

**A history of state veterinary services and  
African livestock regimes in colonial  
Zimbabwe, c.1896-1980**

by

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in the  
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## Declaration

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By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the authorship owner thereof (unless to the extent explicitly otherwise stated) and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

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## Abstract

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This thesis explores the relationship between African traditional livestock regimes and state veterinary services in colonial Zimbabwe from the perspective of socio-environmental history. It offers a new direction both methodologically and empirically as few academic studies have used state veterinary services archives extensively as a lens to understanding the parameters of the interaction of veterinarians and African livestock owners during the colonial period. Though located in socio-environmental history, this study has applicability to the histories of medicine, conservation and land policy as it connects with the broader debate regarding the experiences of local healing practices under colonial administrations. It examines the complex, fluid and interactive interdependence of people, livestock and disease, and discusses how veterinary medicine, conservation policies, and introduced epizootics impacted on African traditional livestock regimes. It demonstrates how African livestock owners reacted to veterinary challenges, and how they understood veterinary and environmental arguments mobilized by the colonial state to justify segregation. It shows that state veterinary services were not limited to pharmacological drugs and the administration of inoculants but also extended to breeding and other livestock improvement activities such as pasture management. It argues that the provision of state veterinary services was largely influenced by the shifting, contradictory relationship involving the state, native commissioners and white settlers. Given the fractured nature of colonial administration in Southern Rhodesia, this thesis also discusses conflicts between colonial experts (veterinary and animal scientists) and African livestock owners over what type of cattle to rear, how they were to be pastured, and also how epizootics and enzootics could be eradicated or controlled.

**Key Words:** conservation; African livestock regimes; veterinary medicine, local healing practices; dipping; therapeutics; acaricides; centralisation; socio-environmental history; liberation war; Zimbabwe; Southern Rhodesia; Rhodesia.

## Opsomming

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Hierdie proefskrif ondersoek die verhouding tussen die beheer oor tradisionele Afrika veekuddes en die staatsveeartsenydienste in koloniale Zimbabwe vanuit die perspektief van sosio-ekonomiese geskiedenis. Daar word gepoog om 'n nuwe metodologiese sowel as empiriese rigting aan te dui aangesien weinig akademiese studies die staatsveeartsenydienste se argief uitputtend gebruik het as 'n lens om die begrensde interaksie tussen veertse en swart veebesitters gedurende die koloniale tydperk beter te verstaan. Alhoewel gesetel in sosio-omgewingsgeskiedenis, is die studie ook relevant vir die geskiedenis van medisyne, bewaring en grondbeleid aangesien dit aansluiting vind by die breër debat rondom die belewenis van plaaslike gesondheidspraktyke onder die koloniale administrasie. Die proefskrif ondersoek die komplekse, vloeibare en interaktiewe interafhanklikheid tussen mense, vee en siektes, en bespreek hoe die medisyne van veertse asook bewaringsbeleide tot ongekende siekteplae gelei het en 'n uitwerking op tradisionele veekuddes gehad het. Daar word gewys op hoe swart veebesitters op hierdie uitdagings gereageer het en hoe hulle veeartsenykundige en omgewingsgebaseerde argumente van die staat begryp het wat ten doel gehad het om segregasie te bevorder. Die staat se veeartsenydienste was nie beperk tot farmakologiese middele en die administrasie van inenting nie, maar het ook verder gestrek en kwessies soos aanteling en die bestuur van weiding behels. Daar word geredeneer dat die voorsiening van staatsveeartsenydienste grootliks beïnvloed is deur die verskuivende en by tye kontradiktoriese verhouding tussen die staat, naturelle kommissarisse en wit setlaars. Gegee die gefragmenteerde aard van die administrasie in koloniale Zimbabwe, bespreek hierdie proefskrif ook die konflik tussen koloniale deskundiges (veertse en wetenskaplikes oor diere) en swart veebesitters oor watter tipe vee geteel moes word, hoe die weiding daar moes uitsien, en hoe bekende en onbekende plae beheer of uitgewis moes word.

**Sleutelwoorde:** bewaring; veekuddes van swartmense; veekundige medisyne; plaaslike gesondheidsmiddele; veedip; terapeutiese middele; miet; sentralisasie; sosio-omgewingsgeskiedenis; bevrydingsoorlog; Zimbabwe; Suidelike Rhodesië; Rhodesië.

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I want to acknowledge assistance received from staff at the National Archives of Zimbabwe (where much of the archival work was carried out), and the Department of Veterinary Services (for access to official reports and oral interviews with communal livestock owners). In particular, I would like thank Mr Choga (National Field Superintendent, the Dept of Veterinary Services) who facilitated travels to Manicaland and Mashonaland Central. His assistants Mr Magwangwa and Mr Dube (Provincial Veterinary Officers in Mashonaland Central and Manicaland respectively) were so helpful in introducing me to junior members of staff, and also for facilitating group and individual interviews with livestock owners in communal lands. Indeed, this thesis would have been lacking were it not for the many interviewees who gave me their valuable time, shared their memories freely, who were very hospitable and took a great interest in my research. Thank you.

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## **Dedication**

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**To my late mother, Evah Umera (1959 – 2010)**

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## List of Abbreviations

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<b>ADF</b>	<b>African Development Fund</b>
<b>ANC</b>	<b>African National Congress</b>
<b>BNLS</b>	<b>Botswana Namibia Lesotho Swaziland</b>
<b>BSAC</b>	<b>British South Africa Company</b>
<b>CFU</b>	<b>Commercial Farmers' Union</b>
<b>CSC</b>	<b>Cold Storage Commission</b>
<b>CVS</b>	<b>Chief Veterinary Surgeon</b>
<b>DCs</b>	<b>District Commissioners</b>
<b>ECF</b>	<b>East Coast Fever</b>
<b>FMD</b>	<b>Foot and Mouth Disease</b>
<b>GVS</b>	<b>Government Veterinary Surgeon</b>
<b>LEMCO</b>	<b>Liebigs Extract Meat Company</b>
<b>LSE</b>	<b>London Stock Exchange</b>
<b>NC</b>	<b>Native Commissioner</b>
<b>NAD</b>	<b>Native Affairs Department</b>
<b>NADA</b>	<b>Native Affairs Department Annual</b>
<b>NDP</b>	<b>National Democratic Party</b>
<b>NLB</b>	<b>Native Lands Board</b>
<b>NLHA</b>	<b>Native Land Husbandry Act</b>
<b>NPA</b>	<b>Native Purchase Area</b>
<b>NAZ</b>	<b>National Archive of Zimbabwe</b>
<b>PVO</b>	<b>Principal Veterinary Officer</b>
<b>RICU</b>	<b>Reformed Industrial and Commercial Workers Union</b>
<b>TTLs</b>	<b>Tribal Trust Lands</b>
<b>UDI</b>	<b>Unilateral Declaration of Independence</b>
<b>WHAM</b>	<b>Winning Hearts and Minds</b>
<b>USA</b>	<b>United States of America</b>
<b>ZANLA</b>	<b>Zimbabwe National Liberation Army</b>
<b>ZANU</b>	<b>Zimbabwe African National Union</b>
<b>ZAPU</b>	<b>Zimbabwe African Peoples Union</b>
<b>ZINATHA</b>	<b>Zimbabwe National Traditional Healers Association of Zimbabwe</b>
<b>ZIPRA</b>	<b>Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army</b>

# Chapter One

## Introduction, literature review and methodology

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Since 2000, land reform policies in Zimbabwe and their overall impact on the country's political and socio-economic fabric have attracted a lot of attention in global news. Participants and the major supporters of the land reform programme argue that they are exorcising one of the last vestiges of European colonialism through reclaiming lost ancestral lands. The ideology behind it is the purported attempt to recreate pre-colonial patterns of land ownership. The land reform programme was characterised by the uncontrolled movement of livestock and people from communal lands (formerly reserves) into commercial farming zones with critical impact for veterinary control measures. In the Lowveld, for instance, game reserves and conservancies were invaded by people establishing settlements and grazing lands for their livestock.<sup>1</sup> Unsurprisingly, the land reform programme has received much scholarly attention.<sup>2</sup> However, very few scholars have focused their attention on the effects of, to use Tropp's phrase, this 'untangling [of] colonialism' on the veterinary landscape.<sup>3</sup> Notable exceptions to the neglect of contemporary veterinary issues are works by Scoones and Wolmer, who provide a succinct description of what the reconfiguration of the Zimbabwean landscape in the wake of land reform entailed for livestock regimes and state veterinary disease control mechanisms:

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<sup>1</sup> W. Wolmer, *From wilderness vision to farm invasions: Conservation and development in Zimbabwe's South East Lowveld*, (Oxford: James Currey, 2007), 186.

<sup>2</sup> T.K. Chitiyo, 'Land Violence and Compensation: Re-conceptualizing Zimbabwe's War Veterans' Debate,' *Track Two*, 9, 1(2000), [http://ccrweb.ccr.uct.ac.za/archive/two/9\\_1/zimbabwe.html](http://ccrweb.ccr.uct.ac.za/archive/two/9_1/zimbabwe.html); S. Moyo, 'The Political Economy of Land Acquisition and Redistribution in Zimbabwe, 1990-1999,' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 26, 1 (2000), 5-28; D. Moore, 'Is the Land the Economy and the Economy the Land? Primitive Accumulation in Zimbabwe,' *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 19, 2 (2001); J. McGregor, 'The politics of disruption: War veterans and the state in Zimbabwe,' *African Affairs*, 101 (2002), 9-37; J. Chaumba, 'New Politics, New Livelihoods: Agrarian Change in Zimbabwe,' *Review of African Political Economy*, 30, 98 (2003); W. H. Shaw, "'They Stole Our Land': debating the expropriation of white farms in Zimbabwe,' *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 41, 1 (2003), 75-89; E. Chitando, "'In the Beginning Was the Land': The Appropriation of Religious Themes in Political Discourses in Zimbabwe,' *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, 75, 2 (2005); J. Muzondidya, 'Jambanja: Ideological Ambiguities in the Politics of Land and Resource Ownership in Zimbabwe,' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 33, 2 (2007), 325-341; N. Sibanda, 'Where Zimbabwe got it wrong – lessons for South Africa: A comparative analysis of the politics of land reform in Zimbabwe and South Africa,' Master of Arts (International Studies), Stellenbosch University, 2010; W.Z. Sadomba, *War Veterans in Zimbabwe's Land Occupations: Complexities of a Liberation Movement in an African Post-Colonial Settler Society*, (London: James Currey, 2011).

<sup>3</sup> J.A. Tropp, *Natures of colonial change: Environmental relations in the making of the Transkei*, (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2006), 2.

The spectre of disease running rife has been emblematic of a disrupted landscape of *jambanja* — the chaos and disorder which ostensibly swept aside Zimbabwe's neatly organised spaces, as poaching, fire-starting, cattle theft and mutilation proliferated in the ranches; as people and cattle moved uncontrolled from 'communal' to 'commercial' areas, from red into green zones, and even into the buffalo-inhabited conservancies; and as miles of veterinary fencing disappeared to be recycled as snare wire.<sup>4</sup>

*Jambanja* (a term denoting the lawlessness and anarchy which accompanied the Land Reform) disrupted the country's beef export market.<sup>5</sup> In particular, the land reform programme resulted in the suspension (sometimes total cessation) of veterinary control measures which emphasized the separation of cattle from wild animals (mainly buffalos and kudu) which are capable of spreading enzootics and epizootics. Thus, there was an increase of disease outbreaks especially Foot and Mouth Disease at the turn of the twenty first century. Indeed, in their study Scoones and Wolmer discuss the potential effect of increased movements between communal areas and former commercial farms and game reserves, and in some cases, the resettlement of people in national parks and game reserves. This contested terrain between state and citizens, between different settler interest groups, between Africans and settlers, between Africans and Africans, and between wildlife and domesticated animals has a long history. However, research is still needed into how the resettled farmers have dealt with veterinary challenges under conditions characterized by the absence of biomedical facilities. This thesis seeks to contribute to an understanding of the history of the veterinary landscape, and suggest – if not solutions to the current problems – then at least provide the context of understanding to inform those solutions.

Although Southern Rhodesia was occupied in 1890, the first interaction between the settlers and Africans that had a direct impact on the cattle economy was necessitated by twin forces of plunder (confiscation of cattle as loot after the 1893-4 and 1896-7 wars of colonization) and epizootics<sup>6</sup> (livestock diseases that broke out after colonisation). Trade in livestock between

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<sup>4</sup> I. Scoones and W. Wolmer, 'Land, Landscapes and Disease: The Case of Foot and Mouth in Southern Zimbabwe,' *South African Historical Journal*, 58, 1 (2007), 58.

<sup>5</sup> For more on how this term gained currency see J. Muzondindya, "'Jambanja': Ideological ambiguities in the politics of Land and resource ownership in Zimbabwe,' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 33, 2 (2007), 325 – 341.

<sup>6</sup> Note: An epizootic is a disease that appears as new cases in a given animal population, during a given period, at a rate that substantially exceeds what is 'expected' based on recent experience. A panzootic is an epizootic that

Africans and European traders/explorers had been going on for generations but the looting of Ndebele cattle in 1894 after the Anglo-Ndebele War (1893-1894) marked the first act of state intrusion into the livestock regimes in African areas, while the Rinderpest epizootic (1896-1898) resulted in the formation of a state veterinary department and, thus, as shown in Chapter 3, widened opportunities for increased state interference in control of livestock. While the colonial state mobilised a variety of tools to recruit Africans into a western version of modernity, this thesis focus the lens specifically on state veterinary services and African livestock regimes (including diagnostic and prophylactic medicines).<sup>7</sup> It investigates how state veterinarians interacted with African livestock regimes.

In addition to discussing human relations over veterinary issues in a colonial context, this thesis explores the relationship between humans and non-humans (livestock, parasites, bacteria, viruses) in the local environmental contexts. In understanding this complex relationship, it centers on the cattle economy as it was very important to both whites and Africans. Thus, cattle were a significant point of contact between Africans and the state and, therefore, a useful tool to analyse veterinary interactions. The importance of cattle to the Southern Rhodesians (both white and black) was highlighted in the *Rhodesian Advertiser* in 1902:

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spreads across a large region. An infection is said to be ‘enzootic’ in a population when the infection is maintained in the population without the need for external inputs. Thus, in a broad sense, an enzootic is a disease that is prevalent in a particular geography, race, field, area, or environment.

<sup>7</sup> A note on terminology: In this study, the term African cattle management practices and African livestock regimes are used interchangeably to denote a body of knowledge, or bodies of veterinary knowledge and practices of black livestock owners who were already resident in Southern Rhodesia at the time of European colonisation. This knowledge, as this thesis will show, also underwent change due to, among other things, the impact of colonialism, biomedical developments and missionary education on local ways of knowing. Generally, there are a number of terms that are generally used to refer to this knowledge including the following: local knowledge, vernacular knowledge, indigenous technical knowledge, folk science, ethno-science, traditional knowledge, ethno-veterinary science, indigenous knowledge systems (IKS) and site specific bodies. Though there is a lot of controversy over the appropriateness of all these, in this study the term local healing practices and African traditional livestock regimes will be used interchangeably for convenience’s sake. See K. E. Flint, *Healing traditions: African medicine, cultural exchange, and competition in South Africa, 1820 – 1948*, (Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2008); D. Millar, ‘Interfacing two knowledge systems: Local knowledge and science in Africa,’ Paper presented to the Bridging Scales and Epistemologies: Linking knowledge in Global Science in Multiscale Assessments Conference, Alexandria, March 2004; E.F. Gueye, ‘Ethno-veterinary medicine against poultry diseases in African villages,’ *World’s Poultry Science Journal*, 55, 2 (1999), 187-198; W.M. Kon and K. Kamanzi Atindehou, ‘Ethnobotanical inventory of medicinal plants used in traditional veterinary medicine in Northern Côte d’Ivoire (West Africa),’ *South African Journal of Botany*, 74 1 (2008)76-84; L.J. McGaw and J.N. Eloff, ‘Ethno-veterinary use of southern African plants and scientific evaluation of their medicinal properties,’ *Journal of Ethno-pharmacology*, 119, 3 (2008), 559-574.



Cattle – to eat and trample down the long rank grass: cattle, to break the land and carry their transport: Cattle whose diseases and nature they understood better than those of any other animal tried in Africa. Cattle were the secret password which promised success in African agriculture to their children if not to themselves. No wonder therefore, if for ten years every shilling these farmers made has gone into the purchase of stock, and every other form of farming has been regarded as, for the present, a waste of time. Cattle have been to them the one thing worth putting money into and all the other methods of farming seen in their neighborhood has only provoked a smile from the quiet grim faces of these men whose forefathers have farmed in Africa for generations. Cattle first, wheat, corn, fruit afterwards.<sup>8</sup>

Indeed, as will become clear in this thesis, cattle were not only important to Africans but also to European farmers.<sup>9</sup> The colonial economy was severely affected whenever there were cattle epizootics. However, it challenges Jeater's argument that the fortunes of both white and black African farmers 'rose and fell *together* [my emphasis] both subject to rainfall, crop pests, and *stock* disease.'<sup>10</sup> This analysis suggests perhaps too undifferentiated a society characterised by equal access to national resources and remedies. It ignores that livestock disease control facilities (which are at the centre of this study) were generally retrograde in African reserves, and that veterinary challenges in these areas were prioritized only when the danger for their spread to settler commercial farms was high – as this thesis will show. Equally Jeater's model – although helpful in many ways – ignores differences (both real and perceived) between African and white owned cattle. It also ignores differences intra-group, as this thesis will show, among African livestock owners in the African reserves.

The origins of Southern Rhodesia's Veterinary Department were linked to the need to control cattle from the Rinderpest epizootic while the imposition of cattle dip tanks in 1904 represented an intensified, systematic, and physical control over African cattle, and also entailed a more intensive interaction involving colonial officials, Africans and livestock. The 'acceptability' of

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<sup>8</sup> 'Farming in Melsetter district: The cattle sickness, poverty and desolation,' *Rhodesian Advertiser*, 3 July 1902 cited in Jeater, *Law, language, and science*, 40.

<sup>9</sup> For an in-depth discussion of the development of the white cattle industry in Southern Rhodesia see N.W. Samasuwo, "There is something about cattle': Towards an economic history of the beef industry in colonial Zimbabwe, with special reference to the role of the state, 1939-1980,' DPhil Thesis, University of Cape Town, 2000.

<sup>10</sup> Jeater, *Law, language, and science*, 41.

these measures to Africans was enabled by the ability of Europeans to exert their control over Africans through overt physical force. However, the relationship of veterinary officials and African livestock regimes need not be simplified as different categories of Africans were impacted differently by the imposition of a state veterinary apparatus. Despite the paucity of studies into pre- and early colonial African class differences, we do know that African class divisions often intensified during colonisation as different groups of responded differently to the exploitation of imposition of the new state and capitalism.<sup>11</sup> Although this thesis discusses the experiences of African livestock owners<sup>12</sup> in general terms, its author is keenly aware that there were differences in, for example, the numbers of herds they owned; some possessed loan cattle only (under the *mafisa* or *kuronzera* systems); some had knowledge of traditional livestock management practices while others interacted with veterinary and colonial experts much earlier than others, while some were in regions that were relatively free from epizootics; some were able to deal with the demands of the capitalist society much better than others and, finally, some collaborated with the state (on a spectrum of accommodation) while some offered resistance in various forms (again on a continuum).<sup>13</sup> These nuances are not captured in the colonial archives that tend to flatten difference and ignore class.

Discussing the experiences of African livestock owners presents a number of challenges to the researcher. Firstly, no scholarly work from an historical or social anthropological perspective that traces this relationship even on a micro level exists. Secondly, the written evidence (including veterinary reports and memoranda), as is shown in the methodology section below, discusses African livestock regimes in general terms and yet, of course, there were different levels of social differentiation. Often in the veterinary reports no mention is made of the different subclasses of African livestock owners in the reserves beyond the fact that some had ‘larger

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<sup>11</sup> See F. Cooper, ‘Peasants, capitalists, and historians: A review article,’ *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 7, 2 (1981), 284-314; J. Lewis, ‘The rise and fall of the South African peasantry: A critique and reassessment,’ *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 11, 1 (1984), 1-24.

<sup>12</sup> Note: This term is used loosely as it also includes people who may not have owned cattle but had increased interaction with them sometimes more than their actual owners for instance cattle herders and those possessing *mafisa* (loaned) cattle.

<sup>13</sup> For an in-depth analysis of the debate on the African ‘peasant’ class see R. Palmer and N. Parsons (eds), *The roots of rural poverty in central and Southern Africa*, (London: Heinemann, 1977); T. Ranger, ‘Growing from the Roots: Reflections on Peasant Research in Central and Southern Africa,’ *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 5, 1, (1978), 99-133; T. Ranger, *Peasant consciousness and guerrilla war in Zimbabwe: A comparative study*, (London: James Currey, 1985).

herds' than others and that some were more 'receptive' to veterinary regulations than others. Neither does a continuous line of veterinary sources exist for geographic districts so using a case study approach to generalize more broadly is a fraught process. A macro-level overview of the colony's veterinary experiences is equally problematic as it raises questions about the uniform application of veterinary policies in different areas and how similar or different the impacts and responses were. Nonetheless, this thesis utilises a broad angle lens to investigate the response to veterinary policy by a bigger, more diverse group of people on a much wider scale since veterinary policy (at least from the 1930s) was implemented nationally. Furthermore, though acknowledging (and finding evidence of) African agency, this thesis has taken seriously Allina-Pissano's advice that we must 'view the colonial experience as a field of negotiation rather than one of resistance, collaboration, or domination.'<sup>14</sup> As in Kuruman<sup>15</sup>, Africans in Southern Rhodesia adjusted to veterinary challenges and pressure on African livestock regimes in diverse ways.

The African Cattle Complex theory – an anthropological view that Africans kept large herds to the point of economic irrationality – reveals an early attempt to understand the social importance of cattle to Africans. Whereas the African Cattle Complex theory gained currency throughout the colonial era, in the late 1970s, when the Africanist<sup>16</sup> argument was popular, the trajectory of Africanist writings focused on proving the economic and exchange value of African livestock at the expense of how African livestock regimes were impacted upon by ecological challenges and colonial policy. This thesis will not dwell on the economic importance of African-owned livestock<sup>17</sup> but on the impact of colonial policy in general and veterinary interventions in particular on how they were reared, treated, and bred.

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<sup>14</sup> E. Allina-Pisano, 'Resistance and the social history of Africa,' *Journal of Social History* 37, 1 (2003), 194.

<sup>15</sup> N.J. Jacobs, *Environment, power and injustice: A South African History*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 207.

<sup>16</sup> For more on Africanist writings see A. Temu and B. Swai, *Historians and Africanist history: A critique; Postcolonial historiography examined*, (London: Zed Press, 1981).

<sup>17</sup> For more on the economic importance of African cattle and the African Cattle Complex theory see R.M.G. Mtetwa, 'Myth or Reality: The 'Cattle Complex' in South East Africa, with specific reference to Rhodesia,' *Zambezia*, VI, I (1978), 23-35; M.C. Steele, 'The economic function of African-owned cattle in colonial

As this thesis will demonstrate, state veterinarians often cast their interventions as being ‘scientific’ and, thus, were ‘superior’ while African modes of livestock management were perceived to be inherently flawed. Due to colonial racial and cultural ideologies of health, attempts were made to systematically substitute local healing and livestock management practices by biomedicine.<sup>18</sup> In Kenya, a former settler economy and a related colonial context, Anderson brings out the conflicting nature of this relationship arguing, ‘this was a battle between the (so called) progressive, economic and sustainable methods of production advocated by the European settlers and the backward, uneconomic, and environmentally damaging practices of African herders.’<sup>19</sup> The thinking that African traditional livestock regimes are flawed still persists. The effect is that in Zimbabwe, biomedical approaches are practiced in the public domain and enjoy state support while no official support has been extended to ideas African livestock regimes although a syncretic mixture is adopted widely.<sup>20</sup> Nonetheless, historically biomedical and local livestock developed and co-existed as African livestock regimes often utilized both knowledge bodies in a syncretic manner. That African livestock owners straddled (and continue to) both sides of the veterinary divide is understandable since, as Jacobs has observed, ‘every generation inherited an understanding of how to live from its parents, and each faced new circumstances that forced it to innovate. Even those generations that were forced to innovate a lot for only a little return do not exist primarily as a degraded version of what went before. They exist as a testament to their own circumstances, values, and perseverance.’<sup>21</sup> This thesis utilises a socio-environmental approach to explore the accuracy of the Manichean and rigidly divided ‘Western versus African’ livestock management model. This categorisation is simplistic as neither fell so neatly into hermetically sealed boxes: white society was heavily

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Zimbabwe,’ *Zambezia*, IX, I (1981), 29-48; A. Shutt, ‘The Settlers’ Cattle Complex: The etiquette of culling cattle in colonial Zimbabwe, 1938,’ *Journal of African History*, 43 (2002), 263-86.

<sup>18</sup> P.S. Woods, et al, ‘Path analysis of subsistence farmers’ use of veterinary services in Zimbabwe,’ *Preventive Veterinary Medicine*, 61 (2003). See also J. Ford, *The role of trypanosomiasis in African Ecology*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971).

<sup>19</sup> D. Anderson, ‘Kenya’s cattle trade and the economies of empire, 1918-48,’ in K. Brown and D. Gilfoyle (eds), *Healing the Herds: Disease, Livestock Economies and the Globalisation of veterinary medicine*, (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2010), 251.

<sup>20</sup> G.L. Chavunduka, ‘Zinatha: The organisation of traditional medicine in Zimbabwe,’ in M. Last and G.L. Chavunduka (eds), *The Professionalization of African medicine*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986).

<sup>21</sup> N.J. Jacobs, *Environment, power and injustice: A South African History*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 19.

divided, different state departments disagreed and there were changes over time as this thesis will demonstrate.

Though veterinary medicine as it is known and practiced in Zimbabwe today is mainly concerned with the diagnostic and therapeutic side of animal health, this thesis will show that that has not always been the case. Historically, veterinary medicine was not limited to these concerns as it also involved livestock improvement activities – a practice presently carried out by animal scientists. For this reason, this thesis will not restrict itself to the Veterinary Department's diagnostic and therapeutic roles but will also investigate colonial animal breeding and livestock 'improvement' activities, and how these intersected with African livestock regimes. As this thesis will show, the Veterinary Department played a very important role in the transformation of livestock farming in Zimbabwe. Furthermore, it is important to note that in the colonial context which was characterized by the state's attempts to solve the conundrum of how to integrate and also exclude Africans from colonial society, the interaction between veterinary officials and African livestock owners was not always direct. Most veterinary duties were administered by or involved (in one way or another as this thesis will explain) administrators from the Native Affairs Department (NAD) – who were neither trained animal scientists nor veterinarians. Thus, the term veterinary medicine is also used to denote the activities of both trained vets and NAD officials who performed quasi-veterinary duties. As Chapter 5 will show the meanings of veterinary policy often resulted in conflicts. For instance, this is demonstrated by the criticism of NAD officials by vets in the 1940s that they had merely focussed their effort in castrating African 'scrub' (cattle not saleable on the capitalist beef market) beasts under the illusion of livestock 'improvement.'<sup>22</sup> Veterinary arguments also related, albeit sometimes uneasily, with ideas of environmental conservation, improvement and development, and were thus mobilized to justify environment policies that sought to intensify African agriculture.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> See Chapter 5.

<sup>23</sup> W. Beinart, 'Vets, viruses and environmentalism at the Cape,' in T. Griffiths and L. Robin, *Ecology and empire: Environmental history of settler societies*, (Edinburgh: Keele University Press, 1997), 88.

## Literature Review

In light of Brown's recent observation that there is a dearth of information on local healing practices and the hybridization of knowledge from a historical or ethnographic perspective in southern Africa, this thesis seeks to bolster existing knowledge that is currently inadequate.<sup>24</sup> Four different approaches related to the subject matter of this thesis can be delineated in African historiography in general and Zimbabwean historiography in particular. Firstly, there are studies that deal with the African response to the growing demands of the capitalist economy. Secondly, there are studies that analyse ecological disasters that occurred after occupation. Thirdly, some historians examine the position of colonial experts in the state bureaucracy. Fourthly, recently some historians are preoccupied with the present veterinary challenges and the possible role of indigenous knowledge systems from a development studies perspective. Yet all these approaches mention colonial veterinary issues tangentially hence this thesis attempts to fill this gap. At present, there are isolated studies that trace how major cattle diseases such as East Coast Fever, Trypanosomiasis and Foot and Mouth Disease affected the beef industry in particular and the economy at large.<sup>25</sup> Agrarian studies by Machingaidze<sup>26</sup>, Phimister<sup>27</sup> and Samasuwo,<sup>28</sup> solely allude to the difficult circumstances that characterized the genesis of the beef cattle industry in Zimbabwe and the role played by the settler state in this process. Indeed, as Zeleza has noted, the African agricultural history continues to suffer from over-broad generalisations hence more fundamental aspects relating to the development of veterinary services and their relationship to colonialism have hardly been subjected to historical analysis.<sup>29</sup> This reveals the need for strongly

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<sup>24</sup> Brown, 'Conclusion,' in Brown and Gilfoyle (eds), *Healing the Herds*, 272.

<sup>25</sup> For instance, I. Scoones and W. Wolmer, 'Land, landscapes and disease: The case of Foot and Mouth in Southern Zimbabwe,' *South African Historical Journal*, 58 (2007); M.K.K. Mutowo, 'Animal diseases and human populations in Zimbabwe: The Rinderpest epidemic of 1898 - 1898,' *Zambezia*, 28, 1 (2001).

<sup>26</sup> V.E.M. Machingaidze, 'The development of settler capitalist agriculture in Southern Rhodesia with particular reference to the role of the state, 1908- 1939,' PhD Thesis, University of London, 1980.

<sup>27</sup> I.R. Phimister, 'Meat and Monopolies: Beef Cattle in Southern Rhodesia, 1890-1938,' *Journal of African History*, 19, 3 (1978).

<sup>28</sup> N.W. Samasuwo, 'There is something about cattle': Towards an economic history of the beef industry in colonial Zimbabwe, with special reference to the role of the state, 1939-1980,' DPhil Thesis, University of Cape Town, 2000; N. Samasuwo, 'Food production and war supplies: Rhodesia's beef industry during the Second World War, 1939 – 1945,' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 29, 2 (2003).

<sup>29</sup> P.T. Zeleza, *A modern economic history of Africa Voll: Nineteenth century*, (Dakar: Codesria Book Series, 1993), 6.

chronological regional studies because the story, as this thesis will argue, is neither Whiggish nor declensionist but rather nuanced, non-linear and idiographic.

One of the most influential academic works is Ford's pioneering ecological study of trypanosomiasis in Africa.<sup>30</sup> His study examines the political and epidemiological reasons for the spread of trypanosomiasis during the colonial period hence it is of crucial importance when exploring the development of veterinary medicine in Zimbabwe. He traces how Africans in pre-colonial Zimbabwe dealt with trypanosomiasis and how European occupation interfered with their livestock disease management strategies.<sup>31</sup> Ford's main argument is that colonialism limited the extent to which Africans dealt with livestock diseases. Giblin has taken this argument further to posit that in Tanzania (a similar colonial context) preventive methods of disease control that had been adopted by Africans during the pre-colonial period became impossible after colonisation.<sup>32</sup> Recently, Ford's argument has been resuscitated in development studies. For instance, Millar argues that colonialism had a strong impact on indigenous cultures and peoples of Africa, limiting their capacity to solve their own problems and develop technologies that serve their own needs.<sup>33</sup> However, not all those that have applied Ford's framework have come to this conclusion. Despite centering on public health, Maynard's exploratory study of Kedjom medicine analyses the impact of colonialism on local healing practices in Cameroon reveals that colonial attempts to dismantle local medicine were neither wholesale nor successful.<sup>34</sup> Unlike these works, this thesis investigates specifically African reaction to invasion by new epizootics, and African attitudes towards hegemonic colonial veterinary regime.

Partly drawing from Ford's pioneering work, and partly motivated by the euphoria of independence from colonialism, in 1970s most historians wrote from an Africanist perspective in

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<sup>30</sup> Ford, *The role of trypanosomiasis in African Ecology*.

<sup>31</sup> Ford, *The role of trypanosomiasis in African Ecology*, 350.

<sup>32</sup> J.L. Giblin, 'The pre-colonial politics of disease control in the lowlands of North Eastern Tanzania,' in G. Maddox, et al (eds), *Custodians of the Land: Ecology and culture in the history of Tanzania*, (London: James Currey, 1996).

<sup>33</sup> D. Millar, 'Interfacing two knowledge systems: Local knowledge and science in Africa,' Conference Paper, Bridging scales and Epistemologies: Linking knowledge in Global Science in Multiscale Assessments Conference, Alexandria, March 2004.

<sup>34</sup> K. Maynard, 'European preoccupation and indigenous culture in Cameroon: British rule and the transformation of Kedjom medicine,' *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 36, 1 (2002), 79-117.

their examination of the position of colonial experts in the state bureaucracy.<sup>35</sup> The Africanist paradigm is an essentially corrective and anti-colonial approach which emphasizes African initiative in the face of European conquest and capitalist exploitation. Those writing from this perspective often view the whole colonial experience in purely negative terms. A popular conclusion they reach is typified by the argument that, ‘the large body of Western experts in the third world is surely the worst plague of locusts ever to descend on the poor countries.’<sup>36</sup> Thus, Africanists explain veterinary services in imperial terms as seeking to further goals of imperial hegemony. Writing specifically about the role of colonial experts (who were usually government employees) in the production of knowledge in colonies, McCracken argues that the biggest fault of these specialists was the assumption that ‘Africa had nothing to offer them.’<sup>37</sup> Waller examines how East Coast Fever and bovine pleura-pneumonia (Lung Sickness) affected the Kenyan colonial society. His basic argument is that these diseases affected almost every aspect of Kenyan society and economy but that the threat posed was constructed and confronted differently by the various constituencies – official, settler and African.<sup>38</sup> This theme is discussed extensively in Leach and Mearns’ *The lie of the land*, and Fairhead and Leach’s *Misreading the African landscape* which vilify the works of colonial experts in the colonies as amounting to both intentional and unintentional ‘misreading’ of African environmental protection regimes.<sup>39</sup> However, this approach, as this thesis will show, is limited, firstly, for its simple analysis of the relationship between colonial experts and the metropole, and secondly, for its narrow examination of the relationship between colonial experts and Africans. As Chapters 4 and 5 demonstrate this was much more complex than the Africanists realised.

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<sup>35</sup> Studies which fit into this category include the following J. Ford, *The role of trypanosomiasis in African Ecology*; J.L. Giblin, ‘The pre-colonial politics of disease control in the lowlands of North Eastern Tanzania’; J. McCracken, ‘Experts and expertise in colonial Malawi.’

<sup>36</sup> J. McCracken, ‘Experts and expertise in colonial Malawi,’ *African Affairs*, 81, 322 (1982), 116.

<sup>37</sup> McCracken, ‘Experts and expertise in colonial Malawi.’

<sup>38</sup> R. Waller, ‘Clean’ and ‘Dirty’: Cattle disease and control policy in colonial Kenya, 1900 to 1940,’ *Journal of African History*, 45 (2004), 45.

<sup>39</sup> M. Leach and R. Mearns (eds), *The lie of the land: Challenging received wisdom on the African environment*, (London: Heinemann, 1996); J. Fairhead and M. Leach, *Misreading the African landscape: Society and ecology in a forest-savanna mosaic*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).



The Africanist perspective has been heavily critiqued by environmental historians of Africa.<sup>40</sup> Environmental historians have sought new explanations to the rise of veterinary medicine in Africa and posit that veterinary science grew as an independent subject borne out of a ‘genuine’ need to eradicate livestock diseases. More specifically, Beinart, Brown and Gilfoyle bemoan what they consider to be an unfair treatment of the pioneering ‘colonial scientists’ in many works on African history.<sup>41</sup> They argue that Africanists have failed to acknowledge how scientists in Africa grappled with ‘and sometimes, grasped, complex diseases, ecologies and natural phenomena.’<sup>42</sup> Using examples drawn from South Africa where biomedical approaches developed side by side with local healing practices, Brown, in particular, has further developed this view in her individual works on the history of veterinary services in South Africa.<sup>43</sup> She demonstrates how animal diseases prompted the growth of medical knowledge, especially in the field of colonial medicine and ecology. Her fundamental argument is that before the arrival of Western scientists, Africans realized that tsetse flies and game contributed to the disease and that when they arrived, the Europeans experimented with a whole range of methods, including African veterinary remedies, to try and eliminate livestock diseases.<sup>44</sup>

Notwithstanding its strong response to the Africanist view, the major flaw, as this thesis will show, in the Brown-Beinart-Gilfoyle model lies in the manner it downplays the fact that during colonialism veterinary policy was, ‘often autocratic, coercive and bound to an ideology of European superiority.’<sup>45</sup> Colonial experts, including state vets, were used to oversee and

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<sup>40</sup> See H. Tilley, ‘African environments and environmental science: The African Research Survey, ecological paradigms and British colonial development, 1920-1940,’ in W Beinart and J McGregor (eds), *Social history and African environments*, (Oxford: James Currey, 2003); W. Beinart, K. Brown, and D. Gilfoyle, ‘Experts and expertise in colonial Africa reconsidered: Science and the interpretation of knowledge,’ *African Affairs*, 108/432 (2009), 413–433.

<sup>41</sup> Beinart, Brown and Gilfoyle, ‘Experts and expertise in colonial Africa reconsidered.’ This study was a response to an earlier study written from an Africanist perspective: See McCracken, ‘Experts and expertise.’

<sup>42</sup> W. Beinart, ‘African history and environmental history,’ *African Affairs*, 99 (2000), 294.

<sup>43</sup> K. Brown, ‘From Ubombo to Mkhuzi: Disease, colonial science and the control of nagana (Livestock trypanosomiasis) in Zululand, South Africa, c.1894-1953,’ *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences*, 63 (2008), 285-322. See also K. Brown, ‘Tropical medicine and animal diseases: Onderstepoort and the development of veterinary science in South Africa, 1908 to 1950,’ *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 31, 33 (2005).

<sup>44</sup> For a fuller appraisal of Brown’s work see W. Mwatwara, ‘Mad Dogs and Meerkats: A History of Resurgent Rabies in Southern Africa, Karen Brown – book review,’ *Historia*, 57, 2 (2012), 470-474.

<sup>45</sup> Tilley, ‘African environments and environmental science,’ 130.

‘legalize’ the appropriation of land for white farmers and mining corporations, to designate African ‘reserves,’ to administer regulations concerning ‘correct’ methods of land and livestock husbandry and often performed paramilitary duties whenever the state felt its power was under threat.<sup>46</sup> There were disparities in the allocation of state veterinary officials between black and white farmers<sup>47</sup>, with the latter receiving almost exclusively all state veterinarians. Commonalities exist with other settler economies like colonial Kenya, in which ‘nine out of ten of the [Veterinary] department’s work consists of free preventive and curative treatment given to the property of the Europeans, who own only five per cent of stock in this country.’<sup>48</sup>

In addition, though managing to demonstrate the complex position of ‘colonial science’ in the imperial fabric, the major weakness of this approach is its synecdochic treatment of sub-regional experiences, as Chapters 3 and 5 will demonstrate. As this thesis will contend, neither imperial hegemony nor philanthropy adequately explains the rise of veterinary medicine in Zimbabwe. In fact, a recent book *Cultivating the colonies: Colonial states and their environment legacies* contends that imperial states ‘got their hands dirty’ in the business of empire.<sup>49</sup> Although the connection between the creation of veterinary departments in Africa and the desire of the colonial state to promote white agricultural interests has been raised in a number of historical studies, this thesis seeks to push this argument further and examine how the marginalization of African livestock regimes impacted on African understanding of veterinary medicine, and also their modes of understanding livestock diseases.<sup>50</sup> It restates the Africanist argument that

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<sup>46</sup> M. Bratton, ‘Settler State, Guerrilla War and Rural Underdevelopment in Rhodesia,’ *Issue: A Journal of Opinion*, 9, 1/2 (1979), 56.

