chieftaincy should shift and new approaches made to the study of the subject exploring different themes in the contemporary Zimbabwe.

Despite the relevance of OH material, the section is not popular with users or members of the public researching on chieftainships. Responding to a question on who uses OH at NAZ, Manungo responded that 'the first group, I would say, are the University students from the History Department doing dissertations. Group number two, I would say, is our overseas researchers.'[299] This suggests that oral histories at the NAZ are underutilised by non-academic researchers despite their usefulness. The same sentiments were reiterated by the current Oral Historian when she lamented that 'the section is not popular with researchers despite how much we try our best to advertise our collections to researchers.'[300] The usual form of advertising OHs to users at the NAZ is by way of a written notice at the catalogue area. Usually researchers fail to see such notices or read because they are used to catalogue cards and inventories to locate files they want making recently acquired or processed files less visible. It is unfortunate that many users are not aware of this section at the NAZ because the manner in which they are publicised is not effective enough to attract the attention of potential users. This problem emanates from the fact that the most sought after files relate to the 1960s only.

4.4.3 URHD Texts – University of Rhodesia History Department Texts, David Beach Manuscripts (part of Oral Histories Collections at the NAZ)

This collection at the NAZ complements the Oral Histories collection covering several chieftainships and headmenships in Zimbabwe. They were generated in the late 1970s through the effort of David Beach and his group of Honours students during the summer vacation when he tasked them to collect oral histories that he felt had not yet been captured.[301] Because they were collected towards the end of settler regime, they fit also the definition of the colonial archive. They were deposited at the NAZ after Beach's death in 1999. They cover a number of recorded oral histories and traditions of various

---

[299] *Ibid.*, p. 72.
[300] Interview with R. Karadzandima, 19 August 2014.
[301] NAZ MS1212/1-4 URHD Text 1978.

chieftaincies and headmenships in Zimbabwe. They are in bound volumes and are transcribed in Shona and English. This makes them accessible and usable by a number of people. However, these manuscripts are not popular with researchers. From looking at the sources consulted by hired historians to document narratives of the above claimants, it appears that they are not referenced or mentioned but it is not clear if academics have used them. The other aspect is that these manuscripts are only accessioned in the inventory of archivists at the Research Section and not the inventory of Public Archives at the research desk making them inaccessible to researchers. They need to be reaccessioned to a format that users will access them in the public Historical Manuscripts Inventory.[302]

Given that these manuscripts can be accessed upon request, researchers' work can be made easier. The unfortunate shortcoming is that the existence of these manuscripts to the public as sources of reference is limited to those who know their existence. The bulk of historians of chieftainship are not aware that there is such a collection of manuscripts at the NAZ for their consultation and use. The use of these manuscripts will help researchers to know about how chieftaincy changed from the Iron Age, the relations between the Shona and Ndebele, how chieftaincy changed with the coming of colonialism. Some of the themes dealt with in the manuscripts cover hunting activities of Frederick Selous and his relationship with African chiefs. This information will help researchers to understand early colonial experiences as imagined by Africans and how society changed due to colonialism. Should these manuscripts made available to the public; it is possible to argue that our understanding of chieftaincy will shift from seeing the institution as a mere repository of tradition. The institution changed over time due to internal and external political and economic developments. The manuscripts discusses succession politics among chieftaincies that were a product of internal political tensions not necessarily the exhausted view that colonialism changed chieftaincy institution. They discuss the Ndebele activities in the 1840s and the extent of their alleged raids on the Zimbabwean plateau in the pre-colonial era. Some of the themes explored include how the Rozvi exercised their authority among other Shona communities that extended as far as the Manyika area. Apart from that, they focus on how the use of Portuguese guns

---

[302] See Inventory of Historical Manuscripts at Research Section at the NAZ.

changed pre-colonial power politics among the Shona communities especially in the eastern part of the country. The availability of these manuscripts on the pre-colonial history of Zimbabwe covering themes mentioned above will enrich our understanding of chieftaincy and other themes in general. However useful these manuscripts are, one should also consider that these interviews were recorded by students at times without supervision.

4.4.4 Collection on Spirit Mediums and Chiefs

These manuscripts are in the custody of Douglas Kunaka, secretary of The Traditional Leadership and Spirit Mediums Committee (TLSMC) in conjunction with the Office of the President and Cabinet (OPC). They work as a team of five representatives composed of comrades Tvetu, Magaya, Kunaka, Mugoni and Maodza.[303] They were given the task of looking into spirit mediums and traditional leadership issues. They advise the President on such matters. In the process of dealing with spirit mediums and traditional leaders, the team has generated important documents covering their activities, minutes of meetings, recommendations to the President from spirit mediums in the country and outside, especially those in Mozambique.[304] There is a strong belief that a number of spirit mediums moved to Mozambique during the liberation struggle but they did not return to Zimbabwe after independence. They were supposed to be brought back through a national ceremony to welcome them back home and also informing the spirit world that the country was liberated *kutura nyika*.[305] These manuscripts are accessed upon request from the people concerned dealing with spirit mediums, culture and traditional leadership mentioned above. The period of their production is quite interesting. They were all generated after the year 2000, meaning they span the information gap in the colonial archive. They are mainly in the form of reports and letters

---

[303] Letter from the Provincial Administrator, A.S. Tome Harare Metropolitan Province advising all stakeholders in the country to grant permission for the team to carry out rituals and ceremonies in various places, 18 February 2011.
[304] I was privileged to have copies of these documents by Mr. Douglas Kunaka who transcribed them in English but some are in Shona.
[305] Interview with comrade Tvetu, 16 September 2014.

at times addressed to the President, expressing the concerns of spirit mediums and how they understood the problems facing the country since 2000.[306]

The documents are centred on some liberation struggle rituals that were done and the national ceremony to properly bury the medium of Nehanda, Charwe, as told by the remaining mediums in Dande and Mozambique.[307] Apart from dealing with the appointment of chiefs, their concern goes beyond chieftainship to national issues such as the emergence of opposition parties in the form of the MDC and its splinter factions and how they would destabilise the economy.[308] The cracks in ZANU PF due to factionalism and how this will impede development and bloodshed, national economic decline due to negligence of ancestors and erosion of traditional and cultural values by the leadership are some of the issues covered.[309] They discuss why there are so many droughts in the country which they believe is a product of how the country has abandoned its national ancestor *mhondoro*.[310] They also raise sharp objections over the use of a multi-currency system substituting the devalued Zimbabwean dollar national currency. They blame the leadership for not consulting the ancestors seeking advice on how to keep the economy going other than resorting to adopting other countries' currencies hence the economy will not be stable.[311] Moreover, they also express disgruntlement about the way land was distributed without seeking advice from the national ancestors. As a result, land will remain unproductive because it is "cursed" and it requires the ancestors' "blessings".[312] They also deal with the 2008 and 2013 presidential elections on how spirit mediums performed rituals on behalf of President Mugabe so that he would win the elections and they predicted electoral outcomes that Mugabe and ZANU PF would win.[313] However, they warned that after the 2013 harmonised elections the economy will not change since

---

[306] For example, letter to the President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, Request for National Conduct of Cleasinging Ceremonies and Rituals and Rehabilitation/Resuscitation of Mazumba/Masasato at Dungwiza/Chitungwiza Shrine from Spirit Medium Rwizi/Danda, dated 28 September 2012.

[307] Julian Murenga, My General View towards Zimbabwe from 1980 to date, latter to the President, 19 November 2012.

[308] Minutes of meeting held on 17 December 2012, what has caused problems in this country?

[309] Minutes of meeting held in Mozambique between the Murenga family and the medium of Tawatawa and Madzomba, 06/04/13 to 21/04/13.

[310] Ibid.

[311] Ibid.

[312] Minutes of meeting held on 25 July 2013 in Mashonaland Central, Mbire Lower Gureve by the medium of Musuma.

[313] Minutes of meeting of the rituals held in Mashonaland Central Province, Mbire District 07/12/12 to 11/12/12.

the leadership has not performed the required rituals such as proper burial of Nehanda *kutsvaira gomba* among other rituals to be conducted at national level.[314]

The use of these manuscripts by researchers could augment archival sources at the NAZ that do not cover the post-colonial issues outlined above. Researchers are presented with fresh information covering topical issues. Most of the issues relating to the economy, political decline and electoral violence had received media coverage and a number of arguments have been raised in accounting the economic meltdown in Zimbabwe. This thesis argues that our understanding of the post-colonial political and economic developments in Zimbabwe will improve through the use of fresh material that deals with issues affecting the country at the moment. This will bring a new understanding on the causes and suggestions on how to solve the current economic and political instability in the country including MDC formations and the ruling ZANU PF. Since some of the manuscripts argue that all chiefs in Zimbabwe are political appointees and lacks traditional credibility, the use of such sources will help to rethinking traditional leadership institution in the country. Researchers compiling claims reports if could use these sources their final reportage would be differently informed by fresh sources that directly relate to traditional leadership problems such as succession and the involvement of chiefs into politics which spirit mediums are strongly condemning.

These manuscripts are essentially important in the sense that they also help to bridge the gap in the colonial archive on the period after 1960s where there are limited files on chieftaincy. Other than constantly relying on colonial archival documents for evidence, there are fresh sources outside the NAZ that claimants and historians should make use of. It is important to note that some of the information covered by these manuscripts involves moves for the restitution of certain chieftainships to their original pre-colonial geographical areas such as the restoration of Hwata back to the Mazoe valley. Other chieftaincies include the Seke succession dispute that was eventually settled in 2014.[315] Unfortunately, these manuscripts are a bit "sensitive" meaning that their accessibility is based on building good relations with the concerned people. If access to these

---

[314] Ibid.
[315] Seke Chieftaincy Minutes of 17 July 2012, the minutes explains all the raised debates and the family tree; Request for the return of chief Hwata and his people to original chiefdom area, the Mazoe valley in Mazoe district dated 23 October.

manuscripts is granted or deposited at the NAZ, new themes and debates will be engaged that are currently affecting the traditional leadership institution.

4.4.5 Ministry of Local Government Files

The dissolution of the Ministry of Internal Affairs gave birth to the development of two Ministries that is, Home Affairs and Local Government. Traditional leadership falls under the Ministry of Local Government besides other responsibilities the Ministry has. The Ministry now produces different files from the delineation reports and native commissioners' reports produced by the predecessor Internal Affairs Ministry. They are distinct in that the current system adopted a single running file for each chief and headmen in the country. The new practice reflects on the changes of administration from the colonial system of producing 'native' histories through a 'native policy'. The new system allows every traditional leader to have his file covering the history of the chieftaincy and other developments since independence. This development means that claimants to chieftaincy, historians and people studying traditional leadership are presented with an advantage of consulting these individual chiefs and headmen files under the custody of the DAs across the country.

Unlike the spirit medium collections, these focus specifically on chiefs and headmen in the post-colonial period. For example, Neshava headmanship file in Buhera deals with succession conflicts bedevilling the headsmanship since the early 1990s to date.[316] There are maps showing topographical aspects as well as geomorphological features of the Shava area where the headship is located. The files cover minutes of meetings held by the Neshava families and the DA, reports and letters, the clan's history, family trees and other useful information. This information is not available at the NAZ at the moment. Most files are still current records under the custody of creating departments. Permission to access them can be granted upon approval by the Ministry of Local Government to use them. In most cases these documents relate to the post-independence developments meaning that their use by researchers will help to complement those files already deposited at NAZ.

---

[316] The author gave his own reference number; MB/3 Neshava Headmanship for easy identification after making copies from the file.

Students, historians and claimants to chieftaincy and headmen in most cases are not privy to this kind of material as they are caught up by the 'myth' of the archive. It has become a tradition that archives have 'all' the information. However, there are other supplementary sources within and without the NAZ. Because these records show the changes in administration from colonial to post-colonial government and changes in the institution, their use will change the way people understand chiefs and headmen in Zimbabwe. It appears that chieftaincy is not a static institution; rather, there are many changes that took place since 1980. To some extent, these files are composed of some extracts and cuttings from the delineation reports especially on narratives of origin of the chieftaincy and family trees. In this way DAs not only rely on the current records but also delineation reports of the 1960s. This means there is continuity of the coloniality of the archives in the present day Zimbabwe.

4.4.6 Newspapers

Another important alternative source of information is newspaper cuttings at the Herald House in Harare. The Herald Library has adopted a running file system started around 1954 for each individual figure or subject in Zimbabwe. The collection is made up of several newspaper cuttings published in Zimbabwe covering important events, personalities and a range of other subjects. In an interview with the late Herald Librarian, Mr. S. Tashaya, pointed out that 'the Herald House started the single subject filing as early as the 1950s. Cataloguing cuttings according to subject makes it easy for researchers because they do not have to read every newspaper; they simply request the file and look at the cuttings. We stamp the date of the newspaper the cutting was made from.'[317] Newspaper cuttings at the Herald House save the researcher a lot of time unlike going through every newspaper at the NAZ looking for information. For example, there is a file on chiefs and headmen covering all published articles on chiefs since 1954 and some files for individual chiefs. It has cuttings showing the relationship between chiefs and the colonial regime, traditional leadership relations with post-colonial government, and the

---

[317] Interview with the late Mr. S. Tapera, 15 August 2014.

involvement of chiefs in land distribution politics.[318] Some of the cuttings cover succession disputes and editorial opinions on traditional leadership in general.

Herald House is located in Harare meaning that it is accessible to everyone. Most of the chieftaincy claims reports discussed in this section did not refer to any newspaper either for comparative reasons except for some academic researchers. Research has been made easier to those interested in the study of chieftaincy. If these cuttings could be used, research on traditional leadership would be interesting for several reasons. Firstly, the cuttings cover a long period to date. This means issues affecting chieftaincy institution can be traced with less difficulty of going through every newspaper. Secondly, traditional leadership and state relations can be researched and understood in the politics of the colonial era. Thirdly, there are many issues published in newspapers concerning chieftaincy such as the customary roles of chiefs, succession disputes, involvement of chiefs in politics and how this has been accepted by people.