<sup>47</sup> Woods, et al, ‘Path analysis of subsistence farmers’ use of veterinary services in Zimbabwe.’ For studies that deal with other settler economies see K. Hughes, ‘‘They give me fever’ East Coast Fever and other environmental impacts of the Maasai moves,’ in K. Brown and D. Gilfoyle (eds), *Healing the Herds: Disease, Livestock Economies and the Globalisation of veterinary medicine*, (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2010); P. Phoofolo, ‘Epidemics and Revolutions: The Rinderpest Epidemic in the late nineteenth century Southern Africa,’ *Past and Present*, 138 (1993).

<sup>48</sup> Norman Leys, a Kenyan medical doctor, cited by K. Hughes, ‘‘They give me fever’ East Coast Fever and other environmental impacts of the Maasai moves,’ in K. Brown and D. Gilfoyle (eds), *Healing the Herds*, 156.

<sup>49</sup> C.F. Ax, et al (eds), *Cultivating the colonies: Colonial states and their environment legacies*, (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2011), 1-2. See chapter by J.M. Hodge, ‘Colonial experts, developmental and environmental doctrines, and the legacies of late British colonialism,’ in Ax, *Cultivating the colonies*, 300 – 326.

<sup>50</sup> D. Anderson, ‘Kenya’s cattle trade and the economies of empire, 1918-48,’ in K. Brown and D. Gilfoyle (eds), *Healing the Herds*. See V. Machingaidze, ‘The development of settler capitalist agriculture in Southern Rhodesia with particular reference to the role of the state, 1908- 1939,’ PhD Thesis, University of London, 1980.

veterinary services were integral to the colonial system and thus did not escape the trappings of segregatory politics.

Though livestock have been mentioned in environmental studies, they appear as part of narratives that explain the predicament of their owners in the wake of colonisation and the development of the capitalist economy rather than being subjects of the studies themselves. However, socio-environmental historians are beginning to place species at the centre of their studies and to develop a deep investigation of livestock breeds and breeding in the colonies.<sup>51</sup> There is a new group of animals-sensitive historians who have enriched our historical understanding by focusing on social history from an animal perspective. Swart has written a number of animal-sensitive historical studies.<sup>52</sup> For instance, her account of the history of horses traces the introduction of 'breeding' regimes in Southern Africa in an attempt to introduce a horse suited to the southern African environment.<sup>53</sup> Jacobs' study of the donkey massacres in Bophuthatswana offers a classic demonstration of the power/knowledge dynamic, and how it influenced attitudes towards certain species of domestic animals in the post-'betterment' era.<sup>54</sup> In her book *Environment, Power and Injustice*, Jacobs also explores the biological, geological, and climatological forces in history of Kuruman.<sup>55</sup> Others have examined how settlers strove to 'tame' the local environment. For example, Beinart and Phimister have both studied the influence and impact of environmental ideas on soil conservation and animal husbandry.<sup>56</sup> In focusing on official concern about soil conservation, Beinart makes an important observation that official thinking was not merely determined by the immediate needs of metropolitan or settler capital as it was rooted deeply into the colonial encounter, and also derived partly from older ideas about improvement and development. However, unlike Beinart who focused mainly

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<sup>51</sup> See for instance Chapters 3, 11, 12 and 13 in Brown and Gilfoyle (eds), *Healing the Herds*.

<sup>52</sup> See S. Swart, 'Case Study of Writing Animals into Social History,' *International Review of Social History*, 55 (2010), 241–263; L. van Sittert and S. Swart, *Canis Africanis: A dog history of Southern Africa*, Leiden: Brill, 2008).

<sup>53</sup> S. Swart, *Riding high: Horses, humans and history in South Africa*, (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2010).

<sup>54</sup> N. J. Jacobs, 'The Great Bophuthatswana Donkey Massacre: Discourse on the Ass and the Politics of Class and Grass,' *The American Historical Review*, 106, 2(2001), 485-507.

<sup>55</sup> N.J. Jacobs, *Environment, power and injustice: A South African History*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

<sup>56</sup> W. Beinart, 'Soil Erosion, Conservationism and Ideas about Development: A Southern African Exploration, 1900-1960,' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 11, 1 (1984), 52-83.

on South Africa, Phimister has shown that in Southern Rhodesia, ideas and prescriptions associated with conservationist thinking were first put into practice in relation to peasant agriculture, not settler farming.<sup>57</sup> Conservationism and segregation, as this thesis shows in Chapters 5 and 6, were opposite sides of the same coin as they were both mobilised in justifying and buttressing practices and arguments that ensured that African traditional livestock regimes remained emasculated and offered no competition to the white commercial cattle interests.

Whereas the initial focus by environmental historians was on how Africans were affected by conservation, Kwashirai and Musemwa have examined how the activities of white farmers and miners impacted negatively on the environment.<sup>58</sup> Kwashirai notes that there was a contemptuous dismissal of indigenous knowledge by the colonial forestry personnel failed to 'build upon, or even to acknowledge, local practices and knowledge.'<sup>59</sup> These issues especially the damage caused by mining operations were discussed in depth over a relatively bigger geographical area by Musemwa. Musemwa's study provides an alternative way of looking at the creation of white identities in southern Rhodesia and represents an ecological narrative of settler colonisation and entrenchment in the colony.<sup>60</sup> These studies reveal that the conservation discourse was victim to the conflict between miners and farmers as theirs was simply a conflict over unfettered access to natural resources both of which they were prepared to exploit without regard to protecting the environment. This is an important issue, as it is raised in Chapters 4 and 5 of this thesis to demonstrate that segregation also played a part in the implementation of conservation policies in African reserves.

Besides attracting the attention of Africanists and environmental historians, Ford's work also drew the attention of professional veterinary and medical personnel as well as medical historians who examine the potential impact of local healing practices on the livestock economy.

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<sup>57</sup> I. Phimister, 'Discourse and the Discipline of Historical Context: Conservationism and Ideas about development in Southern Rhodesia 1930-1950,' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 12, 2 (1986), 263-275.

<sup>58</sup> V.C. Kwashirai, 'Dilemmas in conservationism in colonial Zimbabwe, 1890-1930,' *Conservation and Society*, 4, 4 (2006), 541-561; M. Musemwa, 'Contestation over resources: The farmer-miner dispute in colonial Zimbabwe, 1903-1939,' *Environment and History*, 15, 1 (2009), 79-107.

<sup>59</sup> Kwashirai, 'Dilemmas in conservationism,' 547.

<sup>60</sup> Musemwa, 'Contestation over resources,' 101.

Chavunduka, a veterinary scientist and also a botanist, is among the first researchers to identify some of the veterinary remedies used by Africans, including infusions, decoctions, powders, fumes and pastes.<sup>61</sup> However, writing in the 1970s, he fell victim to the then popular notion among veterinary scientists that African livestock regimes were archaic and irrational. In dismissing African livestock regimes, Chavunduka declared that, ‘to the less sophisticated African mind, derangement of health is attributed to some supernatural powers and evil spirits which cannot be remedied by medical treatment alone.’<sup>62</sup> While Chavunduka’s brand of scepticism stunted further research into local veterinary healing practices, local healing practices attracted the attention of public health professionals and medical historians during the 1980s and 1990s. Work by Feierman<sup>63</sup>, Waite<sup>64</sup>, Ranger<sup>65</sup>, Turshen<sup>66</sup>, Orley<sup>67</sup>, Chavunduka<sup>68</sup> and Gelfand<sup>69</sup> reveal bias towards public health issues.

Though located in veterinary history, this thesis is in conversation with the histories of medicine and colonialism as it connects with the broader debate regarding the experiences of local healing practices under colonial regimes. Medical anthropologists and social historians have increased our understanding of the complexity of colonial rule, and how black people interacted with it (and under it) in diverse and shifting ways. Thus, works by Flint and White were particularly influential in helping to shape this study’s theoretical framework. Flint examines the changes in the medical, social, and political roles of healers in the Zulu Kingdom, and how these changed under white rule.<sup>70</sup> White’s pioneering work on rumour and history in colonial Africa is of importance to this study, especially the two chapters which deal with the experience of colonial

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<sup>61</sup> D.M. Chavunduka, ‘Plants regarded by Africans as being of medicinal value to animals,’ *Rhodesian Veterinary Journal*, 7, 1(1976).

<sup>62</sup> Chavunduka, ‘Plants regarded by Africans as being of medicinal value to animals,’ 8.

<sup>63</sup> S. Feierman and J.M. Janzen, ‘Therapeutic Traditions of Africa: A historical perspective,’ in S. Feierman and J. M. Janzen (eds), *The social basis of health and healing in Africa*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992).

<sup>64</sup> G. Waite, ‘Public health in pre-colonial East Central Africa,’ in S. Feierman and J. M. Janzen (eds), *The social basis of health and healing in Africa*.

<sup>65</sup> T.O. Ranger, ‘Godly medicine: The ambiguities of medical missions in South Eastern Tanzania,’ in S Feierman and J.M. Janzen (eds), *The social basis of health and healing in Africa*.

<sup>66</sup> M. Turshen, *The political ecology of disease in Tanzania*, (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1984).

<sup>67</sup> J. Orley, ‘Indigenous concepts of disease and their interaction with scientific medicine,’ in E.E. Sabben-clare, et al, *Health in tropical Africa during the colonial period*, (London: Clarendon Press, 1980).

<sup>68</sup> Chavunduka, ‘Zinatha: The organisation of traditional medicine in Zimbabwe.’

<sup>69</sup> M. Gelfand, ‘The traditional Shona’s attitude to Medicine,’ *Central African Journal of Medicine*, 18, 8 (1972).

<sup>70</sup> Flint, *Healing traditions*.

medicine in East and Central Africa and debates on the control of sleeping sickness in colonial Northern Rhodesia.<sup>71</sup> She discusses the context in which biomedicine was practiced, how biomedical technologies were believed to work as well as how much power was invested in their application. She also looks at the interaction of African ideas on diseases and imperial science and argues that the vampire accusations that emerged in Rhodesia involved local and colonial ideas about the relationship between wild animals, tsetse flies, authority and shifting cultivation practices.<sup>72</sup> Since colonial stereotypes about the health of Africans were not different from those that existed in veterinary issues, these studies are crucial in giving a wider context to that which this study seeks to explore.

Livestock and veterinary issues have also been discussed albeit tangentially in social history studies that deal with the African response to the growing demands of the capitalist economy. Most studies written from this vantage point argue that Africans responded positively to the growing demands of the capitalist economy.<sup>73</sup> This perspective was partly a response to triumphalist history written by early colonial administrators and settlers depicting their ‘successes in conquering the ‘Dark’ Continent.’<sup>74</sup> Arrighi’s ‘proletarianisation’<sup>75</sup> theory and Phimister’s study of peasant production dealt with the early colonial interactions and the incorporation of the African agricultural economy into the international capitalist system. A number of themes and sub-themes (including peasantisation, proletarianisation, de-peasantisation, peasant consciousness and the settler capitalist accumulation), which arose from Arrighi’s and Phimister’s works, motivated a number of scholarly studies subsequently. Most of these themes were captured in Palmer and Parson’s *The roots of rural poverty in Southern and Central Africa* which was concerned with the applicability of the underdevelopment or

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<sup>71</sup> L. White, *Speaking with Vampires: Rumour and history in colonial Africa*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 90.

<sup>72</sup> White, *Speaking with Vampires*, 208.

<sup>73</sup> G. Arrighi, ‘Labour supplies in historical perspective: A study of the proletarianization of the African peasantry in Rhodesia,’ *Journal of Development Studies*, 6 (1970), 197-234; I.R. Phimister, ‘Peasant Production and Underdevelopment in Southern Rhodesia, 1890-1914,’ *African Affairs*, 73, 291 (1974), 217-228. Note: Although there are various debates about the term ‘proletarianisation’, in this study it refers to the conversion of Africans into a cheap labour force.

<sup>74</sup> E. Tawse-Jollie, ‘Southern Rhodesia: A White man’s country in the tropics,’ *Geographical Review*, 17, 1 (1927). Also see: Wolmer, *From wilderness vision to farm invasions*, Chapters 1 and 2.

<sup>75</sup> Note: Arrighi uses this word loosely to refer to the conversion of African peasants into a cheap labour force.

dependency theory to the sub-region.<sup>76</sup> Palmer and Parson's book motivated a number of other studies including Ranger's extensive study of the 'peasantisation' process and 'peasant consciousness' in colonial Zimbabwe.<sup>77</sup> Closely related to these were studies that examined the development of settler agriculture in the colony whose main argument was that the impoverishment of the African peasantry was a deliberate state policy.<sup>78</sup> What stands out in this perspective is the argument that the livestock economy fared relatively better than extensive farming and that a section of successful African farmers utilised revenue from cattle sales to purchase farms and to accumulate.<sup>79</sup> Since this body of literature discusses the rise of a fledgling cattle economy in the aftermath of the Rinderpest epizootic and also to issues of destocking in passing, this thesis will utilise them to provide a nuanced understanding of the broader economic variables shaping African livestock regimes.

Though not specifically rooted in the environmental history of the region, Africanist writings also invigorated interest in colonial conservation policies.<sup>80</sup> Environmental historians have tapped into these writings to develop a rich body of literature on colonial conservation programmes. One the most significant historiographical debates raged between Beinart and Phimister.<sup>81</sup> Beinart and Phimister were at loggerheads over the intention of the colonial state in

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<sup>76</sup> R. Palmer and N. Parsons (eds), *The roots of rural poverty in central and Southern Africa*, (London: Heinemann, 1977).

<sup>77</sup> T. Ranger, 'Growing from the Roots: Reflections on Peasant Research in Central and Southern Africa,' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 5, 1, (1978), 99-133; T. Ranger, *Peasant consciousness and guerrilla war in Zimbabwe: A comparative study*, (London: James Currey, 1985).

<sup>78</sup> R. Palmer, 'The agricultural history of Rhodesia,' in R. Palmer and N. Parsons (eds), *The roots of rural poverty in central and Southern Africa*, (London: Heinemann, 1977); I.R. Phimister, 'Meat and Monopolies: Beef Cattle in Southern Rhodesia, 1890-1938,' *Journal of African History*, 19, 3 (1978); V.E.M. Machingaidze, 'The development of settler capitalist agriculture in Southern Rhodesia with particular reference to the role of the state, 1908- 1939,' PhD Thesis, University of London, 1980; J. Alexander, et al, *Violence and memory: One hundred years in the 'Dark Forests' of Matabeleland* (Oxford: James Currey, 2000).

<sup>79</sup> T. Ranger, *Peasant consciousness and guerrilla war in Zimbabwe: A comparative study*, (London: James Currey, 1985); G.C. Mazarire, 'A social and political history of Chishanga, South Eastern Zimbabwe, c.1750-2000,' DPhil Thesis, University of Zimbabwe, 2009.

<sup>80</sup> M. Drinkwater, 'Technical Development and Peasant Impoverishment: Land Use Policy in Zimbabwe's Midlands Province,' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 15, 2 (1989); J. McGregor, 'Conservation, Control and Ecological Change: The Politics and Ecology of Colonial Conservation in Shurugwi, Zimbabwe,' *Environment and History*, 1, 3, (1995), 257-279; E. Kramer, 'The clash of economies: Early centralisation efforts in colonial Zimbabwe, 1929-35,' *Zambezia*, XXV, I (1998).

<sup>81</sup> See W. Beinart, 'Soil Erosion, Conservationism and Ideas about Development: A Southern African Exploration, 1900-1960,' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 11, 1 (1984), 52-83; Phimister I., 'Discourse and the Discipline of

implementing the centralisation policy.<sup>82</sup> Beinart argued that it was for conservation purposes whereas Phimister saw the application of these programmes as serving a segregatory purpose. Some scholars drew syncretically from these debates to argue that they served both purposes.<sup>83</sup> Overall, these historiographical approaches reveal a sustained state intrusion, among other things, into African livestock regimes especially through destocking through forced sales and centralization of lands into grazing and farming land. This thesis considers segregation and conservation arguments as two different parts of the same coin, and discusses the impact of state intrusion in general and veterinary activities in particular on African livestock regimes.

While acknowledging and sometimes upholding the Africanist contention that increased interaction between people and animals from different environments in the wake of European colonisation resulted in outbreaks of new epizootics and enzootics, a number of studies have focused on how these were perceived and dealt with under colonial setups.<sup>84</sup> Van Onselen has analysed the political effects of Rinderpest in Southern Africa, that is, how veterinary measures adopted by the colonial authorities led to rebellions by indigenous populations.<sup>85</sup> Phoofolo has questioned why Rinderpest failed to precipitate a revolution in Southern Africa.<sup>86</sup> Bundy argues that from the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century and the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century developments in Eastern Griqualand were closely shaped by the disease environment, and that change in rural

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Historical Context: Conservationism and Ideas about development in Southern Rhodesia 1930-1950,' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 12, 2 (1986), 263-275.

<sup>82</sup> See Chapter 5 for more on centralisation policies.

<sup>83</sup> J. McGregor, 'Conservation, Control and Ecological Change: The Politics and Ecology of Colonial Conservation in Shurugwi, Zimbabwe,' *Environment and History*, 1, 3, (1995), 257-279; W.A. Munro, *The moral economy of the state: Conservation, community development, and state making in Zimbabwe*, (Athens: Ohio Center for International Studies, 1998); G. Thompson, "'Pumpkins just got in there": Gender and generational conflict and "improved" agriculture in colonial Zimbabwe,' *International Review of Social History*, 55 (2010), 175-201.

<sup>84</sup> D. Gilfoyle, 'The Heartwater mystery: veterinary and popular ideas about tick-borne animal diseases at the Cape, c.1877 – 1910', *Kronos*, 29 (2003), 139-160; D. Gilfoyle, 'Veterinary Research and the African Rinderpest epizootic: The Cape Colony, 1896-1898,' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 29, 1 (2003); K. Brown, 'Tropical medicine and animal diseases: Onderstepoort and the development of veterinary science in South Africa, 1908 to 1950,' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 31, 33 (2005); C.B. Andreas, 'The Spread and Impact of the Lung sickness Epizootic of 1853-57 in the Cape Colony and the Xhosa Chiefdoms,' *South African Historical Journal*, 53 (2005), 50-72; K. Brown, 'From Ubombo to Mkhuzi: Disease, colonial science and the control of nagana (Livestock trypanosomiasis) in Zululand, south Africa, c.1894-1953,' *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences*, 63 (2008), 285-322.

<sup>85</sup> C. van Onselen, 'Reactions to Rinderpest in Southern Africa, 1896-1897,' *Journal of African History*, 13, 3, (1972).

<sup>86</sup> P. Phoofolo, 'Epidemics and Revolutions: The Rinderpest Epidemic in the late nineteenth century Southern Africa,' *Past and Present*, 138 (1993).



communities was increasingly forced upon Africans through veterinary interventions.<sup>87</sup> However, this thesis questions the translatability of Bundy's model across the region since the enforcement of dipping (discussed in Chapter 3) among Africans in Southern Rhodesia may be an example of colonial intrusion that does not describe a straightforward process of colonial subjugation to which Africans responded simply in terms of either 'collaboration' or 'resistance'.<sup>88</sup>

Cranefield's study is a useful comparative history of the struggle against East Coast Fever in Rhodesia (colonial Zimbabwe) and the Transvaal. His main focus was the effort by colonial veterinary authorities to control the disease. He argues that the disease made relatively little progress among African-owned cattle compared to European cattle. The explanation given, especially for Southern Rhodesia (Colonial Zimbabwe), is that the remoteness of African owned cattle from main roads used by transport riders protected them from the new disease for a long time.<sup>89</sup> This explanation will be challenged in Chapter 2 as it ignores evidence of African agency as it assumes that they were passive spectators to the devastation caused by the disease. It assumes that they were not using any local healing remedies and practices to heal or protect their cattle. Neither does it consider the possibility that colonial veterinary practices may have been adopted by African livestock owners. The evidence Cranefield provides is fragmentary and inadequate, obtained as it is from the reports of the chartered company then running the colony, native commissioners and cattle inspectors. The African voice is largely absent. Nevertheless, Cranefield's study remains important in as far as it delineates the factors driving state veterinary policies in the Transvaal and Southern Rhodesia at the beginning of the twentieth century. This thesis addresses some of these weaknesses by taking a multidisciplinary approach to veterinary history. Like Cranefield, I have examined the struggle against East Coast Fever in colonial

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<sup>87</sup> C. Bundy, 'We don't want your rain, we won't dip,' Popular opposition, collaboration and social control in the anti-dipping movement, c.1908-16,' in C. Bundy and W. Beinart (eds), *Hidden struggles in rural South Africa* (London: James Currey, 1987), 193. See also S. Marks, 'The Zulu disturbances in Natal,' in R.I. Rotberg and A.A. Mazrui (eds), *Protest and Power in Black Africa*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), 213-257.

<sup>88</sup> Brooks, 'Images of 'Wild Africa', 222.

<sup>89</sup> P. Cranefield, *Science and Empire: East Coast Fever in Rhodesia and the Transvaal*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 225.

Zimbabwe.<sup>90</sup> Though this study attempted to fill the historiographical gap on veterinary history by analysing earliest forms of intercourse between veterinary medicine and tropical diseases, it dealt with one side of the equation which is ‘colonial science’ and European cattle breeds. It did not engage key issues to do with African livestock owners and their relationship with veterinary scientists. Thus, this thesis grapples with this lacuna in our understanding of Zimbabwe’s veterinary past.

Whilst the rising challenges to biomedical approaches have, since the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, rekindled interest in local healing practices, this interest led as it is by sociologists, veterinary and animal scientists, is mainly from a development studies perspective – especially presentist concerns over how local healing practices can be preserved and applied. Matekaire and Bwakura, who examine community based solutions to farmers’ health problems in East, West and Central Mashonaland in post-colonial Zimbabwe, conclude that 95 per cent of their sample never availed themselves of the services offered by the veterinarians except for cattle dipping which was mandatory.<sup>91</sup> Their findings are also similar to those of Gueye who has reviewed selected field experiences on the use of ethno-veterinary medicine in poultry husbandry systems in postcolonial Africa.<sup>92</sup> Gueye argues that resource-poor village poultry farmers in Africa do not have money for or access to chemical medicines or to other cost effective control measures hence they rely on ancestral indigenous knowledge to control various poultry diseases. Post-colonial Zimbabwe is among those countries said to be increasingly resorting to ethno-veterinary medicine. Unlike Matekaire and Bwakura, and Gueye, this thesis does not seek to reduce African preference of local healing practices to financial desperation but seeks to take into consideration other factors which shaped choice of veterinary medicine among African livestock owners. Furthermore, since these are all quantitative studies, this thesis draws on their approaches and proposes a qualitative approach that includes a strong focus on how livestock owners viewed their particular historical situations and experiences.

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<sup>90</sup> W. Mwatwara, ‘‘The tick was not slow to take advantage’’: Conflicts in the struggle against East Coast Fever in Southern Rhodesia (1901–1920),’ *South African Historical Journal*, 65, 2 (2013), 249-270.

<sup>91</sup> T. Matekaire and T.M. Bwakura, ‘Ethno-veterinary medicine a potential alternative to orthodox animal health delivery in Zimbabwe,’ *International Journal of Applied Research in Veterinary Medicine*, 2, 4 (2004), 269-273.

<sup>92</sup> E.F. Gueye, ‘Ethno-veterinary medicine against poultry diseases in African villages,’ *World’s Poultry Science Journal*, 55 (1999), 187-198.

Presentist and forgivably ahistorical studies examine how local healing practices are faring in post-colonial contexts. McGaw and Eloff have collated the documented use of plants in South Africa for healing various ailments in domestic animals and argue that the livestock owners generally treat their own animals using medicinal plant knowledge that they themselves possess, instead of consulting traditional healers.<sup>93</sup> A similar contention is offered by Davis who specifically dealt with the gender dimension to local healing practices, which will help sensitise this study to an inclusion of gender as a category of historical analysis.<sup>94</sup> In her study, Davis contends that women continue to have a sizable role in the daily life of livestock. Some studies deal with efforts that have been made by nongovernmental organisations in the provision of veterinary services. In particular, Almond's study on Southern Sudan describes Oxfam's programme of rehabilitation among pastoralists with its emphasis on the use of locally trained para-vets and community participation in the management of animal health services.<sup>95</sup> A study by Woods reveals that such an initiative was made in Zimbabwe but a historical account is still lacking hence little is known regarding its origin, impact and fate.<sup>96</sup> Nonetheless, Woods' identification of the relationships between variables affecting the demand and use of the various services offered by government employed veterinary livestock technicians in Zimbabwe, is an important foundation for this research. Unlike these studies, this thesis seeks a longer understanding of change over time, to contribute to filling the lacunae on the historical role and significance of African livestock regimes and their co-existence with western forms of medicine. Gaps in our understanding of Zimbabwe's veterinary past reveal a pressing need for a more holistic understanding of the historical relationship between communal farmers and veterinary medicine. This is pertinent as such a study would provide a more nuanced understanding of the country's veterinary past and, more importantly, suggest potential modes of state veterinary intervention in the present dispensation. It is in light of this, that this thesis seeks to contribute to

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<sup>93</sup> L.J. McGaw and J.N. Eloff, 'Ethno-veterinary use of southern African plants and scientific evaluation of their medicinal properties,' *Journal of Ethno-pharmacology*, 119 (2008), 559–574.

<sup>94</sup> D. Davis, 'Gender indigenous knowledge, and pastoral resource use in Morocco,' *Geographical Review*, 86, 2 (1996).

<sup>95</sup> M. Almond, 'Pastoral development and the use of para-vets in Southern Sudan,' *Development in Practice*, 1, 1 (1991).

<sup>96</sup> P.S. Woods, et al, 'Path analysis of subsistence farmers' use of veterinary services in Zimbabwe,' *Preventive Veterinary Medicine*, 61 (2003).

knowledge through an examination of the historical relationship between African cattle owners and the veterinary establishment in colonial Zimbabwe.

### **Theoretical points of departure and research questions**

The literature review above reveals that a number of colonial technocratic policies which had a largely indirect impact on African livestock regimes have drawn significant attention from academics and that veterinary interactions in the reserves have hardly been subjected to historical analysis. However, it also confirms Carruthers' observation that very little has been said about livestock regimes in Africa.<sup>97</sup> Whereas colonial expansion, settler capitalist accumulation, rural politics have been discussed, veterinary practices have been restricted to what Tropp merely calls 'cameo appearances here and there.'<sup>98</sup> Drawing on the model offered by Jeater, this thesis utilises the development of veterinary medicine to understand 'what happens when humans encounter each other's societies in circumstances where they each find the other's behaviour strange and potentially threatening... [It] focuses on how white administrators tried to make sense of African societies, but it is also about how the local peoples tried to make sense of the white people's interventions into their lives.'<sup>99</sup> Indeed, among other things, this thesis is concerned with conflicts between colonial experts (veterinary and animal scientists) and African livestock owners over what type of cattle to rear, how they were to be pastured, and also how epizootics and enzootics could be eradicated or controlled. Thus, in approaching this topic from a veterinary perspective, this thesis offers a novel direction both methodologically and empirically as few, if any, academic studies have extensively utilised material generated by veterinarians as a lens to understanding the parameters of the interaction of vets and African livestock owners during the colonial period.

Given the gaps that exist in literature, the following questions arise: What were the factors driving the establishment of veterinary services in Zimbabwe? What was the relationship between veterinary medicine and colonialism? How did colonial relations affect access to

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<sup>97</sup> J. Carruthers, 'Tracking in game trails: looking afresh at the politics of environmental history in South Africa,' *Environmental History*, 11, 4 (2006), 822.

<sup>98</sup> Tropp, *Natures of colonial change*, 7.

<sup>99</sup> D. Jeater, *Law, language, and science: The invention of the "Native Mind" in Southern Rhodesia, 1890 – 1930*, (Portsmouth: Heinemann, 2007), 1.

veterinary services? Did the state use veterinary diseases as an excuse to justify, facilitate and consolidate its control over the local population as other studies have suggested in other contexts? How did veterinary policy relate to the science of veld management and the politics of African affairs? How did African livestock owners deal with new epizootics and enzootics that broke among their animals? What was the impact of state policies on African livestock regimes?

This thesis is rooted in the field of socio-environmental history as local livestock management practices are located strongly in both their social and environmental context. However, since it is clearly about the complex interactive interdependence of people, livestock and disease – issues central to veterinary medicine, it does not limit itself to the trappings of a single grand theory. Instead, it draws upon (but does not limit itself to) ideas from political ecology, theory from the south, and subaltern studies coupled to a long tradition of social history to examine how those historically suppressed and disenfranchised from state veterinary policies reacted to or imagined the veterinary and environmental arguments mobilized by the state to justify segregation. These frameworks were pivotal in influencing the nature of questions (rather than the answers) which this thesis raises and seeks to address. Given Thompson's observation that the history of the working class cannot be understood without also examining the history of their employers, this thesis disentangles state veterinary interactions with African livestock regimes through approaching the subject both from the bottom and from above.<sup>100</sup> Subjugated knowledge – as is the case with African traditional livestock regimes which were (and still are) eclipsed by the hegemonic scientific and technocratic explanations of livestock disease control and management – is also better understood, as Scott argues, and approached from the bottom.<sup>101</sup>

Both subaltern theory and 'theory from the South' are helpful tools of analysis for this type of study as they challenge one to explore the relationship between biomedicine and society, and the historical inadequacies of the science through the lens of those that were formerly colonized rather than through the lenses of their colonizers only.<sup>102</sup> These epistemologies allow us to

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<sup>100</sup> See E.P. Thompson, *The making of the English working class*, (England: Penguin Books, 1968).

<sup>101</sup> J.C. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday forms of peasant resistance*, (New London: Yale University Press, 1985).

<sup>102</sup> J. Comaroff and J.L. Comaroff, *Theory from the south or how Euro-America is evolving toward Africa*, (London: Paradigm Publishers, 2012); R. Connell, *Southern theory: The global dynamics of knowledge in social science*,

explore and understand the complexity of the colonial experience through interrogating how Africans ‘flouted, reconstructed, repudiated and remade European life-ways,’ and also how they understood modernity so as to ‘fashion their own versions of it, even as they live with its constraints and contradictions.’<sup>103</sup> Likewise African livestock owners interpreted veterinary policy in ways that differed with that of the vets. The net effect was the manufacture of a different modernity other than the one which was anticipated by the colonizers. This, as this thesis will show, resulted in a complex relationship characterised by the colonial state’s attempt to assert control over African livestock regimes on one hand and attempts by livestock owners to negotiate for space in a situation where their access to resources was constrained by the development of a capitalist economy, on the other hand. In this thesis, the south is understood to be a geographical expression. However, the crass reductionist assumption implicit in extreme Africanism that everything from the North is bad is to be questioned as veterinary medicine certainly played an important role in eradicating and controlling certain diseases. Political ecology recognises the complex linkages between social, political, and biophysical process at global, regional and local levels.<sup>104</sup> This is an important framework to utilise when examining veterinary medicine and African livestock regimes as it affords us an opportunity to understand how this relationship has been shaped or reshaped by ecological and political factors.

### **Research design and methodology**

This thesis makes use of archival material, supplemented with oral interviews where possible. It is informed by a secondary body of literature delineated in the literature survey above. Two methods and a range of historical sources were used to answer questions that have been raised. Owing to the paucity of historical works on the rise of veterinary medicine and livestock healing practices used by African livestock owners in Zimbabwe, initial focus was placed on reading and analysing secondary works such as books, theses, dissertations and articles in journals (scientific, anthropological and historical) to challenge conventional interpretations and fill gaps in

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(Cambridge: Polity, 2007). For a critique of the subaltern theory in African studies see, for instance, F. Cooper, ‘Conflict and connection: Rethinking colonial African history,’ *The American Historical Review* 99, 5 (1994), 1516-1545.

<sup>103</sup> Comaroff and Comaroff, *Theory from the south*, 8, 11.

<sup>104</sup> E. Kalipeni and D. Feder, ‘A political ecology perspective on environmental change in Malawi with the Blantyre Fuelwood Project Area as a case study,’ *Politics and the life sciences*, 18, 1 (1999), 39.

historiography. This was coupled to broader theoretical texts which pushed me to ask new questions too. Although this thesis intended to make extensive use of a variety of newspapers to capture the train of contemporary thought prevailing throughout the country at particular periods, access to these was very limited as the microfilm machine at the National Archives of Zimbabwe (NAZ) has not been repaired following its breakdown a few years ago. Nonetheless, a few hard copies were accessed at NAZ but as documentary sources, newspapers have their own biases and at times inaccuracies. This gap was solved through reading contemporary veterinary journals, legislative debates and letters sent to colonial veterinary officials about veterinary challenges and policy.

Most of the primary material utilized in this thesis was obtained from the National Archives of Zimbabwe. This repository contains a great deal of previously neglected material related to veterinary administration, policy, committee papers (mainly evidence to commissions of enquiry), memoranda, letters from the public, records of interviews with interest groups, clippings from newspapers and paper reports among others. Since veterinary issues were dealt with by several government ministries and departments, that is, the Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture and Native Affairs Department, the researcher was aware of the importance of paying attention to more than one government department or ministry when searching for documentary evidence. Interdepartmental correspondence provided a very interesting dynamic to both state policy, and how livestock disease management and cattle improvement activities in the reserves were perceived by colonial officials.

Whilst effort was made to access institutional records, such as those belonging to the Commercial Farmers' Union (CFU), no access was permitted as there was suspicion (understandably so given the political polarisation in Zimbabwe at the moment) that the author was a government spy sent to monitor activities of the former white commercial farmers. A letter of introduction from Stellenbosch University increased the suspicion since the university now has a large number of presidential scholarship beneficiaries drawn from perceived sympathisers of the land reform programme. At the Zimbabwe National Traditional Healers Association of

Zimbabwe (ZINATHA) – the largest association representing traditional healers, herbalists and faith healers in Zimbabwe – there exist no database or repository of livestock diagnostic, prophylactic and therapeutic remedies as most traditional healers specialize on public health. Attempts to access personal archives belonging to influential former government officials particularly Dr Dexter Chavunduka (the first black veterinary surgeon in Zimbabwe), Prof Gordon Chavunduka (a Sociology professor and the founding president of ZINATHA) and Dr Stuart Hargreaves (Principal Director Livestock and Veterinary Services) were futile as these three officials could not speak to me as they were all unwell. Each of these three officials had a unique impact on livestock disease management. As head of ZINATHA, Prof Chavunduka had influence among traditional healers – many of whom referred to him as their ‘father’ – and for many years collated their therapeutic remedies. In fact, the ZINATHA archive was at his house due to financial constraints of running a library in Harare City Centre. As a result, this material remained inaccessible throughout his illness, and also after his death as officials at ZINATHA do not have a register of what exactly was kept at Prof Chavunduka’s house.<sup>105</sup> Dr Chavunduka, being the first black veterinarian in the Zimbabwe’s veterinary services and also one time principal director in that department, no doubt would have provided a rich source of information both written and oral. Stuart, also a veterinary surgeon, who joined the Veterinary Services Department in 1970 and worked through the change of government from white minority rule to majority rule in 1980, rose through the ranks to become principal director, may also have provided useful data. Nonetheless, these avenues will be pursued in future studies.

Although interviews with Prof Gordon Chavunduka were cancelled on account of his illness, he kindly referred me to a trusted official Mr George Kandiero (ZINATHA’s spokesperson) with whom I travelled to attend a series of meetings with traditional and faith healers in outlying districts. These journeys unearthed a rich seam of ethnographic material and oral history, which I also used together with interviews carried out with livestock owners in different parts of the country. I also travelled to Rusape (Manicaland Province) to attend an annual ZINATHA Conference addressed by a Mr Amon Ndhlovu – the Deputy President (ZINATHA).

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<sup>105</sup> Personal communication with Margaret Nchacha, Administrator and Finance Manager at ZINATHA Head Office, 01/09/2013.



Dr Chavunduka had relocated to Canada, while Dr Hargreaves was no longer coming to work due to illness. It was with sadness that I later learnt of the deaths of these three officials shortly after my return from fieldwork. Personal archives would have been important in illuminating individual contributions to public issues and as sources that provide important material on events and problems to which the person was involved as a witness.<sup>106</sup> Furthermore, not all of the information needed could be accessed from the national archives partly due to loss of machinery and also due to lack of expert document retrievers. The Department of Veterinary Services Library in Harare proved to be a rich source of information especially veterinary and other technical reports.

In addition, it is important to challenge the nature of the colonial archive. Important as they were to this thesis, they do not reflect popular thinking among Africans during the colonial period. Instead they reflect an ‘outsider’s’ perspective as they were written by colonial officials who were partly blinded by prejudices against local veterinary practices, and partly by their inability to penetrate the local culture. Thus, in official reports and correspondence, Africans are generally portrayed as unintelligent, puerile and in need of guidance.<sup>107</sup> Consequently, colonial records ‘report the elaborate colonial attempt to record local space, local property and local ideas into imperial terms...’<sup>108</sup> Despite this weakness, this thesis utilises the ‘reading against the grain’ technique (where necessary) to both retain some measure of historical objectivity and find what is hidden between the lines of official discourse.<sup>109</sup> These archives enable one to study, for example, the nature of complaints lodged against local healing practices and livestock management practices by colonial officials, how Africans defended their veterinary practices and

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<sup>106</sup> G. McCulloch, *Documentary research in education, history and the social sciences*, (London: RoutledgeFalmer, 2004), 70.

<sup>107</sup> For more on how the colonial archive was meant to promote settler colonialism see L. Dristas and J. Haig, ‘An archive of identity: the Central African Archives and Southern Rhodesian history,’ *Archival Science* (2013), 1-20; P. Lalu, ‘The grammar of domination and the subjection of agency: colonial texts and modes of evidence,’ *History and Theory*, 39, 4 (2000), 45-68.

<sup>108</sup> J. Hervia and G. Spivak cited in L. White, *Speaking with Vampires*, 209.

<sup>109</sup> For more on the reading against the grain technique see E. Allina-Pisano, ‘Resistance and the social history of Africa,’ *Journal of Social History*, 37, 1 (2003), 187-198.

whether there were any prosecutions. Furthermore, they are important sources of information especially for the pre-1930 period – for which interviews could not be done.

The third source and second method were oral history sources. For a study dealing with people's lived experiences, the view that, 'human actions cannot be understood unless the meaning that human beings assign to them is understood' is worth noting.<sup>110</sup> As such, deeper perspectives into the thoughts, feelings, beliefs and values of African livestock owners, where possible, were obtained through oral history interviews.<sup>111</sup> This is important given the point that 'the words of the colonized simply describe their world with far greater detail and accuracy than any coloniser could.'<sup>112</sup> However, where interviews were carried out with veterinary officials, traditional chiefs, district administrators, politicians and veterinary technical officials, they provided a good yield of data. When carrying out interviews, the researcher utilized the convenience sampling technique to get important connections and insights. After this initial stage, the snowball sampling technique was used. In areas, where it was not possible to personally hold interviews, research assistants native to those areas were utilised.

More specifically, two types of oral history interviews were used: in-depth and focus group interviews. In-depth interviews are particularly useful when assessing subjugated knowledge, that is, they give access to peoples' ideas, thoughts and memories in their own world.<sup>113</sup> Focus group interviews are crucial given that they yield data more quickly as they give a group dynamic which is an important source of data that cannot be found in in-depth interviews.<sup>114</sup> Homogenous focus groups consisting of livestock owners and or people who have knowledge of livestock diseases, policy and or remedies were also utilised extensively since they give an

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<sup>110</sup> C. Marshall and G.B. Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research*, (California: Sage Publications, 2006), 53.

<sup>111</sup> For an understanding of the role of oral history in recreating an historical narrative this thesis drew on: B. Carton and L. Vis, 'Doing oral history,' in P. Denise and R. Nsimane, *Oral history in a wounded country*, (Scottsville: UKZN Press, 2008); B. Bozzoli, 'Interviewing women of Phokeng,' in R. Perks and A. Thomson (eds), *The oral history reader*, (New York: Routledge, 2006); L. Stopes, 'Oral history and the study of communities: Problems, paradoxes and possibilities,' in R. Perks and A. Thomson (eds), *The oral history reader*.