Newspapers provide useful information on various subjects and a number of historians have used them. For example, Alexander says she drew on press reports: 'high profile events such as the political conflict in Matabeleland, squatter's evictions in the 1980s, and the land occupations since 2000 have received extensive coverage by remarkably critical media.'[319] Although she was no longer dealing with chiefs, she found them useful in that they were critical. Attention should be paid also to radical journalism in Zimbabwe after 2000. One such newspaper, the *Daily News*, was banned in 2003 only to be reprinted in 2009 after its license was reinstated. Others such as the *Financial Gazette* offer critical views on the economy and political developments in the country.

While the press does not cover every chief or headmen, it is useful in understanding some trajectories in the chiefly histories especially after independence. The availability of these newspaper cuttings at Herald House helps to advance the argument that there is a need for a shift in the study of chiefs by consulting many sources. The use of newspapers as a source of information requires critical attention. State-owned or independent media houses have their political affiliations and they are doing business as well. Such a scenario

---

[318] For example, *The Daily Mirror*, 27 July 2003, *The Herald* 31 January 2003, *Daily News* 25 January 2003.
[319] Jocelyn Alexander, *The Unsettled Land*, p. 14.

therefore means that the use of newspapers as sources of information in Zimbabwe especially after the year 2000 needs a critical reading.

4.4.7 High Court Files Online

These are the court rulings where chiefs are involved either as defendants or plaintiffs and in some instances claimant's voices will also be captured. They are on open access online and can be downloaded from the High Court (HC) website launched in 2001. Some of these cases involved chieftaincy succession disputes such as Buninu chieftaincy where Golden Moyo was contesting the DA's decision to appoint Stephen Moyo as chief.[320] The Bunina case involved a succession dispute that followed after the death of Mantiya in 2003. He was succeeded by his son Jackson Moyo in acting capacity and his term ended in May 2006. Meanwhile meetings were conducted between the Ministry of Local Government officials and the Bunina family to select the substantive Chief Bunina where two sub-houses emerged as claimants to the throne. These were the Mkoba and Mantiya families. The Mantiya family traced their chieftainship as having come with Bunina from Matojeni with a group of followers who came and settled in the Lower Gweru. According to them, the chieftainship did not cascade across to the brothers but to the sons, that is, bilateral system of succession.[321] In this regard, Mavu's descendants, being the eldest wife, were eligible to the throne. The Mantiya family highlighted the fact that although the Bunina's were of Rozvi origin, their ancestors inherited the Ndebele customs and culture following their defeat by the Ndebele in the pre-colonial era. Accordingly, in terms of the Ndebele system of succession their chieftainship was passed from father to son. The Mkoba version was contrary to that of the Mantiya family. The Mkoba version enjoyed the support of Lugwalo and Mpabanga families. Their version was that there was a battle between the whites and the Bunina community which resulted in the latter being victorious and ultimately being appointed chief by the government of the day.

Though there was no succession among the family, what sufficed was that Stephen Mkoba was chosen by the majority of the houses. 'The decision to appoint Stephen

---

[320] HC 1396/09, Golden Moyo Versus Stephen Mkoba and District Administrator for Midlands Province and Governor of Midlands Province And Minister of Local Government, Public Works and Urban Development and President of Republic of Zimbabwe, Bulawayo 26 August 2011 & 19 January 2012.
[321] Ibid.

Mkoba from the families, though non-procedural and non-congruent with either the bilateral or collateral system was welcome by the DA office was in the best interest of the chieftainship as continued squabbles derail the operations of chiefdom [sic].'[322] The matter was centred on the customary practice applicable to the Bunina chieftaincy. The first respondent Golden Moyo's argument was then dismissed by the High Court on the grounds of the clause in the *Traditional Leaders Act*. Section 3(2) of the Act implies that the President 'should give dire consideration to the customary principles succession if any applicable to the community over which the chief is to preside, as investigated by Ministry of Local Government officials [sic].'[323] In such circumstances, once the investigation has been made, the President is free to act as he thinks best in the interests of good governance of the community. Accordingly, the Act provides the President with an unfettered discretion in the appointment of a chief. Thus the Judge passed the verdict that 'the President exercised this discretion after supporters of rival candidates were consulted through the second, third and fourth respondents. This exercise of executive powers by the President cannot be reviewed.'[324] Therefore Golden Moyo lost the case.

The court cases were written in an illuminating manner chronicling disputes involved and the court verdict passed in arbitrating the case. Despite the fact that they are written in legal jargon, HC files on open access are very useful for the study of chieftaincy. The fact that background information leading up to the case is given makes it possible for researchers to understand the matter well. However, the fact that chieftaincy disputes involve courts appointed by the President also politicises the institution. When customary succession principles impede governance, the President will use his executive powers stipulated in the *Traditional Leaders Act*. This observation gives researchers an understanding and claimants the legal processes involved in the institution. The use of these files and records by researchers will help them to appreciate contemporary chieftaincy debates, court rulings and involvement of chiefs in politics. Since these files are on open access, it is an advantage because if they are deposited at NAZ they will have to go through the record life cycle and closure period. Technically, HC files of the period

---

[322] Ibid.

[323] *Traditional Leaders Act*.

[324] HC 1396/09, Golden Moyo Versus Stephen Mkoba and District Administrator for Midlands Province and Governor of Midlands Province and Minister of Local Government.

before 2001 cannot be accessed at NAZ because they are still under the closure period but ironically some of them can be accessed online.

4.4.8 Claims to Chieftaincy Reports

These are a compilation of reports submitted to the Ministry of Local Government for approval by various claimants to chieftaincy that have become archival documents themselves. This includes the completed reports of the Seke, Chidziva, Sanyanga, Mutsago and Musaigwa chieftaincies discussed earlier in this chapter.[325] These reports were written by contracted historians and ethnographers using delineation reports, chiefs and headmen files, *NADA*s and NCs' reports and oral interviews gathered during the documentation process.

These manuscripts offer insight into the use of the colonial archive by historians and families researching on claims and resuscitation of chieftaincies in post-colonial Zimbabwe. These reports were all compiled after 2000, a period where there are limited archival documents to cover this era due to the 25 years closure period at the NAZ. More importantly, these reports illustrate the context in which claims and resuscitations are being made. They shows reasons for claiming chieftaincy, the relationship between land and chieftaincy institution and the use of colonial archives as sources in contemporary Zimbabwe. Moreover, they show how archival documents are interpreted and how value changes over time such as the delineation reports that are heavily used. It can be argued that the value chiefly and headmen archival documents had in colonial era is different by comparison with the post-colonial era. Their use to advance political and social agendas has recently changed as claimants to chieftaincy consulted them for evidence to validate their claims. At the same time, their authenticity has been also challenged especially by those families who feel that their history was not properly documented as shown in the Mutsago case study referred to earlier in this chapter.

However, the way in which these reports are produced requires critical reflection. Since people who document these reports are paid by their clients, it is difficult for them to produce a balanced version of the narrative of the clan. Information that does not

---

[325] The author is in possession of these reports. They were given a reference number MB/2 Chieftainships claims and disputes.

support the claimant is often suppressed, with interviewees handpicked by the clients compromising the quality of the final product.[326] These reports can be accessed by the people involved in chieftaincy claims or disputes. Their use will enhance our understanding of this institution and the problems associated with it in contemporary Zimbabwe. Since claimants and historians who authored them have copies, it is easy to access them. When submitted to the Local Government, they have to be deposited to the NAZ. They will have to go through the life cycle like every public record affected by closure period. Access can only be granted if the families concerned choose to deposit their reports as manuscripts for public access.

4.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, it has been argued that most of claims reports to chieftaincy drew heavily from archival colonial documents and oral interviews. Most of the consulted archival documents are the delineation and NC's reports. Usually findings in these colonial records are used uncritically and the final reports are a history of the client usually one-sided. The use of the colonial archive continues to perpetuate the coloniality of the colonial mind through documents. The use of colonial records and documents on chiefs and headmen requires a critical approach because they were produced by colonial officials who had settler agendas. Although they were specifically generated to further colonial endeavours, it will be unfair to dismiss their use in the post-colonial Zimbabwe by people researching on and vying for chiefly positions. Since there are limited archival files in the colonial archive of chiefs to cover the period after 1960s, there are other alternatives sources within and without the NAZ repositories. The use of these sources will help to shape the way traditional leadership is understood. The institution underwent several changes since pre-colonial era influenced by a number of factors such as internal power relations among chiefdoms, colonialism and post-colonial state politics. Some of the useful information informing these developments is found in other manuscripts that are without the NAZ such as the spirit mediums manuscripts discussed in this chapter. Arguably, if researchers and claimants were able to consult these sources, this would enrich their understanding of the institution.

---

[326] In one of the claims, we had to go during the night and do interviews. We were instructed to suppress any information in the archive that did not support our client.

Chapter 5

---

5. Conclusion

This study has combined an institutional history of the NAZ with a critical investigation of the historical study of chieftaincy in Zimbabwe. The major thrust of the thesis turns on methodological concerns. The thesis set out to critically appreciate the uses and abuses of the colonial archive in settling chieftaincies claims in post-colonial Zimbabwe. The research was driven by three broad questions which are addressed in chapters two, three and four of the thesis. First, the thesis has examined the nature of archival sources on chieftaincy, including processes of production, acquisition, access and the ways that they have been used for the study of chieftainships. Secondly it has addressed tensions over traditional leadership in post-colonial Zimbabwe and the arguments put forward to justify these claims. Thirdly, it has investigated the nature and usefulness of the established sources used to document claims reports, as well as describing alternative sources that might improve our understanding of chieftaincy and of chiefly claims.

Many archival institutions in sub-Saharan African countries were established after the Second World War. The BSAC administration did not prioritise systematic record keeping of documents generated during the course of its administration between 1890 and 1923. To some extent, archiving had no immediate relevance for the political economy and social development of the colony. Only after the coming of Responsible Government in 1923 did the need to preserve Company records and other documents generated by the administrator emerge. This eventually led to the establishment of the National Archives of Rhodesia (hereafter National Archives of Zimbabwe) in 1935. Over time, colonial archival institutions have become centres of memory for indigenous people filing land claims in countries such as Canada and New Zealand as Jérémie Gilbert has observed.[327]

The establishment of the colonial archive facilitated the collection and storage of information on so-called native administration, particularly traditional leadership. Analyses of these documents show that there was an imbalance in their production processes. Processes were shaped by the views, imaginations and interpretations of the

---

[327] Gilbert, 'Historical Indigenous Peoples' Land Claims: A Comparative and International Approach to the Common Law Doctrine on Indigenous Title', pp. 583-611.

colonial officials who produced them. What we have now as a colonial archive is a collection of what officials desired to be collected mainly for administrative purposes. Despite these developments, as Worby shows, colonial subjects were not passive consumers of colonial maps, ethno-histories and colonial imaginations on Africans.[328] Chiefs and headmen also participated in the documentation process, although their involvement was shaped by their own interests and they supplied information that usually favoured incumbents in power. Documents that resulted from this process include NC and CNC reports, chiefs and headmen files, delineation reports, minutes of assemblies of chiefs and the PER/5 files described in chapters two and four. These archival documents were directly related to the functions, duties and operation of traditional leaders.

It is these documents that are currently used as official sources of information for claims to chieftaincy. Their first use for such purposes was in the 1970s when several chieftaincies, demoted in the 1950s, were reactivated. DCs and affected families relied on delineation reports and certain *NADA* articles to validate claimants' arguments for reappointment. The use of colonial maps, ethno-histories and family trees by local people involved in land claims is not unique to Zimbabwe. In New Zealand, Canada and South Africa, many people filed land claims with more sympathetic post-colonial governments.[329] They used archives as evidence to advance their claims. This thesis has shown that in Zimbabwe, although the production of such narratives about Africans was meant for colonial administrative purposes, they were subsequently consulted by indigenous peoples in the post-colonial era to gain social and political benefits. Because they comprised histories of chieftaincies, boundaries, family trees and genealogies, they remain useful sources of evidence for families, individuals and historians involved in chieftaincy succession disputes or claims. Yet the use of these documents leaves a lot to be desired because they were the results of a manipulated process where information was produced to suit the needs of the colonial day.

---

[328] Worby, 'Maps, Names, and Ethnic Games: The Epistemology and Iconography of Colonial Power in North-western Zimbabwe', pp. 371-392.

[329] See Hamley, 'Native Land Claims in Quebec Considered in a Canadian Context' pp. 93-109; Gilbert, 'Historical Indigenous Peoples' Land Claims: A Comparative and International Approach to the Common Law Doctrine on Indigenous Title', pp. 583-611.

Colonial archival material reveals how the early administration tried to understand Africans in order to effectively control them. Readers of chieftainship history documents in the colonial archive need to be cognisant of the reasons behind their production. This helps to understand why some information is missing, and why histories were recorded in the way they were. When trying to convince Local Government officials, claimants rely on colonial documents. Whereas previously the NAZ helped academic historians with their research the trend has changed, as claimants to chieftaincy now also frequent the institution's reading room and it has come to be viewed as the 'unproblematic' site of 'national memory.' The most sought after archival documents, as noted in chapter four, are delineation reports used to document claims reports. Most of the archival documents used as sources to draw up family trees, genealogies and boundaries in these reports were generated by successive colonial regimes for administrative purposes. The uncritical use of evidence drawn from the supposedly canonical archival documents perpetuates the coloniality of the archives.

This conclusion argues many of the claims reports discussed in chapter four are not analytically rooted. The historians and ethnographers who document these claims reports do not critically read the colonial archive against the grain. Over-reliance on the same archival documents distorts our understanding of chieftaincy in general because of the limitations in the colonial archive. This study has identified other useful sources on chieftaincy within and without NAZ that could also be accessed. If these sources were used, claimants and historians could change the ways in which chieftaincy is understood. In fact, the arguments made in many claims reports rest on colonial prejudices which are made to fit the claimant's quest. Thus, claims reports reflect 'antiquarian' practice by duplicating archival documents originally produced for a different purpose.

In modern-day Zimbabwe, pre-colonial and colonial evidence has been advanced as justification for chieftaincy claims, and the government is faced with the mammoth task of redressing claims whose validity cannot easily be established. Whilst traditional leadership is arguably one of the oldest institutions in many African societies, most-post colonial governments have been reluctant to work with chiefs because of their alleged allegiance to colonial governments. Nationalist governments were unwilling to incorporate them in nation building projects. But, as argued in chapter three, the

situation changed in the 1990s. Restoring chief's powers in many African countries coincided with chiefs' unrelenting efforts to be officially recognised. In Zimbabwe, the government desired the services of chiefs in order to regain the support of the rural electorate. At the same time, chiefs also registered their voices by openly supporting land reform and President Mugabe's candidature in 2002, 2008 and 2013 elections.