<sup>112</sup> L. White, *Speaking with Vampires*, 90.

<sup>113</sup> S.N. Hesse-Biber and P. Leavy, *The practice of Qualitative Research*, (Los Angeles: Sage, 2011), 47.

<sup>114</sup> C. Marshall and G. B. Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research*, (California: Sage Publications, 2006), 101-2.

opportunity for a deeper understanding about a given issue.<sup>115</sup> Focus group interviews produce ‘a happening’ that cannot be reproduced in any other group because participants ‘are not merely responding to questions posed by the researcher but are also responding to each other.’<sup>116</sup> Informants were asked to describe state veterinary practices, ethno-veterinary remedies, their conceptualization of both practices, the indigenous attitudes to animals and understanding of animal diseases. However, since interviewees may ‘lie a bit, cheat a bit,’<sup>117</sup> their statements were examined for consistency through drawing information from as many different sources as possible, and reading against the grain of the archive.

All interviews with black livestock owners were conducted in vernacular languages. However, these could not be carried in all provinces due to logistical, linguistic and security concerns as no funding for fieldwork was obtained. An opportunity to travel with two teams, led by Mr Choga (National Field Superintendent of the Department of Veterinary Department (Field services)), during their annual field inspections first to Mashonaland Province in March 2012 and then to Manicaland province in May 2012 enabled me to meet with livestock owners at their local dip tanks. Because it was important to understand how local veterinary knowledge was passed down from generation to generation, I had several interviews with different age-groups ranging from seven to ninety seven years old. These interviews unearthed a very rich body of indigenous healing remedies and livestock management practices. Most of the livestock owners interviewed during these field visits revealed that they have a large body of knowledge inherited from parents, relatives, neighbours and friends. However, because all the interviewees were born after the imposition of certain mandatory veterinary regulations, they had difficulties in recollecting how their ancestors initially reacted to veterinary medicine when it was first introduced. While most believed that European occupation resulted in the increase of disease outbreaks, they also thought that resistance to veterinary medicine and technocratic intervention was partly because of ignorance. Nonetheless, older informants usually capped their recollections of the colonial

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<sup>115</sup> Hesse-Biber and Leavy, *The practice of Qualitative Research*, 178.

<sup>116</sup> Hesse-Biber and Leavy, *The practice of Qualitative Research*, 166.

<sup>117</sup> Deutscher cited by S. Taylor and R. Bogdan, *Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods*, (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1998), 109.

veterinary policies with the poignant understatement ‘*zvakange zvakaoma panguva iyoyo*’ (life was difficult during that time).

That there were few female informants at dip tanks where interviews took place is explained by the fact that herding livestock is culturally a male duty and thus more men take livestock to the dip tank. At times, I felt that informants were not willing to share some information they possessed. Furthermore, oral interviews sometimes did not yield data as some informants were either averse to being put on record or thought that I was a state veterinary official whose duty was to ‘sniff out’ violators of veterinary programmes. That they harboured such suspicions was not surprising – as this thesis reveals – as there has been an enduring legacy in both colonial and post-colonial contexts of state pressure into accepting policies whose motives locals neither understand nor who appeared to benefit from their effects. Some were clearly in a hurry to go back to their homesteads as soon as their cattle dipped, and thus did not have time to finish the interviews. Interviews carried out with informants in the comfort of their homes tended to produce much data as informants were more relaxed. Generally, there were uniformities in oral histories collected in different regions – something which gave me confidence that interviewees were not distorting or exaggerating their experiences – and it was also corroborated in official reports which sometimes had to be read against the grain.

Although close to 100 interviews were carried out in different parts of the country, only a fraction has been utilised in this thesis. This was because most of the accounts were of recent experiences to be of value for this thesis (but will be useful in postdoctoral research) while some were biased towards public health. A case in point is that of the data collected on the side-lines of a conference organized by ZINATHA where over 100 traditional and faith healers attended. Most practitioners did not know much about livestock disease management practices but because they thought I could serve as a marketing tool for their services some made outrageous claims to possessing veterinary knowledge. Notable examples, are that of Obert Nkomo, a traditional healer from Rusape and also an ex-combatant, whose only evidence to possessing such knowledge was the fact that he survived the liberation war while Muneri Nehaka from Wedza

claimed to have lived with mermaid 'under' water in a pool for fifteen years and thus could treat any disease both animal and human alike.<sup>118</sup>

### **Structure and layout**

The thesis is divided into seven chapters. The first chapter introduces the thesis, reviews the literature and discusses the theoretical as well as the methodological approaches employed. Chapter 2 discusses how the interaction with Europeans just before and after colonisation brought a variety of diseases which were unknown to Africans. It examines the 1861 contagious bovine pleuropneumonia (Lung Sickness) outbreak, Rinderpest Epidemic (1896-1898), and the 1902 East Coast Fever outbreak. It argues that African livestock regimes were unable to deal with these epizootics, thus Africans largely linked them to colonisation and the expansion of capitalist production. It also contends that the distribution of veterinary facilities was highly racialised as there was no corresponding tendency by the administration to provide Africans with veterinary services in the reserves. It demonstrates that, regardless of their ingenuity in the face of adversity, there was an inadequacy and, in some cases, an absence of a wide pool of indigenous knowledge for some of the diseases because they simply never existed before.

Whereas Chapter 2 discussed initial veterinary experiences in the territory, and the different bodies of veterinary knowledge, Chapter 3 explores the role played by East Coast Fever in the introduction of dipping tanks in the colony. While acknowledging that there was therapeutic pluralism, this chapter particularly concentrates on the processes, reactions, and results of dipping. It argues that though dip tanks were introduced as a tick control measure, in African reserves it was also a social control tool. Furthermore, it argues that dipping was also an integral part of the growth of the capitalist economy offering an opportunity for herds across the country to be enumerated for taxation purposes. Their distribution across the country offers a revealing portrait of the social relations in the territory. This chapter draws on but challenges Colin Bundy's argument that from the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century and the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century developments in Eastern Griqualand, a similar colonial context to that in Southern Rhodesia,

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<sup>118</sup> Interview with Muneri Nehaka (Traditional healer from Wedza), born 1944, Rusape Hall, 28/03/12; interview with Obert Nkomo, born 1961, traditional healer, Rusape Hall, 28/03/12

were closely shaped by the disease environment, and that change in rural communities was increasingly forced upon Africans through veterinary interventions.

Chapter 4 shifts the focus from therapeutic and prophylactic measures discussed in chapters 2 and 3 to reproductive issues. It focuses the lens on how Africans grappled with livestock breeding issues in a changing economic and socio-political environment characterised by the imposition of a hegemonic veterinary regime. Contrary to general literature which suggests that livestock ‘improvement’ policies began in the 1930s, this chapter argues that attempts to reshape the African ideas of what good cattle entailed and African livestock management began much earlier than is generally assumed. Furthermore, it demonstrates that settler attempts at ‘taming’ the local environment through the introduction of better breeds were accompanied by virulent disease outbreaks, and that efforts to control these through either breeding or development of an inoculant made very slow progress. Thus, it discusses quarter evil and contagious abortion, and the role of state animal scientists in influencing opinion and creating conditions under which scientific livestock management could be imposed in both African and European areas.

Chapter 5 examines, firstly, conservation policies and the various ways through which veterinary challenges and measures intersected with ‘betterment’ efforts, and, secondly, how these attempted to reshape African ideas on livestock improvement. It also explores African reaction to this intrusion. It contends that centralisation policies were at variance with the state’s own veterinary policies, and that the state’s failure in dealing with this contradiction added to increased soil degradation in the reserves. Using Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) control measures as a case study, it reveals that the concentration method intrinsic to efforts to eradicate FMD contributed to environmental degradation. It argues that myriad state-led intrusive measures had a significant impact on the African rural landscape in general and livestock management practices in particular such that by 1951, the livestock regime in the reserves had changed significantly.

Chapter 6 discusses the changing nature of state veterinary and livestock policy from the passage of the Native Land Husbandry Act (1951) to independence from white minority rule in 1980. It

argues that by the 1950s, state intervention in the reserves had incubated rural political consciousness which began to adopt an increasingly nationalistic tone. It focuses on the ways through which rural nationalism manifested itself as an ideology actively opposed to veterinary measures, and how avenues opened up for rural Africans to resuscitate, among other things, debates on veterinary issues. Furthermore, it examines how, faced with the prospect of being replaced by a certain version of African vernacular veterinary system, the state veterinary bureaucracy sought to assert its control over the rural populace.

Chapter 7 wraps this thesis and suggests that by understanding its veterinary past, Zimbabwe can deal with some of the veterinary challenges it is currently facing. It argues that studies exclusively dedicated to colonial veterinary legislation may unearth useful information on how they (veterinary legislation) came into being and also how they compared with other regional contexts. Furthermore, it explores the need for further research both on the role played by women in African traditional livestock regimes, and how these women were affected by the veterinary policy pursued by both the colonial and post-colonial state.

## Chapter Two

# ‘Flying against the wind’: Local livestock healing practices and the emergence of a colonial order (c.1890-1902)

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In 1927, Eric Nobbs, the Director of Agriculture in Southern Rhodesia, observed that:

The Mashona possess an intimate knowledge of the medicinal virtues of herbs, root and bark, and use these for their cattle. Generally speaking, these drugs are similar in action to corresponding materials known to us, and in use are in more convenient form whether it be as purgatives, laxatives, diuretics, emollients, as stringers and so on.<sup>119</sup>

This statement offers rare evidence of official acknowledgement of the existence and even efficacy of local healing practices in Southern Rhodesia. Ironically, this statement was made by an official who, eleven years earlier, had declared that agricultural development in the territory was to be based strictly on his version of ‘Western scientific methods.’<sup>120</sup> Indeed, Nobbs had, since 1908, presided over a system that resisted the residual use of vernacular healing practices.<sup>121</sup> His startling admission notwithstanding, the history of veterinary services in the colony was largely characterised by attempts to exclude local therapeutic methods and ideas about disease. In exploring the development of veterinary services, this chapter will show that while there was shared (albeit limited) animal healing practices between European and Africans prior to 1902, veterinary services were founded in a highly racialised context.<sup>122</sup> It will contend that livestock disease management also provided an opportunity for social control and ‘performing’ the alleged superiority of the settler society. Moreover, as this chapter will demonstrate veterinary services were considered by Southern Rhodesian settlers as a barometer

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<sup>119</sup> E. A. Nobbs, ‘The native cattle of Southern Rhodesia,’ *South African Journal of Science*, XXIV (1927), 337. See M.K.K. Mutowo, ‘Animal diseases and human populations in colonial Zimbabwe: the rinderpest epidemic 1896-1898,’ *Zambezia*, 28, 1 (2001), 1-22.

<sup>120</sup> National Archives of Zimbabwe (hereafter NAZ) G1/1/1 Nobbs, ‘Memorandum on the organisation of the Department of Agriculture and the Veterinary Department,’ 23/09/1916.

<sup>121</sup> L.H. Gann, *A history of Southern Rhodesia: Early days to 1934*, (London: Chatto and Windus, 1965), 167.

<sup>122</sup> D. Gilfoyle, ‘The heartwater mystery: veterinary and popular ideas about tick-borne animal diseases at the Cape, c. 1877 – 1910,’ *Kronos*, 29 (2003), 139.



for measuring the successes of colonial rule, since conquering livestock disease was integral in taming the local landscape.<sup>123</sup>

### **Ethno-veterinary practices prior to colonisation**

Since this thesis analyses colonial interactions of African livestock regimes and veterinary medicine, this section offers an overview of pre-colonial animal husbandry and ethno-veterinary practices to challenge the historical stereotype that local healing practices in Africa consisted of magic, witchcraft, sorcery, and spirit possession, set against a background of throbbing drums. It utilises Edward Green's 'indigenous contagion theory' to demonstrate that ethno-veterinary ideas were not entirely supernatural in character but involved a set of concepts which were not dissimilar from biomedicine.<sup>124</sup> Green posits that African healing practices comprised of at least three interrelated types of etiological belief: 'naturalistic contagion' or what has been called folk germ theory; 'mystical contagion' more often called pollution; and environmental dangers.<sup>125</sup> This categorisation is important, as will be shown in this chapter, in as far as it demonstrates the diversity of ideas and practices existing in Africa on the eve of colonisation.

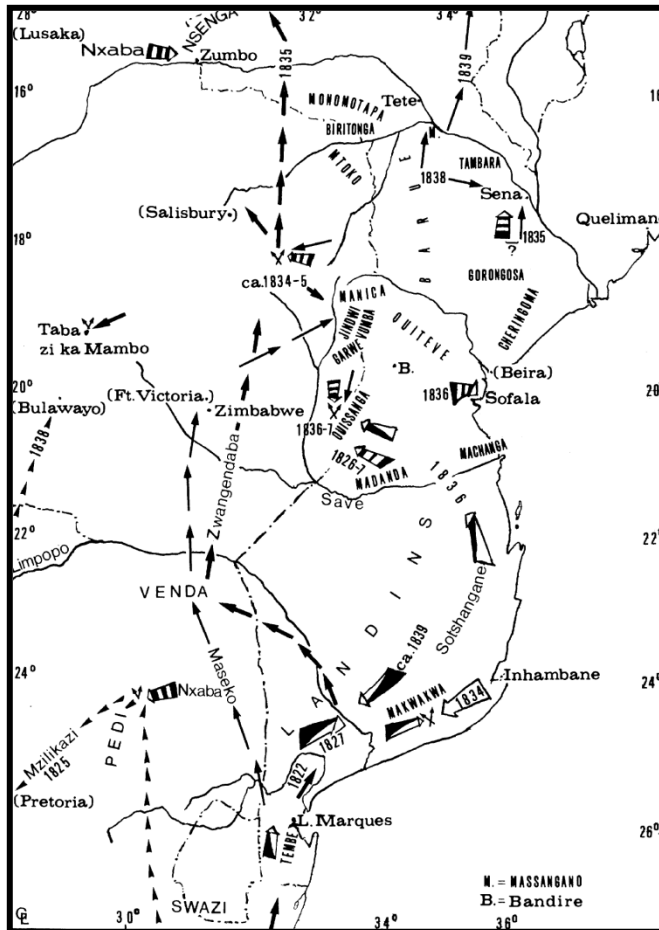
It is important to understand that African livestock regimes were neither static nor generalised geographically. They, like the diseases themselves, mutated periodically, among other things, as a result of new disease outbreaks and, after colonisation, due to contact with biomedical approaches to disease eradication. Nineteenth century Southern Africa was characterised by huge population movements mainly as a result of the Mfecane. Two groups of people, the Ndebele

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<sup>123</sup> See I. Scoones and W. Wolmer, 'Land, landscapes and disease: The case of Foot and Mouth in Southern Zimbabwe,' *South African Historical Journal*, 58 (2007), 42-64; R. Waller and K. Homewood, 'Elders and experts: Contesting veterinary knowledge in a pastoral community,' in A. Cunningham and B. Andrews, *Western knowledge as contested knowledge*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997).

<sup>124</sup> See E.C. Green, *Indigenous theories of contagious diseases*, (London: Altamira Press, 1999).

<sup>125</sup> Green, *Indigenous theories of contagious diseases*, 13. Note: naturalistic infection has been defined as an invasion of the victim's body by obnoxious microorganisms. The agents of infection are described as worms or tiny insects rather than germs. The notion of mystical contagion or pollution denotes a belief that people and animals will become ill as a result of contact with or contamination by a substance considered dangerous because it is unclean or impure. A related belief in environmental dangers is based on the idea that elements in the physical environment can cause or spread illness. One expression of this is the belief that contagious illness can be carried in the air or wind.



**Figure 2. 1: Nguni Migrations, 1821-1839**

the absence of reliable data, the extent to which all mentioned factors influenced the development of therapeutic remedies during this time remains subject to debate.<sup>128</sup> Nevertheless, it is clear that pre-colonial ethnic groups (Shona, Ndebele, Shangaan / Hlengwe, Kalanga and Tonga) possessed a variety of domestic animals including indigenous fowl, pigs, dogs, goats, sheep and cattle for which they had developed therapeutic remedies.<sup>129</sup> Oral traditions suggest that these animal species were well adapted to the local environment, with disease outbreaks being infrequent. Interviews carried out by native

and Shangaan, fleeing Shaka, settled in the area of Southern Rhodesia, and another, the Ngoni, passed through the region.<sup>126</sup> Their movements are shown in the Fig 2.1.<sup>127</sup>

No doubt these population movements increased interaction with European explorers and missionaries from the 1850s, coupled to outbreaks of new livestock diseases such as Lung Sickness among Ndebele cattle in 1861. This arguably resulted in the cross-pollination of ideas which helped to reshape African livestock regimes. Although the Nguni migrations, as shown elsewhere in this section, facilitated the dissemination of certain Zulu environmental control methods against Trypanosomiasis to Southern Rhodesia, in

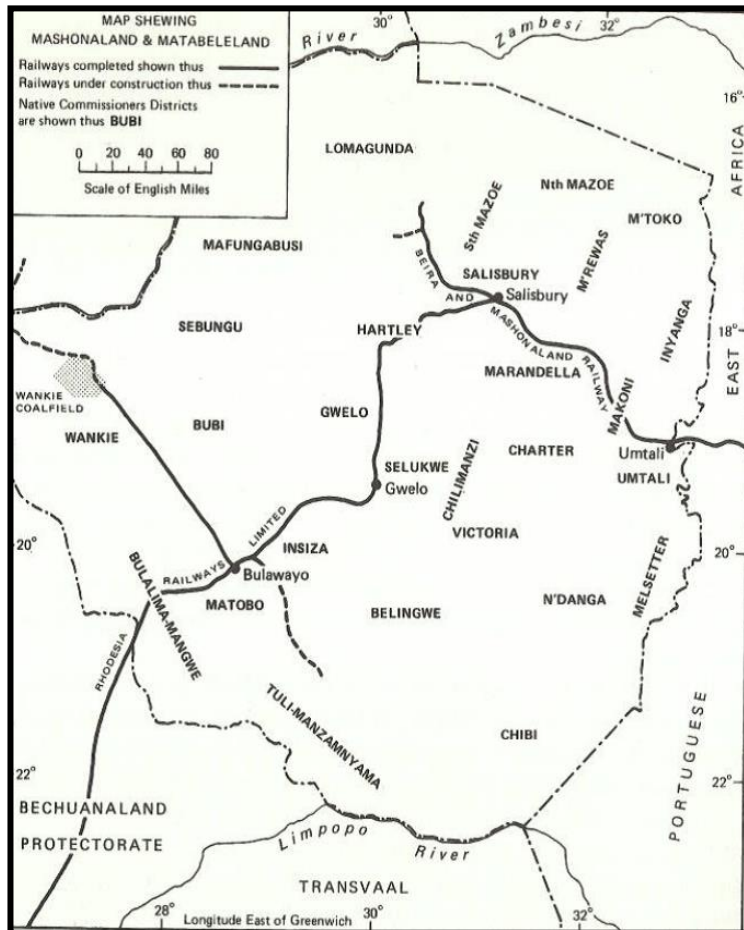
<sup>126</sup> A note on place names: The author is aware of the danger of anachronism but will, for the sake of convenience, use names of places that were used during the colonial period.

<sup>127</sup> Source: G. Liesegang, "Nguni Migrations between Delagoa Bay and the Zambezi, 1821-1839," *African Historical Studies*, 3, 2 (1970), 318.

<sup>128</sup> For a detailed study of Zulu environmental control methods see K. Brown, 'From Ubombo to Mkhuzi: Disease, colonial science and the control of *Nagana* (Livestock Trypanosomosis) in Zululand, South Africa, c.1894-1953,' *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences*, 63 (2008), 285-322.

<sup>129</sup> NAZ N3/18/2-3 Livestock: General 1917- 23.

commissioners with African elders and herbalists, between 1919 and 1923, revealed that epizootics became frequent only after colonisation.<sup>130</sup>



**Fig 2.2: Southern Rhodesia**

Even though cattle will be at the centre of this discussion, given their relative importance in the everyday lives of the local people, ethno-veterinary ideas under discussion also apply to all types of livestock. Cattle were particularly important for their social, economic and religious uses which included their role as a store of wealth, their use in *lobola* (bride-wealth) transactions, ploughing and transport, and as suppliers of milk and manure. Regardless of these commonalities, there were clear differences in the types of cattle possessed by the major ethnic groups (the Shona and the Ndebele). A self-consciously scientific study by Nobbs offers an

<sup>130</sup> NAZ N3/18/2-3 Livestock: General 1917- 23. See also Rev D. Shropshire, 'The story of anthropological research trek,' *Native Affairs Department Annual* (hereafter NADA), 7 (1929).

important source of contemporary information on cattle held by the Shona and Ndebele at the time of colonisation.<sup>131</sup> The hardy *Mashona* type (also known among the Ndebele as *Amanjanja/Njanja*) was predominant in Mashonaland areas (Melsetter, Chipinga, Chimanimani, Umtali, Inyanga, Mrewa, Makoni, Darwin, Mazoe, Lomagundi, Goromonzi, Marandellas, Charter, Chilimanzi, Selukwe), Gwanda and parts of Insiza (see Fig 2.2<sup>132</sup> above).<sup>133</sup> In Matabeleland, the *Matabele* type, probably the result of a rigorous process of selection through raiding, predominated. This ‘breed’ was mostly of a mixed type merging blood traits from the *Zansi* cattle brought from the south, when Mzilikazi fled from Zululand, the *Amabula* (Boer) cattle which were Devon-Afrikander crosses (captured on the northward journey), the *Kavuvu* cattle captured from Mashukulumbu people across the Zambesi, and *Amabowe* (Mangwato) cattle captured during raids on the Ngwato.<sup>134</sup> Nobbs contended that these animals suffered far less than imported breeds from Redwater and Gall sickness, and epizootics lost their virulence sooner.<sup>135</sup> Counter-intuitively, they also appeared to acquire immunity to introduced diseases more rapidly than introduced breeds.<sup>136</sup>

To avoid the reductionist trap of the extreme Africanist argument which blames everything on the colonisation process, it is important to acknowledge that the occurrence of disease among even these well adapted animals was experienced by livestock owners long before the 1890s. Indeed, one of the earliest written accounts pointing to the existence of the Cattle Trypanosomiasis in the area appears in a 1569 Portuguese account of life in the Mutapa Empire.<sup>137</sup> In fact, familiarity with diseases as well as the availability of a large body of ideas on how a number of livestock diseases could be treated, suggests the local environment was in no way disease free. Ethnographic research carried out by Dexter Chavunduka (1934-2012), Southern Rhodesia’s first black veterinary surgeon and botanist, revealed that at the time of colonisation in 1890, local people had already developed remedies and practised home-grown

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<sup>131</sup> See E. A. Nobbs, ‘The native cattle of Southern Rhodesia,’ *South African Journal of Science*, XXIV (1927).

<sup>132</sup> Adapted from Cranefield, *Science and Empire*, 220.

<sup>133</sup> Nobbs, ‘The native cattle of Southern Rhodesia,’ 328-9.

<sup>134</sup> Nobbs, ‘The native cattle of Southern Rhodesia,’ 338.

<sup>135</sup> Nobbs, ‘The native cattle of Southern Rhodesia,’ 336.

<sup>136</sup> Nobbs, ‘The native cattle of Southern Rhodesia,’ 336.

<sup>137</sup> J. Ford, *The role of Trypanosomiasis in African Ecology*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), 327.

environmental control measures with the twin objectives of improving animal health and productivity.<sup>138</sup> Through lived experience and observation over a long period of time, the locals became acquainted with the veterinary diseases prevalent in their areas and herbal remedies to them.<sup>139</sup> Traditional healing remedies (*mishonga yechivanhu*) were either prepared from a whole plant or from parts of the plant such as roots, bulb, bark, leaves or the fruit.<sup>140</sup> The reproductive potential of their herds was improved through the use of certain herbs which were believed to convert the sex of the unborn foetus from male to female. Milk production was increased by drenching milking cows with an extract from the Vlei lily (*crinum macowanii*) whose roots were pounded and the juice smeared on the cows' teats.<sup>141</sup> The Aloe plant (*aloe barbadensis*) was, and in some places continues to be, used as preventive medicine for New Castle disease in chickens. Among the Manyika, the *mumwahuku* plant's leaves (*cassia didymobotrya*) were pounded and mixed with water to prevent chickens from being affected by *chitosi* (Coccidiosis).<sup>142</sup> Africans may not have had the same scientific explanations as to how these remedies purged diseases but scientific analysis has demonstrated that some of these were of pharmacological value. For instance, *Clausena anisata* (*muvengehonye*) leaves which were and are still used to expel maggots from wounds contains high percentage (1, 2% - 1, 7%) of volatile oils which make them an effective remedy.<sup>143</sup>

However, the major flaw, indeed methodological naivety, in Chavunduka's work is that of generalising African therapeutic knowledge across the territory. Understandably, as a scientist his major motive was to develop a catalogue of medicinal plants used by Africans and subject these to scientific analysis. Environmental and ecological differences in African areas and the way these affected African livestock regimes were, therefore, outside his scope. Despite the

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<sup>138</sup> D. M. Chavunduka, 'Plants regarded by Africans as being of medicinal value,' *Rhodesia Veterinary Journal*, 7, 1 (1976), 7. Note: Before obtaining a B.Sc. Degree in Veterinary Science at Edinburgh University in 1964, Dr Chavunduka studied and obtained a B.Sc. Degree in Zoology and Botany at Roma University (now University of Lesotho). See *The Herald*, 20/07/2012.

<sup>139</sup> H. J. O'D. Burke-Gaffney, 'The history of medicine in Africa,' Symposium on The History of Medicine in the Commonwealth, Faculty of the History of Medicine and Pharmacy, Royal College of Physicians of London, 23 September 1966.

<sup>140</sup> Chavunduka, 'Plants regarded by Africans as being of medicinal value,' 7.

<sup>141</sup> Chavunduka, 'Plants regarded by Africans as being of medicinal value,' 7.

<sup>142</sup> J. Mapara, 'Indigenous Knowledge Systems in Zimbabwe: Juxtaposing Postcolonial Theory,' *The Journal of Pan African Studies*, 3, 1 (2009), 147.

<sup>143</sup> Chavunduka, 'Plants regarded by Africans as being of medicinal value,' 7.

overwhelming similarities in therapeutic methods, it would be a miscarriage of historical justice to suggest that ideas about veterinary diseases were homogenous – that a set ‘body of thinking’ existed. A series of interviews carried out by native commissioners with African elders between 1919 and 1921 dispelled Chavunduka’s teleological imposition of uniformity.

Contagious abortion in cattle and screw worm are intriguing examples that demonstrate both differences and similarities in livestock therapeutic practices in the pre-colonial period. Most of the replies from elders all over the country suggested that the disease never occurred in severe epidemic form before occupation, and that it occurred when there were droughts or prolonged dry spell. However, in some areas where it was prevalent, Africans did not have any effective remedy. For instance, pre-colonial livestock owners in what is now Plumtree (see Fig 2.2) knew this disease but did not look upon it as serious enough to demand a remedy.<sup>144</sup> The Native Commissioner for Inyati reported: ‘I have carefully questioned Chief Sikokobo, who, before the occupation, had charge of all Lobengula’s cattle in this district. He states that only a few cases of abortion were known, and that these generally occurred when the cattle were low in condition. Losses from this cause were so few that the matter never called for any attention.’<sup>145</sup> Contrary to these examples of pre-colonial experiences in the south-western areas, the disease appears to have been serious in the east where it occurred frequently. The NC Inyanga reported:

I am informed by older natives that contagious abortion in cattle frequently occurred among the cattle before the Rinderpest. It seems to have disappeared about the time of the occupation by the BSA Company... No herd appeared to be immune from it. It occurred all over this district. Sometimes it was very severe and large numbers of abortions occurred. In these days there are several native doctors who claimed to have remedies for this disease.<sup>146</sup>

The Victoria, Shamva and Mtoko districts seem not to have known the disease except as abortion which occurred occasionally in healthy herds due to accidents or other non-contagious causes.<sup>147</sup>

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<sup>144</sup> NAZ N3/18/2-3 Livestock: General 1917-23, letter from NC Plumtree to Superintendent of Natives (Bulawayo), 8/11/1921.

<sup>145</sup> NAZ N3/18/2-3 Livestock: General 1917-23, letter from NC Inyati to Superintendent of Natives, 21/11/1921.

<sup>146</sup> NAZ N3/18/2-3 Livestock: General 1917-23, letter from NC Inyanga to Superintendent of Natives, 21/11/1921.

<sup>147</sup> See letters from the NCs for Victoria, Shamva and Mtoko in N3/18/2-3 Livestock: General 1917-23.

There were local variations to the treatment of Screwworm (*Cochliomyia hominivorax*). While the disease occurred frequently in Fort Rixon with salt being the only remedy used,<sup>148</sup> in Umtali it came at intervals of some years usually after or during wet seasons. The Shona in Umtali considered knifing to be the only way of removing the maggots.<sup>149</sup> In Umzingwane<sup>150</sup>, Nyamandlovu<sup>151</sup>, and Charter<sup>152</sup>, Africans used the crushed leaves of the *Acacia macrothyrsa* plant (*mhlahlampethu* [*Ndebele*]/ *Muwengahonye* [*Manyika*]/*mutandahonye*/*muvhunambezo* [*Zezuru/Karanga*]) which on being applied to the wound either caused the maggots to come to the surface or killed them. It was also effectively used as a preventative measure against flies settling on a wound and laying their eggs. This remedy continued to be used in colonial times and, in some instances, attracted interest from colonial administrators. Certainly, Nobbs was not the only white administrator who developed a keen interest in African therapeutics. In 1919, for example, the NC Charter was so positive about the efficacy of *Muwengahonye* that he wrote, ‘I have seen this remedy used and can verify as to its efficacy in cleaning a wound. The shrub grows near here and I could send some leaves should they be required.’<sup>153</sup>

Furthermore, despite acknowledging the extent and efficacy of local veterinary knowledge in the nineteenth century, Chavunduka’s work does not provide particular instances in which environmental control practices were utilised to curtail outbreaks of certain epizootics. Entomological work by James Ford partly solves this problem. Unlike Chavunduka’s synchronic ‘timeless’ perspective, Ford provides an in-depth understanding of ethno-veterinary control practices of vector-borne diseases by demonstrating how pre-colonial people inhabiting the tsetse-fly belt in the south-eastern areas controlled Cattle Trypanosomiasis.<sup>154</sup> The Shangaan

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<sup>148</sup> NAZ N3/18/6 Screw worm in Cattle: 1919, letter from the NC Fort Rixon to Superintendent of Natives (Gwelo) 07/08/1919.

<sup>149</sup> NAZ N3/18/6 Screw worm in Cattle: 1919, letter from the NC Rusape to Superintendent of Natives (Umtali), 01/08/1919.

<sup>150</sup> NAZ N3/18/6 Screw worm in Cattle: 1919, letter from the NC Umzingwane to Superintendent of Natives (Bulawayo), 08/08/1919.

<sup>151</sup> NAZ N3/18/6 Screw worm in Cattle: 1919, letter from the NC Nyamandhlovu to Superintendent of Natives (Bulawayo), 08/08/1919.

<sup>152</sup> NAZ N3/18/6 Screw worm in Cattle: 1919, letter from the NC Charter to Superintendent of Natives (Salisbury), 20/08/1919.

<sup>153</sup> NAZ N3/18/6 Screw worm in Cattle: 1919, letter from the NC Charter to Superintendent of Natives (Salisbury), 20/08/1919.

<sup>154</sup> J. Ford, *The role of Trypanosomiasis in African Ecology* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971).

(Gaza-Nguni / Shangani / Changana / Hlengwe) led by Soshangane, a fugitive running away from Tshaka, first settled in the south-east in the 1830s, and returned later for an extended occupation from 1862 to 1889 during which time they demonstrated environmental ingenuity by avoiding certain environments.<sup>155</sup> Areas with butterfly trees (*Colophospermum mopane*) were avoided because they were considered harbingers of sleeping sickness.<sup>156</sup> From the 1860s, the Shangaan developed methods of tsetse control that did not involve wholesale slaughter of wild game – a policy taken by the settlers during the colonial era.<sup>157</sup> One notable example was the settling by Mzila and his Shangaan subjects in the tsetse prone Msilizwe Valley. Through his *sondela enkosini* ‘draw nigh to the king’ decree, Mzila created cattle concentration areas away from the bushes while deliberately leaving other portions unsettled to act as ‘game reserves’ especially the area between the Sitatonga Hills and the Buzi River.<sup>158</sup> What is interesting about this decree is that it exposes the fact that the locals were already aware that certain epizootics spread from wild to domestic animals. For this reason, the Shangaan kept a standing army whose sole purpose was to slaughter any game, buffaloes, baboons, and pigs, which trespassed into areas inhabited by livestock.<sup>159</sup> Evidence that these practices were useful is not hard to find. By the late 1880s when Gungunyana, Mzila’s successor, was under colonial pressure from the Portuguese in the east and the British from the south, and could no longer maintain the ecological balance in the region, there was the resurgence of Cattle Trypanosomiasis.<sup>160</sup>

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<sup>155</sup> Note: Mzila and Gungunyana were descendants of Soshangane (Manukosi) a leader among several groups of Nguni-speaking migrants who fled from disturbances in Natal associated with the rise of the Zulu state. See E. MacGonagle, ‘Living with a Tyrant: Ndaun Memories and Identities in the Shadow of Ngungunyana,’ *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 41, 1 (2008), 29-53; G. Liesageng, ‘Nguni migrations between Delagoa Bay and the Zambezi, 1821 -1839,’ *African Historical Studies*, 3, 2 (1970), 317-337.

<sup>156</sup> Ford, *The role of Trypanosomiasis in African Ecology*, 330, 333.

<sup>157</sup> See E. Gargallo, ‘A Question of Game or Cattle? The Fight against Trypanosomiasis in Southern Rhodesia (1898–1914),’ *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 35, 3 (2009), 737-753. See also M.M.M. Bolaane, ‘Tsetse and Trypanosomiasis control in the Okavango Delta, c.1930s – 1970s,’ *South African Historical Journal*, 58 (2007), 91-116.

<sup>158</sup> Ford, *The role of Trypanosomiasis in African Ecology*, 334.

<sup>159</sup> Ford, *The role of Trypanosomiasis in African Ecology*, 334.

<sup>160</sup> Ford, *The role of Trypanosomiasis in African Ecology*, 334. Immunological benefits of environmental practices have since been corroborated in a related context by Giblin’s study of East Coast Fever in Tanzania. See J.L. Giblin, ‘East Coast Fever in Socio-Historical Context: A Case Study from Tanzania,’ *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 23, 3 (1990), 401-421.



At the time Mzila was controlling Trypanosomiasis<sup>161</sup> with success in the south-eastern region, other Zulu fugitives, Mzilikazi and his Ndebele subjects were fighting Lung Sickness (*contagious bovine pleuropneumonia*) in the south-west. Lungsickness, a contagious cattle disease which was accidentally imported with infected animals from its enzootic hotbed in Europe into the Cape Colony in mid-1853<sup>162</sup>, was brought by Christian missionaries led by Robert Moffat into the Ndebele state. This outbreak, which occurred in 1861, is important for two reasons. Firstly, it was possibly the first highly contagious disease of European origin to occur among local livestock in pre-colonial times. Secondly, it occurred in a highly polarised political environment. As has been shown by Gatsheni-Ndlovu, the late 1850s were characterised by cut-throat competition for adherents and converts between traditional healers and missionaries respectively.<sup>163</sup> Realising that missionaries sought to change the traditional way of life, Ndebele traditional religious practitioners blamed them for ‘upsetting’ the ancestors hence outbreaks of epizootics.

Shortly after their arrival in the Ndebele state, the missionaries observed signs and symptoms of Lungsickness among their draught oxen and immediately reported these to Mzilikazi. Mzilikazi’s response was not only to quarantine the diseased animals, but he also arranged for his traditional religious practitioners to administer medical treatment to the missionaries themselves.<sup>164</sup> A number of questions arise from the scanty details that are available. In the first instance, was the idea to quarantine locally inspired or it was suggested by the missionaries? While McCorkle and Mathias-Mundy<sup>165</sup> have argued that there was a general policy among pre-colonial people of

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<sup>161</sup> Note: Though Trypanosomiasis had repercussions on veterinary policy, its diagnoses and control did not fall under the Veterinary Department but the Department of Tsetse Fly Control Services (manned by entomologists) and the Department of Health. As such, in this study it does not feature as a veterinary policy issue.

<sup>162</sup> Acute cases of Lung Sickness in cattle are characterized by fever, loss of appetite, depression and a drop in milk production, followed by respiratory signs which may include coughing, purulent or mucoid nasal discharges, and rapid respiration progressing to dyspnea. Severely affected cattle typically stand with their head and neck extended and forelegs apart, and breathe through the mouth. See H.P. Schneider, J.J. van der Lugt and O.J.B. Hubschle, ‘Contagious bovine pleuropneumonia,’ in J.A.W. Coetzer, G. R. Thomson and R.C. Tustin (eds), *Infectious diseases of livestock with special reference to Southern Africa*, (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1994), 1485. See also C.B. Andreas, ‘The Spread and Impact of the Lungsickness epizootic of 1853-57 in the Cape Colony and the Xhosa Chiefdoms,’ *South African Historical Journal*, 53 (2005), 50-72.

<sup>163</sup> Ndlovu-Gatsheni, ‘Rethinking religious encounters,’ 23.

<sup>164</sup> Ndlovu-Gatsheni, ‘Rethinking religious encounters,’ 23.

<sup>165</sup> C.M. McCorkle and E. Mathias-Mundy, ‘Ethnoveterinary Medicine in Africa,’ *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, 62, 1 (1992), 67.

separating sick from healthy animals, it is not clear whether ideas informing the control of 1861 outbreak were entirely local given that Mzilikazi had been in close contact with Robert Moffat. Moffat was a European missionary who was presumably aware of the 1853-7 outbreak in the Cape, and the measures taken to combat it.<sup>166</sup> The possibility of this cannot be dismissed because when the disease broke out in parts of what later became South West Africa in 1859; missionaries played a pivotal role in its containment by adopting quarantine measures.<sup>167</sup> However, contemporary accounts suggest that Mzilikazi initiated this.

Secondly, how effective were these methods? While one may celebrate the attempt to separate infected from disease free animals, circumstantial evidence suggests that the Ndebele nevertheless lost a significant number of cattle to this disease.<sup>168</sup> Therefore, these losses demonstrate two major weaknesses of African livestock regimes, that is, their inadequacy in dealing with highly infectious diseases, and that while cattle management measures such as avoidance, quarantine, and herd dispersion were helpful when the disease was intermittent or localised, they could not halt epidemics.<sup>169</sup> One can assume that since Lung Sickness is not mentioned in missionary accounts after the 1861 outbreak or in colonial records until 1895, the disease's further spread must have been halted by the dying of infected herds.<sup>170</sup>

Mzilikazi allegedly sprinkled traditional medicine on the missionaries soon after this outbreak. This raises another question: Does the administration of medicine on the missionaries suggest that they were suspected to have carried the disease into the area, and, therefore, needed to be disinfected? Ndlovu-Gatsheni has argued that the ritual was an important process meant to chase away 'bad spirits' coming with these white people and causing diseases and other misfortunes.<sup>171</sup> More importantly, these actions demonstrate yet another facet of ethno-veterinary medicines,

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<sup>166</sup> See C.B. Andreas, 'The Spread and Impact of the Lung sickness Epizootic of 1853-57 in the Cape Colony and the Xhosa Chiefdoms,' *South African Historical Journal*, 53 (2005). See also: T. J. Stapleton, 'Reluctant Slaughter: Rethinking Maqoma's Role in the Xhosa Cattle-Killing (1853-1857),' *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 26, 2 (1993), 345-369.

<sup>167</sup> H.P. Schneider, J.J. van der Lugt and O.J.B Hubschle, 'Contagious bovine pleuropneumonia,' 1485.

<sup>168</sup> Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 'Rethinking religious encounters,' 23.

<sup>169</sup> McCorkle and Mathias-Mundy, 'Ethnoveterinary Medicine in Africa,' 72.

<sup>170</sup> NAZ N1/1/3 Monthly Reports December 1894: letter from the NC Umfuli District to the Chief Native Commissioner (CNC), 09/03/1895.

<sup>171</sup> Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 'Rethinking religious encounters,' 23.

that is, supernatural practices often accompanied natural ones.<sup>172</sup> It is, therefore, safe to argue that by 1890, the fundamental principles surrounding the treatment of diseases among Africans hinged on environmental factors, natural infection as well as supernatural explanations. African livestock regimes were suited to both the livestock they possessed and environments in which they lived.

### **The making of a colonial order in the 1890s**

If, as shown in the previous section, Africans thought that certain diseases were contagious and that certain environments were undesirable for livestock, why then did these ideas become controversial especially when they seemingly appear to resonate with germ theories of the late nineteenth century? It is in the political development that one can find the process through which local modes of thinking were supplanted. A number of studies have been produced in an attempt to account for colonialism and imperialism, with a gamut ranging from strategic, economic, political and psycho-social reasons being advanced.<sup>173</sup> Although historians have convincingly demonstrated how these factors motivated colonialists and influenced the way colonies were administered, Daniel Headrick is among the few to argue compellingly about a technological dimension to imperialism and colonialism. Veterinary medicine, as this chapter will show, fits into Headrick's argument that imperialism was a direct result of technological changes which in turn determined the economic relations of colonialism.<sup>174</sup> As a 'tool of empire,' veterinary medicine made it possible for colonial farmers to overcome constraints on livestock production as well as to hold competition from African producers at bay. In the sub-regional context, Ian Scoones, William Wolmer and Jane Carruthers have strongly argued that the development of veterinary medicine in Southern Rhodesia and South Africa was linked to the protection of the

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<sup>172</sup> McCorkle and Mathias-Mundy, 'Ethnoveterinary Medicine in Africa,' 71.

<sup>173</sup> For strategic reasons see R. Robinson and J. Gallagher, *Africa and the Victorians: The climax of Imperialism* (New York: Garden City, 1968); for economic reasons see J.A. Hobson, *Imperialism: A study* (New York: Pott, 1902), and also D.K. Fieldhouse, *Economics and empire, 1830-1914* (New York: Ithaca, 1973). For psychological reasons see H. Brunschwig, *French colonialism, 1971-1914: Myths and realities* (London: 1966).

<sup>174</sup> D.R. Headrick, *The tools of empire: Technology and European imperialism in the nineteenth century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), 10. See also Chapter 12 in W. Beinart and L. Hughes, *Environment and Empire*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

settler beef industries.<sup>175</sup> Indeed, the Southern Rhodesian Veterinary Services Department grew as an attempt to deal with recurrent disease that hampered the growth of a beef industry but this process occurred, sometimes deliberately, and sometimes inadvertently, at the expense of African livestock owners.<sup>176</sup> White farmers benefitted from racial laws such as the Land Apportionment Act which enabled the white landowners to segregate their pedigree beasts from communal herds, which they regarded as reservoirs of disease, and also prevented competition from African farmers.<sup>177</sup>

While it is possible that in the introduction of veterinary medicine the original idea of benefitting the settlers mutated, it is difficult to allow complete autonomy to the ‘Beinart-Brown-Gilfoyle’ thesis which states, rather unconvincingly, that tropical veterinary medicine was an independent subject borne out of a genuine need to eradicate livestock diseases.<sup>178</sup> This contention, as this section will show, not only ignores the fact that a fundamental choice was made at the very beginning that the colony’s development to be made on the basis of western scientific approaches<sup>179</sup> but also neglects that during colonialism, ‘external imperial control... was still often autocratic, coercive and bound to an ideology of European superiority.’<sup>180</sup> State efforts in agriculture and veterinary research were directed to the benefit of the settlers at a time when there existed little, if any, development policy for Africans.<sup>181</sup> Having extremely limited political power, Africans, as will be shown, could not countervail these developments.

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<sup>175</sup> I. Scoones and W. Wolmer, ‘Land, landscapes and disease: The case of Foot and Mouth in Southern Zimbabwe,’ *South African Historical Journal*, 58 (2007), 42-64; J. Carruthers, ‘Influences on wildlife management and conservation biology in South Africa c.1900 to c.1940,’ *Southern African Historical Journal*, 58 (2007), 65-90.

<sup>176</sup> Scoones and Wolmer, ‘Land, landscapes and disease,’ 45, 46.

<sup>177</sup> Scoones and Wolmer, ‘Land, landscapes and disease,’ 45.

<sup>178</sup> W. Beinart, K. Brown and D. Gilfoyle, ‘Experts and expertise in colonial Africa reconsidered: Science and the interpretation of knowledge,’ *African Affairs*, 108/432, 2009, 413–433. This study was a response to an earlier work written from an Africanist perspective: See J. McCracken, ‘Experts and expertise in colonial Malawi,’ *African Affairs*, 81, 322 (1982).

<sup>179</sup> NAZ G1/1/1 Nobbs, ‘Memorandum on the organisation of the Department of Agriculture and the Veterinary Department,’ 23/09/1916.

<sup>180</sup> H. Tilley, ‘African environments and environmental science,’ in W. Beinart and J. McGregor, *Social history and African environments* (Oxford: James Currey, 2003), 130.

<sup>181</sup> P. Mosley, *The settler economies: Studies in the economic history of Kenya and Southern Rhodesia, 1900-1963* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

The British South Africa Company (BSAC), a private company owned by British capitalist Cecil John Rhodes, occupied Southern Rhodesia in 1890 in the belief that there was abundant gold (a Second Rand).<sup>182</sup> By 1893, it was clear that such gold was not in Mashonaland hence a process which led to the occupation Matabeleland in 1894 was begun. Hope that gold could only be found in Lobengula's capital at Bulawayo was ubiquitous but this also turned out to be a chimera. Despite these frustrations, the BSAC went on to set up an administrative system based on Victorian industrial principles and Christian values which reflected the power and interests of the settler community.<sup>183</sup> The government was organised around particular economic sectors and general services like health and education, but African affairs were a separate part of the governmental system. To placate the British government which feared that African interests may not be upheld if left entirely in the hands of the BSAC, two institutions were put in place to represent what were regarded as the true interests of the Africans.

Besides having administrative and judicial roles, the Native Affairs Department (NAD) was given the duty of safeguarding the perceived interests of Africans and making known their wishes and needs. Safeguarding African interests, as Murray correctly argues, involved maintaining the framework of 'traditional life' or rather maintaining such features of it as were permissible given the context of a settled colony.<sup>184</sup> During this time, Africans did not consider the NAD to be the protector of their interests. Although without official mandate, missionaries were given an important role in decision making because of their relatively intimate knowledge of the Africans. However, the latter had their own interests of changing rather than preserving the established way of life of what they regarded as the 'heathen' masses.<sup>185</sup> Diana Jeater has argued persuasively that Southern Rhodesian 'native policy' was the product of arguments, debates, and profoundly conflicting interests among the whites – administrators, missionaries, and settlers – who interacted with Africans on a daily basis.<sup>186</sup>

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<sup>182</sup> See E. Tawse-Jollie, 'Southern Rhodesia: A White Man's Country in the Tropics,' *Geographical Review*, 17, 1 (1927).

<sup>183</sup> D.J. Murray, *The governmental system in Southern Rhodesia*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), 63.

<sup>184</sup> Murray, *The governmental system in Southern Rhodesia*, 273, 279, 280.

<sup>185</sup> Murray, *The governmental system in Southern Rhodesia*, 281.

<sup>186</sup> D. Jeater, 'Imagining Africans: Scholarship, fantasy, and science in colonial administration, 1920s Southern Rhodesia,' *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 38, 1 (2005), 1.

Pervasive populist social Darwinism buttressed the belief that the African was a lesser being, and therefore, not expected to be treated at the same level as settlers were mobilised to explain and justify inequalities. Mobilising the notion that societies evolve at their own pace, settlers argued that whites were at the pinnacle of the human racial hierarchy in terms of mental, physical, cultural, and political attributes.<sup>187</sup> As Sauer noted, ‘neither in mental capacity nor in physical fitness could the aborigine ever become the equal of the European....The average brain weight of the native is three ounces less than that of the European.’<sup>188</sup> Sauer contended, ‘Africans were only at the best of times children, and they must be dealt with as children.’<sup>189</sup> Indeed, as Jeater has convincingly shown, this was a useful metaphor which allowed for the possibility of Africans ‘catching up’ with the demands of an industrial society, but insisted that whites remain paternalistically responsible for African welfare.<sup>190</sup> These alleged deficiencies, it was argued, could be ameliorated through conversion to Christianity and also adoption of western modes of thinking.

Missionaries were particularly intolerant of local medico-religious ideas. Father A. Burbridge, a Catholic priest based at Chishawasha Mission, voiced a general view among missionaries when he said, ‘the witchdoctor is an unwholesome charlatan, and from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot there is no soundness in him....[It] is necessary that the whole spirit system of medicine be thrown off doors.’<sup>191</sup> These attitudes explain why in the 1890s, traditional healers and herbalists such as Mnyenyezi of Matabeleland, ‘who knew all the grasses by name and the trees which cattle browsed on in times of drought and likewise many native cures for stock diseases’<sup>192</sup> were not permitted to contribute their knowledge to public health and veterinary

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<sup>187</sup> Brown, *Mad dogs and meerkats*, 54.

<sup>188</sup> Statement by Dr. Sauer, the Matabeleland Representative, Legislative Council Debates, First Session, First Council, 15 May 1899, 13.

<sup>189</sup> Legislative Council Debates, Fourth Session, Third Council, 18 December 1907, 15.

<sup>190</sup> Jeater, ‘Imagining Africans,’ 2.

<sup>191</sup> Rev Father A Burbridge, ‘How to become a witch doctor,’ *NADA*, 8 (1930), 86. See also A. Boos, ‘The Springtime of the Mashonaland Mission,’ *Zambesi Mission Record*, 1, 4 (1899), 121-127.

<sup>192</sup> NAZ WE 3/2/4 Weale’s reminiscences: Recollections of Matabele Tribal days and of the Matabele War, the stories of Nyamanza and Mnyenyezi. Col W Napier - manager of the Willoughby’s Ranch and a very close friend of Mnyenyezi - made extensive use of his remedies. Weales’ memoirs suggest that such knowledge was acknowledged by certain settlers and made use of them in livestock husbandry.

policy even in a limited way. However, throughout the 1890s local Africans resisted the encroachment of western values and norms by remaining mainly indifferent to Christianity and other symbols of western values.<sup>193</sup> Behind their public display of conformity lay an African whose beliefs remained largely rooted on local modes of thinking, which simultaneously frustrated the objective of transforming Africans into colonial subjects. One of the first Native Commissioners wrote of this passive resistance, ‘the native in his own home, in his own surroundings, is a totally different person to him we meet in the office.’<sup>194</sup> This exposes the inability of the native commissioners to penetrate into the lives of the people they were supposed to represent.<sup>195</sup>

Besides these socio-religious considerations, economic factors played an important role in colonial policy formulation. Regardless of their purported racial superiority, settlers often contradicted themselves as they sometimes unwittingly acknowledged that the African was indeed a rational being capable of making rational decisions and could, in a just society, out-compete the European. For this reason, they occasionally demanded that mechanisms be established to make sure that the African remained:

A hewer of wood, and drawer of water for his master. If we educate him to plough, sow and reap in the white man’s way, we will very soon make him quite independent of the incentive to work...our country will become a second India where there is no room for the white farmer or white man except as a civil servant... with his simple mode of life and his easily satisfied wants the agriculturally educated native will be able easily to undersell the white farmer...<sup>196</sup>

It was upon these racial and economic considerations that the government made a fundamental choice that the settlers, and not the Africans, were to be the agents of agrarian and pastoral development. Concomitantly, veterinary facilities were distributed along racial lines. The fear of

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<sup>193</sup> S.J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, ‘Rethinking religious encounters in Matabeleland region of Zimbabwe, 1860-1893,’ *African Journal of History and Culture*, 1, 2 (2009), 19.

<sup>194</sup> H.N. Hermans, *The log of a native commissioner*, (Bulawayo: Books of Bulawayo, 1971), 18.

<sup>195</sup> See next chapter.

<sup>196</sup> *Rhodesia Herald*, 22/11/1912.

competition from blacks among the settlers was not peculiar to Southern Rhodesia as it also existed in other settler colonies.<sup>197</sup>

The segregationist land policy pursued by the administration came to determine access to veterinary resources. African settlements were predominantly in the periphery – far away from areas where the biomedical facilities were established. The local environment was imagined by colonial adventurers as ‘a landscape of adventure, mystique and danger... disease ridden, drought ravaged, barren and fearful landscape to be battled and tamed,’ and these imaginations influenced veterinary policy as African-owned livestock were generally considered diseased, and, therefore, to be kept separate from pedigree breeds owned by white farmers.<sup>198</sup> Nonetheless, it is important to underscore the fact that veterinary reasons were simply one among many reasons for segregation.

The idea of setting aside separate land for Africans was first enforced by the 1902 Native Reserve Act which designated 25.5 million acres for African reserves.<sup>199</sup> Land division by legislation was further supported by ancillary regulations such as the Private Location Ordinance (1908), which aimed to regulate Africans who resided on farms owned by absentee white landlords, and the Native Urban Location Ordinance (1906) which provided for land designated for Europeans to be used to accommodate Africans working in the industrial commercial sector.<sup>200</sup> Out of these considerations arose a system of land ownership and resource distribution favourable to the settlers. These considerations crystallized and were later to be delineated in the report of the 1925 Morris Carter Commission, which was the pre-cursor to the Land Apportionment Act (1930). The Morris Carter Commission reported in favour of a policy of

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<sup>197</sup> For instance, Swart’s analysis of the growing racial anxiety particularly in the poorer agricultural areas of the Northern Free State and South-western Transvaal, an area which became the epicentre of the 1914 Boer Rebellion, demonstrates that it was partly caused by the class-bound competition between the white male small farmers or *bywoners* and black families. See S. Swart, ‘The ‘Five Shillings Rebellion’: Rural White male anxiety and the 1914 Boer rebellion,’ *South African Historical Journal*, 56, 1 (2006), 92.

<sup>198</sup> W. Wolmer, *From wilderness vision to farm invasions: Conservation and development in Zimbabwe’s South East Lowveld*, (Oxford: James Currey, 2007), 2. Note: The impact of these stereotypes on the colonial breeding policy will be discussed in depth in Chapter 4.

<sup>199</sup> O. Cluer, ‘The assessment of rural development and planning in the tribal areas of Zimbabwe under the Rhodesian settler government,’ Master of Social Planning and development, University of Queensland, 1980, 60.

<sup>200</sup> Note: A lot of land was in the hands of absentee landlords or undercapitalised settler farmers who entered into agreements with landless Africans to stay on their farms.



separate land purchase areas for Africans and Europeans arguing, among other reasons, that if Africans were interspersed with Europeans on farms the value of land would depreciate and, more importantly, that stock thefts would increase while African livestock would spread disease to European stock.<sup>201</sup> As such, constructions of nature were political as the shift of blame for veterinary disease transmission to African livestock ‘vectors’ enabled the depopulation of certain areas and the expansion of commercial ranches.<sup>202</sup> The new areas to which African livestock were driven were environmentally unfriendly as they were prone to diseases.

After their lands were confiscated in the 1890s, Africans had three options: to become rent paying tenants without legal leases on land taken over by white farmers; secondly, to reside on land alienated by the government and pay hut tax or, thirdly, to move to the uninviting new reserves.<sup>203</sup> The creation of reserves in tsetse fly infested areas (Gwaii and Shangani) in 1895 is a telling example of how Africans were removed from environments where disease outbreaks were manageable as they usually occurred in a mild form. Hughes, who discusses a related matter but with specific reference to Maasai experiences in colonial Kenya, has persuasively argued that the Maasai were aware of the environmental dangers lurking in the areas they were forced to settle, hence the thinking that they were deliberately sent into these areas so that they would lose their livestock to diseases.<sup>204</sup> In Southern Rhodesia, Africans often drew comparisons between reserves and their ancestral lands with the latter being considered habitable and disease free. Recently, the process through which white administrators abandoned their image of Shangani as desolate and began to view it as the ‘Ndebele Homeland’ has been analysed.<sup>205</sup> The Ndebele never considered Shangani as a good place for habitation but referred to it as ‘*amagusu amnyama*’ (dark forests).<sup>206</sup> These areas were regarded as ‘thickets to be afraid of’, as ‘dark and fearful’, full of lions, spirits and other scary things, places of tall, crowded trees and no people,

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<sup>201</sup> Cluer, ‘The assessment of rural development and planning,’ 12. See also L. Hughes, “‘They give me fever’: East Coast Fever and other environmental impacts of Maasai Moves,” in K. Brown and D. Gilfoyle (eds), *Healing the Herds: Disease, Livestock Economies and the Globalisation of veterinary medicine* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2010), 150.

<sup>202</sup> Wolmer, *From wilderness vision to farm invasions*, 132.

<sup>203</sup> Cluer, ‘The assessment of rural development and planning,’ 60.

<sup>204</sup> Hughes, “‘They give me fever’: East Coast fever and other environmental impacts of Maasai Moves,” 148.

<sup>205</sup> J. Alexander, et al, *Violence and memory: One hundred years in the ‘Dark Forests’ of Matabeleland* (Oxford: James Currey, 2000).

<sup>206</sup> Alexander, et al, *Violence and memory*, 23.

places where outcasts and witches were made to live.<sup>207</sup> In this place, the Africans and their livestock had to go through a very difficult process of acclimatization involving the development of livestock regimes best suited to that environment.

### **The origins of state veterinary services in colonial Zimbabwe, c.1890-6**

The previous section has shown that European modes of thinking and living were promoted at the expense of local ideas. This section provides a discussion of the origins of veterinary services in this racialised socio-political context. Located between latitudes 15° and 23°S, and longitudes 25° and 34°E in the tropics, Southern Rhodesia presented veterinary challenges that were quite different from those experienced in Europe, and, thus, alien to most of the settlers in general and veterinarians in particular. L.E.W. Bevan, the first and until the 1920s the only bacteriologist in the colony, reminisced that during the 1890s, ‘Southern Rhodesia was always a source of veterinary surprises – as it is today.’<sup>208</sup> One such ‘surprise’ was a mysterious disease in which animals appeared to be stiff in one or more limbs or the muscles of the throat hence they called it ‘stiff sickness’ and another which Bevan admitted, ‘because we veterinarians knew nothing whatever about it, we gave it the more dignified title of ‘ephemeral fever.’<sup>209</sup> These recollections are helpful in demonstrating the inadequacies of orthodox veterinary medicine in the colonies where veterinary services were introduced as a by-product of the colonisation process.

One of the first veterinary measures to be taken in the 1890s was the publication in December 1891 of a regulation in connection with Lung Sickness by the BSAC, and also the appointment of an inspector of cattle. This notice announced steps to be taken to prevent the spread, and promote the eradication of Lung Sickness including an embargo on the importation of sick or un-inoculated cattle.<sup>210</sup> Close connections between the Southern Rhodesian state and the Cape Colony were heavily exploited as most of the regulations applied during the 1890s by the former were derived from the laws of the Cape Colony, particularly the Animal Diseases Act, 1881-

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<sup>207</sup> Alexander, et al, *Violence and memory*, 23, 36.

<sup>208</sup> NAZ BE 11/9/12 Historical Manuscript: A brief history of veterinary research in Southern Rhodesia by L. E. W. Bevan.

<sup>209</sup> NAZ BE 11/9/12 Historical Manuscript: A brief history of veterinary research in Southern Rhodesia by L. E. W. Bevan.

<sup>210</sup> NAZ A7/1/1 Original signed copies of Ordinances: 1891- 99 Vol. 1.

which made provisions for the isolation of livestock suffering from contagious and infectious diseases.<sup>211</sup> Ordinance No. 1 of 1893 announced the incorporation of the Cattle Removal Act (1870) and the Cattle Removal Amendment Act (1889) as well as its usage in Mashonaland as the Cattle Removal Amendment Ordinance (1893).<sup>212</sup> Similarities also extended to the unequal provision of veterinary services, with African areas being assigned a lower priority status.<sup>213</sup>

The veterinary regulations passed between 1890 and 1893 were simply a declaration of good intent because, in practice, beyond settler towns modern quasi-veterinary services were almost non-existent. Moreover in areas where such services were available, cattle inspectors, under whose command the administration of veterinary regulations was, were mainly preoccupied with controlling the importation of livestock into the colony rather than local disease management and control.<sup>214</sup> The administration's obsession with the procurement of gold, and the seeming absence of epizootics militated against the early establishment of a veterinary services department.<sup>215</sup> In the spirit of fiscal saving, veterinary duties for the settler population were simply superintended by cattle inspectors who operated under the Surveyor General's Department. In fact, C.E. Gray, the first qualified veterinary surgeon in the country came with the Pioneer Column in 1890 but, for lack of a job, was employed in the ranks of the Post Office at Fort Victoria until 1896 when he was 'unearthed like Cincinnatus from the plough, and called upon to form a veterinary department to control Rinderpest.'<sup>216</sup>

The provision of veterinary services to Africans was an entirely different affair. Prior to 1896, the administration preferred western control methods to local remedies, and, therefore, attempted to disseminate these to Africans via field cornets, missionaries and Native Commissioners.

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<sup>211</sup> D.A. Lawrence, 'The history of Veterinary Services in Rhodesia: Earliest developments, 1890 to 1899,' *Rhodesia Veterinary Journal*, 1, 2 (1970), 30.

<sup>212</sup> NAZ A7/1/1 Original signed copies of Ordinances: 1891- 99 Vol. 1.

<sup>213</sup> Gilfoyle, 'Veterinary Research and the African Rinderpest Epizootic,' 144.

<sup>214</sup> See NAZ A7/1/1 Original signed copies of Ordinances: 1891- 99 Vol. 1.

<sup>215</sup> R. Palmer, 'The agricultural history of Rhodesia,' in R. Palmer and N. Parsons (eds), *The roots of rural poverty in central and Southern Africa*, (London: Heinemann, 1977).

<sup>216</sup> NAZ BE 11/9/12 Historical Manuscript: A brief history of veterinary research in Southern Rhodesia by L E W Bevan. Lucius Quinctius Cincinnatus (520 BC – 430 BC) was a Roman aristocrat serving as consul in 460 BC, and dictator in 458 BC and 439 BC. Cincinnatus was regarded by the Romans, especially the aristocratic patrician class, as one of the heroes of early Rome and as a model of Roman virtue and simplicity.

Before the formation of the Native Affairs Department in 1894, and the appointment of Native Commissioners in that year, African affairs were in the hands of a field cornet who was usually a member of the settler community residing in an outlying district. Such officials were expected to report as well as deal with livestock diseases on an *ad hoc* basis. However, an amicable way of bringing the African livestock owner to use the western approach and technical knowledge for livestock production and healthcare was not found.

Writing in the mid-1960s, Chavunduka, who wanted to understand why biomedical practices had not gained widespread acceptance among Africans, concluded that it was because veterinary medicine was not introduced in a way that was understandable and acceptable to blacks.<sup>217</sup> Indeed, from the 1890s, the official policy (as pursued by missionaries and native commissioners) was to eliminate African livestock regimes and replace them with ‘scientific’ methods. Having inadequate knowledge of the social background of the people amongst whom they worked, the activities of these officials often resulted in conflict with the Shona and Ndebele. In spite of the pressure brought to bear upon Africans to adopt biomedical approaches, there was nothing really veterinary about early interactions between colonial officials and Africans as these were, in the main, tax collection expeditions and exploratory journeys. Limited veterinary contact between Africans and settlers inadvertently affected the rate at which the supposed superior biomedical ideas could be diffused to African livestock owners. As long as livestock disease control remained a mere auxiliary task of Native Commissioners, knowledge about the new forms of veterinary ideas remained exclusive to the whites. An undesirable by-product of this scenario to the government was that African livestock regimes continued to thrive.

Considering that African livestock regimes were undermined after colonisation on the basis of their ‘unscientific nature’ it is ironic that the colonial administration did not place veterinary issues under qualified scientists but Native Commissioners. Most Native Commissioners had hardly received formal education (worse still veterinary instruction) and, therefore, knew little, if

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<sup>217</sup> D.M. Chavunduka, ‘Veterinary teaching methods in African areas,’ *Newsletter of the Veterinary Research Laboratory*, 2, 1 (1967), 7.

anything, about the scientific basis of veterinary diseases. To illustrate this paucity of education, it is important to quote some of the Native Commissioners' recollections of these early days. M.E. Weale (1871-1947), who was appointed to the Native Department in 1894 as Native Commissioner for Chilimanzi, wrote:

There was scant means of obtaining books on anthropology and primitive customs. Some were stocked by the government for our guidance as none of us had been trained for administrative work or had studied law. I was probably the only public school boy in the Department and from the Administrator downwards none took much interest in the natives except in collecting taxes from them... the only answer I could get to any questions I might ask as to very official duties was to use my own discretion as the Chief of the Department was a rough, illiterate young man.<sup>218</sup>

Moreover, Jeater has demonstrated that the Native Affairs Department Annual (NADA), which began publication in 1923, and the ethnographic texts produced by members of the department, indicated how white official perceptions of the local population poorly equipped the NAD to understand growing African engagement with the modern world.<sup>219</sup>

Native Commissioners were also laden with non-veterinary responsibilities. Besides veterinary tasks, a native commissioner's duties included tax collection (by far their most important activity), issuing a variety of passes which Africans were obliged to carry, acting as arbitrators in cases involving Africans, enquiring into complaints brought by Africans, registration of dogs, rifles, brands, births and deaths, issuing cattle permits, inspecting farms whenever reports were called from headquarters, acting as locust officers and vaccinators, and labour recruiters.<sup>220</sup> Under the Hut Tax Ordinance (1894), Native Commissioners were mandated to collect 10 shillings hut tax from every African male. The ordinance, however, provided for other kinds of payment: 'Hut tax shall be payable in sterling coin, but in cases where the Administrator or the Collector has no alternative it may be accepted in grain or stock, the value of such grain or stock being taken to be the price current at the nearest market at which such grain or stock can be

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<sup>218</sup> NAZ WE 3/2/5 Weale's reminiscences: The 1894 Mtoko Expedition.

<sup>219</sup> See D. Jeater, 'Imagining Africans: Scholarship, fantasy, and science in colonial administration, 1920s Southern Rhodesia,' *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 38, 1 (2005).

<sup>220</sup> *Report of the Board of Inquiry into the Public Service in Rhodesia*, 58.

disposed of, and in all such cases the reasonable cost of carriage or driving.<sup>221</sup> Because they operated in a largely cashless economy, the activities of these officials often entailed the confiscation of local livestock, and therein lay their dilemma. Their various functions in the colonial economy were not always clear to the Africans hence African suspicion of even well-meant initiatives of NCs. Generally, blacks viewed native commissioners not as veterinary officials, but as, ‘nothing but a collector of debts they owed.’<sup>222</sup>

Although taxation was a way through which the administration raised revenue for the day to day administration of the colony, it also created opportunities for settler capitalist accumulation. Livestock taken from Africans under the tax system found its way into settler hands by way of auctions occasionally organised by native commissioners. Settler farmers had access to the so-called Hut Tax Cattle on easy terms as the rule was that:

25 per cent of the cattle brought in by the Native Commissioner at any of his expedition be sold to bona-fide farmers before the rest of the stock is put up to auction the terms being: half payment down, and one quarter payment at any time in each of the two succeeding months.<sup>223</sup>

Given the above, the role played by Native Commissioners in the provision of veterinary services was compromised severely. Their confiscation of livestock belonging to Hut Tax defaulters compromised their acceptability to Africans in the Reserves. Throughout the territory, Africans hid their livestock each time these officials appeared in their localities.<sup>224</sup> In some districts, the appearance of a white man was considered an ominous sign for loss of cattle. For instance, in December 1894, just two months after the passage of the Hut Tax Ordinance, the Native Commissioner for Victoria, which had the largest cattle population in the colony, and, therefore, subject to many cattle raids (both official and unofficial) by white settlers, reported that, ‘the Mashonas have a habit of clearing away from their villages on the approach of any

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<sup>221</sup> NAZ A7/1/1 Original signed copies of Ordinances: 1891- 99 Vol 1, Hut Tax Ordinance, 1894.

<sup>222</sup> Earl Grey (the Administrator of Southern Rhodesia) quoted in the Legislative Council Debates, Fourth Session, Third Council, 18 December 1907, 18.

<sup>223</sup> NAZ N1/1/3 Monthly Reports December 1894, letter from H. S. Savour (Acting Civil Commissioner, Umtali) to Col F. Rhodes (the Secretary (BSAC), 27/03/1895.

<sup>224</sup> NAZ N1/1/3 Monthly Reports December 1894, letter from NC Umfuli to CNC, 31/08/1895.

white man.’<sup>225</sup> The Native Commissioner complained that cattle, sheep and goats were being taken from Africans in that district by white constables who falsely claimed that the district had not disarmed after the Anglo-Ndebele War (1893-4).<sup>226</sup>

Besides the tax demands for which they had to meet by selling their livestock, African livestock owners had to contend with the abuse of power especially by policemen. In 1895, several cases involving African policemen who were seizing livestock from Africans were reported. The NC for Hartley reported that African constables had killed a goat belonging to an African.<sup>227</sup> Just a fortnight later, he was reporting that a white constable had confiscated four cattle belonging to a peasant in the same district.<sup>228</sup> These incidents increasingly made tax collection very difficult such that it had to be accompanied by force. So pervasive was the abuse of power by tax collectors-cum-veterinary officials that within a decade (1897-1907) most had become prolific livestock owners – large enough to threaten European cattle traders.<sup>229</sup> By 1907, even European cattle traders were complaining that NCs ‘were in such a position that they could practically purchase what they required, and also influence the sale of cattle in their respective districts to various farmers and traders.’<sup>230</sup> Resistance to taxation was varied with some Africans fighting the tax collectors while others chose to run away. For example, in Mtoko, one chief relocated together with his people to Portuguese East Africa,<sup>231</sup> while another, Chief Gurupira, was punished for allowing his people to attack the Native Commissioner and policemen.<sup>232</sup> Livestock movements arising out of these tax collection skirmishes perpetuated the spread of animal diseases.

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<sup>225</sup> NAZ N1/1/3 Monthly Reports December 1894, Quarter report dated 31/12/1894.

<sup>226</sup> NAZ A15/1/1 NC Victoria’s Monthly Report, 10/12/ 1894. Note: This war which was fought between 1893 and 1894 pitted the British South Africa Company against the Ndebele (Matabele) Kingdom. The latter had not been brought under colonial rule when Mashonaland was occupied in 1890. The defeat of the Ndebele in 1894 therefore signalled the beginning of colonial rule in Matabeleland.

<sup>227</sup> NAZ N1/1/3 Monthly Reports December 1894, letter from NC Hartley to CNC, 17/08/1895.

<sup>228</sup> NAZ N1/1/3 Monthly Reports December 1894, letter from NC Hartley to CNC, 31/08/1895.

<sup>229</sup> NAZ A3/2/5/5 Cattle Trading by Native Commissioners: 1907, letter from the CNC (Bulawayo) to the Chief Secretary (Salisbury), 01/02/1907.

<sup>230</sup> *Salisbury Herald*, 22/02/1907.

<sup>231</sup> NAZ WE 3/2/5 Weale’s reminiscences: The 1894 Mtoko Expedition.

<sup>232</sup> NAZ WE 3/2/5 Weale’s reminiscences: The 1894 Mtoko Expedition.

So far this discussion has shown that in the absence of adequate veterinary services, Africans, who were on the margins on the nascent colonial economy, were victims of a parasitic relationship with Native Commissioners who were supposed to be their veterinary officials. Thus, out of both choice and necessity by Africans, by 1896 African livestock continued to thrive despite them being discouraged.<sup>233</sup> Even reporting veterinary diseases to veterinary officials was eschewed by Africans. In fact, the first real veterinary interaction between Africans and veterinary officials had occurred by accident in 1895 when cases of Lung Sickness among African cattle were detected by a Native Commissioner (NC) in Umfuli District while collecting tax.<sup>234</sup> The NC reported, ‘The lot I have here are affected, one case showing unmistakably and as the boys tell me several cattle have died at Inyamweda’s kraals from the same disease.’<sup>235</sup> Clearly this outbreak had not been reported to the authorities as the African livestock owners sometimes hid them and chose to use their own remedies.<sup>236</sup>

The marginalisation of African livestock regimes, and the shortages of veterinary facilities in the 1890s, not only perpetuated, but also gave rise, as Weale’s memoirs suggest, to a thriving body of local therapeutic knowledge which was exploited by both settler and African livestock owners.<sup>237</sup> An interesting case of therapeutic pluralism during the 1890s is that of Col. Napier, manager of the Willoughby’s Ranch and a very close friend of Mnyenyezi (a local herbalist), who, after the occupation of Matabeleland in 1894, made extensive use of Mnyenyezi’s veterinary remedies.<sup>238</sup> Col. Napier actions show, as argued by Karen Flint, the belief among some European travellers, traders, and biomedical doctors (at times) within the colonies that

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<sup>233</sup> Waitte, ‘Traditional medicine and the quest for national identity in Zimbabwe,’ 238. See also M. Barwegen, ‘For better or worse: the impact of the veterinary service on the development of the agricultural society in Java (Indonesia) in the nineteenth century,’ in Brown and Gilfoyle (eds), *Healing the Herds*, 95.

<sup>234</sup> NAZ N1/1/3 Monthly Reports December 1894: letter from the NC Umfuli District to the Chief Native Commissioner (CNC), 09/03/1895.

<sup>235</sup> NAZ N1/1/3 Monthly Reports December 1894: letter from the NC Umfuli District to the Chief Native Commissioner (CNC), 09/03/1895.

<sup>236</sup> An in-depth analysis of this aspect will follow in the ensuing chapter.

<sup>237</sup> NAZ WE 3/2/4 Weale’s reminiscences: Recollections of Matabele Tribal days and of the Matabele War, the stories of Nyamanza and Mnyenyezi.

<sup>238</sup> NAZ WE 3/2/4 Weale’s reminiscences: Recollections of Matabele Tribal days and of the Matabele War, the stories of Nyamanza and Mnyenyezi.



nature provided local remedies for local diseases.<sup>239</sup> This suggests that biomedical ideas which the veterinarians were championing were also a subject of debate among whites, and that while African livestock regimes were not recognised at an official level, experiences of pragmatic white farmers in the countryside demanded that they sometimes adopted these.

In the absence of veterinary officials, some settler farmers also used knowledge garnered from practical experience to develop therapeutic remedies. For instance, contagious poultry diseases that broke out among imported chickens from 1890 had by 1895 been brought under control by settler home remedies – salt, tobacco, and water being the most popular concoction.<sup>240</sup> These therapeutic exchanges are important as they demonstrate that outside the official discourse that disparaged African livestock regimes, settler farmers and African livestock owners shared herbal knowledge in a reciprocal manner. This extended elsewhere in the sub-continent, as Swart has demonstrated that ordinary blacks and Afrikaners in rural South Africa shared therapeutic knowledge much more often than was assumed.<sup>241</sup> The crisis of acceptance which veterinary scientists faced during this time betrays a far bigger problem. Indeed as Woods has argued, the incredulity of farmers was reasonable because until 1934 in Britain where some of Southern Rhodesia’s vets had received training, the veterinary curriculum focused on the horse leaving those who entered agricultural practice ‘to learn from their colleagues or from bitter experience ... [hence] many farmers used veterinarians as a “fire-brigade” service, summoning them only as a last resort, by which time animals were often past the point of recovery.’<sup>242</sup>

### **The 1896-8 Rinderpest Epidemic**

The outbreak of Rinderpest in March 1896 brought to the fore the need for regular veterinary services. Rinderpest, which has a mortality of over 90 per cent in affected herds, is an acute to sub-acute contagious viral disease of cattle characterised by necrosis and erosions in the

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<sup>239</sup> K. E. Flint, *Healing traditions: African medicine, cultural exchange, and competition in South Africa, 1820 – 1948*, (Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2008), 96.

<sup>240</sup> NAZ A15/1/1, NC Victoria Monthly Report, December 1894: letter from Father Boos to the NC Victoria, 3/02/1895.

<sup>241</sup> S. Swart, ‘Bushveld Magic’ and ‘Miracle Doctors’: An Exploration of Eugène Marais and C. Louis Leipoldt’s Experiences in the Waterberg, South Africa, c. 1906-1917,’ *Journal of African History*, 45, 2 (2004), 237-255. Note: This issue will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

<sup>242</sup> A. Woods, ‘Breeding Cows, Maximizing milk: British veterinarians and the livestock economy, 1930-50,’ Brown and Gilfoyle (eds), *Healing the Herds: Disease*, 60.

gastrointestinal tract that result in severe diarrhoea and dehydration.<sup>243</sup> The disease made its first appearance in Africa in around 1887 after infected Indian or Arabian cattle were introduced to Massawa in Eritrea by the Italian army.<sup>244</sup> From this area, it spread all the way down to the Cape, helped, as it was, by the inefficient attempt to use prophylactic and therapeutic control rather than slaughter and quarantine.<sup>245</sup> It finally crossed the Zambezi, its largest natural barrier, in February 1896 before making its first appearance in Bulawayo from which it spread very fast to Palapye (Botswana), Kimberley, the Cape, Natal, Lesotho, and Namibia.

The Rinderpest outbreak offers a good lens into how Africans in Southern Rhodesia reacted to veterinary medicine in the mid-1890s. The Ndebele who were still smarting from the 1894 ‘Company Cattle Scandal’ were the first to experience Rinderpest as it spread first in Matabeleland and then onto other areas.<sup>246</sup> Administratively, at first, little was known about the prevention or cure of this disease. So fast was its spread such that within a period of 25 days of the first reported occurrence in Southern Rhodesia, it travelled southwards at a rate of 20 miles a day reaching a point 16 miles north of the borders of the Cape Colony on the 31st March.<sup>247</sup> The disease set the stage, as Rossiter succinctly argues, for ‘one of the keenest competitions medical science has ever seen.’<sup>248</sup> In South African colonies, the competition was between two teams; one, including Drs Arnold Theiler, of the Transvaal, and Herbert Watkins-Pitchford of Natal and, another, led by Dr Robert Koch, a German microbiologist who worked in Kimberley at the Cape government’s expense.<sup>249</sup> Theiler and Watkins-Pitchford developed a technique for immunizing cattle with simultaneous but separate inoculations of immune serum and infectious disease.

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<sup>243</sup> D.C. Blood, O.M. Radostits and J.A. Henderson, *Veterinary medicine: A textbook of the diseases of cattle, sheep, pigs, goats and horses* (London: Bailliere Tindall, 1983), 748.

<sup>244</sup> P.B. Rossiter, ‘Rinderpest,’ in J.A.W. Coetzer, G. R. Thomson and R.C. Tustin, *Infectious diseases of livestock with special reference to Southern Africa*, Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1994), 735.

<sup>245</sup> Rossiter, ‘Rinderpest,’ 735.

<sup>246</sup> The phrase ‘Company Cattle Scandal’ refers to the expropriation of Ndebele livestock following their defeat in the Anglo-Ndebele War. The Matabeleland Order in Council, 1894 declared that the ownership of all cattle in the possession of natives in Matabeleland on or before 31st December 1893, as well as its offspring, was vested in the BSAC. See H. Weinmann, *Agricultural research and development in Southern Rhodesia, 1890 – 1923* (Salisbury: University of Rhodesia, 1972).

<sup>247</sup> C. van Onselen, ‘Reactions to rinderpest in Southern Africa, 1896-97,’ *Journal of African History*, XIII, 3 (1972), 473.

<sup>248</sup> The Russian government set a prize of one million rubbles for the winner. See Rossiter, ‘Rinderpest,’ 736.

<sup>249</sup> Rossiter, ‘Rinderpest,’ 736.

However, their method did not become very popular since immune serum was in desperate short supply and time-consuming to produce. Robert Koch's method of prevention, which involved the injection of bile from infected animals into uninfected animals, was successful at the laboratory. Even though this conferred some degree of immunity, the main bone of contention was that it did not set up immunity until the end of eight days during which time animals could become naturally infected.<sup>250</sup> Controversy arose from its hasty introduction throughout the affected areas in the Cape Colony.