A claim such as the Sanyanga case is an attempt to recover ancestral homes (*matongo)*. Such claims turn on land issues. Several claims discussed in chapter three were made in the post 2000 era, that is, after the Fast Track Land Reform Programme. While the government was committed to addressing land shortages, chiefs also utilised the same opportunity to reassert their authority. This was observed by Mujere when he argued that 'in a number of cases starting with Chief Svosve in Marondera district, traditional authorities have made attempts to re-establish their control over lands from which they were alienated during the colonial period, in some instances even claiming restitution.'[330] Although some chiefs genuinely sought to return to ancestral lands, reasserting their authority in resettlement areas, this study has also suggested that certain families, individuals and clansmen saw an opportunity to establish new chieftaincies, thereby obtaining land, traditional authority and power. Certainly claims to chieftaincy are not only based on land questions. Instead, they are linked to succession disputes stemming from colonial and pre-colonial disagreements. As mentioned, the Seke and the Mutsago cases are based on pre-colonial developments that disadvantaged other sub-houses. Colonialism therefore did not entirely alter power relations among chieftaincies; the institution was shaken by internal turmoil before colonialism. Rather than blaming colonialism for transforming African chieftaincies, this thesis further emphasised that chieftaincy disputes are as old as the institution itself. Colonialism escalated and widened differences, disputes and quarrels which had started earlier as in the Mutsago and Seke case studies discussed.

Access to archives and records at the NAZ is regulated through the access regimes. As pointed out in chapter two, the existing closure period is too long for reasonable access

---

[330] J. Mujere, ' Land, graves and belonging: land reform and the politics of belonging in newly resettled farms in Gutu, 2000-2009', (eds.), L. Cliff, J. Alexander, B. Cousins and R. Gaidzanwa, *Outcomes of post-2000 Fast Track Land Reform in Zimbabwe*, London, Routledge, 2013.

to records and in the process this affects research. By comparison with other international archival institutions, the 25 year closure period implemented by NAZ inhibits research. In the United Kingdom, for example, the closure period was reduced successively from 50 years to 30 years in 1967. The policy was later amended to 20 years,[331] lower than the 25-years closure period at NAZ. Factors hindering access include high staff turn-over, technical and institutional challenges. There are documents that researchers are unable to access because of backlog challenges at NAZ. This also applies to certain records and documents after the closure period.

The limitation imposed by the small range of archival material for the period after the 1960s greatly narrows the scope of claims reports and chieftaincy studies. Although oral interviews have been used to cover or 'correct' archival documents' limitations, this study has argued that the NAZ should make more readily available sources such as PER/5 files. This study has attempted to inform readers of the existence of alternative sources at the NAZ, as well as those outside the national repositories. Although the NAZ has tried to make available useful sources, it has not done enough to inform users of the existence of other materials such as oral histories and manuscripts such as the David Beach collection. Consequently, historians and claimants, as discussed in chapter four, have failed to use such material. Often enough, the use of oral evidence to 'correct' or 'support' colonial documents is actually a subtle way of producing a biased version of 'history' in supporting particular claimants. Eventually, claims reports submitted to the Ministry of Local Government will be eventually deposited at the NAZ. When they are accessioned, it can be argued that they too will become another 'reliable' source in the form of 'doctored' colonial documents and oral traditions.

Scholars of indigenous historiography such as Will Hamley, Jérémie Gilbert, John Sharp, Steven C. Bourassa and Ann Louise Strong have focused on 'native' land claims in countries such as Canada, Australia, Malaysia, Belize, South Africa Botswana, and Kenya. They show how indigenes use customary laws to claim land.[332] This scholarship on land

---

[331] http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/information-management/access-to-public-records.pdf, Access to public records, July 2012, accessed on 25 February 2015.
[332] See for example Hamley, 'Native Land Claims in Quebec Considered in a Canadian Context' p. 93; Sharp, 'Land Claims in Namaqualand: The Komaggas Reserve' pp. 403-414; Gilbert, 'Historical Indigenous Peoples' Land Claims: A Comparative and International Approach to the Common Law Doctrine on Indigenous Title'

claims was important for this study as demonstrated that claims to chieftaincy by indigenous people in Zimbabwe are not unique. In some cases, people involved in land claims rely on colonial maps and treaties, such as the Maori of New Zealand who use the Waitangi Treaty and the Indians in Canada who used treaties signed by local leaders and the British. These colonial documents are used as evidence to validate land claims and usually they are found at national archival institutions.

Although this thesis focused on a similar aspect of land-linked claims to chieftaincy in Zimbabwe, it differed on three points. Firstly, unlike indigenous scholarship focusing on land claims only, it brought together an examination of chieftaincy claims with the institutional history of a postcolonial national archive. The NAZ has played a central role in how traditional leadership institutions have been understood, and cannot be disassociated from it. Not only an institution where academics visit, the NAZ is also a site where people come to further their own political and social aims either by manipulating or uncritically using materials in the colonial archives. Secondly, this dissertation has suggested that traditional leadership claims and disputes also transcend contemporary power politics; rather they need to be analysed in the context of pre-colonial dynamics. This is distinct from an indigenous historiography that tends to focus attention only on colonial legacies. The view that colonialism transformed communities may place undue emphasis on its impact. This thesis has argued that even before colonialism, societies were subjected to changes brought by a number of local factors such as warfare, disputes over control of resources and power politics independent of colonialism. Thirdly, this study discussed how archives are used and abused by individuals and families vying for traditional leadership positions in the country. This depends in part on the hired historians who document claims with colonial documents. Their research, in turn, has created further sources of 'antiquarian' chieftainship histories when such reports are deposited at the NAZ by the Ministry of Local Government in the long run. Lastly, the thesis has identified a number of other sources within and without the NAZ repositories that could be used to understand traditional leadership institutions. If such sources were

---

p. 585; Bourassa and Strong, 'Restitution of Land to New Zealand Maori: The Role of Social Structure' p. 227.

used, it could open up new approaches to the study of chieftaincy. Claims reports might be produced with different conclusions as well. In other words, this study has argued for a shift in the way users interpret and read archives. They should be more critical paying particular attention to the processes involved in the generation of colonial records.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

A. *National Archives of Zimbabwe (NAZ) Files*

N9/1/1 NC Chibi, Chilimanzi, Musipambi to CNC Salisbury, 31 August 1895

N3/33/8 Mashona History Rozvi, Marondera Native Commissioner Responding to the Chief Native Commissioner on 1 January 1904

N1/2/1-4 Chiefs and Headmen, Marandellas 1904

A3/10/18/14 Chiefs and Headmen, Appointments of chiefs 1 January 1910

A3/18/18/14 Chiefs and Headmen, Separation between Chiefs and Headmen 1910-15

A18/18/1 chiefs and headmen 17 November 1915

A3/10/18/14 Appointments of chiefs, Executive Council 1910 to 1915

A18/18/1 Chiefs and Headmen, Disposal of Native Tribe formerly under chief Mdilizelwa, the Secretary Department of Administrator, 17 November 1915