Southern Rhodesia, not having enough financial resources to run a full scale scientific research into the disease, followed veterinary developments in the neighbouring, wealthier South African colonies with keen interest. In March 1897, Dr George Turner, who was conducting a series of experiments at the Kimberley Rinderpest Station on behalf of the Cape Government, visited Bulawayo, and, on his advice, a system of compulsory inoculation against Rinderpest was established in the province.<sup>251</sup> At the time of the adoption of Turner's advice the scientific community had not yet produced a standard vaccine. This, notwithstanding the 'crisis of knowledge' did not stop the Southern Rhodesia from adopting British veterinary methods of containment: slaughtering infected cattle and those merely suspected of infection as well as the creation of cordons to restrict the movement of cattle from infected areas.<sup>252</sup> However, Southern Rhodesia was not the only colony to gamble with the inoculation method as the Cape Colony also indulged in a similar act of desperation.<sup>253</sup> Inoculating stations were quickly established at Bulawayo, Ramaquabane, Gwelo, Manzinyama, Tuli, Khami, and Queen's Kraal.<sup>254</sup> In Mashonaland, the work of inoculating cattle was started much later. However, after a few months, the double method of inoculation had to be discontinued owing to the impossibility, under the existing conditions, of obtaining virulent Rinderpest blood from the organisms of other

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<sup>250</sup> L. E. W. Bevan, 'Veterinary Research: Some facts and figures,' *Rhodesia Agricultural Journal*, Vol. 11, 4 (1914), 518.

<sup>251</sup> NAZ LO4/1/2 Report of the Deputy Administrator of Matabeleland for the Year Ending September 30 1898.

<sup>252</sup> D. Gilfoyle, 'Veterinary Research and the African Rinderpest Epizootic: The Cape Colony, 1896-1898,' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 29, 1 (2003), 134.

<sup>253</sup> Gilfoyle, 'Veterinary Research and the African Rinderpest Epizootic,' 144.

<sup>254</sup> M.K.K. Mutowo, 'Animal diseases and human populations in colonial Zimbabwe: the rinderpest epidemic 1896-1898,' in *Zambezia*, 28, 1 (2001), 12.

diseases such as gall-sickness.<sup>255</sup> These methods, as will be shown below, turned out to be impractical, expensive and politically controversial.<sup>256</sup> So disastrous was Rinderpest such that by the end of 1897, there were less than 14 000 head of cattle left in African possession throughout the colony.<sup>257</sup> Unfortunately, there are no pre-Rinderpest figures of cattle owned by Africans but the stated number is a much reduced figure from their perceived pre-Rinderpest holdings.

On their part, Africans did not understand the slaughter of healthy and, in other instances, *seemingly* healthy cattle, and their attempts to move cattle to avoid destruction actually resulted in a more rapid spread of infection.<sup>258</sup> Mbangwa Ngomambi's account of this disease gives us an insight into what transpired and how Africans reacted to this menace. Mbangwa was working at a mine when he saw cattle dying in their numbers but like many other people, he did not know what it was. He recalled that, 'cattle fell ill and we had plenty of meat. We would cut up what we wanted and leave the rest. The choice was ours. People now said, 'cattle should be released from their kraals, they should sleep outside' but the next morning you still find them dead.'<sup>259</sup> This testimony provides us with a new reading of the Rinderpest epidemic and how people sought to deal with it. It affords us an opportunity to ask questions: What was the logic behind unkraaling them? Was it because people thought the disease was in the kraals? Was it because they thought the disease was contagious?

It is difficult to find answers to these questions, but they show that Africans were not simply resigned to their fate. More importantly, the disease demonstrated, beyond any reasonable doubt, the ineffectiveness of African livestock regimes against a fast spreading viral disease. Africans were, nevertheless, quick to discover just as in South Africa that, 'meat left in the wake of Rinderpest could be dried for biltong or eaten at once without ill effects.'<sup>260</sup> This also suggests a

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<sup>255</sup> Colony of Southern Rhodesia, *Official Year Book of Southern Rhodesia*, No. I, 1924, 159.

<sup>256</sup> Gilfoyle, 'Veterinary Research and the African Rinderpest Epizootic,' 153.

<sup>257</sup> R. Blake, *A History of Rhodesia*, (London, Eyre Methuen, 1977), 123. See also H. Weinmann, *Agriculture Research and Development in Southern Rhodesia, Under the Rule of the British South Africa Company, 1890–1923* (Department of Agriculture, Occasional Paper, 4, University of Rhodesia, 1972), 105–6.

<sup>258</sup> T. T. Jamu, 'The growth and control of African herds, 1910 – 1955,' M.A African History Thesis, University of Zimbabwe, 1987, 11.

<sup>259</sup> NAZ AOH/58 Rinderpest Epidemic Oral interview with Mbangwa Ngomambi (born c.1877-83), 14/07/1979.

<sup>260</sup> Van Onselen, 'Reactions to rinderpest in Southern Africa, 1896-97,' 483.

re-orientation of people's ideas about livestock diseases. However, while Africans were contemplating their next move, Mbangwa recalled that the NC for Gwanda District, C.G. Fynn,

went to Bulawayo to collect bullets and then started killing the sick cattle... you know if cattle fall ill Europeans kill them. They do not eat the meat. We herded all the cattle and drove them to some hidden area and there they were shot. When they tried to run away we surrounded them and they were gunned down.<sup>261</sup>

Africans in Gwanda were not the only ones suffering from indecision. Correspondence between the NC Hartley and the CNC reveal that when cattle started dying from what later turned out to be Rinderpest in early 1896, the former was not sure what this was after having tested some of the dead cattle for diseases without finding any evidence of sickness.<sup>262</sup> Nevertheless, he was sure that it was not Trypanosomiasis, for he wrote: 'The only symptom I noticed in the sick oxen was [sic] violent purging [diarrhoea] and a running from the nose. Nobody here has any idea of what the disease may be but they are sure that it is not the fly.'<sup>263</sup> Given that he did not know what this was, all he could do was to ask, 'Have I any duties in connection with cattle diseases? Will you please let me know by return of post if I have, and what they are, that I may perform them.'<sup>264</sup> This exchange is indicative of the inadequacy of veterinary services offered to Africans during the time, that is, Native Commissioners, under whom control over African livestock fell directly, did not have the requisite expertise to offer advice to African livestock owners in times of need.

In as far as the depredations of the disease are concerned, Mbangwa's account tallies with that of Francois Coillard – a white European missionary and explorer. Coillard narrates the devastation that followed Rinderpest as follows:

It mowed down the whole bovine race in its passage. Hundreds of carcasses lay here and there, on the roadside or piled up in the fields. In vain did the native gorge themselves, careless of the consequence. In vain did legions of vultures and beasts of prey gather to devour them. They could not overtake the quantity...<sup>265</sup>

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<sup>261</sup> NAZ AOH/58 Rinderpest Epidemic Oral interview with Mbangwa Ngomambi.

<sup>262</sup> NAZ N1/1/3 Monthly Reports December 1894: letter from NC Hartley to the CNC, 21/03/1896.

<sup>263</sup> NAZ N1/1/3 Monthly Reports December 1894: letter from NC Hartley to the CNC, 21/03/1896.

<sup>264</sup> NAZ N1/1/3 Monthly Reports December 1894: letter from NC Hartley to the CNC, 21/03/1896.

<sup>265</sup> Coillard, *On the threshold of Central Africa*, 626-7.

However, Mbangwa's attitude towards the sanitary cordons and the slaughter policy differs sharply with Francois Coillard's. While acknowledging that the disease pursued its course relentlessly in spite of preventive measures, Coillard wrote apologetically arguing that the government 'grasped' the situation right from the beginning.<sup>266</sup> Coillard spiritualized the disease as he advised, 'Let us draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to us. Let us cleanse our hands and purify our hearts. Let us humble ourselves in the sight of God, and he shall lift us up.'<sup>267</sup> As a missionary, Coillard could afford to straddle both lines of science and spirituality without getting the stern rebuke Africans gained by being labelled 'superstitious'. The inequalities existing at the time can then be fully appreciated if one considers that the African could not walk the tight rope separating natural laws and the spiritual world without being chastised as discussed below.

Having failed to find neither remedies nor answers to this mysterious disease, Africans sought spiritual assistance.<sup>268</sup> Many Africans looked to their political and religious leaders for answers. The religious oracle spread from the Umlimo High Priest in the Matopos to Mkwati who was stationed at Ntaba Zika Mambo then to Kaguvi in the Chishawasha area, and to Nehanda in the Mazoe area. All these were national spirits and next in seniority to the national spirit (Murenga). These in turn took the word to lesser spirit mediums (*mhondoro*) spread throughout the country. The Rinderpest outbreak and other ecological disasters of the 1890s also propelled into prominence individuals who, unlike the majority of local people which remained unprovoked by the presence of the white settlers, were adamantly opposed to the idea of allowing the Europeans to settle in their areas. In this category, were Mapondera in Northern Mashonaland, Mashayamombe in Hartley, Kaguvi in Chinamhora, Nehanda in Mazowe, and Muchemwa in eastern-central Mashonaland. By pointing to the government's slaughter and inoculation policies, these individuals heightened the anti-colonial and anti-white phobia already prevalent in the colony.<sup>269</sup> Their speeches made sense to the ordinary people since the slaughtering of local cattle

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<sup>266</sup> Coillard, *On the threshold of Central Africa*, 627.

<sup>267</sup> Coillard, *On the threshold of Central Africa*, 627.

<sup>268</sup> See C. van Onselen, 'Reactions to Rinderpest in Southern Africa, 1896-97.'

<sup>269</sup> P. Phoofolo, 'Epidemics and Revolutions: The Rinderpest Epidemic in the late nineteenth century Southern Africa,' *Past and Present*, 138 (1993), 119.

was done by veterinarians who were long suspected of spreading the disease. Dead beasts or their carcasses were either burned or buried hence they wondered, ‘Whoever had heard of food being destroyed like this? If our cattle die well, we could eat them but these people bury and burn them, and grain is scarce. They want us to die of famine.’<sup>270</sup> Death tolls arising from inoculation trials carried out before the adoption of Koch’s inoculation method in late 1896 strengthened the arguments of sceptics who believed that whites were out to exterminate them.<sup>271</sup>

The branding of cattle increased black people’s fears and suspicions of the white man’s designs for their livestock. Some Africans saw the branding of their cattle as some weird form of sorcery.<sup>272</sup> At the height of the slaughter policy, one African chief asked, ‘They tell me that you are a doctor, and that you are a great doctor, but can you do nothing but kill?’<sup>273</sup> As in other colonies affected by Rinderpest, it was rumoured that the disease was a deliberate poisoning of African cattle by the whites with the intention of impoverishing Africans, and facilitate their cooption into the settler economy.<sup>274</sup> So strong was the anti-colonial feeling that in Southern Rhodesia, an African missionary, Bernard Mizeki, who, among other things, tried to explain measures taken to deal with Rinderpest, was murdered.<sup>275</sup> Mizeki’s explanation that brands were designed to control stock thefts and epidemics was dismissed.

The vendetta against Mizeki in 1896 had a history to it. His relations with the Nhowe people first deteriorated in 1895 when he received smallpox vaccine from Llewellyn Meredith, the NC for Makoni, which he administered on the populace.<sup>276</sup> Vaccination had its own side effects. Some

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<sup>270</sup> Quote cited by D. Chanaiwa, ‘A history of the Nhowe before 1900,’ PhD history Thesis, University of California, 1971, 246.

<sup>271</sup> Phoofolo, ‘Epidemics and Revolutions,’ 132.

<sup>272</sup> Chikorowondo, ‘Muchemwa and the Nhowe people,’ 10.

<sup>273</sup> Chief Molala in Bechuanaland quoted by C. van Onselen, ‘Reactions to Rinderpest in Southern Africa 1896-97,’ 482.

<sup>274</sup> Phoofolo, ‘Epidemics and Revolutions,’ 119. See also Mutowo, ‘Animal diseases and human populations in colonial Zimbabwe,’ 17; C. van Onselen, ‘Reactions to Rinderpest in Southern Africa 1896-97,’ *The Journal of African History*, 13, 3 (1972), 473-488.

<sup>275</sup> Bernard Mizeki (sometimes spelt Bernard Mzeki; c. 1861 – 18 June 1896) was an African Christian missionary and martyr born in Portuguese East Africa (Mozambique) who moved to Southern Rhodesia from South Africa in 1891 when he accompanied the new missionary bishop of Mashonaland, George William Knight-Bruce, as a lay catechist among the Shona people. See J. Farrant, *Mashonaland Martyr: Bernard Mizeki and the Pioneer Church*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1966).

<sup>276</sup> Chanaiwa, ‘A history of the Nhowe people,’ 212.

people worsened after they were vaccinated and some developed sores on their arms hence when cattle were being vaccinated in 1896, one traditional healer rhetorically asked, ‘Did he (Mizeki) not cut our flesh with a sharp instrument and rub in poison? Did he not say this was to save us from sickness and yet some people had ugly sores and could not move their arms?’<sup>277</sup> Furthermore, because Mizeki was an African of foreign origin, and had actively assisted missionaries in 1895 in vaccinating locals against smallpox, Muchemwa, a political leader who was against the presence of Europeans in the country, argued that he was not really a black man but had been reared by the white men with an evil purpose of ‘changing all the Mashona people into Europeans by witchcraft.’<sup>278</sup> Such was the local reaction to Rinderpest but it is imperative to acknowledge the universality of reaction to this epizootic and explain it as human nature, that in times of social stress in general conspiratorial explanations of events find fertile ground irrespective of culture, race or historical epoch.<sup>279</sup> It was not that they were superstitious but their actions reveal an attempt to explain the disasters that followed one after another. Indeed, the areas that were not affected by the Rinderpest disease, the Chipinga-Melsetter area and the Umtali region, did not take part in the 1896 uprising.

Some Africans believed that ‘something’ that had gone grossly amiss in the territory after white occupation, and could, in their view, only be rectified by means of a drastic measure.<sup>280</sup> The spiritual leaders blamed the disease on the Europeans because the BSAC and settlers seized land and started to use it without any reference to the owners of that land, the most important of whom were the spiritual forces.<sup>281</sup> Indeed, the Company seized cattle, goats, and sheep for hut tax and some of them were dedicated to the ancestors, the company introduced forced labour and in that way disrupted the normal lives of the African community, the Europeans and their agents in general introduced a new religion and condemned the African ancestors as evil spirits and demons that should be abandoned.<sup>282</sup> Even though they seemingly dismissed the belief among Africans that the disease was not a natural one, missionaries also tended to explain the series of

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<sup>277</sup> Farrant, *Mashonaland Martyr: Bernard Mizeki and the Pioneer Church*, 204.

<sup>278</sup> Farrant, *Mashonaland Martyr: Bernard Mizeki and the Pioneer Church*, 203.

<sup>279</sup> Phoofolo, ‘Epidemics and Revolutions,’ 123.

<sup>280</sup> A. Boos, ‘The Springtime of the Mashonaland Mission,’ *Zambesi Mission Record*, 1, 4 (1899), 122-3.

<sup>281</sup> Chigwedere, ‘The 1896 Rinderpest disease,’ 31.

<sup>282</sup> Chigwedere, ‘The 1896 Rinderpest disease,’ 33.



climatic and ecological crises of the 1890s as meaning that God had ‘turned his countenance away from the land.’<sup>283</sup> Prayer requests were also sent by some whites whenever diseases broke out.

It is clear that supernatural beliefs played a crucial role in the construction and imagination of Rinderpest amongst Africans but it will be myopic to suggest, as the settlers did at the time, that Africans viewed livestock diseases through spiritual lens only. In fact, what happened during the Rinderpest outbreak can be explained by the politicization of troubles in general, and disease in particular, by religious and political leaders who were desperate to keep pre-colonial modes of life in place. As has been shown by Ndlovu-Gatsheni, competition between traditional healers and missionaries began as early as the late 1850s when Mzilikazi invited missionaries into his state. In the 1860s, Ndebele traditional religious practitioners began to blame the white people for having come with such animal diseases as lung sickness which claimed a lot of Ndebele cattle.<sup>284</sup> In the 1890s, this competition between western and local ideas reached its peak during the Rinderpest outbreak. That some Africans viewed Rinderpest spiritually does not mean that all Africans viewed epizootics in this way. Even so, attempts by some Africans to deal with this disease using therapeutic methods suggest otherwise. Quarantining and slaughter, which were at epicentre of the conflict, were not totally incompatible with the local worldview but the fact that they were constructed and tainted with contextual western historical experiences and understanding revealed their imperialistic texture.<sup>285</sup>

Two eye witness accounts, one on the outbreak of smallpox among Lobengula’s soldiers and another on the rabies outbreak among dogs in Bulawayo in 1893 give us a window through which we can analyse African ideas about disease during the early colonial period. Mbangwa Ngomambi revealed that Lobengula quarantined the infected soldiers in the forests and that people developed immunity to the disease by voluntarily infecting themselves.<sup>286</sup> Coillard, who

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<sup>283</sup> Phoofolo, ‘Epidemics and Revolutions,’ 127.

<sup>284</sup> S.J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, ‘Rethinking religious encounters in Matabeleland region of Zimbabwe, 1860-1893,’ *African Journal of History and Culture*, 1, 2 (2009),’ 23.

<sup>285</sup> Ndlovu-Gatsheni, ‘Rethinking religious encounters,’ 22.

<sup>286</sup> NAZ AOH/58 Rinderpest Epidemic Oral interview with Mbangwa Ngomambi (born c.1877-83), 14/07/1979.

passed through Bulawayo during a rabies outbreak, reported that the Ndebele enforced a slaughter policy on all dogs showing signs of infection.<sup>287</sup> A 1902 ethnographic study by Charles Edmonds, a British veterinarian, corroborates this. Interviews carried out by Edmonds with Ndebele and Shona elders revealed that canine rabies (*chimbwamupengo / chimbwambwambwa / ubhova*) had existed in pre-colonial times, and that as a rule the locals combatted it by slaughtering all infected dogs.<sup>288</sup> These revelations, therefore, challenge the idea that, in 1896, Africans resisted slaughter and inoculation because these were alien to them. The slaughter of rabid dogs demonstrates that some African ideas about diseases were not entirely at variance with those widespread in Europe at the time. It remains, however, to be questioned whether the willingness to slaughter dogs in cases of rabies was because of their perceived smaller socio-economic value relative to cattle? This concern is dispelled by the fact that a slaughter policy was also pursued with regard to contagious abortion in cattle.<sup>289</sup> It seems plausible to argue that Africans opposed these moves because veterinary medicine was integral to an exploitative system they rejected. When they moved their cattle away from the Administration's reach, therefore, they were safeguarding their livestock against what they considered to be yet another round of cattle confiscation by the settler Administration.<sup>290</sup>

### **The Veterinary Department, 1898 -1902**

The vastness of Rinderpest's sweep and the rapidity of its spread left an indelible mark on the history of Southern Rhodesia. So devastating was the disease that it resulted in a major reorientation of both western and local world views. Its only positive outcome was the disappearance of Cattle Trypanosomiasis as a result of the decimation of cattle and wildlife.<sup>291</sup> After running its full course, this disease demonstrated two things to the administration; one, that the religious leaders had a strong influence upon the Africans; two, the vulnerability of livestock to diseases in the absence of an effective veterinary services department. The first concern was

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<sup>287</sup> F. Coillard, *On the threshold of central Africa: A Record of Twenty-Five Years Pioneering Among the Barotsi of Upper Zambezi* (London; Frank Cass, 1971). See also K. Brown, *Mad dogs and meerkats: A history of resurgent rabies in Southern Africa*, (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2011), 64.

<sup>288</sup> Charles Edmonds cited by Brown, *Mad dogs and meerkats*, 64.

<sup>289</sup> *Annual report of the Chief Veterinary Surgeon*, 1918.

<sup>290</sup> Mutowo, 'Animal diseases and human populations in colonial Zimbabwe,' 14.

<sup>291</sup> See E. Gargallo, 'A Question of Game or Cattle? The Fight against Trypanosomiasis in Southern Rhodesia (1898–1914), *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 35, 3 (2009), 737.

dealt with legislatively. Regarding the role played by the spiritual leaders, Father Boos, a Catholic priest, wrote:

Now it is well known that superstition holds the native mind in complete thralldom ... whole tribes of kaffirs destroyed all their cattle and provisions at the word of a prophetess ... engaged in a war of extermination with the white colonists and even though defeated again and again they continued their stubborn resistance ... buoyed up with their unwavering belief in the promises of the witch doctors.<sup>292</sup>

This statement underlines the settler consensus to obliterate any vestiges of local therapeutic practices and ideas about diseases (both human and animal).

With regards to the second challenge, the state buttressed structures formed in 1896. Despite Rinderpest being brought under control by 1898, the situation did not improve as the following diseases broke out amongst livestock in quick succession between 1898 and 1902: glanders (1898), contagious bovine pleuropneumonia (1900), ulcerative lymphaginitis and ECF (1902).<sup>293</sup> Against this backdrop, the turn of the nineteenth century saw the introduction of new veterinary measures for the twin purposes of dealing with these epizootics and plugging loopholes on legal measures that had been pushed through in the 1890s. The following instructions were issued for the guidance of all officers charged with the administration of the Animal Diseases Ordinance (1901), Lung Sickness Ordinance No.5 (1900) and Glanders: in the Native Reserves livestock belonging to Africans issues were to be dealt by NCs or any other authorised officials of the Native Department.<sup>294</sup> This arrangement, a continuation of pre-Rinderpest veterinary policy, differed starkly with what was happening in European areas where veterinary surgeons and inspectors in charge of European stock reported directly to the Chief Veterinary Surgeon (C.V.S). However, a new development was that in addition to their principal work in European areas, cattle inspectors could *assist* (my emphasis) the Native Department, if called upon, in carrying out veterinary duties in African areas.<sup>295</sup>

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<sup>292</sup> A. Boos, 'The Springtime of the Mashonaland Mission,' 122-3.

<sup>293</sup> Ford, *The role of Trypanosomiasis in African Ecology*, 350-1. See also D. Hutcheon, 'Virulent redwater in the Transvaal,' *Agricultural Journal*, 33 (1903), 45.

<sup>294</sup> NAZ RG-P/AGR 5 General Instructions issued to officers charged with the administration of laws for the suppression of contagious and infectious diseases in animals in Rhodesia (1901), 2.

<sup>295</sup> NAZ RG-P/AGR 5 General Instructions, 5.

The prescriptive nature of the regulations is evident especially when one considers how scab was to be treated among sheep and goats. The possibility that Africans may have had their own remedies was never entertained as veterinary officials and NAD officers were instructed to:

*Teach natives within their districts, the proper methods of curing scab, and to personally superintend a number of operations conducted for such purposes in different parts of the district, as object lessons for natives. Native Commissioners should obtain the cooperation of missionaries, farmers and traders in teaching, inducing and aiding natives to take proper steps to eradicate scab.*<sup>296</sup>(my emphasis)

This statement displays an attempt by the veterinary hierarchy to slot Africans into their world view. In the ensuing years, this ambition becomes much visible in the manner regulations were crafted. For instance, under the Animal Diseases Ordinance (1902), stock-owners were obliged under law to report the presence of any disease among their herds to veterinary officers in their districts, police and NCs. In 1904, it became the Animal Diseases Consolidation Ordinance – providing cattle inspectors with more powers to inspect and detect diseases among livestock in their districts as well as to inspect transport animals and issue permits to transport riders and those in charge of travelling stock.

The Veterinary Services Department was intended to favour the literate, and those knowledgeable to the workings of a European form of administration. Although there is nowhere in the regulations where it was stated that Africans were to be excluded from accessing veterinary services, whites became its major beneficiaries.<sup>297</sup> Services allegedly made available to the ‘public’ were listed as follows: attending and giving professional advice in connection with the following diseases; Anthrax, Contagious abortion, East Coast Fever, Epizootic Lymphangitis, Foot and Mouth, Farcy, Foot-rot, Heartwater, Glanders, intestinal parasites among sheep and goats, Liver Disease, Lung Sickness, Osteoporosis, Malarial catarrhal fever (Blue Tongue), Rabies, Rinderpest, Scabies, Quarter Evil, Swine Fever.<sup>298</sup> The following charges were to be made and payable for services rendered by the Government Veterinary Surgeon (GVS): a)

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<sup>296</sup> NAZ RG-P/AGR 5 General Instructions, 12.

<sup>297</sup> ‘Historical Note: Services of Government Veterinary Surgeons: October 1921,’ *Rhodesia Veterinary Journal*, 3, 2 (1972). 30.

<sup>298</sup> ‘Historical Note,’ 30.

for every professional visit within three miles of his office or residence: 5s. b) for every professional visit beyond such distance plus an additional charge of 2/6 per hour whilst engaged in such activities or £2 3s 6d a day. c) for advice given at the Veterinary Surgeon's office: 2s 6d.<sup>299</sup> Applicants for services of the GVS had, at their own cost, to provide the necessary transport for the conveyance of these officers to and from their stations.<sup>300</sup> In all cases where veterinary advice was required, the owner was supposed to telegraph to "Veterinary," Salisbury, with prepaid reply, the nature of the complaint that the animal is suffering from, giving a full description of the symptoms. This, it was argued, was to enable the CVS to telegraph advice at once and state whether he was able to arrange for veterinary attendance on the case or not.<sup>301</sup> A 1909 Enquiry into the Public Service of Rhodesia succinctly summarized their duties as providing advice in veterinary matters to all *farmers* requiring their assistance.<sup>302</sup> These provisions had the resultant effect of conveniently disenfranchising African livestock owners who, at the time, were largely illiterate, with an economy run largely along barter trade, and not included in the category of 'farmers.' Furthermore, having been settled further away from the means of communication, it meant that those that Africans who may have desired this medicine needed to pay more. By 1902, therefore, veterinary services were skewed in favour of settler farmers who, unlike African livestock owners, had the political power to force through legislation that protected their interests.

## Conclusion

This chapter has, firstly, shown that Nobbs' contention that black people in Southern Rhodesia possessed a large body of effective veterinary remedies was justified. It has demonstrated that interaction with Europeans before and after colonisation brought a variety of diseases which, prior to the advent of European occupation, were unknown to Africans. Notable examples are contagious bovine pleuropneumonia, a bacterial disease, which was brought by missionaries from South Africa into Matabeleland in 1861<sup>303</sup>, Rinderpest in the 1890s and tick-borne East

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<sup>299</sup> 'Historical Note,' 30.

<sup>300</sup> 'Historical Note,' 30.

<sup>301</sup> 'Historical note,' 31.

<sup>302</sup> *Report of the Board of Inquiry into the Public Service in Rhodesia (1909)*, 42.

<sup>303</sup> Ford, *The role of Trypanosomiasis in African Ecology*, 337.

Coast Fever in the early twentieth century.<sup>304</sup> In cases where African livestock regimes were unable to deal with these epizootics, Africans correctly linked such diseases with colonialism and the expansion of capitalist production. The administration was during this period mainly preoccupied with the search for gold that no major investment in veterinary infrastructure was made before 1896. This deficiency, notwithstanding, the distribution of veterinary facilities was highly racialised as there was no corresponding tendency by the administration to provide Africans with veterinary services in the reserves. Despite providing a very large proportion of the revenue, both in direct and indirect taxation, little, if any, was spent for the benefit of African livestock which, like their owners, were driven to unfriendly environments. Since veterinary tasks pertaining to African livestock were in the hands of Native Commissioners, who were not veterinary specialists by training, the envisaged diffusion of western ideas about disease did not occur at the desired pace as Africans kept their socio-cultural views of what constituted diseased and 'clean' animals. However, regardless of their ingenuity in the face of adversity, one has to acknowledge the inadequacy or even absence of a wide pool of indigenous knowledge for some of the diseases because they simply never existed before. Rinderpest is one disease that demonstrated that local therapeutics were not sophisticated enough to deal with viral diseases. New diseases may have resulted in the development of new ideas or reshaping of old ones in a way that one may not be easily explainable as such ideas were not recorded. If land dispossession, imposition of a battery of taxes after 1894, and the visitation of new animal diseases are computed, it is justifiable to conclude that the period 1890-1902 saw a rapid deterioration in the local disease situation.

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<sup>304</sup> Brown, *Mad dogs and meerkats*, 16.

## Chapter Three

### **‘Even the calves must dip’: Africans and the imposition of dipping tanks in Southern Rhodesia, c.1902 – 1930.**

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The previous chapter established that the Southern Rhodesian state preferred biomedical veterinary approaches to alternative African livestock therapeutic practices in its effort to control epizootics and enzootics. While diverse state veterinary regulations passed in the aftermath of the Rinderpest outbreak were still seeping into the colony’s socio-economic fabric, the uneasy relationship between state veterinary services and African livestock regimes persisted. African livestock regimes, especially veterinary therapeutics, endured partly because of the practical inadequacies of state veterinary services, African aversion to veterinary medicine, and were reshaped by new epizootics which brought another dynamic into the veterinary equation. The outbreak of East Coast Fever (ECF) and Rabies in 1902, when the country was still recovering from the outbreak of Rinderpest, further stretched the colony’s embryonic state veterinary services, and precipitated change in the veterinary scene. In particular, ECF – a tick-borne disease which spreads among bovines –, as this chapter will show, resulted in conflicts between African livestock owners and the state, white farmers and vets, and between entomologists and vets over both the role of ticks in spreading epizootics, and how they could be controlled. These differences, notwithstanding, the devastation caused by ECF resulted in the systematic dipping of livestock – a development which (as this chapter shows) reshaped the nature of veterinary interactions in the country in general, and the African reserves in particular.

Moving from a broad discussion of the interaction of African livestock regimes and state veterinary services (discussed in Chapter 2), this chapter focuses the lens on tick-borne epizootics to explore the impact of dipping tanks in African reserves. It builds upon studies by Jamu and Hombarume on the growth of African herds, and diseases that affected African

livestock respectively.<sup>305</sup> Though touching on issues that had an important impact on African livestock regimes these studies were not particularly interested in examining the interconnections of tick-borne livestock diseases, the colonial state and African livestock regimes. Thus, issues pertaining to dipping tanks were discussed tangentially. Thus, this chapter draws on but challenges Colin Bundy's argument that from the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century and the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century developments in Eastern Griqualand, a similar colonial context to that in Southern Rhodesia, were closely shaped by the disease environment, and that change in rural communities was increasingly forced upon Africans through veterinary interventions.<sup>306</sup> Bundy's study of the enforcement of dipping in the Transkei and its political consequences remains an interesting case of the interplay of socio-political and veterinary forces in a rural setting. In Southern Rhodesia, the process through which African livestock owners negotiated for space within a highly racialised context, as this chapter shows, questions the oft made argument that political consciousness found in the reserves was brought by migrant labourers from mines, urban areas and farms.<sup>307</sup> Unlike Bundy, Gilfoyle centres on the influence of veterinary scientists as benign veterinary care givers not influenced by colonial intentions of cultivating a culture of consent among livestock owners.<sup>308</sup> Yet Gilfoyle does not discuss how these 'well-intentioned' veterinary policies were imagined by African livestock owners whose prior knowledge of livestock therapeutics sometimes ran contrary to biomedical practice.

On the other hand, the translatability of Bundy's model across the region is to be questioned since the enforcement of dipping among Africans in Southern Rhodesia may be an example of colonial intrusion that does not describe a straightforward process of colonial subjugation to

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<sup>305</sup> See T.T. Jamu, 'The growth and control of African herds, 1910 – 1955,' M.A African History Thesis, University of Zimbabwe, 1987; L.T Hombarume, 'The significance of disease among African owned cattle, 1900- 1950, with general reference to Gutu, Inyanga and Nyamandlovu,' M.A History Thesis, University of Zimbabwe, 1988.

<sup>306</sup> C. Bundy, 'We don't want your rain, we won't dip,' Popular opposition, collaboration and social control in the anti-dipping movement, c.1908-16,' in C. Bundy and W. Beinart (eds), *Hidden struggles in rural South Africa* (London: James Currey, 1987) 193. See also S. Marks, 'The Zulu disturbances in Natal,' in R.I. Rotberg and A.A. Mazrui (eds), *Protest and Power in Black Africa*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), 213-257.

<sup>307</sup> See W. Dopcke, 'Magomo's Maize': State and peasants during the Depression in colonial Zimbabwe,' in I. Brown (ed), *The economies of Africa and Asia in the inter-war Depression*, (London: Routledge, 1989), 46.

<sup>308</sup> D. Gilfoyle, 'The heartwater mystery: veterinary and popular ideas about tick-borne animal diseases at the Cape, c.1877 – 1910', *Kronos*, 29 (2003), 139-160.



which Africans responded simply in terms of either ‘collaboration’ or ‘resistance’.<sup>309</sup> But it is true that dip tanks, just as Brooks has argued about fencing, were an ‘important signifier of change ... and a revealing point of tension between ruler and ruled.’<sup>310</sup> Interestingly, a very intriguing case on African overt reaction to dipping in Southern Rhodesia, almost similar to Bundy’s findings, is offered by Norval whose study centres on the liberation war in the 1970s.<sup>311</sup>



**Figure 3.1: Mavhaire Dip Tank, Buhera, Manicaland**

Dilapidated dip tanks in modern-day Zimbabwe’s countryside are testament to both the hubris of a long fallen power, and their on-going neglect (See Figure 3.1).<sup>312</sup> Norval adheres to the orthodox colonial view which suggests that veterinary war-time experiences were a negation of the harmony emanating from a close working relationship between veterinary officials and livestock owners, and that liberation fighters were forcing livestock owners to shun dipping.

<sup>309</sup> Brooks, ‘Images of ‘Wild Africa’, 222.

<sup>310</sup> Brooks, ‘Images of ‘Wild Africa’, 231.

<sup>311</sup> R.A.I. Norval, ‘The effects of partial breakdown of dipping in African areas in Rhodesia,’ *Rhodesia Veterinary Journal*, 9, 1-4 (1978).

<sup>312</sup> Photo taken by the author, 14/06/2012.

Although Norma Kriger<sup>313</sup> partly collaborates this, Norval's view obfuscates a long history of calculated 'obedience' and 'negotiation' with veterinary regulations. Although war-time experiences by livestock owners tally with Bundy's findings, this chapter argues that the early history of dip tanks in Southern Rhodesia between 1902 and 1930 was not characterised by vandalism nor was resistance as overt, armed and organised.<sup>314</sup> Nonetheless, this chapter will show that, as in other Southern African contexts, Africans came to understand that technological intervention was not politically neutral, and, therefore, resisted these mostly through covert means. The numerous pressures which dipping placed upon African livestock regimes meant that the dip tank assumed a new meaning other than that offered by colonial officials.

### **The veterinary context, 1902-04**

The imposition of dipping tanks occurred in a specific veterinary context mainly shaped by the outbreak of East Coast Fever in 1902. This outbreak particularly threatened the hegemonic ambitions of the colonial administration as it retarded the rate at which the penetration of the countryside took place. As a hindrance to the colonial project, livestock diseases, therefore, necessitated the expansion of the hitherto embryonic veterinary services. The connection between the consolidation of colonial control and veterinary challenges is not hard to prove. For instance, reports from Native Commissioners detail their complaints of how horses supplied to them for their everyday use in administering their districts succumbed to horse sickness, and that diseases tampered with their vision of making the colony in general and the African society in particular, governable and exploitable.<sup>315</sup> East Coast Fever was directly responsible for the introduction of dipping tanks, and by extension the increased interaction between colonial veterinary officials and African livestock regimes since tick eradication became a very important veterinary activity after 1902 following the failure of Koch's inoculation methods.<sup>316</sup>

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<sup>313</sup> Norma Kriger's study on peasant participation during the liberation war questions the idea that the war was fought with overwhelming peasant support as she noted various forms of intimidation on the parents. She shows that guerrilla fighters sometimes stopped African livestock owners from dipping their livestock. See N.J. Kriger, *Zimbabwe's guerrilla war*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

<sup>314</sup> Bundy, 'We don't want your rain, we won't dip,' 200.

<sup>315</sup> See for instance NAZ N1/1/3 Monthly Reports December 1894, letter from NC Hartley to the CNC (Salisbury), 10/06/1895.

<sup>316</sup> Gilfoyle, 'Heartwater' 146.

Administratively, Southern Rhodesia suffered from a dearth of financial resources necessary to mount a sustained campaign against ECF. The shareholders of the BSAC in London were reluctant to commit resources to a colony whose financial prospects were uncertain.<sup>317</sup> Therefore, numerous letters written by colonial administrators to the BSAC Directors yielded no financial rewards. Cost minimisation and profit maximisation policies that were pursued by the company government for ‘colonial development’ meant that funds were either unavailable or inadequate. This scenario had implications on African livestock regimes as Africans were exposed to heavy taxation payable both in livestock and cash.

For financial reasons, the initial stance taken by the BSAC was that ECF ‘did not exist.’ This was because admittance would have compromised the value of the Company’s shares on the London Stock Exchange (LSE).<sup>318</sup> While this shows the role played by financial considerations on the way the Southern Rhodesian state reacted to epizootics, it also exposes imperial ties that linked Southern Rhodesia to Great Britain. Thus, the manner in which ECF were dealt with offers an opportunity to explore the complicated relationship between colonies and the metropole, between white and black people, and also within the white community itself.<sup>319</sup> State veterinary intervention in the reserves in a polarised environment resulted in the emergence, as also shown in Chapter 2, of competing narratives about otherwise progressive colonial policies. Amidst widespread repugnance, the Veterinary Department took a two-pronged approach involving immunological measures centring on the development of a vaccine, and regulatory policies of quarantines and slaughter of infected animals. It imposed restrictions on cattle movement in several districts, and periodically threatened to call for a general ban throughout the country in clean and unclean areas alike.<sup>320</sup>

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<sup>317</sup> See I.R. Phimister, *An economic and social history of Zimbabwe, 1890-1948: Capital accumulation and class struggle*, (London; Longman, 1988).

<sup>318</sup> S.P. Hyatt, *The Old Transport Road*, (London; Andrew Melrose Ltd, 1914; Reprint: Bulawayo, Books of Rhodesia, 1969), 297. Note: S.P. Hyatt was born in 1877 in London before going to Southern Rhodesia at the age of 22. Together with his brother, he started a very lucrative transport business which was, however, ruined by East Coast Fever which eventually forced him to leave the colony in 1904.

<sup>319</sup> For more on these conflicts see W. Mwatwara, ‘‘The tick was not slow to take advantage’’: Conflicts in the struggle against East Coast Fever in Southern Rhodesia (1901–1920),’ *South African Historical Journal* 65, 2 (2013), 249-270.

<sup>320</sup> NAZ ZAB 2/2/1 African Coast Fever Committee 1910: Written evidence by E. Nobbs to the E.C.F Committee (1910).

Cattle quarantines were unpopular among many Africans who trusted their long standing practice of outpacing (strategic withdrawal from the area) livestock epizootics. For African livestock owners moving cattle became both a disease avoidance method and security measure against state interference in the livestock economy. Thus, they moved possibly already infected herds to ‘green fields and new pastures afar from the madding crowd’ of veterinary officials.<sup>321</sup> A former colonial veterinary officer, R.F. Stifling, argued that coping mechanisms by African livestock owners created fresh foci of disease at considerable distance from the main outbreak but this view has been challenged convincingly. Cranefield has exposed the contradictions in statements given by colonial officials regarding the supposed irrationality of African livestock owners in the face of veterinary calamity. He notes that statements that Africans would have nothing to do with dipping cattle are contradicted by reports that they did cooperate in dipping.<sup>322</sup> Cranefield dismisses the assumption that Africans refused help and spread the disease when and if they chose to move cattle.<sup>323</sup> However, this does not mean that outpacing the disease was a fool proof stratagem. What is being challenged is the insinuation that Africans ‘irrationally’ moved livestock. In fact, African responses, and experiences during the early ECF outbreaks were not typical as other racial groups in the territory reacted in a seemingly similar manner. Some settler farmers and traders concealed the disease, and hindered the work of veterinarians ‘in every way’ they could.<sup>324</sup> An array of white home-made remedies also proved ineffective. Perhaps a more telling example of the devastation amidst therapeutic experimentation is that of Stanley Hyatt, an ox transport owner operating in the colony between 1899 and 1904, who was left with one beast out of a 450 herd.<sup>325</sup> Across the territory, therapeutics ranging from Bluestone mixed with tobacco and ‘Dop’ (Cape impure spirit) to Methyl-Arsenate of Sodium and Trypan-Blau as well as the administration of carbolic acid, quinine and calomel were tried but without success.<sup>326</sup>

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<sup>321</sup> R. Stifling, ‘East Coast Fever in Rhodesia and its control,’ Fellowship Thesis, Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, London, 1912, 16.