A18/18/1 Chiefs and Headmen Umtali, Chieftainship of the Jindwe tribe, NC Umtali to CNC Salisbury 11 June 1917

A3/28/5-7 Archives, Shipment of Company Documents to London 7 May 1923

S1007/7, NC, Selukwe to Superintendent of Natives, Bulawayo, Centralisation of Lands, Selukwe Reserve 17 July 1930

MS663/9 Chiefs and Headmen, NC Sipolilo 1933

S2328/F6/B/51 Replies to Questionnaires, Native Commissioners 24 December 1935

S1846 Archives Commission Proceedings 1935-47, 16 September 1937

S1542/L4 Native Commissioner Umtali to Chief Native Commissioner, 29 September 1938

S1563, Chief Native Commissioner Annual Report 1945

NAZ S1563, Chief Native Commissioner Annual Report 1946

S1564 Chief Native Commissioner Annual Report 1949

S1562, Chief Native Commissioner Report 1950

S327/1 Chiefs and Headmen Recommendations, Abolishment of Redundant Chiefs 26 March 1950

S2583/542 Chiefs General, Chiefs and Councils and Chiefs Powers, Secretary of Native Affairs to Secretary of Native Affairs Nyasaland, Zomba 13 March 1950

S3700/74 Recognition of Tribal Leaders 1951

S2796/2/1 Assemblies of Chiefs General, Minutes of Fourth Chiefs Assembly Midlands Province Held at Gwelo 28th June 1954

S2442/A3/2/5 Access to Records, United Kingdom Policy on Access to Official Records 22 March 1956

S2442/A3/2/5 Access to Records, Circular minute C/4305/2, Public Access to Official Records 27 August 1957

S2929/1/8 Marange Delineation Report 1964

S2929/3/3 Goromonzi Delineation 1965 April-July

S2929/1/1 Buhera District Delineation Report, 1964

S2929/2/1 1964 Bindura District Nov 26-1965 April

S2929/2/2 Darwin District Delineation Report 1964 8 November to 11 January 1965

S3700/74 Recommendation of Tribal Leaders 26 March 1976

S3700/74 Recognition of Tribal Leaders, District Commissioner to the Provincial Commissioner, 13 April 1976

African Councils Handbook and Amendments Vol ii, unprocessed 1958 to 1979

Notes on Nyashanu-Chamutsa dispute, unprocessed manuscript 1978

MS1212/1-4 URHD Text 1978

ORAL/FL1 Oral Patrick Fletcher 1978

AOH/34 Shona People Customs, Marriage 1978

AOH/35 Shona People, Customs (succession systems) 1978

AOH/18 Shona Rising 1896 Goromonzi 1978

PER5/12/81 Musara Chieftainship, Letter to the Ministry of Local Government by the Under Secretary Victoria district, 22 October 1981

PER5/18/82 Resettlement of Makumbe people, the Settlement Officer to the Ministry of Local Government, 7 April 1982

PER5/14/82 Claim to Chieftainship/Headman Gurajena, Undersecretary for Development to the Ministry of Local Government, 21 September 1982

PER5/28/82 Chiefs and Headmen Functions, Circular by J. D. White, for Secretary for Local Government and Town Planning to all District Administrators, 23 November 1982

MS746 Schedule of Chiefs and Headmen Zimbabwe 12 December 1985

B. *Interviews*

Interview with Chikomba A, 22 September 2014

Interview with Chipashu E. 16 August 2014

Interview with Gwangwawa, 20 August 2014

Interview with Karadzandima R, 12 September 2014

Interview with Maodza J, 2 September 2014

Interview with Manvura B, 12 September 2014

Interview with Muchefa L, 12 September 2014

Interview with chief Murinye, 17 August 2014

Interview with Mushunje H, 17 September 2013

Interview Mutsago J, 10 July 2013

Interview with Mutsago S, 10 July 2013

Interview with Mutsago F, 11 July 2013

Interview with the late Tapera S, 15 August 2014

Interview with comrade Tvetu, 16 September 2014

Interview with Zidya, 14 August 2014

C. *Published Primary Sources*

Chieftaincy Act 2008, Act 756, Accra, Assembly Press, 2008.

Mangwende Commission of Inquiry 1961.

National Archives of Zimbabwe Act 1986, Harare, Government Printers.

Official Year Book of Southern Rhodesia, No. 4, 1952.

Research and Public Archives Procedures Policy 13 February 2014

Traditional Leaders Act, chapter 29:17, Harare, Government Printers.

D. *Newspapers and Periodicals*

Daily News, 11 February 1957

Umbowo, 12 October 1951

Executive Intelligence Review, 'Smith Tries To Look Liberal', New Solidarity International Press Service, Vol. IV, No.9, 29 February 1977

The Herald, 6 September 1980

The Herald, 3 October 1980

The Guardian 27 May 2000

The Herald, 17 April 2002

The Herald, 1 January 2002

The Herald, 21 September 2003

The Manica Post, 3 August 2003

The Daily Mirror, 27 July 2003

The Herald, 23 June 2003

The Chronicle, 18 June 2003

The Financial Gazette, 8-14 May 2003

The Standard, 2 February 2003

The Herald, 31 January 2003

The Herald, 30 January 2003

The Daily News, 25 January 2003

The Chronicle, 2 July 2007

Sunday News 27 May 2007

Sunday News, 20 May 2007

The Guardian, 20 May 2007

The Chronicle, 11 February 2007

Times Media, 26 July 2013

The Herald, 3 July 2007

Newsday, 22 March 2012

All Africa, 10 December 2013

The Mirror, 7 August 2014

E. *Secondary Sources*
    Articles

Abbolt B, 'The State of Electronic Records Management in South Africa: An Overview', *ESARBICA Journal*, Vol. 20, 2001, pp. 62-70.

Anderson D. M, Mau Mau in the High Court and the 'Lost' British Empire Archives: Colonial Conspiracy or Bureaucratic Bungle?, *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, Vol. 39, No. 5, 2011, pp. 699–716.

Beach D. N, "NADA" and Mafohla: Antiquarianism in Rhodesia and Zimbabwe with Special Reference to the Work of F.W.T. Posselt', *History in Africa*, Vol. 13, 1986, pp. 1-11.

Bourassa S. C. and Strong A. L, 'Restitution of Land to New Zealand Maori: The Role of Social Structure', *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. 75, No. 2, 2002, pp. 227-260.

Ceeney N, 'The Role of a 21st-century National Archive—The Relevance of the Jenkinsonian Tradition, and a Redefinition for the Information Society', *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, Vol. 29, No. 1, 2008, pp. 57-71.

Cobb H. S, 'Politicians and Archives', *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, Vol. 15, No. 2, 1994, pp. 141-149.

Crehen K, 'Tribes and the People who read Books: Managing History in Colonial Zambia', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, No. 23, Vol. 2, 1997, pp. 203-218.

Cripps I, 'The Umtasa Treaty: A study in the empire building and other things', *NADA*, 1933, pp. 91-94.

Crowder M, 'Indirect Rule – French and British Style', *Journal of the International African Institute*, Vol. 34, No. 3, 1964, pp. 197-205.