<sup>322</sup> Cranefield, *Science and empire*, 237.

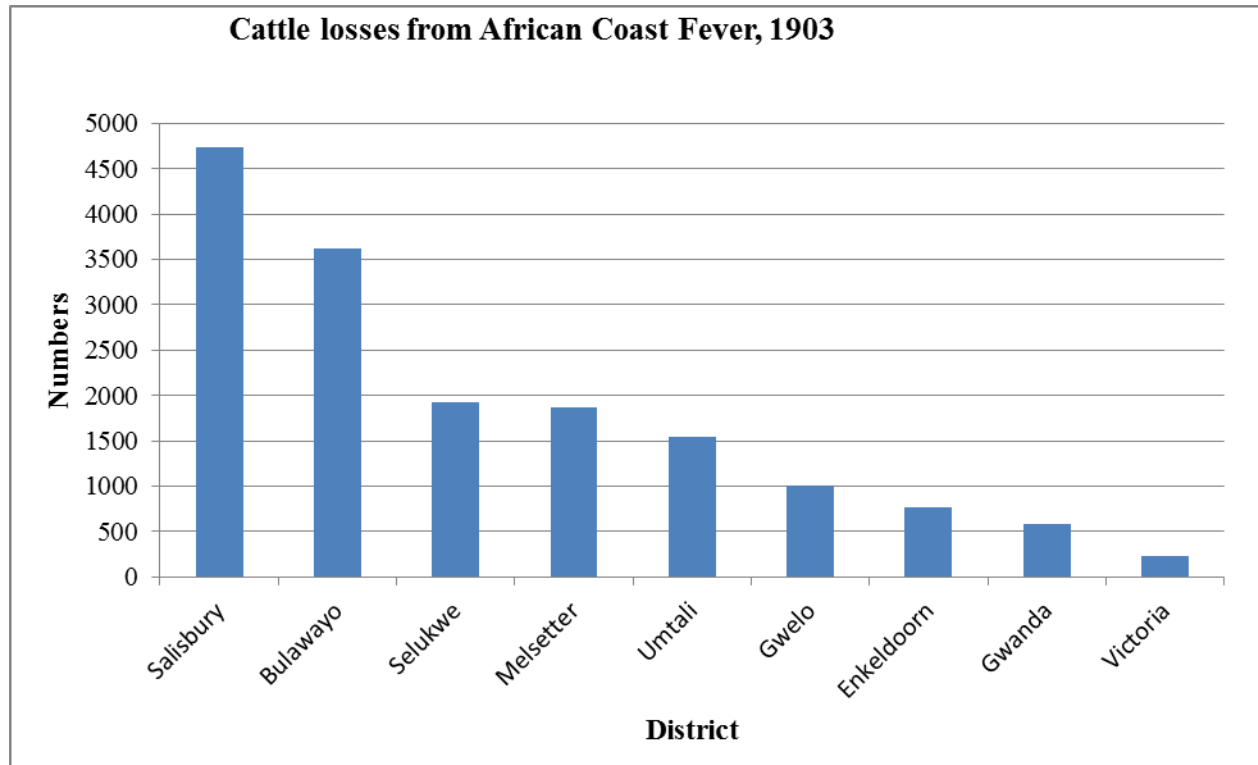
<sup>323</sup> Cranefield, *Science and empire*, 237.

<sup>324</sup> Stifling, ‘East Coast Fever in Rhodesia and its control,’ 15.

<sup>325</sup> See Hyatt, *The Old Transport Road*, 295, 296.

<sup>326</sup> Stifling, ‘East Coast Fever in Rhodesia,’ 11.

State veterinary intervention, notwithstanding, ECF wreaked havoc especially among European-owned herds in routes traversed by infected oxen used by transport riders. By March 1903, the following cattle losses (See Figure 3.2) had been incurred:



**Figure 3.2: Cattle losses from African Coast Fever, 1903**

It is important to acknowledge that the figure only shows reported cases and losses but these were probably significantly greater. Outbreaks and losses were particularly high among European-owned cattle in relatively big commercial and urban centres such as Bulawayo and Salisbury.

Continued losses to the disease amidst the deployment of conventional veterinary disease control measures, and the outcry they generated forced the Southern Rhodesian state to look beyond its borders for veterinary expertise. So important was the eradication of this disease to the state that it took the unconventional route of appointing Robert Koch, a German bacteriologist, to lead the

ECF campaign ahead of British Crown's preferred candidate, a Major Bruce.<sup>327</sup> In fact, in a telegram to the Administrator of Southern Rhodesia, the British High Commissioner wrote that the Committee of the Royal Society 'recommend that investigation be entrusted to Bruce who discovered the curse of Tsetse fly disease ... I am inclined to think it would be well to accept this opinion and ask Bruce to come out at once.'<sup>328</sup> Despite, its willingness to pool resources together with the Cape, Orange Free State and Natal for the appointment of a veterinary official to study the 1902 outbreak, Koch was clearly Southern Rhodesia's preferred candidate. Koch's availability was going to be expensive but the Southern Rhodesian government was prepared to contribute two-fifths of the £10 000 annual pay demanded by Koch. Southern Rhodesia made it clear that, 'if anyone else was employed it will bear only an equal share with other governments.'<sup>329</sup> Koch was eventually appointed on the basis of his previous experience with the same disease in German East Africa while Bruce was rejected because he was not a 'renowned' bacteriologist despite having done some 'excellent' work with Tsetse Fly diseases.<sup>330</sup>

Koch's first move upon arrival in Southern Rhodesia was to dispel W. Robertson's (a Cape Government expert) findings that the disease was known as Texas Fever in the United States, Tick Fever in Australia, and Redwater in the Cape Colony.<sup>331</sup> Koch argued that it was a distinctly different disease hence he called it African Coast Fever.<sup>332</sup> He, therefore, recommended, and developed an inoculant. His recommendations had a direct impact on African livestock regimes in the reserves since the Southern Rhodesian government decided to test the efficacy of his vaccine, firstly, among infected 'native' cattle in Victoria and Chibi Districts, and later among a

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<sup>327</sup> In Britain, the appointment of Koch was politically incorrect given the worsening relations between Britain and Germany, that is, Germany's open support of the Boers in the South African War as well as the failure of the envisaged alliance with Germany against France and Russia that year. See Cranefield, *Science and Empire*, 135.

<sup>328</sup> NAZ A11/2/2/14 Veterinary Bacteriological Expert, 1902-07, telegram from the British High Commissioner to Administrator of Southern Rhodesia, 12/11/1902.

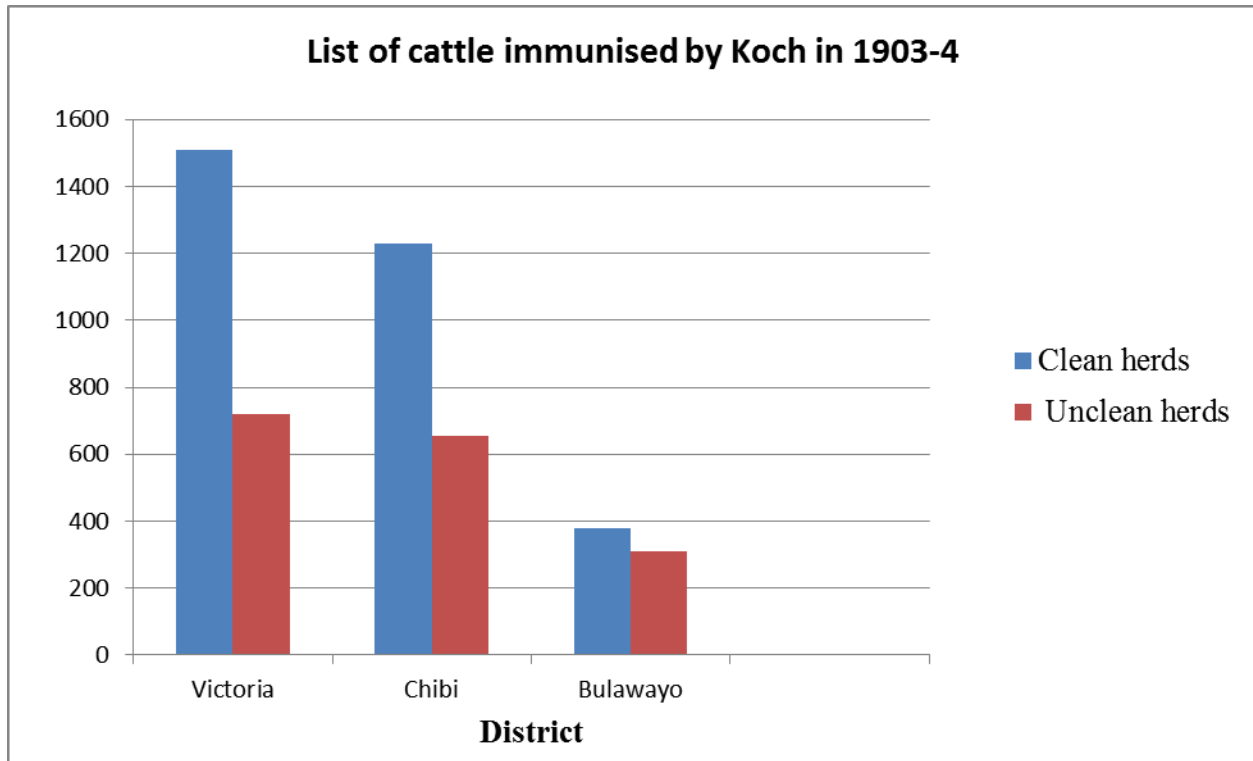
<sup>329</sup> NAZ A11/2/2/14 Veterinary Bacteriological Expert, 1902-07, letter from the High Commissioner to the Governors of the Cape, Natal and Bloemfontein, 08/12/1902.

<sup>330</sup> NAZ A11/2/2/14 Veterinary Bacteriological Expert, 1902-07, telegram from D. Hutcheon, the Cape Chief Veterinary Surgeon, to the High Commissioner, 14/11/1902.

<sup>331</sup> Stifling, 'East Coast Fever in Rhodesia and its control,' 2.

<sup>332</sup> R. Koch, 'Interim report on Rhodesian Redwater or African coast fever in Southern Rhodesia,' *Report on the Department of Agriculture* (1903).

few 'European' cattle in Bulawayo.<sup>333</sup> Figure 3.3<sup>334</sup> below illustrates the full extent of Koch's activities.



**Figure 3.3: List of cattle immunised by Koch in 1903-4**

Victoria and Chibi were predominantly African areas hence this graph demonstrates how rigorous Koch's controversial method was experimented among African-owned livestock. Figure 3.3 particularly revealed that major losses from ECF had occurred in major towns among European owned herds. The decision to target African herds which had remained disease free for nearly eighteen months after the first outbreak in Umtali and for a year after it had spread to Bulawayo for testing Koch's drug reveals the preparedness by veterinarians to experiment with

<sup>333</sup> C. Gray, 'Inoculation for African Coast Fever,' *Rhodesian Agricultural Journal*, 2, 1 (1904), 8. See Chapters 2 and 4 for an in-depth discussion of cattle breeds.

<sup>334</sup> Source: C. Gray, 'Inoculation for African Coast Fever,' *Rhodesian Agricultural Journal*, 2, 1 (1904), 8.

African livestock.<sup>335</sup> In fact, the decision to do this potentially dangerous experiment in an area hitherto deprived of other state veterinary services put the issue into proper context, and challenges the thinking that veterinary services were politically neutral.

An official report about this intrusion simply stated that it was done in ‘peace’ allegedly because Africans were ‘anxious’ to have their animals treated, and that white farmers were equally ‘unanimous’ in their desire to give the inoculation method a trial.<sup>336</sup> However, this was not true. Koch’s report betrays both the general ignorance among colonial officials about African livestock regimes, and the comforting myth of the intruder who wishes to believe that Africans are pleased with the intrusion. At present, some historians have convincingly argued that this period was characterised by acute opposition to veterinary measures both among whites and Africans in Southern Africa.<sup>337</sup> For instance, B.N. Lawrance, E.L Osborn and R.L. Roberts have argued convincingly that very few Europeans learned African languages and that with the exception of some British officials in Nigeria and Kenya, few European administrators remained in one posting long enough to develop sufficient linguistic and cultural familiarity to communicate independently, and understand their colonial subjects.<sup>338</sup> In the Southern Rhodesian context, Jeater has compellingly shown the limited knowledge which these officials had about African culture and behaviour.<sup>339</sup> As the previous chapter demonstrated, there was widespread resistance to inoculation against Rinderpest, thus, it is questionable, as the states vets alleged, that the same method was ‘welcomed’ barely a decade later. It is plausible that state veterinary coercion forced African livestock owners to resort to what Scott describes as, ‘the normal tendency of the dependent individual is to reveal only part of his or her full transcript in

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<sup>335</sup> In fact, Charter, Chilimanzi, Gutu, Lomagundi, Makoni, North Mazoe, Marandellas, Salisbury, Mtoko, Ndanga, Matobo, Wankie, Tuli, Belingwe, Insiza, Filabusi and Bulalima-Mangwe District loss from ECF had either been small or non-existent. See Cranfield, *Science and empire*, 226, 227-229.

<sup>336</sup> R. Koch, ‘Rhodesian Redwater or African Coast Fever: Fourth Report,’ *Agricultural Journal of the Cape of Good Hope*, 24, 5(1904), 549.

<sup>337</sup> See for instance Cranfield, *Science and Empire*; K. Brown and D. Gilfoyle, ‘Introduction: Livestock diseases and veterinary services in Southern Africa,’ *South African Historical Journal*, 58 (2007), 2-16; Mwatwara, ‘The tick was not slow to take advantage.’

<sup>338</sup> B.N. Lawrance, E.L. Osborn and R.L. Roberts, ‘Introduction: African intermediaries and the “bargain” of collaboration,’ in B.N. Lawrance, E.L. Osborn and R.L. Roberts (eds), *Intermediaries, interpreters, and clerks: African employees in the making of colonial Africa* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2006).

<sup>339</sup> D. Jeater, ‘Imagining Africans: Scholarship, fantasy, and science in colonial administration, 1920s Southern Rhodesia,’ *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 38, 1 (2005).



encounters with the powerful that is both safe and appropriate to reveal.<sup>340</sup> African livestock owners could not challenge Koch's intrusion overtly given their weakened position as the subjects.

Interestingly, before Koch had finished carrying out his experiments, he already had a number of sceptics both among white farmers and scientists. White farmers, in particular, were vocal given that they had political power to channel their grievances. Some placed their faith on home remedies, and, as the previous chapter revealed, some African therapeutic methods. However, their main grievance, which could also capture the voice of the Africans whose livestock were inoculated, was that Koch's vaccine did not have any noticeable results in infected herds, and that it had the effect of killing the calves.<sup>341</sup> In fact, some interested whites mobilised the unsatisfactory results among the following 'native' cattle herds to destroy the government's confidence in Koch's inoculation method: in Mangwendi's herd, which originally consisted of seventy-three cattle, three died at the time of inoculation, thirteen died within the first two weeks of inoculation and twelve more died in the third month after commencement of inoculation.<sup>342</sup> At Fingo location near Bulawayo, the following deaths occurred: eighteen in October, fourteen in November, four in December, and thirteen in January.<sup>343</sup> Furthermore, between September 1904 and 1905 there were nineteen outbreaks in two reserves in Matabeleland Districts (Bubi and Insiza).<sup>344</sup>

Questions over the efficacy of Koch's method also extended to other scientists. When it became clear that the inoculation method had failed to stop the disease entomologists came to lead the struggle against tick-borne diseases. Experiments by Charles Lounsbury, the head of the Cape Entomology Department, revealed that the brown tick (*Rhipicephalus Appendiculatus*) was the

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<sup>340</sup> J.C. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday forms of peasant resistance*, (New London: Yale University Press, 1985), 286.

<sup>341</sup> NAZ LO 4/1/16, Report of the Chief Native Commissioner, 31 March 1904.

<sup>342</sup> Koch, 'Rhodesian Redwater or African Coast Fever: Fourth Report,' 553.

<sup>343</sup> Koch, 'Rhodesian Redwater or African Coast Fever: Fourth Report,' 554.

<sup>344</sup> NAZ V3/1-3 Veterinary Reports, letter from the Government Veterinary Surgeon, Charles Edmonds (Salisbury) to Charles Gray, the Chief Veterinary Surgeon, 6/11/1905.

important vector in the spread of ECF.<sup>345</sup> It was on the basis of Lounsbury's findings that Southern Rhodesian state shifted its search for a vaccine to tick destruction through dipping in arsenic solution. Even though dipping of livestock was not an entirely new phenomenon as it had been practiced in the USA and Australia since the 1890s<sup>346</sup>, it was adopted in Southern Rhodesia after experiments by Watkins-Pitchford (a Government Bacteriologist in Natal) demonstrated that ECF could be controlled, and eradicated by dipping cattle at intervals of 72 hours.<sup>347</sup>

### **The introduction of dipping, 1904-1914**

The previous section has revealed the inadequacy of veterinary science in the fight against epizootics, and also the conflict between and among scientists. Furthermore, it also revealed how lowly African-owned cattle were rated in the veterinary hierarchy, and how the decision to adopt dipping as a tick control method came into being. This section discusses the operationalization of dipping. The passage of the Animal Diseases Consolidation Ordinance (later amended by Ordinances No. 2 of 1910, No. 2 of 1911, No. 2 of 1913 and No. 1 of 1918) in 1904 marked the official beginning of livestock dipping. Although it became popular as a result of its enforcement during ECF outbreaks, the new ordinance actually applied to a number of diseases: Anthrax, Foot and Mouth, Glanders, Heartwater, Lung Sickness, Pyaemia, Redwater, Rinderpest, Swine fever, Quarter Evil, Tuberculosis, enzootic abortion, Liver rot, Trypanosomiasis, Scabies in sheep and goats and rabies in dogs and other animals.<sup>348</sup> With its passage, administrative officials made frantic efforts to enforce it but, as will be shown, fell into financial difficulties. Following Southern Rhodesia's resolution to adopt dipping as a tick control method, the Administrator (BSAC) wrote to the Secretary (BSAC London) requesting funds amounting to £3 000 for use in the construction of dip tanks.<sup>349</sup> However, despite agreeing to compulsory dipping, the Board of Directors could not authorise expenditure. Instead, they encouraged the Administrator to

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<sup>345</sup> C.P. Lounsbury, 'Transmission of African Coast Fever,' *Agricultural Journal of the Cape of Good Hope*, 25, 4 (1904).

<sup>346</sup> Gilfoyle, 'The heartwater mystery,' 154.

<sup>347</sup> Sinclair, 'A short history of the infective diseases,' 15.

<sup>348</sup> NAZ T2/29/28/1-5: Cattle Dipping: Ordinance and Government Notices Affecting Livestock in Southern Rhodesia.

<sup>349</sup> NAZ A11/2/2/14 Veterinary, Bacteriological Expert, 1902- 07, letter from the Administrator, BSAC (Salisbury) to Secretary. BSAC (London), 27/10/1904.

consider farmers making their own tanks, and that unless cattle were dipped they were supposed to be isolated.<sup>350</sup> This resolution, as will be shown, impacted negatively on African livestock regimes as livestock owners paid a relatively exorbitant dipping fee.

While the administrator was grappling with his financial woes and pondered how dip tanks could be constructed in the country without the assistance of the BSAC's London financiers, dipping was not received by livestock owners with unanimity. Some white livestock owners argued vociferously that it was costly, time consuming and also represented an unwelcome state intervention into livestock management.<sup>351</sup> Some appreciated its efficacy in tick destruction but detested the opportunity it gave to the authorities to inspect and count their livestock. They argued, as their counterparts in the Cape<sup>352</sup>, that it was detrimental to their cattle and they, therefore, refused to dip. White livestock owners reported an immediate rise in mortality in ECF-infected herds when dipped for the first time, and the irritation caused by the solution.<sup>353</sup> One cattle inspector confirmed it thus, 'Cattle seem to feel the effects of the dip. Transport riders particularly say that their oxen are not able to pull their loads for a couple of days. In the Salisbury tank, beasts were burned [sic] and were not able to pull their loads for a week.'<sup>354</sup> Similar concerns were raised by African cattle owners in the reserves.

Resentment largely emanated from the manner in which the dipping ordinance was implemented. Like in other colonial activities involving Africans, coercion became a standard method of implementing veterinary regulations as colonial veterinary officials seldom considered how some of their policies negatively impacted on certain aspects of African livelihoods. In fact, NCs rarely bothered to explain to Africans what dipping was supposed to accomplish. Instead they just told Africans what to do, when to have it done, and what would happen to them if they failed to meet

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<sup>350</sup> NAZ A11/2/2/14 Veterinary, Bacteriological Expert, 1902- 07, letter from the Secretary, BSAC (London) to the Administrator, BSAC (Salisbury),

<sup>351</sup> K. Brown, 'Tropical medicine and animal diseases: Onderstepoort and the development of veterinary science in South Africa, 1908 to 1950,' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 31, 33 (2005), 522.

<sup>352</sup> Gilfoyle, 'The heartwater mystery,' 157.

<sup>353</sup> *Report of the Agricultural Department, March 1903*, 36.

<sup>354</sup> NAZ ZAB 2/1/1, Oral evidence by J.J. Keiser (Mazoe Cattle Inspector), 7 July 1910.

the deadline.<sup>355</sup> Their mistaken belief was that Africans would come to appreciate the project's worth once they were in place.<sup>356</sup> Despite the fact that by 1914 there existed no law that compelled livestock owners (both black and white) to dip, in African reserves NCs gave the impression that everyone was mandated to. In fact, legislative efforts to make dipping mandatory across the territory started with the Animal Disease Amendment Ordinance (1911) but came to fruition with passage of the Compulsory Dipping Ordinance (1914). The former called for the construction of more dip tanks, and for the first time introduced a penalty for illegal cattle movement. The latter made dipping compulsory in certain parts of the colony. All African livestock owners were asked to obtain dipping cards in order to access dipping tanks. The registration of African cattle (book system) helped vets and other public officials to ascertain the number of African-owned cattle. With this knowledge the provision of dipping tanks, supervisors, dip tanks attendants and others was planned. Vets could also assess the approximate number of cattle in various districts, map strategies for enforcing dipping regulations, and enforce payment of dipping fees. At each dipping, dipping cards were checked against the number of cattle brought to the tank.

With their 1896-7 defeat still engraved in their memory, Africans complied with the 'law' because they believed that they had no choice. Their 'resistance' mainly manifested through holding onto certain vernacular ideas about livestock diseases, and by refusing to accept the colonial government's explanations and goals.<sup>357</sup> From its inception in 1904, dipping was characterised by the use of force such that 1914 it had become established as the key to tick eradication in certain parts of Southern Rhodesia.

However, dipping was not smooth as its propagation was precluded by lack of resources, and strong legal instruments to buttress it. The government started by providing public tanks at trading centres where livestock owners paid a fee for the service. The dipping charge had the negative effect of discouraging both poor African and white livestock owners from utilising the

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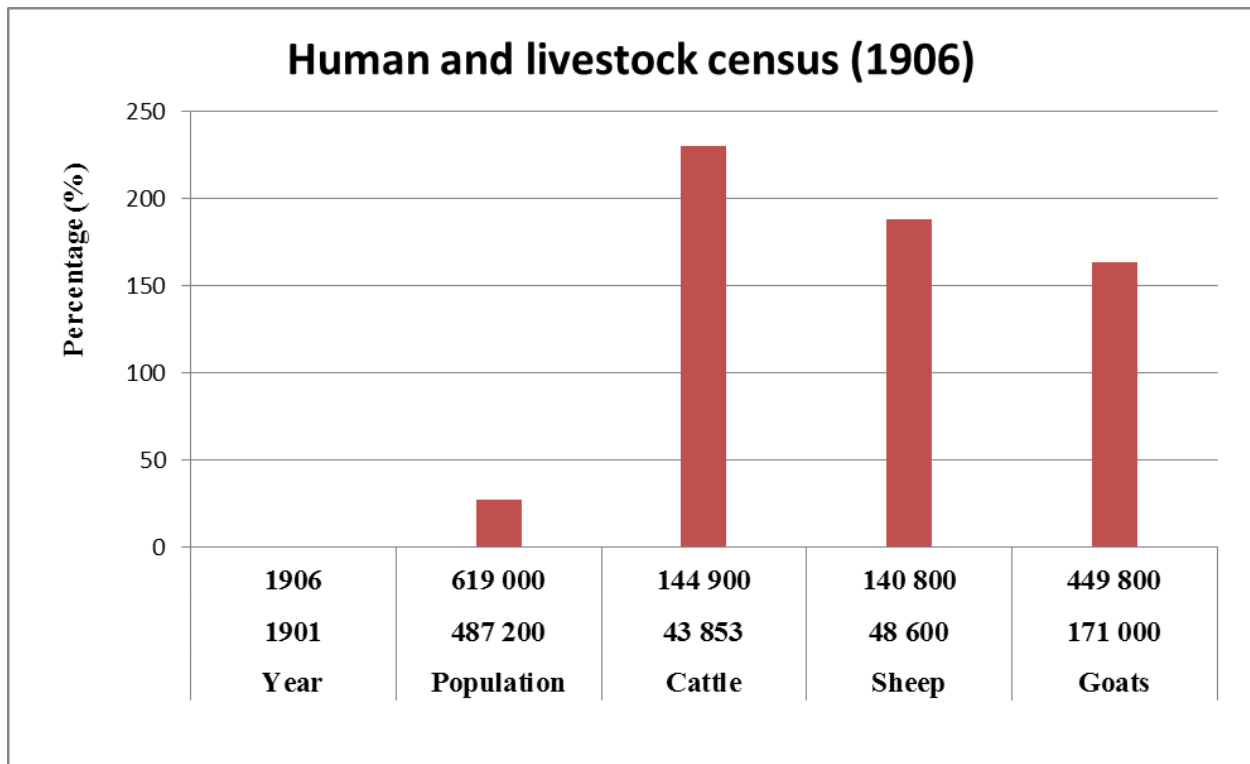
<sup>355</sup> L.L. Bessant, 'Coercive Development: Land Shortage, Forced Labor, and Colonial Development in the Chiweshe Reserve, Colonial Zimbabwe, 1938-1946,' *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 25, 1 (1992), 40.

<sup>356</sup> Bessant, 'Coercive Development,' 58.

<sup>357</sup> Bessant, 'Coercive development,' 43.

facility. To encourage everyone to dip the government scrapped dipping charges on public tanks in 1910, and also actively supported the construction of public tanks throughout the country. In that year alone, public tanks were constructed at Marandellas, Old Umtali, Gatooma, and Victoria. Over a three year period the number of dip tanks rose from 100 in 1910 to 215 in 1911 (25 of which were public)<sup>358</sup> before reaching 325 at the end of 1913.<sup>359</sup>

Yet it is important to state that despite the controversy surrounding the introduction of dipping tanks, what had been a precarious position in 1902 had, by 1906, changed somewhat for the better amidst new outbreaks. Paradoxically, the period 1902-06, which was characterised by incessant outbreaks, was fruitful for many livestock owners as can be shown in Fig. 3.4<sup>360</sup> below:



**Figure 3.4 Human and livestock census (1906)**

Figure 3.4 shows results of a human and livestock census carried in 1906. Impressive cattle statistics shown in the figure are particularly important to this discussion as the colonial officials

<sup>358</sup> D.A Lawrence, “The history of veterinary services in Rhodesia, 2, Period 1900 – 1921,” *Rhodesian Veterinary Journal*, 1, 3 (1970), 56.

<sup>359</sup> Machingaidze, ‘The development of settler capitalist agriculture,’ 324.

<sup>360</sup> NAZ LO 4/1/21, Report of the Administrator (1905-06), 25.

attributed them to dipping. In their writings, they generally acknowledged progress made among African livestock owners. For instance, in his 1905-6 report, the Administrator stated, ‘The natives are gradually seeing the benefits to be derived from dipping their small stock and keeping them clean, and I am pleased to say that scab is gradually being stamped out of their herds.’<sup>361</sup> By 1910, Africans were being commended for their obedience to veterinary regulations. That year the CVS exonerated Africans from the long held view that they were responsible for the spread of East Coast Fever. He stated that, ‘as a matter of fact, I think 80 per cent of the outbreaks have been done [sic] by the Europeans and not native cattle.’<sup>362</sup> Native Commissioners’ reports also revealed that a large number of African-owned cattle were dipping, especially those on settler farms and in areas where dip tanks were available. The NC Victoria stated unequivocally, ‘if the natives had not complied with the regulations, it is certain that the disease would never have been stamped out of Victoria.’<sup>363</sup> Victoria had the country’s largest African cattle population and therefore, the disease was supposed to have become uncontrollable there but there were only two outbreaks in 1906 and 1907 with no reoccurrence. The probability of this being the result of the increase cannot be dismissed entirely but one needs to treat the impact of dipping tanks on the growth of African herds with caution. For a number of years after the Rinderpest outbreak, the colonial administration did not have adequate statistical data on African herds hence the reported increase may simply have been because the administration began to have stricter control over herds after the imposition of dipping and other ECF measures, and therefore got opportunity to update its books.<sup>364</sup> In fact, in his 1904 Report the Chief Native Commissioner (Mashonaland) explained success in enforcing a number of laws including livestock disease control in outlying districts and their counting for taxation purpose. Or one may explain this increase to the fact that, as Cranefield has argued, African herds being remote from major transport routes avoided the disease between 1902 and 1906, and that Africans had drawn back from the Europeans.<sup>365</sup>

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<sup>361</sup> NAZ LO 4/1/21, Report of the Administrator (1905-06), 25.

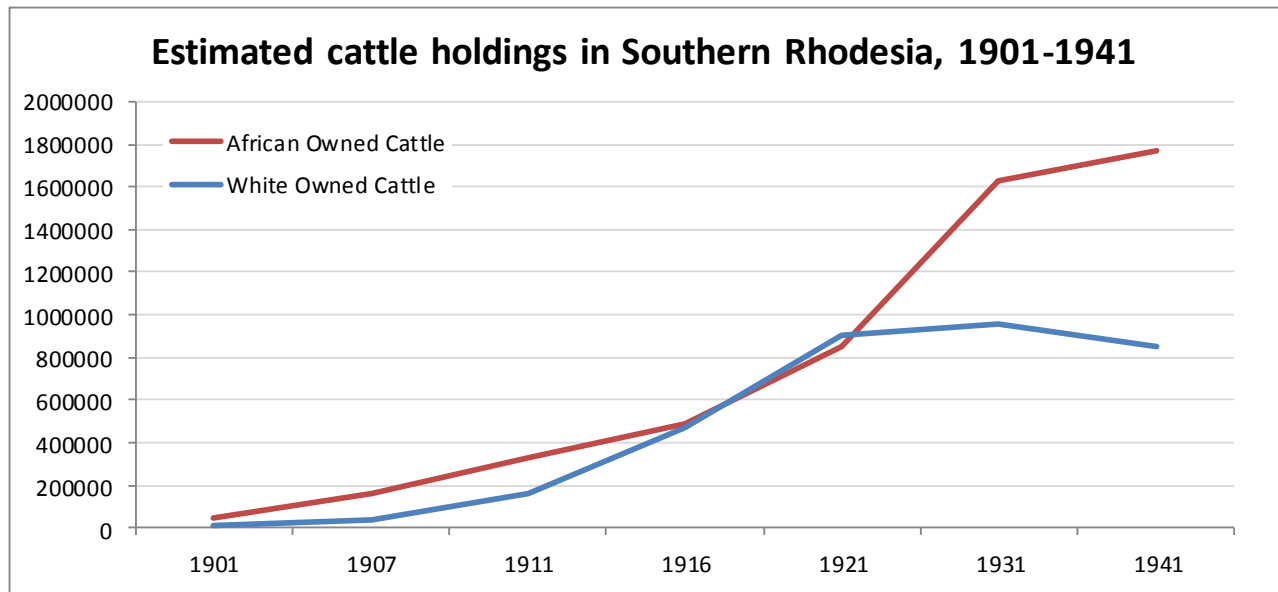
<sup>362</sup> NAZ ZAB 2/1/1, Oral evidence by the C.V.S, Salisbury, 4 July 1910.

<sup>363</sup> NAZ ZAB 2/1/1, Oral Evidence by S.N. G. Jackson (NC Victoria), 22 July 1910.

<sup>364</sup> NAZ LO 4/1/16, Report of the Chief Native Commissioner, 31 March 1904.

<sup>365</sup> Cranefield, *Science and Empire*, 225.

However, the shortage and in some cases total absence of dip tanks in certain reserves and farms precluded vets from enforcing dipping regulations, and this placed them in a conflict situation with certain white farmers who believed that African-owned livestock were essentially pathogenic.<sup>366</sup> This was not entirely true as the disease tended to be prevalent in European-owned herds. In fact, the disease did not hinder at all the natural increase of African herds which was estimated at 26.2 per cent per annum at a national level.<sup>367</sup> Notwithstanding this impressive growth, there were differences across the colony's ecological zones as some Africans, especially in Sebungwe, Gwelo, Wankie, Lomagundi, Urungwe, Chirundu, Hartley, Mtoko, Chipinga, Mazoe and Sabi Valley, did not have a noticeable increase until after 1910 on account of Tsetse fly.<sup>368</sup> The national growth of cattle holdings is shown in Fig. 3.5<sup>369</sup> below.



**Figure 3.5: Estimated cattle holdings in Southern Rhodesia, 1901-1941**

<sup>366</sup> For an in-depth understanding of state-settler conflicts over East Coast Fever see W. Mwatwara, 'The tick was not slow to take advantage': Conflicts in the Struggle Against East Coast Fever in Southern Rhodesia (1901–1920), *South African Historical Journal*, 65, 2 (2013), 249-270.

<sup>367</sup> T.T. Jamu, 'The growth and control of African herds, 1910 – 1955,' M.A African History Thesis, University of Zimbabwe, 1987, 12.

<sup>368</sup> Jamu, 'The growth and control of African herds,' 12.

<sup>369</sup> Source: Palmer, *Land and racial domination*, 95.

Thus, by 1910 a significant percentage of Africans were dipping was indeed great. However, this came about as a result of a careful and pragmatic implementation of the dipping ordinance. At first, dipping was not enforced in the reserves chiefly because of the fear that if forced to dip Africans could take it as another step towards dispossession of their cattle as had happened after the Anglo-Ndebele war of 1893-4 and the Chimurenga uprising of 1896-7 (as discussed in Chapter 2).

### **Compulsory dipping: Implications for African livestock owners (1914 -1930)**

By 1914, dipping had been practiced in the territory for a decade, and the following negative effects had been confirmed: a) poisoning due to the dipping fluid being over strength, death being caused by absorption of the arsenic through the skin and from thirsty cattle drinking the fluid. b) Injuries: calves dipped with the fully grown were liable to be drowned or hurt. c) Loss of immunity to Redwater through constant dipping.<sup>370</sup> In fact, in 1913 these dangers were spelt out at the 1913 Bulawayo Veterinary Conference which was attended by Chief Veterinary Officers from Southern Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia, Mozambique Territory, Nyasaland, Portuguese East Africa, Bechuanaland, Belgian Congo, Swaziland, Basutoland and South Africa. Nonetheless, hardly a year later Southern Rhodesia passed the Compulsory Dipping Ordinance (1914). The chief motivator was that despite its side effects dipping reduced losses incurred due to ECF, liver disease, white scour, and other tick borne diseases in calves by up to 90 per cent.<sup>371</sup> These advantages were believed to extend to all animals on the farm: horses, mules, pigs, sheep, goats and dogs.<sup>372</sup> This law made dipping mandatory in certain parts of the colony as it could only be applied in a district or area on the application of a majority of landowners in such a district or area.<sup>373</sup> Even so, its enforcement in areas where it was compulsory was piecemeal as the prevalence of ticks was the dominating variable. For instance, the ordinance was enforced in

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<sup>370</sup> NAZ A3/2/5/3 Cattle General: 1912-3, Report by R. J. Jordy (Chief Veterinary Officer, East Africa Protectorate) to the 1913 Veterinary Conference (Bulawayo), 24.

<sup>371</sup> NAZ A3/2/5/3 Cattle General: 1912-3, Report by R. J. Jordy (Chief Veterinary Officer, East Africa Protectorate) to the 1913 Veterinary Conference (Bulawayo), 9.

<sup>372</sup> NAZ A3/2/5/3 Cattle General: 1912-3, Report by R. J. Jordy (Chief Veterinary Officer, East Africa Protectorate) to the 1913 Veterinary Conference (Bulawayo), 9.

<sup>373</sup> NAZ S1215/183/52/23/37 Veterinary Department Reorganisation, 1932-36, letter from A.C. Bagshawe, Secretary, Department of Agriculture and Lands to J.M. Sinclair the Chief Veterinary Surgeon, 10/10/1931.



Victoria and Nyamandlovu Districts from 1916 and 1917 respectively. This meant that some areas began to dip much later than others.

Nonetheless, its impact on dipping was immediate. In its first year of operation it was applied to 78 per cent of the farms resulting in the rise of the number of dip tanks to 450 and it was in course for adoption over a further 20 per cent. By the end of 1918, when the cattle population had reached 1 200 000, compulsory dipping was in force throughout the country and 1 263 dipping tanks were in regular use, a figure which had increased to over 2000 by 1921.<sup>374</sup> These impressive results, however, need to be placed in their proper context if one is to get a clear picture of the local veterinary situation. They were impressive in the sense that they were accomplished when Southern Rhodesia faced a critical shortage of veterinary officials as local veterinary surgeons were recruited into the Cavalry Corps of the Allied armies. While Lawrence has lauded these developments as concrete achievements of white rule in African reserves, it is noteworthy that only 25 of these were public tanks.<sup>375</sup> This meant that the majority of African livestock were being dipped on private tanks owned by settler farmers.

Given the vigour with which this ordinance was applied from 1914, many Africans, for the first time, had to dip their cattle. However, this project immediately faced problems which other veterinary measures had confronted previously. African livestock owners who relied on government dip tanks paid one shilling per annum per beast dip fees, out of which was paid the total cost of running the service, including the purchase of dip fluid, pumps, and all wages and salaries.<sup>376</sup> Some owners who were convinced of the benefit of dipping their cattle, were either unwilling or unable to pay the fees simply alternated their herd, bringing some one week and others the next week. The problem of ghost herds became a cause for concern for administrators as it resulted in the loss of revenue, and, more importantly, allowed certain species of ticks to survive. This problem was tackled in various ways but the most effective was to saturate the area served by one dip tank with dipping staff from other areas and district assistants who waited until all the herds were on their way to the dip tank, and then swooped on the remaining cattle found

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<sup>374</sup> Lawrence, 'The history of veterinary services in Rhodesia,' 56.

<sup>375</sup> Lawrence, 'The history of veterinary services in Rhodesia,' 56.

<sup>376</sup> Government Notice 235, 11/09/1902.

in the kraals and in the grazing areas, marked them and then demanded an explanation from the owners who were fined if their excuse was not satisfactory.<sup>377</sup>

Though exhibiting interest in meeting the demands of the ordinance, some Africans also had logistical reservations. The major problems associated with the shortage of dip tanks in the reserves included having to travel long distances, loss of stock through fatigue and through mingling with cattle from different areas, and inadvertently spreading diseases.<sup>378</sup> Before a roster was put in place for different villages to dip on different days, people grazed their cattle around the tank while waiting for their turn. Sometimes this had disastrous results in that deaths occurred as a result of some cattle drinking the dip.<sup>379</sup> In Salisbury District, Africans were not happy with dipping regulations in view of their work on land hence their NC reported, 'It seems a pity that a risk should be run of making the dipping of cattle unpopular amongst the natives by, to the native mind, unnecessarily frequent dipping [sic].'<sup>380</sup> In a letter to the Superintendent of Natives (Salisbury), the NC Goromonzi similarly reported that Africans in Seke Reserve expressed great dissatisfaction with the stipulation that dipping was to take place at intervals not exceeding seven days arguing that it would be impossible to attend to their cultivated lands if such was the case since their 'whole time would be occupied in driving their cattle about.'<sup>381</sup> He suggested that:

As there has never been a known case of East Coast Fever in the Seki [sic] Reserve, and the cattle are exceptionally free from ticks, I would strongly urge that the interval of dipping be extended to once a month. Some of the natives have to drive their cattle a distance of ten to twelve miles to reach the dip. If the dipping is to take place more often than once a month, I would recommend that the erection of a second dip in the vicinity of M'sungu's kraal be considered.<sup>382</sup>

While agreeing that Africans had a genuine grievance, the Acting CVS, C. Edmonds did not see how possible it was for them to be excluded from weekly dipping because they were included in

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<sup>377</sup> T. Hermans, *Those were the days*, [http://archive.org/details/ThoseWereTheDays\\_290](http://archive.org/details/ThoseWereTheDays_290), 4, accessed 25/11/2012.

<sup>378</sup> Hombarume, 'The significance of disease among African owned cattle,' 67-8.

<sup>379</sup> Hombarume, 'The significance of disease among African owned cattle,' 67-8.

<sup>380</sup> NAZ N3/18/1/1 Livestock: General 1909-16, letter from NC Salisbury to the Superintendent of Natives (Salisbury), 16/01/1915.

<sup>381</sup> NAZ N3/18/1/1 Livestock: General 1909-16, letter from NC Goromonzi to the Superintendent of Natives (Salisbury), 12/01/1915.

<sup>382</sup> NAZ N3/18/1/1 Livestock: General 1909-16, letter from NC Goromonzi to the Superintendent of Natives (Salisbury), 12/01/1915.

the Act hence, ‘The only satisfactory solution to this appears to be to give the natives further facilities for dipping.’<sup>383</sup> This reveals the balance which those in the Native Department had to strike when dealing with Africans. On one hand, they had to enforce regulations that were blind to the deprived status of the black community, and on the other, ensure that the rights of the Africans were not impinged upon in the process. As this exchange shows, NCs generally sympathised with the Africans. Since the state was not prepared to meet the expense for the construction of a second dip tank in Seki Reserve, it was suggested that the natives raise the funds themselves<sup>384</sup> to which the NC Goromonzi responded negatively.<sup>385</sup>

Attempts to apply the ordinance in Matabeleland also faced resistance from both Africans and native commissioners. In 1916, the NC Wankie wrote to the Superintendent of Natives (Bulawayo) arguing that proposals necessitated by the Compulsory Dipping Ordinance (1914) were impracticable because:

Natives own a considerable number of cattle, scattered over a wide area of the district. Even if several tanks were erected for native stock, regular and compulsory dipping cannot be undertaken. Certain stock would have to travel 50-100 miles on occasion of dipping. In the rainy season, when rivers are flooded, stock could not be sent to the tanks.<sup>386</sup>

So prevalent was resistance that the Superintendent of Natives (Bulawayo) wrote to the CNC explaining that, ‘in normal times, the prejudices and opposition of the natives in this area should be over-ruled for their good, but under present conditions and circumstances I doubt the wisdom of a sudden extension of compulsory dipping.’<sup>387</sup> As an official mandated to deal with the social welfare of Africans, the Superintendent of Natives was convinced that since many Africans had,

not come into contact with civilisation, they are inconceivably suspicious. Undoubtedly the introduction of dipping will meet with strong opposition. While such opposition will probably be passive, it is also quite possible that more or less

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<sup>383</sup> NAZ N3/18/1/1 Livestock: General 1909-16, letter from Acting CVS, C. Edmonds to the CNC, 18/01/1915.

<sup>384</sup> NAZ N3/18/1/1 Livestock: General 1909-16, letter from Chief Clerk to the CNC also copied to the Superintendent of Natives (Salisbury), 21/1/1915.

<sup>385</sup> NAZ N3/18/1/1 Livestock: General 1909-16, letter from NC Goromonzi to the Superintendent of Natives, 02/02/1915.

<sup>386</sup> NAZ N3/18/1/1 Livestock: General 1909-16, letter from NC Wankie to the Superintendent of Natives (Bulawayo), 20/11/1916.

<sup>387</sup> NAZ N3/18/1/1 Livestock: General 1909-16, letter from Superintendent of Natives (Bulawayo) to CNC, 17/10/1916.

wholesale slaughter of stock will take place. You will remember what happened in 1901 and on other occasions. The present time is hardly opportune for the introduction into a remote district of a measure which, to say the least of it, might have a disturbing effect.<sup>388</sup>

The construction of dip tanks for the use of Africans in Wankie continued to attract so much debate in government circles because of that district's exceptionalities. Ideally, the cost of the construction of such dip tanks was achieved with fees collected from livestock owners but Wankie presented difficulties. In 1917, unlike in 1916, the Superintendent of Natives explained in a detailed manner:

Conditions in Wankie District differ from those generally obtaining in the following respects: 1. The new tick is a special source of danger to cattle in that district and possibly to those of the whole district. 2. That owing to successive droughts and the normal scarcity of water there, Wankie presents great difficulties in the way of the application of the Ordinance in addition to which 3. The native population and native cattle are sparse and widely scattered over a large area, so much so that I doubt the financial ability of the owners to meet the expense.<sup>389</sup>

The concentration of cattle in certain localities was suggested with the cost of such measures being borne by Africans but this did not have sufficient support due to the scarcity of water and grazing pasture.<sup>390</sup> The case of Wankie revealed, in a telling way, that the provision of dip tanks in the reserves was indelibly linked to the ability of livestock owners to make contributions. With the company's continuous failure to meet the colony's budgetary needs, Native Commissioners were mandated to collect money from African cattle owners for the construction of dip tanks. At times, the Ministry of Lands and Agriculture through the NC assisted in financing the construction of some tanks. The discrepancy was that responsibility for the construction of dipping tanks was left to each NC.<sup>391</sup> Many dip tanks were constructed from subscriptions by cattle owners. This was started in Mrewa District in 1915 and, by 1920 it was already in general practise in many districts.

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<sup>388</sup> NAZ N3/18/1/1 Livestock: General 1909-16, letter from Superintendent of Natives (Bulawayo) to CNC, 17/10/1916.

<sup>389</sup> NAZ N3/18/2-3 Livestock: General 1917-23, letter from Superintendent of Natives (Bulawayo) to CNC, 30/06/1917.

<sup>390</sup> NAZ N3/18/2-3 Livestock: General 1917-23, letter from Acting NC to Superintendent of Natives (Bulawayo), 16/07/1917.

<sup>391</sup> Hombarume, 'The significance of disease among African owned cattle,' 58.

Generally, correspondence by NCs from the time the ordinance was passed reveals the inability of African livestock owners to build their own tanks. In areas where there were settler farms, a stop-gap measure was adopted: that Africans dip at private tanks belonging to settler farmers at an undisclosed fee. However, many Africans were still not sure of its benefits. Their concerns were captured succinctly by the Superintendent of Natives (Bulawayo):

I met the chiefs Nematanga and Nekatalubi together with sixty of their followers. Dipping was the principal subject discussed. They told me that they were quite prepared loyally to carry out without question any instructions they received from the government but that I was not to understand them to say that they expected any benefits from dipping. They had, many years before, dipped their sheep and goats under instructions from their Native Commissioner with the result that most had died. They expected their cattle to die. However, they were in the hands of the government to whom they would be obedient.<sup>392</sup>

This letter reveals the undercurrents of resistance. It also reveals the suspicion that existed regarding these veterinary measures, and that Africans only dipped because they were mandated to do so. That there were rumours that livestock was supposedly being killed deliberately by colonial officials was not unique to Southern Rhodesia. Using rumour and gossip as historical sources, White discusses the context in which biomedicine was practiced, how biomedical technologies were believed to work as well as how much power was invested in their application in colonial Africa.<sup>393</sup> She also examines the interaction of African ideas on diseases and imperial science and argues that the vampire accusations that emerged in Northern Rhodesia involved local and colonial ideas about the relationship between wild animals, tsetse flies, authority and shifting cultivation practices.<sup>394</sup> Although colonial officials in Southern Rhodesia, as will be below, dismissed such rumours, oral interviews with elderly Africans suggests that many Africans believed them.<sup>395</sup>

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<sup>392</sup> NAZ N3/18/2-3 Livestock: General 1917-23, letter from Superintendent of Natives (Bulawayo) to CNC, 03/10/1917

<sup>393</sup> L. White, *Speaking with Vampires Rumour and history in colonial Africa*, (University of California Press, Berkeley, 2000), 90.

<sup>394</sup> White, *Speaking with Vampires*, 90, See chapter entitled ‘Blood, Bugs and archives’ Debates over sleeping sickness control in colonial Northern Rhodesia, 1931-1939, 208.

<sup>395</sup> Interview with Majoni Hombarume, born 1914, Sadza, Chivhu, Mashonaland East 29/03/ 2012; interview with Raphael Svikiro, born 1943 Sadza, Chivhu, Mashonaland East, 29/03/ 2012; interview with Ngwarai Maraire, born 1924, Mhandarume, Chimanimani District, 06/04/12.

All over the country, for instance, Charter and Marandellas Districts, there were rumours that Africans were killing their livestock on account of high dipping fees demanded by settler landowners. However, in Southern Rhodesia NCs dismissed that rumour in their reports to the Superintendent of Natives (Salisbury).<sup>396</sup> An exception is the report given by NC Insiza:

I have not heard of any cases where natives have been killing their cattle in consequence of the high dipping charges, but from remarks made at different meetings I have held in connection with dipping, I am convinced that *the natives have come to the conclusion that it is a crime in the eyes of the government, and the European land-owners for them to own cattle. That they should come to such a conclusion is not surprising when we find the owners of all the occupied lands in the territory using the Ordinance as a means of improving their property at the expense of their native tenants.*<sup>397</sup> (My emphasis)

Although this NC did not see the particular correlation between the exorbitant dipping fees and the tendency by Africans to kill their livestock, what is clear is that, overall, Africans felt that dipping regulations made it difficult for them to rear livestock.

Reported cases of Africans who contested the basis upon which compulsory dipping lay were dealt with indirectly. Rather than censure the culprits, the administration punished some chiefs and headmen for failure to lead their people in following government dipping regulations. Chief Gutu of Victoria District was a notable example. Although dipping was not yet compulsory in Gutu, his ‘crime’ was that he did not encourage his subjects ‘in every way’ to dip voluntarily, and that he had also ‘opposed’ the Native Commissioner’s efforts in the matter.<sup>398</sup> But since that was hardly an offence for which he could be tried for under the Native Regulations, the CNC was, ‘of the opinion that Gutu’s studied attitude of opposition to the government would be better dealt with by reduction of his subsidy... and I recommend that this chief’s subsidy be reduced from £5 to 5s per mensem.’<sup>399</sup> While this course of action was eventually abandoned, Chief Gutu

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<sup>396</sup> For instance, see NAZ N3/18/2-3 Livestock: General 1917- 23, letter from NC Charter to CNC, 01/11/1917; NAZ N3/18/2-3 Livestock: General 1917-23, letter from NC Marandellas, 12/12/1917.

<sup>397</sup> NAZ N3/18/2-3 Livestock: General 1917-23, NC Insiza to the Superintendent of Natives Bulawayo, 08/11/1917.

<sup>398</sup> NAZ A3/18/18/12 Chiefs and headmen: Non-compliance with government orders, letter from the CNC to the Secretary, Department of the Administrator, 16/10/1917.

<sup>399</sup> NAZ A3/18/18/12 Chiefs and headmen: Non-compliance with government orders, letter from the CNC to the Secretary, Dept. of Administrator, 16/10/1917.

escaped with a warning that his subsidy would be stopped if he did not support the government. Across the country, several other chiefs found themselves in this situation if the native commissioners felt that they were not encouraging their subjects to follow instructions from colonial officials.<sup>400</sup>

By 1918, the number of dip tanks needed on unalienated lands throughout the country amounted to 66.<sup>401</sup> This was considered a heavy responsibility hence the suggestion by W. Olive, the BSAC Commercial Representative, that the BSAC could be relieved of the responsibility for the construction of dip tanks at a cost of £6 750 if such lands were alienated or if African living on such lands were moved to reserves or if arrangements were made with adjoining landowners.<sup>402</sup> The BSAC's rejection of the Native Department's schedule for the urgent construction of 51 dip tanks for an estimated 39 500 cattle in 15 African areas in unalienated lands in 1919, therefore, did not result in the stoppage of the project but added a financial burden on the Africans.<sup>403</sup> The BSAC justified their stance on the Privy Council's 1918 ruling which stated that unalienated land neither belonged to the BSAC, settlers nor Africans but to the Crown.<sup>404</sup> Nevertheless, this project resulted in a significant increase in the number of cattle being dipped; 158 526 on farms and 343 379 on reserves and unsurveyed land.<sup>405</sup> In 1919, the total number of cattle being dipped was 503 465 which was only 110 311 cattle less than the number of cattle estimated to be in the country.<sup>406</sup>

An amendment to the dipping ordinance resulted in the Cattle Cleaning Ordinance (1918) which gave full powers to cattle inspectors to inspect any cattle at any time and to take samples from the contents of any dipping tank. The inspection and reporting of disease in areas where there were few cattle inspectors was also dealt with. In such areas, if an animal died before the cause of death

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<sup>400</sup> NAZ A3/18/18/12 Chiefs and headmen: Non-compliance with government orders, letter from the CNC to the Secretary, Dept. of Administrator, 16/10/1917.

<sup>401</sup> NAZ N3/18/4 Dip tanks on unalienated land: 1917-20, letter from W. Olive Commercial Representative to Secretary, BSAC (London), 18/06/1918.

<sup>402</sup> NAZ N3/18/4 Dip tanks on unalienated land: 1917-20, letter from W. Olive Commercial Representative to Secretary, BSAC (London), 18/06/1918.

<sup>403</sup> NAZ N3/18/4, Dip tanks on unalienated land: 1917-20, Letter from the Secretary of Law Department to the Secretary, Department of the Administrator, 13 March 1919.

<sup>404</sup> NAZ N3/18/4, Dip tanks on unalienated land: 1917-20, Letter from the Secretary of Law Department to the Secretary, Department of the Administrator, 13 March 1919.

<sup>405</sup> *Annual Report of the Chief Veterinary Surgeon (1919)*, 524.

<sup>406</sup> *Annual Report of the Chief Veterinary Surgeon (1919)*, 524.

was detected, the owner was required to send the spleen or liver of the dead animal to the dip attendant, who in turn prepared blood smears to send to the Veterinary Office for analysis. Such measures were mostly used in the Native Reserves as the government did not have enough cattle inspectors to effectively inspect cattle.<sup>407</sup> Unlike the 1914 ordinance, this made dipping compulsory in all parts of the colony. Furthermore, any cattle with 10 or more engorged ticks were declared ‘tick-infested,’ and failure to dip became a punishable crime. The impact of this ordinance on dipping was tremendous. By 1927, dip tanks had expanded significantly throughout the country, and relatively large numbers of cattle were dipping as can be shown in Table 3.1 below.<sup>408</sup>

**Table 3.1: Return of Cattle and Dipping Tanks**

<b>Veterinary District</b>	<b>No. of tanks</b>	<b>No. of cattle.</b>
Salisbury East	439	251 860
Salisbury West	455	191 053
Umtali	233	112 049
Melsetter	104	37 655
Fort Victoria	250	407 245
Gwelo	507	403 121
Bulawayo	701	980 446
<b>Total</b>	<b>2 689</b>	<b>2 383 429</b>

However, making dipping compulsory at a time when the government did not control the dipping fee turned out to be a recipe for the exploitation of Africans who dipped at private tanks. There were big disparities on charges for dipping on alienated land and reserves. Although dipping fees varied from district to district, Africans who dipped at government tanks paid a lot less than those depending on private tanks. Terms entered into with private tank owners were generally usurious hence some Africans had to sell their livestock to offset debts they owed. Resultantly, Africans residing on European farms decided to move to reserves where dipping charges were cheaper.<sup>409</sup> In light of the exploitation of African livestock owners, one commission of enquiry reported, ‘there is evidence of instances where natives have been charged an exorbitant fee, in some of

<sup>407</sup> Lawrence, ‘The history of veterinary services in Rhodesia,’ 41.

<sup>408</sup> Source: *Annual Report of the Chief Veterinary Surgeon*, 1927, 7.

<sup>409</sup> *Annual report of the CNC*, 1918.



which it is feared that the dipping solutions were quite useless. With a view to preventing excessive charges, it is proposed that the Administrator may further provide by regulation for the fixing of a dipping fee.’<sup>410</sup>

By 1924, more than 10 000 African-owned cattle were dipped at privately owned tanks at the rate of 1d per immersion.<sup>411</sup> This meant that private dip tank owners got £41.13.0 per immersion for 10 000 cattle yet the real cost of dipping fluid was one shilling per head per year for weekly dipping.<sup>412</sup> One result to come out of this was that some Africans stopped dipping some of their cattle, that is, the so-called *danga redhibha* (cattle to be dipped) and *danga resango* (cattle to be hidden).<sup>413</sup> For example, in 1920 in Nyanga, out of more than 18 600 cattle about 17 053 dipped regularly while 1 547 did not dip.<sup>414</sup> In 1930 and 1931, an estimated 1 650 and 1 275 respectively did not dip. He even suggested that there might have been more cattle which were not registered and so were not dipping.<sup>415</sup>

At the time of the passage of the Cattle Cleansing Ordinance (1918), the recommended number of cattle per tank was 1 000 but in the reserves this was hardly the case. For instance, in Nyanga District only two tanks had been constructed by 1923 to serve all the reserves in the district.<sup>416</sup> These two plus four private-owned tanks served 11 807 African owned cattle in the District.<sup>417</sup> In Nyamandlovu District, there were three tanks for approximately 33 339 head of cattle.<sup>418</sup> In Wedza, a government constructed tank at Chehave served a large area comprising Zviyambe, Makanda, Ruzawi and Goneso, estimated to have 15 000 cattle.<sup>419</sup> These problems were to worsen after the Morris Carter Commission (1925), constituted to report into the expediency and

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<sup>410</sup> *Report of the Committee of Enquiry in respect of African Coast Fever, Quarter Evil, and Epizootic Diseases of Cattle*, 1917, 1.

<sup>411</sup> Hombarume, ‘The significance of disease among African owned cattle,’ 80.

<sup>412</sup> Hombarume, ‘The significance of disease among African owned cattle,’ 80. See also *Rhodesian Herald*, 5 Sept 1924; NAZ S235/510 Nyamandlovu Annual Report, 1932.

<sup>413</sup> M.I. Murambiwa, ‘Destocking in Gutu District and African response (1928-1958),’ B.A History Hons, University of Zimbabwe, 1987.

<sup>414</sup> NAZ S235/507 NC Nyanga, Annual Report 1929; NAZ S235/509, NC Nyanga, Annual Report 1931.

<sup>415</sup> Hombarume, ‘The significance of disease among African owned cattle,’ 71.

<sup>416</sup> NAZ S235/501, Nyanga, Annual Report, 1923.

<sup>417</sup> NAZ S235/501, Nyanga, Annual Report, 1923.

<sup>418</sup> NAZ S235/505, NC Nyamandlovu, Annual Report, 1927.

<sup>419</sup> Hombarume, ‘The significance of disease among African owned cattle, 1900-1950,’ 64.

practicability of setting apart defined areas outside the boundaries of the Native Reserves, reported in favour of a policy of separate land purchase areas for Africans and Europeans. These recommendations resulted in the passage of the Land Apportionment Act (1930) marked the formal beginning of a separate land policy.

One thing that was to pose considerable challenges to African livestock owners was the assumption by colonial officials that African-owned cattle living on unalienated land would be dipped at adjoining farms for a reasonable fee. Perhaps the most striking example regarding dipping and the onerous challenges faced by those upon whom this task fell is that of Tshabuda, Tjilimani, Bulawa, Kulumanga and Manuka who pleaded to W. Lees of Alali Farm (Matopo) if his dip tank could be made available to their cattle as they had been notified by the police or Veterinary Department that they must dip.<sup>420</sup> Since the nearest government dip tank was ten miles away, and near the site of an ECF outbreak in the Figtree area, they had to move their cattle to and fro over infected veldt at the risk of picking up and spreading this disease.<sup>421</sup> Lees turned them down for fear that such cattle from a declared infected area posed a big risk to his over 400 head of 'pedigree' cattle as well as 124 head of African owned stock kraaled on this farm.<sup>422</sup> He criticised the Administration:

I respectfully want to point out that it is the business of the Administration to build dipping tanks at suitable points so that the natives can comply with the regulations of the Cattle Cleaning Ordinance... This point of moving healthy cattle from kraals where no East Coast Fever is known, to and fro and across the site, and all the surrounding veldt – where East Coast Fever is known to have existed and been prevalent is the height of this folly.<sup>423</sup>

Following this powerful letter the government decided to construct two dipping tanks in the unsurveyed, unalienated land in the Matopo Hills area.

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<sup>420</sup> NAZ N3/18/4 Dip tanks on Unalienated land: 1917-20, W. Lees to the NC Matopo, 28/03/1920.

<sup>421</sup> NAZ N3/18/4 Dip tanks on Unalienated land: 1917-20, W. Lees to the NC Matopo, 28/03/1920.

<sup>422</sup> NAZ N3/18/4 Dip tanks on Unalienated land: 1917-20, W. Lees to the NC Matopo, 28/03/1920.

<sup>423</sup> NAZ N3/18/4 Dip tanks on Unalienated land: 1917-20, W. Lees to the NC Matopo, 28/03/1920.

### **The search for a suitable acaricide, 1918 – 1927**

As has already been discussed, controversy over dipping partly centred on its impact on livestock. However, the search for a dip solution which was capable of destroying ticks without causing a certain amount of inconvenience to the animal dipped only began after the enactment of the Cattle Cleansing Ordinance (1918). This was probably the first official recognition that there was something wrong with the country's dipping solutions. Investigations into the death of ten working oxen at the Agricultural Experimental Station in 1919 which revealed that they died from arsenic poisoning resulted in serious state-funded research into dipping solutions.<sup>424</sup>

These problems at the Agricultural Experimental station were, in actual fact, a microcosm of the macrocosm. Similar deaths were recorded among cattle African-owned in Charter but the NC denied culpability when he reported, 'A considerable number of deaths have occurred amongst calves both by being trampled down in the muddy kraals by big cattle and scalding, the three-day dipping presumably being too strong for them. There were also deaths of big cattle from arsenic poisoning.'<sup>425</sup> The Veterinary Department merely stated 'the deaths of big cattle were due to sheer neglect on the part of the native owners and that the scalding of calves was occasioned by the severe climatic conditions then existing and to the fact that these particular cattle had not been dipped before, the strength of the dip was regularly tested and found correct.'<sup>426</sup> In this case, the Veterinary Department was only trying to mask a big problem it had failed to resolve since the introduction of dipping in the territory. The problem can be seen in the proliferation of cattle dips available for sale in 1920. In fact, there were six different kinds of cattle dip on the Southern Rhodesian market: Champion Star Dip, Cooper's Tixol Cattle Dip, St O'Gorman Cattle Dip, Capex Cattle Dip, and McDougall Cattle Dip – all approved in terms of the Cattle Cleansing Ordinance. Efforts to standardise the strength of these dips did not bear desired results. For instance, in 1922, an analysis of the Melsetter Commonage Dip revealed that the fluid was considerably over-strength, and that it had also been fatal to certain calves.<sup>427</sup> The Chief Chemist

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<sup>424</sup> NAZ S1177/7 Veterinary correspondence: 1949-53, letter from the Assistant Agricultural Chemist to the Director of Agriculture, 22/03/1919.

<sup>425</sup> NAZ N3/18/2-3 Livestock: General 1917-23, Monthly report by the NC Charter District, March 1923.

<sup>426</sup> NAZ N3/18/2-3 Livestock: General 1917-23.

<sup>427</sup> NAZ S1177/7 Veterinary correspondence: 1949-53, letter from Chief Chemist to the CVS, 24/01/1922.

doubted whether the cattle inspector's test of the fluid was helpful, pointing out that, 'owing to the high degree of oxidation, the cattle inspector's test of the fluid is no criterion of its actual strength. From the figures of our analysis, the fluid is shown to be considerably over strength for weekly dipping, and it has proved fatal to calves.'<sup>428</sup> By 1925, this problem had largely remained unsolved and, therefore, prompted the Chief Chemist to seek counsel from the Director of Veterinary Education and Research (Pretoria):

Experience in Rhodesia indicates that cattle dipped in solutions of the prescribed strength for short intervals, either 5 day or 3 day interval, are severely scalded, and that two of the proprietary dips suitable for "short interval" dipping are Cooper's Improved and St O'Gorman's. Doubtless you have studied this question very closely, and for any information you can give us concerning it we shall be very grateful.<sup>429</sup>

The search for a dip which combined maximum tick-killing efficiency with minimum risk to the animals was futile because, although the total arsenic content in all proprietary dips by 1930 was equivalent to 64 grams per hundred cubic centimetres of strong solution, they had somewhat different compositions.<sup>430</sup>

Attempts by the Veterinary Department to prosecute white dip tank owners who dipped their livestock and African-owned cattle in weak solutions turned out to be in vain since the Cattle Cleansing Ordinance (1918) did not have such a clause. Impromptu tests carried by cattle inspectors at private dip tanks were proved inadmissible in a court of law as the *Rex versus Coulson* case (tried at Mazoe Magistrate's Court) demonstrated. Although the cattle inspector's records indicated that for several months, the defendant had, in spite of warning, persisted in dipping not only his own cattle in very weak solutions but also many African-owned cattle for which he received payment, he was acquitted.<sup>431</sup> Evidence submitted by the Chemist was dismissed as the magistrate maintained that the only kind of dip sample which could constitute

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<sup>428</sup> NAZ S1177/7 Veterinary correspondence: 1949-53, letter from Chief Chemist to the CVS, 24/01/1922.

<sup>429</sup> NAZ S1177/7 Veterinary correspondence: 1949-53, letter from the Chief Chemist to the Director of Veterinary Education and Research (Pretoria), 01/10/1925.

<sup>430</sup> NAZ S1177/7 Veterinary correspondence: 1949-53, Letter from Chief Chemist to F. M. Perkins of Bulawayo, on the manufacture of Cattle dips in Southern Rhodesia, 23/04/1930.

<sup>431</sup> NAZ S1177/7 Veterinary correspondence: 1949-53, confidential letter from A. N. Facer, the Chemist, to the Chief Chemist, 19/06/1924.

valid evidence under the Ordinance was one taken during, or immediately after dipping of stock.<sup>432</sup> This ruling caused the following procedures to be adopted when it was found necessary to prosecute for dipping below strength:

Having found out on what day the suspected farmer dips, the C/I (Cattle inspector) should inform him (dip tank owner) that he intends to be present at a dipping to take samples, invite him to be present, and ask him to reply as to the suitability of the day specified. On the dipping day, he should proceed to the farm accompanied by a witness (preferably a policeman), and taking 3 carefully cleaned bottles. During dipping he should draw a large sample in a thoroughly clean bucket or paraffin tin: from this he should fill each of the three bottles.... To each bottle he should affix a label with the following particulars: owner, farm, dip used, date taken and signed by: Taker of sampler and witness.<sup>433</sup>

In addition, making the certificate of analysis sufficient evidence admissible in a court of law was made possible by the Cattle Cleansing Act (1927). In addition to this, the Act modified the definition of tick-infested animals to include all livestock with 5 or more engorged ticks. It recommended a seven day cleansing scheme for most of the areas except for areas such as Nyamandlovu, Gwaai and Tjolutjo in Matabeleland where they had to dip every 5 days due to higher tick infestation.<sup>434</sup>

In the reserves and areas where there were public tanks, the need to supervise the strength of the dip brought with it unexpected results. One, which deserves considerable discussion, was the belief that Africans could not supervise the strength and, therefore, needed the supervision of a European whose salary was paid from contributions by livestock owners. The 1920s, a particularly difficult ecological period characterised by the 1922 drought, gave opportunity for contradictions within the white community to manifest. Given that Africans bore a plethora of socio-economic responsibilities, some liberal whites sought to defend them from colonial inequalities. A rumour circulated in Marandellas District to the effect that the Chief Native Commissioner, H.J. Taylor, had sanctioned the Native Department to levy 1/6 a head on the

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<sup>432</sup> NAZ S1177/7 Veterinary correspondence: 1949-53, confidential letter from A. N. Facer, the Chemist, to the Chief Chemist, 19/06/1924.

<sup>433</sup> NAZ S1177/7 Veterinary correspondence: 1949-53, confidential letter to the Chief Chemist, A. N. Facer, 19/06/1924.

<sup>434</sup> NAZ S235/513 NC Nyamandlovu, Annual report, 1935.

estimated 15 000 African owned cattle with the object of appointing a European cattle inspector and advisor for African stockowners in the district.<sup>435</sup> A very vocal and liberal white missionary, A. Cripps, protested the rumoured changes:

I would register a very solemn protest against the imposition of any such levy at this particular time. It is generally understood, I should imagine, that there are very grave objections just now to the loading up (with any extra local burdens) of native life in our Mashonaland reserves. Natives have had a very stern struggle with hunger. I should think it probable that hundreds of natives in Marandellas district have not paid last year's Government tax as yet. What with the collection of dog tax, and with dipping fees superadded, our Natives' struggle for existence after coming through a terrible period of scarcity is hard enough already. I hope to hear that any idea of the kind I have indicated is to be abandoned.<sup>436</sup>

Regarding the argument brought forward by the NCs to the effect that African stockowners in Marandellas were demanding the services of a European cattle inspector, and were willing to pay for the services, Cripps, argued, 'their ideas for the improvement of the native are quite sound, and for his betterment, but the time is not yet. It always seems to me such a simple matter for a native commissioner in Rhodesia to make natives say anything they want them to....'<sup>437</sup>

A letter of similar tone was also received from Reverend John White of Waddilove Training Institution (Marandellas). Unlike Cripps who wrote directly to the CNC, White chose to air his protest by appealing to a bigger audience as he send his complaint to the Editor of the *Rhodesia Herald*. His main concern was the 'unprocedural' manner the issue of white cattle inspectors was being dealt with hence he asked rhetorically:

Is there not a very important political principle involved in this proposal? Where there is taxation, there should be some form of representation. If, as your correspondent suggests, these European supervisors of dipping are to be generally adopted and schemes for the improvement of stock introduced, for which, of course, the native must pay, should not the matter be brought before the Legislative Council, where it can be fully and freely discussed? Should not the natives too in some way be consulted in this matter?<sup>438</sup>

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<sup>435</sup> NAZ N3/18/2-3 Livestock: General 1917- 23, letter from Arthur Cripps to CNC H. J. Taylor, 09/02/1923.

<sup>436</sup> NAZ N3/18/2-3 Livestock: General 1917- 23, letter from Arthur Cripps to CNC H. J. Taylor, 09/02/1923.

<sup>437</sup> NAZ N3/18/2-3 Livestock: General 1917- 23, letter from Arthur Cripps to CNC H. J. Taylor, 27/02/1923.

<sup>438</sup> Letter to the Editor by Rev John White, *Rhodesia Herald*, 22/05/1923.

Like-minded whites also wrote supporting this stance. A letter by Archibald McDonald which reiterated White's contention ended in a very revealing way, 'For the missionaries are labouring not ... for the good of one race but for the good of all races and Rhodesia.'<sup>439</sup> With this show of support, Cripps wrote another personal letter to the CNC arguing that, 'If assistance be required by the Native Department, let the Vet Department provide such extra assistance. I submit that it is grossly unfair that the burden of the cost of extra assistance required in a job that is pre-eminently a Vet Department job, should be thrown on to the Natives directly, when Europeans are given the services of the Vet Department in the ordinary course of things.'<sup>440</sup> Members of the Native Affairs Department dismissed MacDonal as being influenced by White and Cripps. He was not thought of as a 'suitable' candidate to criticise the dipping policy in African areas because he 'kept a native woman some time ago and has a half caste child living with him on his farm at present.'<sup>441</sup> These slanderous statements notwithstanding, the fact that veterinary services favoured whites while disenfranchising African livestock owners and that NAD officials were playing a key role in perpetuating disparities in accessing them could not be hidden.

The NC Marandellas among other things responded to the issue of white supervision of African dipping, and the allegation that the Vet Department was offering the same services to settler farmers free of charge. In a letter to the Superintendent of Natives (Salisbury), he denied that the Veterinary Department was supervising the dipping of cattle belonging to Europeans. Before telling Cripps to confine his activities to African spiritual welfare, and to cease to 'meddle' in administrative measures which were not his immediate concern, the NC argued, 'There is certainly inspection not supervision as Mr Cripps implies. Furthermore, the European knows what he is doing, and realises the dangers of poisoning cattle but we cannot expect the same degree of responsibility from the individual native.'<sup>442</sup> This did not reduce the heat generated by the missionaries' contestations hence the CNC found himself having to clarify issues to the Secretary (Department of the Administrator). Regarding the imposition of the levy, he argued

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<sup>439</sup> Letter to the Editor by Archibald Donald, *Rhodesia Herald*, 15/06/1923.

<sup>440</sup> NAZ N3/18/2-3 Livestock: General 1917- 23, letter from Arthur Cripps to CNC H. J. Taylor, 25/06/23.

<sup>441</sup> NAZ N3/18/2-3 Livestock: General 1917- 23, confidential letter from the Superintendent of Natives to the CNC, 25/06/1923.

<sup>442</sup> NAZ N3/18/2-3 Livestock: General 1917-23, letter from the NC Marandellas to the Superintendent of Natives (Salisbury), 28/06/1923.

that certain headmen and chiefs in Marandellas District had approached the NC with a request that three more dipping tanks be erected, and that well-bred bulls be bought from their funds to improve their herds.<sup>443</sup> He emphasised that there was no levy whatsoever, as this was a voluntary collection by the Africans from which a European cattle inspector they particularly requested, was appointed and paid.<sup>444</sup> He accused missionaries of confusing Africans and undermining the idea that NCs were there to help them. To him, there was nothing wrong in ‘encouraging and educating the native mind to the advantages to be gained by the systematic care and improvement of their main source of wealth – their herds – and it is obvious that any manifestation of a desire to improve, as in this instance, merits the greatest encouragement from the government.’<sup>445</sup> The problem though was, as Cripps pointed out, that there was ‘no machinery in shape at present for gauging the mass opinion in the back blocks of any really large Native Reserve, whether in Marandellas or any other district known to me.’<sup>446</sup>

### **Dipping: African livestock owners’ views**

While it has been shown how the colonial state set up its veterinary regime, and how white livestock owners reacted to veterinary policy, it is imperative to locate dipping within the colonial milieu, and explain how African livestock owners reacted to the changes the colonial state effected. It is important to state that state’s imagination of the African reserves and African-owned livestock as ‘diseased’ served both a scientific and social purpose. Firstly, its scientific purpose was interwoven with the need for the eradication of tick-borne livestock diseases which were a constant hindrance to the development of capitalist modes of livestock management. Secondly, its social purpose concerned the settler intention to ‘transfer’ technology and technical knowledge, often presented as development and improvement, to ‘barbaric’ Africans.<sup>447</sup> As has already been shown, the dip card, the power behind the enforcement of dipping, was also a powerful enumerative tool for administrative purposes.

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<sup>443</sup> NAZ N3/18/2-3 Livestock: General 1917-23, letter from CNC to the Secretary, Dept. of the Administrator, 12/06/1923.

<sup>444</sup> NAZ N3/18/2-3 Livestock: General 1917-23, letter from CNC to the Secretary, Dept. of the Administrator, 12/06/1923.

<sup>445</sup> NAZ N3/18/2-3 Livestock: General 1917-23, letter from the CNC to the Secretary, Dept. of the Administrator, 12/06/1923.

<sup>446</sup> NAZ N3/18/2-3 Livestock: General 1917-23, letter from A. Cripps to CNC, 25/06/23.

<sup>447</sup> S. Brooks, ‘Images of ‘Wild Africa’: nature tourism and the (re)creation of Hluhluwe game reserve, 1930-1945’, *Journal of Historical Geography* 31 (2005), 220-240.



One fundamental point of conflict between veterinary officials and Africans emanated from conflicting beliefs on the role of ticks in the propagation of livestock diseases. Studies in a related colonial context, the Cape, have revealed that ticks were accepted by Cape settler farmers as the cause for certain diseases because they were visible and their vicious bites being tangible evidence to the harm they caused to livestock.<sup>448</sup> In contrast, in Southern Rhodesia, as has already been shown, dipping only came to Africans as an unexplained government directive. In typical fashion of NAD officials, self-styled specialists in African affairs, dipping was literally ‘dropped’ on Africans ‘out of the blue.’<sup>449</sup> In their interaction with veterinary issues and African livestock regimes, vets considered the countryside a ‘blank page on which they could write their authority.’<sup>450</sup> Reports from native commissioners reveal that dipping (and its intended purpose of eradicating ticks) was not appreciated since prior to colonisation, African livestock owners argued, ‘native’ cattle had always had ticks but had not been susceptible to epizootics.<sup>451</sup>

Though African livestock owners were not able to mobilise ‘scientific’ explanations in connecting tick-borne epizootics to colonial intrusion, their thinking was not entirely wrong. As is discussed in Chapter 4, serious problems with tick-borne diseases were linked to the introduction of tick-infested exotic livestock breeds into the territory.<sup>452</sup> The fledgling capitalist economy depended heavily on ox transport hence cattle infested with ticks, and infected with tick-borne disease agents were moved into areas where such tick species did not exist previously. Given that ECF was mainly prevalent in towns and commercial centres where transport riders had traversed, and also that the government did not have adequate financial resources to build many dip tanks across the territory, certain African areas experienced dipping much earlier than others. However, rumour circulated to the effect that ECF was caused by dipping, inoculation or spraying. In tackling this rumour, the Veterinary Department deliberately left infected African

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<sup>448</sup> Gilfoyle, ‘The heartwater mystery’ 153.

<sup>449</sup> Bessant, ‘Coercive Development,’ 42.

<sup>450</sup> I. Hofmeyr, *“We spend our years as a tale that is told” Oral historical narrative in a South African Chieftdom*, (Portsmouth: Heinemann, 1993), 73.

<sup>451</sup> See NAZ N3/18/2-3 Livestock: General 1917-23.

<sup>452</sup> J.E. George, J.M. Pound and R.B. Davey, “Chemical control of ticks on cattle and the resistance of these parasites to acaricides” *Parasitology*, 129, S1 (2004), S353.

herds to die, and then intervened when it was clear that the disease was coming from elsewhere.<sup>453</sup> The suspicion that veterinary policies were part of a bigger colonial scheme was not limited to Southern Rhodesian African livestock owners. Hofmeyr has argued that fencing regulations in rural South Africa were also construed as ‘part of a more general white invasion whose object was to dispossess Africans of their livestock.’<sup>454</sup>

Dipping offered an opportunity for the colonial governments to reshape the interaction between people and their livestock. Africans came to realise its potential revolutionary impact on livestock regimes in the reserves. In particular, dipping was at odds with African livestock regimes as it involved ceding livestock control to an outsider (a white veterinary official) as well as counting whose purpose was not really understood. One’s cattle herd came under close government scrutiny, and attempts to influence the breed of livestock they could rear were also made through livestock improvement lessons often delivered at the local dip tank.<sup>455</sup> Furthermore, the fact that compulsion was used to make African livestock owners provide building materials, and take part in the construction of dip tanks forced some to consider that kind of work as *chibaro* (forced labour) – commonly used by the BSAC in the construction of roads, railway lines, and on European farms.<sup>456</sup> Forced labour – *chibaro* – has justifiably been considered as ‘the baldest manifestation of the coercion inherent in colonialism.’<sup>457</sup> Therefore, dipping ‘concretised’ other restrictive colonial measures Africans had to deal with. Indeed, Beinart has argued convincingly that new technical ideas were seldom socially neutral and conservation interventions in African agriculture were often examples of the imposition of technical ideas.<sup>458</sup> The top-down nature of the introduction of dip tanks boomeranged on the administration because much later when dipping became widely discredited it became difficult to meet Africans to ‘impress’ on them its advantages for fear that it would suggest ‘that the

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<sup>453</sup> *Annual report of the Department of Agriculture (1905)*, 3.