Curtin P. D, 'The Archives of Tropical Africa: A Reconnaissance', *Journal of African History*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1960, pp 129-147.

Gilbert J, 'Historical Indigenous Peoples' Land Claims: A Comparative and International Approach to the Common Law Doctrine on Indigenous Title', *International and Comparative Law Quarterly,* Vol. 56, No. 3, Jul., 2007, pp 583–612.

Green E, 'The Political Economy of Nation Formation in Modern Tanzania', *Commonwealth and Comparative Politics*, Vol. 49, No. 2, pp. 223-244.

Hamley W, 'Native Land Claims in Quebec Considered in a Canadian Context', *Human Geography*, Vol. 75, No. 2, 1993, pp. 93-109.

Harris V, 'The Archival Sliver: Power, Memory, and Archives in South Africa', *Archival Science* Vol. 2, 2002, pp. 63-86.

Howman R, 'The effects of history on the African', *Rhodesiana* Vol. 2, 1957, pp. 1-2.

'Indirect rule in West Africa' The Round Table, *Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs*, Volume 39, 1948, pp. 125-130.

Jeater D, 'Speaking like a Native: Vernacular Languages and the State in Southern Rhodesia, 1890-1935', *Journal of African History*, Vol. 42, No. 3, 2001, pp. pp. 449-468.

Jump M, 'The Role of Archives in the Movement for the Recovery of Historical Memory', *Journal of the Society of Archivists* Vol. 33, No. 2, October 2012, pp. 149-166.

Kargbo J. A, 'Archives Management in Post-war Sierra Leone: Luxury or Necessity?' *Journal of the Society of Archivists* Vol. 26, No. 2, 2005, pp. 243-250.

Ketelaar E, *Archival and Records Management Legislation and Regulations: A RAMP Study with Guidelines*, Paris, UNESCO, 1985, pp. 1-116.

Latham C. J. K, 'Rusambo Chiefdom', *NADA*, Vol. X1, No 2, 1975, pp. 67-77.

Machiwenyika J, 'A History and customs of the Manyika people', *NADA*, Volume XI, 1976, pp. 228-344.

Makahamadze T. et al, 'The Role of Traditional Leaders in Fostering Democracy, Justice and Human Rights in Zimbabwe', *The African Anthropologist*, Vol 16, Nos. 1&2, 2009, pp. 33-47.

Malkki L, 'National Geographic: The Rooting of Peoples and the Territorialisation of National Identity among Scholars and Refugees', *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol. 7, No. 1, 1992, pp. 24-44.

Manungo K. and Peet S, 'We Have a Tradition of Story-Telling': Oral History in Zimbabwe', *Oral History*, Vol. 16, No. 2, 1988, pp. 67–72.

Matsa M. and Masimbiti T, 'The Community Share Ownership Trust Initiative as a Rural Development Solution in Zimbabwe: The Tongogara Experience in Shurugwi District', *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* Vol. 4, No. 8(1), 2014, pp. 151-163.

Mazarire G. C, 'Oral Traditions as Heritage', *Historia*, 47 (2), November 2002, pp. 421-445.

-Mazarire, 'Reading 'Chishanga' in the Colonial Archive: Some Issues of Process and Method' in Ngulube P. (ed.), *National Archives 75@30: 75 Years of Archiving Excellence at the National Archives of Zimbabwe*, Harare, National Archives of Zimbabwe, 2012, pp. 43-63.

McNab D, 'The Colonial Office and the Prairies in the Mid-Nineteenth Century', *Prairie Forum*, Vol. 3, No.1, 1978, pp. 21-38.

Montgomery B. P, 'Saddam Hussein's Records of Atrocity: Seizure, Removal, and Restitution', *The American Archivist*, Vol. 75, 2012, pp. 326 – 370.

Muchefa L, 'Politicization of memory and the creation of dark histories in Zimbabwe', *Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Branch of the International Council Archives (ESARBICA) Journal*, 2012, pp. 125-132.

Mutasa M. and Ncube B. B, 'Zimbabwe Refuses to Lag Behind: The Introduction of an Information Management Degree Programme at the National University of Science and Technology', *ESARBICA Journal,* Vol. 23, 2004, pp. 143-154.

Mutiti N, 'The Challenges of Managing Electronic Records in the ESARBICA Region', *ESARBICA Journal,* Vol. 20, 2001, pp. 57-61.

NADA, No. 1, 1 December 1923.

Nyandoro M, 'Zimbabwe's land struggles and land rights in historical perspective: The case of Gokwe-Sanyati irrigation (1950-2000)', *Historia,* 57. 2. November 2012, pp. 298-349.

Owusu-Mensah I, 'Politics, Chieftaincy and Customary Law in Ghana', *KAS International Reports*, Vol. 9, 2013, pp. 31- 48.

Parer D, Archival Legislation for Commonwealth Countries, *Association of Commonwealth Archivists and Records Managers (ACARM)*, Cairns, Australia, pp. 1-73.

Ranger T, 'The Mobilization of Labour and the Production of Knowledge: The Antiquarian Tradition Rhodesia', *Journal of African History,* Vol. 20, No. 4, 1979, pp. 507-524.

-Ranger, 'Tradition and Travesty: Chiefs and The Administration in Makoni District, Zimbabwe, 1960- 1980', *Journal of the International African Institute,* Vol. 52, No. 3, 1982, pp. 20-41.

Savanhu J, 'The Waharava History', *NADA*, No 3, Salisbury, 1925, pp. 59-62.

Schwartz J. M. and Cook T, 'Archives, Records, and Power: The Making of Modern Memory', *Archival Science Vol.* 2, 2002, 1-19.

Schwartz and Cook, 'Archives, Records, and Power: From (Postmodern) Theory to (Archival) Performance', *Archival Science,* Vol. 2, 2002, pp. 171-185.

Sharp J, 'Land Claims in Namaqualand: The Komaggas Reserve', *Review of African Political Economy*, Vol. 21, No. 61, 1994, pp. 403-414.

Stoler A. L, 'Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance', *Archival Science,* Vol.2, 2002, pp. 87-109.

Tapfuma M. M, 'Discussing indigenous knowledge and indigenous knowledge systems in Africa', *ESARBICA Journal,* Vol. 31, 2012, 160-171.

Tough A. G, 'Archives in Sub-Saharan Africa half a century after Independence', *Archival Science*, 8, 3-4, 2009, pp. 187-201.

Ubink J, 'Traditional Authority Revisited: Popular Perceptions of Chiefs and Chieftaincy in Peri-Urban Kumasi, Ghana', *Journal of Legal Pluralism*, 2007, Vol. 55, pp. 123–161.

Vumbunu N, 'Disaster Preparedness at the National Archives of Zimbabwe: An Appraisal', *ESARBICA Journal*, Vol. 20, 2001, pp. 114-116.

Worby E, 'Maps, Names, and Ethnic Games: The Epistemology and Iconography of Colonial Power in North-western Zimbabwe', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 20, No. 3, Special Issue: Ethnicity and Identity in Southern Africa, Sep., 1994, pp. 371-392.

F. *Books and Book Chapters*

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

Baxter T. W., (ed.), *Guide to the Public Archives of Rhodesia*, Salisbury, National Archives of Rhodesia, 1969.

Baxter T. W, and Burke E. E., *Guide to the Historical Manuscripts in the National Archives of Rhodesia*, Salisbury, National Archives of Rhodesia, 1970.

Beach D. N., *War and Politics in Zimbabwe 1840-1900*, Gweru, Mambo Press, 1986.

Beach, *A Zimbabwean Past: Shona Dynastic Histories and Oral Traditions*, Gweru, Mambo Press, 1994.

Bhebe N. and Ranger T., (eds), *The Historical Dimensions of Democracy and Human Rights in Zimbabwe: Volume One: Pre-Colonial and Colonial Legacies*, Harare, University of Zimbabwe Publications, 2001.

Bratton M., *From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe: Beyond Community Development in Southern Rhodesia*, Harare, CCJP, 1978.

Curtin, *Pre-colonial African History*, American Historical Association, Washington DC, 1974.

Holleman J. F., *Chief, Council and Commissioners*, Assen, Royal VanGorcum, 1968.

Johnson M, 'Indigeneity and the Archive; Mediating the Public, the Private and the Communal' in Ashton P., *et al* Gibson (eds.), *By-Roads and Hidden Treasures: Mapping Cultural Assets in Regional Australia*, Crawley, University of Western Australia Publishing (UWAP), 2015.

Lalu P., *The Deaths of Hintsa: Post-apartheid South Africa and the Shape of Recurring Pasts*, Cape Town, HSRC Press, 2009.

Manungo K. D., 'Oral History As Captured By The National Archives of Zimbabwe over the Years' in Ngulube P. (ed.), *National Archives 75@30: 75 Years of Archiving Excellence at the National Archives of Zimbabwe*, Harare, National Archives of Zimbabwe, 2012.

Mason P., *The Birth of a Dilemma: The Conquest and Settlement of Rhodesia*, London, Oxford University Press, 1958.

Mlambo A. S., *A History of Zimbabwe*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2014.

Mudenge S. I. G., *A Political History of Munhumutapa c. 1400-1902*, Harare, Zimbabwe Publishing House, 1988.

Murambiwa I. *et al*, 'Archival Development in Zimbabwe 1935-2010: Setting the Scene' in Ngulube P. (ed.), *National Archives 75@30: 75 Years of Archiving Excellence at the National Archives of Zimbabwe*, Harare, National Archives of Zimbabwe, 2012.

Mujere J., ' Land, graves and belonging: land reform and the politics of belonging in newly resettled farms in Gutu, 2000-2009' in Cliff L., *et al* (eds), *Outcomes of post-2000 Fast Track Land Reform in Zimbabwe,* London, Routladge, 2013.

Omer Cooper J. D., *The Zulu Aftermath: A Nineteenth-Century Revolution in Bantu Africa*, London, Longman, 1969.

Posselt F.W.T., *A Survey of Native Tribes of Southern Rhodesia*, Salisbury, Government of Southern Rhodesia, 1927.

Raftopoulos B. and Mlambo A. S., (eds), *Becoming Zimbabwe. A History from the Pre-colonial Period to 2008*, Harare, Weaver Press, 2009.

Ranger, *Peasant consciousness and guerrilla warfare in Zimbabwe: A Comparative Study*, London, James Currey, 1985.

Shamuyarira N., *Crisis in Rhodesia*, London, Heinemann, 1965.

State of the Archives: An analysis of South Africa's national archival system, 2014, pp. 1-180.

Vansina J., *Oral Tradition: A Study of Historical Methodology*, Brunswick, Transaction, 1972.

Weinrich A.K.W, *Chiefs and Councils in Rhodesia; Transition from Patrichal to Bureaucratic Power*, London, Heinmann, 1971.

G. Unpublished Theses and Papers

Bishi G and Chipashu E., A historical Analysis of the Mutsago Chieftainship: A Reconstruction, 2013.

Chipashu E and B. Magadzike, A Historical Investigation of the Lost Sanyanga Chieftainship of Nyanga District, Eastern Zimbabwe, 2011.

Chipashu E, et al, A Survey of Seke Genealogy, 2013.

Chipashu E., A Historical Investigation into the Soko-Chidziwo Clan, December 2010.

Chipashu E., An inquiry into the Kuvhirimara Headman ship of Dziva Musaigwa Dynasty in Chivi District of Masvingo: A historical Rejoinder, early 1900 to 2011.

Harlech L, *British Native Policy and Administration in Tropical Africa, South African Institute of International Affairs*, University of The Witwatersrand, Milner Park Johannesburg, 1941, pp. 1-16.

Letter from the Provincial Administrator, A.S. Tome Harare Metropolitan Province advising all stakeholders in the country to grant permission for the team to carry out rituals and ceremonies in various places, 18 February 2011.

Letter to the President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, Request for National Conduct of Cleasinging Ceremonies and Rituals and Rehabilitation/Resuscitation of Mazumba/Masasato at Dungwiza/Chitungwiza Shrine from Spirit Medium Rwizi/Danda, dated 28 September 2012.

HC 1396/09, Golden Moyo Versus Stephen Mkoba and District Administrator for Midlands Province and Governor of Midlands Province And Minister of Local Government, Public Works and Urban Development and President of Republic of Zimbabwe, Bulawayo 26 August 2011 & 19 January 2012.

Chief Hwata and others, letter to the Secretary for Local Government, Public Works and National Housing, 23 October 2007.

Mazarire G. C., 'Reading Chishanga (South-Central Zimbabwe): Some Issues of Process and Method', Paper Presented to the Centre of African Studies, University of Edinburgh, 29th June 2007.

MB/3 Neshava Headmanship.

Murenga J., My General View towards Zimbabwe from 1980 to date, Letter to the President, 19 November 2012.

Seke Chieftaincy Minutes of 17 July 2012, the minutes explain all the raised debates and the family tree; Request for the return of chief Hwata and his people to original chiefdom area, the Mazoe valley in Mazoe district dated 23 October 2012.

Mazarire, A Social and Political History of Chishanga, PhD thesis submitted to the History Department of the University of Zimbabwe, 2010.

Phiri K M., 'The Oral Historiography of Pre-Colonial Southern Malawi and Eastern Zimbabwe' In Conference on Zimbabwean History, Vol. 1, Department of History University of Zimbabwe, 23-27 August 1982.

Research and Public Archives Procedures Policy 2014.

Preserving institutional memory: Creating a University of Zimbabwe Archive, History Department, 2015.

H. *Online Sources*

Foundation for Human Rights Initiative, 'Uganda: a situation of systematic violations of civil and political rights', Alternative Report To the Government of Uganda's First Periodic Report before the United Nations Human Rights Committee, February 2004, http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/46f1469c0.pdf accessed 13 April 2015.

Mazikana P., Chapter 11
Africa, http://www.unesco.org/webworld/wirerpt/wirenglish/chap11.pdf,
accessed on 12 February 2015.

http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/information-management/access-to-public-records.pdf, Access to public records, July 2012, accessed on 25 February 2015.

The National Archives, Access to public records: A toolkit for practitioners involved in the sensitivity review and transfer of public records to the National Archives and other archives services, July 2012, http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/information-management/access-to-public-records.pdf, accessed 19 June 2015.