<sup>454</sup> Hofmeyr, “*We spend our years as a tale that is told*”, 71.

<sup>455</sup> Vide infra Chapter 4.

<sup>456</sup> L.T Hombarume, ‘The significance of disease among African owned cattle, 1900- 1950, with general reference to Gutu, Inyanga and Nyamandlovu,’ M.A History Thesis, University of Zimbabwe, 1988, 60.

<sup>457</sup> Bessant, ‘Coercive Development,’ 59.

<sup>458</sup> W. Beinart ‘Introduction: The Politics of Colonial Conservation’, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 15, 2, 1989, 159.

desirability of dipping was in question.<sup>459</sup> It also interfered with daily lives as people had to travel long distances in order to dip.

Dipping legislation dictated that all livestock were supposed to be brought forward for dipping at a fee. One Shona elder, Majoni Hombarume stated, ‘Cattle must dip because that is the law of the white man. What else can we do when they declared that cattle must dip? We were not supposed to resist orders. Our task was just to oblige.’<sup>460</sup> Indeed, one popular Shona expression *Dhibha harina mhuru* (even the calves must dip) demonstrates both the rigorous nature of the colonial dipping system, and how foreign the idea was to existing notions of livestock disease control among black Africans. African livestock owners read the state’s seriousness about dipping from the fact that even calves, despite their delicate nature, were not spared from the rigorous process of dipping. Furthermore, the categorisation of their herds as *danga redhibha* (herds to be dipped) and *danga resango* (ghost herds) reveals their aversion to it.<sup>461</sup> Hiding of livestock from colonial administrators, as shown in chapter 3, started sometime after the Ndebele Loot scandal in Matabeleland in 1894. However, by 1914, the practice had become prevalent as to cause bureaucratic concern. For instance, the Statistician was alarmed by the 1914 statistics of cattle belonging to Africans that he remarked:

I am of the opinion that the number of number of horned cattle belonging to the Natives at the end of 1914 has been greatly underestimated. There is no need to refer to the extreme repugnance that natives have for any sort of inquiry into their possessions, nor to the obstacles that are invariably placed in the way of any attempt to get at the numbers of their livestock, but the desire for concealment naturally lends itself to error of this description... the figures relating to European farmers shows an increase of over 100 per centum. There is reason to believe that the rate of increase amongst natives’ cattle is normally greater than amongst Europeans’ herds.<sup>462</sup>

The Statistician’s suspicions were real as they touched on an important issue of ghost herds, and yet nothing could be done as there were other factors that hid African livestock from such scrutiny. However, his concerns could not ignite an inquiry into African livestock regimes as

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<sup>459</sup> *Report of the Committee of Enquiry in respect of African Coast Fever, Quarter Evil, and Epizootic Diseases of Cattle, 1917*, 1.

<sup>460</sup> Interview with Majoni Hombarume, born 1914, Sadza, Chivhu, Mashonaland East 29/03/ 2012.

<sup>462</sup> NAZ N3/3/1 Cattle statistics, letter from the Statistician to the Director of Agriculture, 09/04/1915.

Native Commissioners explained the discrepancy by arguing that between 1911 and 1914 there were droughts hence Africans sold their livestock to Europeans, and that there were floods at the end of 1914 which destroyed many calves and young beasts.<sup>463</sup>

Besides interfering with immediate human-animal relationships, dipping tanks had an impact on African cultural habits as Africans sought to negotiate new forms of interaction in a colonial set up. It strengthened certain cultural habits while new others were developed. Prohibitive dipping fees necessitated and popularised cultural habits such as *kuronzera / ukusisa* (cattle loaning) as large livestock owners spread their herds among relatives and friends. Cattle loaning had long played the purpose of preventing overgrazing, reducing losses due to disease by dividing the herd, and enabling the poor to access milk and build their own herds. In the colonial era, some Africans continued with the practice which also became a popular way of ‘hiding’ cattle from seizure by authorities.<sup>464</sup> Archival sources are replete with stories of how the keeping of ‘ghost’ herds became a bureaucratic nightmare for colonial officials in general and veterinary officials in general. The hidden ownership of cattle challenged white claims to domination and control. ‘Cattle trade’ that also grew increasingly during this time was simultaneously both a ‘centrepiece’ of relations between Africans and Europeans and a hidden arena in which herds were concealed from investigators, placed outside the reach of regulations, and moved to official and unofficial markets away from roads, and out of view, without permits.<sup>465</sup> As such, these covert acts were in themselves a critique of the superficial power the colonial state held over the colonies.<sup>466</sup>

Given the numerous pressures which dipping placed upon African livestock regimes, the dip tank assumed a new meaning other than that offered by colonial officials. It also came to symbolise a convenient platform for demonstrating loyalty to the administration. Archival evidence suggests that in many areas some Africans simply obliged without necessarily understanding the logic

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<sup>463</sup> NAZ N3/3/1 Cattle statistics, letter from the Chief Native Commissioner to Secretary to Treasury, 28/04/1915.

<sup>464</sup> T.V. McClendon, “‘Hiding Cattle on the White Man's Farm’: Cattle Loans and Commercial Farms in Natal, 1930-50,” *African Economic History*, 25 (1997), 49.

<sup>465</sup> D.W. Cohen and E. S.A Odhiambo, *Siaya: The Historical Anthropology of an African Landscape*, (London: James Currey, 1989), 76-77.

<sup>466</sup> Cohen and Odhiambo, *Siaya: The Historical Anthropology of an African Landscape*, 75.

behind dipping. For instance, in a classic demonstration of what Bundy calls ‘reluctant acquiescence’<sup>467</sup> or Scott’s ‘self-protecting compliance’<sup>468</sup> Chief Manjikili told the CNC that his people were dipping, ‘not because they thought the methods adopted in dealing with the disease were correct, but because we recognised that what the Government said was Law.’<sup>469</sup> This objectification of dipping tallies with Scott’s contention that farmers are ‘pragmatically alert to knowledge coming from any quarter should it serve their purposes.’<sup>470</sup>

Africans were prepared to accommodate state veterinary measures (which they referred as the Law) so long they did not have negative effects on their herds. In apparent reference to culling, Manjikili argued that his people had never had occasion for their confidence in the Government to waver, but that they were hurt by the killing of their cattle hence they wondered, ‘whether the government really desire us to live: why have the officials *deliberately* destroyed our cattle? How can the Government expect us to *assist* them when we see our healthy cattle killed by these officials?’<sup>471</sup> That Manjikili suggested that cattle had been ‘deliberately’ killed, and that this made it difficult for his subject to ‘assist’ the government shows that some Africans followed veterinary regulations, not because they agreed with their stated purpose, but because they wanted to please vets. In his report, the CNC acknowledged that African livestock owners were angry but accused them of behaving like children, ‘because it was nonsense for them to think the government was no longer interested in their welfare.’<sup>472</sup> Paternalistic notions in this statement are detectable. In fact, the CNC proceeded to appease Africans for their livestock losses by offering them compensation. This was against the general practice that livestock owners (both white and black) were not compensated for their losses due to veterinary sanctioned culling.<sup>473</sup>

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<sup>467</sup> C. Bundy, ‘A voice in the big house: the career of Headman Enoch Mamba,’ in C. Bundy and W. Beinart (eds), *Hidden struggles in rural South Africa* (London: James Currey, 1987), 84.

<sup>468</sup> Scott, *Weapons of the weak*, 280.

<sup>469</sup> A3/2/5/1 Cattle General: 1910, letter from the CNC to the Administrator, 27/10/1910.

<sup>470</sup> J.C. Scott, *Seeing like a state: How certain schemes to improve the human condition have failed*, (London: Yale University Press, 1998), 264.

<sup>471</sup> NAZ A3/2/5/1 Cattle General: 1910, letter from the CNC to the Administrator, 27/10/1910.

<sup>472</sup> NAZ A3/2/5/1 Cattle General: 1910, letter from the CNC to the Administrator, 27/10/1910.

<sup>473</sup> NAZ A3/2/5/1 Cattle General: 1910, letter from the CNC to the Administrator, 27/10/1910.

Such compromises often brought conflict between the Native Affairs and Veterinary Departments, and in the process this demonstrated the fractured nature of colonial administration in Southern Rhodesia. Contradictions played out more clearly in the African reserves. The main concern of Veterinary Department was protecting, and controlling epizootics while to the Native Affairs Department, and the government in general ‘public order was of paramount importance hence anything that threaten to undermine that had to be avoided as far as possible.’<sup>474</sup> Given this consideration, NCs, who were also veterinary caregivers, were torn apart on how to proceed, and this explains the haphazard nature of the enforcement of dipping regulations in different parts of the territory. In some instances, they did not rigorously enforce dipping as they feared that it would provoke resistance throughout the reserves. At times, there were even exemptions to the ordinance especially *mombe dzemadiramhamba* or *inkomo zamadhlozi* (bulls dedicated to the ancestral spirits). NCs knew that such animals would not be produced for dipping if there was any likelihood for them being interfered with while at the dipping tank in any other way than the mere act of dipping.<sup>475</sup> Interestingly, most Africans, as shown by Chief Manjikili’s statement to the CNC, were also careful not to appear to defy government regulations. Thus, there was mutual distrust on both sides of the racial divide with either side choosing to tread carefully for fear of repercussions.

On one hand, Africans had to walk the tight rope of civil obedience expected by the administration, and on the other, complain without offending the authorities. Zachrisson has shown how African reacted to the encroachment of the settler economy in Belingwe. His findings are important for this study especially his categorisation of ‘rumour’ as a form of unorganised African reaction to European rule prior to the 1920s.<sup>476</sup> He notes that in the rural areas of Belingwe the older forms of response consisting of tax evasions, contraventions of pass laws, non-payment of dipping fees and passive resistance against government regulations in

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<sup>474</sup> Brown, *Mad dogs and meerkats*, 75.

<sup>475</sup> D.M. Chavunduka, ‘Veterinary extension work in African areas of Rhodesia,’ *Newsletter of the Veterinary Research Laboratory*, 1, 1 (April 1966), 8.

<sup>476</sup> P. Zachrisson, ‘An African area in change, Belingwe 1894 – 1946: A study of Colonialism, Missionary Activity and African response in Southern Rhodesia,’ *Bulletin of Department of History No 17*, University of Gothenburg, 1978.

general continued and were increasing.<sup>477</sup> In the east, resistance to colonial domination in general and veterinary control in particular took a slightly different form because of that area's proximity to Portuguese East Africa. For instance, in 1906 the NC Inyanga reported that the population in his district had, like in the 1890s, decreased, 'owing to the large number of natives who crossed over into Portuguese Territory, in consequence of the warning given to them that they should pay hut rent if they remained on the land on which they were living before they left the territory.'<sup>478</sup>

Besides the above, the anxieties produced by colonisation resulted in fatalism or hopes for salvation. In Southern Rhodesia, it was more of the latter than the former. Some Africans looked back to Nehanda's 1897 promise that her bones would rise again and fight colonial rule. The resurfacing of individuals claiming to possess spiritual power to deliver Africans from their sorrows, therefore, found a very fertile ground for recruitment. 1906 was a bad year as there was a drought hence the re-emergence of spirit mediums was a potential source of destabilisation. In Ndanga, a rumour circulated to the effect that the government intended to restore to the Matabele all the cattle that formerly belonged to them and which prior to the advent of Europeans were herded by their Shona vassals.<sup>479</sup> This rumour was fomented by a police patrol in the District with the result that large numbers of cattle were slaughtered.<sup>480</sup> In an attempt to protect them from 'seizure' some livestock owners in Nyajena drove their cattle to the mountains.<sup>481</sup> In Umtali, the rumour took a different form as the NC reported that an order had gone forth from an unknown source that,

all native kraals are to be kept scrupulously clean, and all the kraals in my district have been thoroughly cleaned up. The punishment for failing to carry out these instructions would be the appearance from the South of a woman with one breast, and one large front tooth, who would cast her spell upon the kraal, and all would die of disease ....<sup>482</sup>

In Mazoe District, there was the rise of a Nehanda spirit medium who demanded to meet the CNC and promising to punish the people if they did not meet her demands. This woman,

<sup>477</sup> Zachrisson, 'An African area in change, Belingwe 1894–1946,' 125.

<sup>478</sup> NAZ N9/1/9 Native Commissioners' Reports: Report of the NC Inyanga Year Ending, 31 March 1906.

<sup>479</sup> NAZ N9/1/9 Native Commissioners' Reports: Report of the NC Inyanga Year Ending, 31 March 1906.

<sup>480</sup> NAZ N9/1/9 Native Commissioners' Reports: Report of the NC Ndanga Year Ending, 31 March 1906.

<sup>481</sup> NAZ N9/1/9 Native Commissioners' Reports: Report of the NC Ndanga Year Ending, 31 March 1906.

<sup>482</sup> NAZ N9/1/9 Native Commissioners' Reports: Report of the NC Umtali Year Ending, 31 March 1906.

Nyamita, commanded a lot of respect from several chiefs as the one after another took turns to visit her. Chiefs who visited her were Chiweshe, Chinamhora, Hwata, Gutu, Shavenduku, Zvomuya, Makumbi and Dososa.<sup>483</sup> Nyamita claimed to have the solution to all African grievances and to have been sent to take care of Africans. Although the source does not specify what she exactly wanted to solve, that all this was happening at a time when there was a serious drought, and ECF was wreaking havoc in the country puts everything into proper perspective. At the same time, Kamoti, a messenger of a spirit medium domiciled in Portuguese East Africa, moved from kraal to kraal in Pfungwe and Maramba (central Mashonaland) in 1907 telling people to kill all their pigs and cattle because, ‘the Mondoro did not wish to see any of these animals when he came.’<sup>484</sup> However, this oracle did not result in the widespread slaughter as NCs did not report any conspicuous livestock slaughter. Such a call had regional precedence. Episodes of mass slaughter for rebirth through mass communication with ancestors had a longer history in South Africa, especially the Xhosa cattle-killing of 1857.<sup>485</sup> In 1905-6 in Zululand, Africans had begun killing white goats, pigs and chickens as well as to destroy tools of European manufacture.<sup>486</sup> Though Nyamita and Kamoti failed to ignite widespread slaughter through their messages of regeneration, their calls reflect a regional response to rural crises.<sup>487</sup> Their movement, unlike that in the Eastern Transkei which was led by educated Africans, was loosely organised and, therefore, could not stop the development of a capitalist economy in general and the imposition of veterinary measures in particular.<sup>488</sup>

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<sup>483</sup> NAZ N3/31/3 Witchcraft: General, Mupambawashe’s testimony, 13/04/1906.

<sup>484</sup> NAZ N3/31/3 Witchcraft: General, letter from the NC Mrewa to Superintendent of Natives, 26/02/1923.

<sup>485</sup> See J.B. Peires, ‘The Central Beliefs of the Xhosa Cattle-Killing,’ *The Journal of African History*, 28, 1 (1987), 43-63; T.J. Stapleton, ‘Reluctant Slaughter: Rethinking Maqoma’s Role in the Xhosa Cattle-Killing (1853-1857),’ *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 26, 2 (1993), 345-369; C.B. Andreas, ‘The Spread and Impact of the Lungsickness Epizootic of 1853-57 in the Cape Colony and the Xhosa Chiefdoms,’ *South African Historical Journal*, 53, 1(2005), 50-72; S.B. Davies, ‘Raising the Dead: The Xhosa Cattle-Killing and the Mhlakaza-Goliath Delusion,’ *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 33, 1 (2007), 19-41.

<sup>486</sup> S. Marks, ‘The Zulu disturbances in Natal,’ in R.I. Rotberg and A.A. Mazrui (eds), *Protest and Power in Black Africa*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), 215.

<sup>487</sup> W. Beinart, ‘The anatomy of a rural scare: East Griqualand in the 1890s,’ in C. Bundy and W. Beinart (eds), *Hidden struggles in rural South Africa* (London: James Currey, 1987), 54.

<sup>488</sup> Note: In the Transkei, a local anti-dipping organisation was formed with the assistance of a black lawyer named A.A. Mangena. See Bundy, ‘We don’t want your rain, we won’t dip,’ 200. Some headmen in Eastern Griqualand were educated, and knew how the colonial judiciary worked, for instance, Enoch Mamba. See C. Bundy, ‘A voice in the big house: the career of Headman Enoch Mamba.’



Since changes associated with the dipping regulations often came during unfavourable ecological conditions, Africans tended to view their predicament using spiritual lens. For instance, following a drought and the forced movements from European land there were visits in 1912 to Mlimo by messengers from Chivi. The oracle told them that, ‘he had withheld rain because they were always selling their grain to the European store keepers, and he wished to punish them. He also told them that he would not now give them rain to save their crops, but would give them drinking water and locusts to eat.’<sup>489</sup> In Plumtree District, there were dances in 1914 which raised further alarm over the resurgence of the Mlimo cult. These dances were being held in various parts of the Plumtree District for ‘rainmaking purposes.’ These had been on the Department’s radar for some time. The Superintendent of Natives wrote to the CNC, Bulawayo, ‘I would express my opinion, based on my experience of this religion in the Matobo District, that Mlimo worship has rarely had any political significance since its misuse in the Matabele Rebellion, and my conviction that the proper attitude of the government towards it is to keep it under observation and so to prevent it from becoming dangerous, but that no attempt should be made to suppress it.’<sup>490</sup> Prior to this, the attitude of the Government to these superstitious observances had been one of tolerance while at the same time keeping Africans informed the government was aware of their existence.<sup>491</sup> In consequence, there was no tendency on the part of the Africans towards secrecy in regard to these practices. The government only intervened when proceedings became subversive.<sup>492</sup> Despite the rise (and fall) of millenarian movements, and muted protest from some livestock owners, by government went on make dipping compulsory in certain parts of the country in 1914.

While between 1912 and 1914 spirit mediums tended to focus on the general hardships that followed colonialism, during the 1922 drought they particularly linked it to dipping. This connection was captured in a letter written by the NC Belingwe to the Superintendent of Natives, ‘some of these imposters connect the drought with dipping, pandering to those cattle-owners who

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<sup>489</sup> NAZ N3/31/3 Witchcraft: General, letter from the NC Victoria to Superintendent of Natives, 6/05/1912.

<sup>490</sup> NAZ N3/31/3 Witchcraft: General, letter from the Superintendent of Natives to CNC, 14/12/1914.

<sup>491</sup> NAZ N3/31/3 Witchcraft: General, letter from the CNC to the Secretary, Department of Administrator, 17/12/1914.

<sup>492</sup> NAZ N3/31/3 Witchcraft: General, letter from the CNC to the Secretary, Department of Administrator, 17/12/1914.

are in a state approaching despair on account of the fees they have to pay at privately owned tanks etc... Wanzira 'the umbuya' is probably now in the Chibi district prophesying years of drought and inveighing against dipping...<sup>493</sup> These activities in the South-Central Zimbabwe had spread to the North East where there was a very curious case involving human sacrifice in order to placate the rain god in 1923.<sup>494</sup> The ritual killing which occurred amongst the KoreKore people living south of the Mavuradonha Mountains in Mt Darwin District was called by a traditional healer from Portuguese East Africa named Kamoti. Regarding Kamoti, the NC Mt Darwin wrote:

He exercises his malign influence over the natives not only of this district but also those of Mtoko, Mrewa and Mazoe. When it is remembered that the influence of Kamoti was sufficient to force nearly a hundred natives to run the risk of participating, in broad daylight, in a crime for which the penalty was known by all to be death it is not difficult to realise that the same influence would be powerful to ensure absolute silence on the part of all the participants... I have no doubt that had the rain fallen within three days after the sacrifice of Manduza this crime would also have remained undiscovered. The continuation of the drought however assured the victim's brother of his innocence of the offence imputed on him and he disclosed the crime as he had threatened to do if the rain did not follow immediately on sacrifice.<sup>495</sup>

In Chief Mataruse's and Maduna's areas in Belingwe, there were rumours in 1923 that the English and Dutch were preparing to fight which resulted in people killing their cattle and hid their grain. An investigation into the rumour revealed that Africans behaved in the manner they did following their failure to meet financial obligations to the state.<sup>496</sup> However, throughout this period despite identifying how the veterinary apparatus furthered the interests of the colonial state, African livestock owners' grievances were not channelled in a systemic manner and, thus, Africans could engage the system in ways that could change their material conditions in the reserves significantly.

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<sup>493</sup> NAZ N3/31/3 Witchcraft: General, NC Belingwe to Superintendent of Natives, Bulawayo, 13/04.1922.

<sup>494</sup> NAZ N3/31/3 Witchcraft: General, letter from the NC Mt Darwin to Superintendent of Natives, 02/02/1923.

<sup>495</sup> NAZ N3/31/3 Witchcraft: General, letter from the NC Mrewa to Superintendent of Natives, 26/02/1923.

<sup>496</sup> Zachrisson, 'An African area in change, Belingwe 1894 – 1946,' 124.

## Conclusion

Having discussed African livestock therapeutic ideas, and how they were supplanted in Chapter 2, this chapter particularly concentrated on the processes, reactions, and results of the dipping as both a form of livestock disease and social control. As a form of disease control, dipping had by 1930 become a conspicuous weekly activity which resulted in the decrease of tick-borne diseases, and this partly explains the exponential growth of livestock herds across the territory during this time. However, dipping also performed another function as it came as an integral part of the growth of the capitalist economy offering an opportunity for herds across the country to be enumerated for taxation purposes. Their distribution across the country offers a revealing portrait of the social relations in the territory. Although there was state legislation, the process through which dip tanks spread across the country was both non-linear and haphazard for the practical reason that some areas were not tick-infested, and land policies were applied idiosyncratically in different areas. On their part, Africans did not resort to overt forms of resistance as happened in the Transkei and Zululand in 1905-6 because they were aware of their inferior military power, and were also loosely organised. The passage of legislation in 1914 and 1918, which made failure to dip a punishable offence, resulted in grumbling among Africans in the reserves. At another level, the absence and inadequacy, or both, of dip tanks in certain reserves and farms precluded vets from enforcing dipping regulations, and this also placed them in a conflict situation with some white farmers, who believed that African-owned livestock were essentially pathogenic. The increased movement of Africans from European farms into reserves from 1914 resulted in land shortages in the latter. In turn, this meant that Africans also sought grazing pastures in contiguous farms, and at times entered into grazing agreements with settler farmers. Compulsory dipping exposed African livestock owners to exploitation by white private tank owners. By 1930, dipping had become a very important tool of both social and livestock disease control.

## Chapter Four

### **‘Where nature objected to anything imported’: Africans and the Cattle Quality Clause in Southern Rhodesia, 1912 – 1930**

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The logic of successful animal husbandry dictates that livestock owners detect, and, as far as possible, arrest disease by recognising when their animals stray across the ill-defined border between health and disease. An intimate acquaintance with both the habits and appearance of their livestock enable livestock owners to detect transition from normal to abnormal. This, however, not only necessitates a regular, thorough and systematic examination of livestock but also requires a vernacular understanding of which types or ‘breeds’ thrive in local ecological conditions. Thus, African livestock regimes and formalised veterinary science are not limited to the treatment and prevention of epizootic and enzootic diseases as they include animal improvement and increase (qualitatively in yield, productivity and quantitatively in stock numbers). Although this chapter examines the introduction of new cattle breeds in to the territory, and the challenges faced after colonisation, it also focuses the lens on how Africans grappled with livestock breeding issues in a changing economic and socio-political environment characterised by the imposition of a hegemonic veterinary regime. By focusing on cattle reproductive issues, this chapter slightly differs with the previous chapters which were mainly concerned with therapeutic and preventative aspects of cattle disease control. It is also a pioneering study as it explores livestock ‘improvement’ policies prior to the more intrusive and cohesive state conservation policies (also known as ‘Betterment’) of the 1930s.<sup>497</sup>

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<sup>497</sup> See I. Phimister, ‘Discourse and the Discipline of Historical Context: Conservationism and Ideas about Development in Southern Rhodesia 1930-1950,’ *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 12, 2 (1986); M. Drinkwater, ‘Technical Development and Peasant Impoverishment: Land Use Policy in Zimbabwe’s Midlands Province,’ *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 15, 2 (1989); E. Kramer, ‘The clash of economies: Early centralisation efforts in colonial Zimbabwe, 1929-35,’ *Zambezia*, XXV, I (1998); W. Wolmer and I. Scoones, ‘The science of ‘civilised’ agriculture: The mixed farming discourse in Zimbabwe,’ *African Affairs*, 99 (2000), 575-600; C. De Wet, ‘Betterment planning in a rural village in Keiskammahoek, Ciskei,’ *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 15, 2 (1989), 326-345; P. Delius and S. Schirmer, ‘Soil conservation in a racially ordered society: South Africa, 1930 – 1970,’ *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 26, 4 (2000), 719-742; A.S. McKinnon, ‘Chiefs, cattle and ‘Betterment’: Contesting Zuluness and segregation in the Reserves,’ in B. Carton, J. Laband and J. Sithole (eds), *Zulu identities: Being Zulu, past and present*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 250- 56.

Although a history of exotic breeds in African reserves is yet to be written, issues related to it have been tangentially addressed in studies that trace the development of Southern Rhodesian settler agriculture in general and the beef industry in particular.<sup>498</sup> For instance, Phimister and Samasuwo have examined settler attempts to create a beef industry big enough to challenge the major beef producers like Mexico, Uruguay and Argentina.<sup>499</sup> Their studies throw light into the complex relationship between white farmers and the Southern Rhodesian government, and also illuminate Southern Rhodesia's predicament on how to produce steers of the desirable weight and quality.<sup>500</sup> Scoones and Wolmer have identified lack of capital, recurrent disease and poor market infrastructure as the major factors hampering the growth of this sector.<sup>501</sup> Closely related to these approaches are studies which investigate the relationship between Africans and their cattle through the lens of the African Cattle Complex theory.<sup>502</sup> For instance, Mtetwa and Steele have shown that Africans were willing to sell their livestock to Europeans provided that they judged the prices offered to be adequate.<sup>503</sup> However, since these studies were preoccupied with the exchange (economic) function of African livestock, environmental and ecological parameters of interaction on the African livestock economy remain largely unexplored. More specifically, such studies have neglected pre-betterment livestock improvement activities. Furthermore, notwithstanding their acknowledgement of the existence of 'indigenous' livestock breeds that were acclimatised to the local environment, these historians did not investigate the role played by the Veterinary Department in livestock improvement prior to the 1930s.

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<sup>498</sup> See I.R. Phimister, 'Meat and monopolies: Beef cattle in Southern Rhodesia, 1890-1938,' *Journal of African History*, 19, 3 (1978), 391-414; V.E.M. Machingaidze, 'The Development of Settler Capitalist Agriculture in Southern Rhodesia with particular reference to the role of the state: 1908-193,' (PhD Thesis, University of London, 1980); P. Mosley, *The settler economies: Studies in the economic history of Kenya and Southern Rhodesia, 1900-1963* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1983); N. Samasuwo, "Food production and war supplies: Rhodesia's beef industry during the Second World War, 1939-1945", *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 29, 2, (2003), 487-502.

<sup>499</sup> I.R. Phimister, 'Meat and monopolies: Beef cattle in Southern Rhodesia, 1890-1938,' *Journal of African History*, 19, 3 (1978), 391-414; Samasuwo, 'Food production and war supplies,' 487-502.

<sup>500</sup> Phimister, 'Meat and monopolies,' 399.

<sup>501</sup> I. Scoones and W. Wolmer, 'Land, Landscapes and Disease: The Case of Foot and Mouth in Southern Zimbabwe,' *South African Historical Journal*, 58 (2007), 42-64.

<sup>502</sup> R.M.G. Mtetwa, 'Myth or Reality: The 'Cattle Complex' in South East Africa, with specific reference to Rhodesia,' *Zambezia*, VI, I (1978). See also A. Shutt, 'The Settlers' Cattle Complex: The etiquette of culling cattle in colonial Zimbabwe, 1938,' *Journal of African History*, 43 (2002), 263-86.

<sup>503</sup> M.C. Steele, 'The economic function of African-owned cattle in colonial Zimbabwe,' *Zambezia*, IX, I (1981), 29-48. See also G. Arrighi, 'Labour supplies in historical perspective: a study of the proletarianization of the African peasantry in Rhodesia,' *Journal of Development Studies*, 6 (1970), 197-234; I.R. Phimister, 'Peasant Production and Underdevelopment in Southern Rhodesia, 1890-1914,' *African Affairs*, 73, 291 (1974), 217-228.

However, some socio-environmental historians have focused on a deep investigation of breeds and breeding in the colonies.<sup>504</sup> Swart's account of the history of horses traces the introduction of 'breeding' regimes in Southern Africa in the attempt to introduce a horse suited to the southern African environment.<sup>505</sup> Jacobs' study of the donkey massacres in Bophuthatswana offers a classic demonstration of the power/knowledge dynamic, and how it influenced attitudes towards certain species of domestic animals in the post-'betterment' era.<sup>506</sup> Others have examined how settlers strove to 'tame' the local environment. For example, Beinart and Phimister have both studied the influence and impact of environmental ideas on soil conservation and animal husbandry.<sup>507</sup> In focusing on official concern about soil conservation, Beinart makes an important observation that official thinking was not merely determined by the immediate needs of metropolitan or settler capital as it was rooted deeply into the colonial encounter, and also derived partly from older ideas about improvement and development. However, unlike Beinart who focused mainly on South Africa, Phimister has shown that in Southern Rhodesia, ideas and prescriptions associated with conservationist thinking were first put into practice in relation to peasant agriculture, not settler farming.<sup>508</sup> Although Phimister's work illuminated intriguing facts on specific relations between Africans and their livestock from the 1930s, his perspective, as Tropp has argued about the Eastern Cape, obscures significant contestations over resources and meaning which surrounded the state's initial takeover of local landscapes and the imposition of new environmental categories during the formative development of colonialism in the region.<sup>509</sup>

Where scholarly attention has been paid to environmental dimensions of African livestock management practices in the pre-1930 period, such attention is generally limited to discussing

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<sup>504</sup> See Chapters 3, 11, 12 and 13 in K. Brown and D. Gilfoyle (eds), *Healing the Herds: Disease, Livestock Economies and the Globalisation of veterinary medicine*, (Athens; Ohio University Press, 2010).

<sup>505</sup> See Chapter 3 in S. Swart, *Riding high: Horses, humans and history in South Africa*, (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2010).

<sup>506</sup> See N. J. Jacobs, 'The Great Bophuthatswana Donkey Massacre: Discourse on the Ass and the Politics of Class and Grass,' *The American Historical Review*, 106, 2(2001), 485-507.

<sup>507</sup> W. Beinart, 'Soil Erosion, Conservationism and Ideas about Development: A Southern African Exploration, 1900-1960,' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 11, 1 (1984), 52-83.

<sup>508</sup> I. Phimister, 'Discourse and the Discipline of Historical Context: Conservationism and Ideas about development in Southern Rhodesia 1930-1950,' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 12, 2 (1986), 263-275.

<sup>509</sup> J. Tropp, 'The contested nature of colonial landscapes: Historical perspectives on livestock and environments in the Transkei,' *Kronos*, 30 (2004), 118-137.

land and livestock holding within African reserves. Although environmental concerns became the foci of agricultural policy between the 1930s and 1950s, the fact that these had begun to be identified by veterinarians and ‘conservationists’ from as early as the turn of the twentieth century is yet to be explored in depth. In addressing this lacuna, this chapter raises the following questions: Were indigenous breeds intrinsically inferior to exotic? Whether, the fact that they did not fit into the capitalist idea of a beef economy necessarily made them a ‘bad’ cattle type? Were the ideas of veterinary scientists about smaller herds economically sound and environmentally rational? Were African livestock owners more knowledgeable on cattle breeds that suited the reserves than state bureaucrats – and did this shift over time?

### ‘Native’ and ‘European’ Cattle of Southern Rhodesia

At the time of colonisation, Southern Africa, unlike Australia and South America, already possessed certain breeds of cattle.<sup>510</sup> However, as already noted in Chapter 2, in Southern Rhodesia there were regional differences in the types of cattle possessed by the major ethnic groups (the Shona and the Ndebele). The hardy *Mashona* type was predominant in Mashonaland areas while in Matabeleland, the *Tuli* type (see Fig. 4.1<sup>511</sup> below), predominated.<sup>512</sup>



**Figure 4. 1: Tuli Cattle**

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<sup>510</sup> *Southern Rhodesia: Handbook for the use of prospective settlers on the land*, 37.

<sup>511</sup> Source: K. Ramsay, L. Harris and A Kotze, *Landrace breeds: South Africa's indigenous and locally developed farm animals*, (Farm Conservation Trust, Pretoria, no date of publication), 28.

<sup>512</sup> E. Nobbs, ‘The native cattle of Southern Rhodesia,’ *South African Journal of Science*, XXIV (1927), 338.

The introduction of new cattle types after colonisation, as will be shown, did not immediately result in significant changes in the genetic makeup of the national herd. In fact, prior to the reorganisation of the Southern Rhodesian agriculture industry in 1908, the line separating ‘scrub’ (mongrel) from ‘pedigree’ beasts was blurred since distinction was largely based on ownership rather than biological traits. Cranefield’s broad classification of Southern Rhodesian cattle types into two groups ‘native’ and ‘European’ cattle shows the ideological rather than biological differences thought to exist among livestock. Like the case of horses in South Africa, the value of cattle depended more on whose possession they were rather than their biological traits.<sup>513</sup> The term ‘native’ cattle loosely denoted cattle owned by the Africans, and these were largely made up of strains of cattle that had been in the country for many years. ‘European’ cattle were not only owned by European settlers, but were sometimes made up of imported strains (see Fig 4.2<sup>514</sup> below).



**Figure 4.2: Afrikaner Cattle**

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<sup>513</sup> Swart, *Riding high*, 56.

<sup>514</sup> Source: Ramsay Harris and Kotze, *Landrace breeds*, 24.

<sup>515</sup> Ramsay, Harris and Kotze, *Landrace breeds*, 24.



‘Native’ cattle were generally looked down upon, as is demonstrated by reports written by native commissioners after exploratory visits to different parts of the territory. ‘Primitive’ and ‘wasteful’ methods were generally thought to characterise pastoral life in the African areas, with cattle being deemed poor, allegedly because of serious in-breeding, ‘careless’ grazing and the use of ‘unsuitable’ bulls.<sup>516</sup> Nothing is as telling about this prejudice as the following statements given by two high ranking colonial officials: one an agricultural scientist and, another, a veterinary bacteriologist. The colony’s first Director of Native Agriculture, E.C. Alvord, dismissed African agricultural practices, arguing, ‘their methods are wasteful, slovenly and unnecessarily ineffective, and, if continued, will be ruinous to the interests of Rhodesia.’<sup>517</sup> The Veterinary Bacteriologist, L.E.W. Bevan was more scathing and direct in his criticism: ‘the indigenous cattle in the country, although hardy and prolific, are slow to mature, and are undersized – many of them too small to be placed on the world’s markets except as canned products.’<sup>518</sup>

The gross generalisation of the differences between ‘European’ and ‘native’ cattle, and the disparagement of the latter obfuscates complex differences that existed. The differences between various types of ‘native’ cattle were actually greater than the perceived differences between ‘European’ and ‘Native’ cattle. The intermixing of various ‘native’ cattle blood types amongst themselves and, in some cases, with ‘European’ cattle during grazing meant that there were regional differences in ‘native’ cattle. In Matabeleland, there were various shades of cattle types – a result of Ndebele cattle raiding from different kingdoms during their journey from Zululand, and after their settlement in the colony. ‘European’ cattle were also mixed breeds. In fact, the foundation stock on white-owned ranches and indeed the great bulk of settler-owned herds before the Second World War, was mainly derived from, and composed of, indigenous cattle breeds such as the Nkone, Mangwato, Matabele, Mashona and Tuli.<sup>519</sup> Incessant cross-breeding, as will be shown, meant that there were constant changes in the genetic make-up especially of

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<sup>516</sup> *Report of the Southern Rhodesia Native Reserves Commission (1915)*, 11.

<sup>517</sup> E.D. Alvord, ‘The agricultural life of Rhodesian natives,’ *NADA*, 7 (1929), 9.

<sup>518</sup> L.E.W. Bevan, ‘Veterinary Research: Some facts and figures,’ *Rhodesia Agricultural Journal*, 11, 4 (1914), 524.

<sup>519</sup> Government of Southern Rhodesia, *Handbook for the Use of Prospective Settlers on the Land* (London and Ipswich, 1924), 30.

white-owned cattle and this meant that the construction of what constituted ‘good’ cattle also changed over time.

Hybridisation notwithstanding, the norm was to extend racialised identities onto cattle. In cases where Africans were found in possession of perceived good breeds, the popular explanation among whites was that they were originally ‘European’ cattle. A notable example was the uncharacteristic white admiration of cattle owned by the Shangaan in the south which whites argued had, allegedly, intermingled with ‘fresh’ and ‘good’ blood from the Bechuanaland Protectorate.<sup>520</sup> They further argued that ‘Shangaan’ cattle owed their ‘good’ stature to cross-breeding with Afrikaner cattle Africans ‘acquired’ from Northern Transvaal during the South African War.<sup>521</sup> However, ‘Shangaan’ cattle, when taken to a different ecological zone fell off rapidly in condition and often contracted gall sickness.<sup>522</sup>

This categorisation of cattle was largely informed by the demands of the world beef market. The world beef market, among other things, demanded quick maturing cattle of uniform quality and size unachievable with either ‘native’ or ‘European’ breeds as there were many variations in mature size and maturing abilities.<sup>523</sup> For instance, in Argentina, beef cattle matured within 20-24 months, where local breeds needed 4-5 years.<sup>524</sup> Thus, before cattle production with a view to supplying the international meat markets could be contemplated, it was necessary to ‘blood’ (cross-breed) with ‘better’ breeds.<sup>525</sup> This thinking mirrored popular ideas and developments in Britain where there was change from the notion that all livestock were valuable to the idea that some ‘breeds’ were more valuable than others.<sup>526</sup>

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<sup>520</sup> *Report of the Southern Rhodesia Native Reserves Commission (1915)*, 11.

<sup>521</sup> NAZ N9/1/11 Mashonaland Native Commissioners’ Reports: NC Ndanga Annual Report Year Ending, 31 December 1908.

<sup>522</sup> NAZ N9/1/11 Mashonaland Native Commissioners’ Reports: NC Ndanga Annual Report Year Ending, 31 December 1908.

<sup>523</sup> C. Maree and I. Plug, ‘Origin of southern African livestock and their potential role in industry,’ in C. Maree and N.H. Casey (eds), *Livestock production systems: Principles and practice*, (Brooklyn; Agri-Development Foundation, 1993), 7.

<sup>524</sup> Phimister, ‘Meat and monopolies,’ 399.

<sup>525</sup> L.E.W. Bevan, ‘Inoculation of Cattle against Redwater and Gall-Sickness,’ Department of Agriculture, Salisbury, Rhodesia, Bulletin No. 316. 1919,

<sup>526</sup> Swart, *Riding high*, 45.

The need to ‘improve’ local breeds had been noted as early as 1893, yet throughout the 1890s no change in their biological composition occurred.<sup>527</sup> Though the Rinderpest outbreak (1896-7) led to a severe depletion of all cattle breeds in Southern Rhodesia, the rate at which the hardy *Mashona* type in particular proliferated afterwards was remarkable. The proliferation of ‘native’ cattle perplexed administrators such that by 1902 the NC for Matobo, for instance, reported, ‘Horned cattle ... are increasing more rapidly than could have been expected in 1896 when the cattle had all but exterminated... Natives who possessed one or two herd of cattle which had escaped the Rinderpest now have growing herds.’<sup>528</sup> Five years later, he noted uneasily that ‘Cattle are increasing rapidly, and it is seldom that many are sold. I know of cases where men in 1897 owned one or two head of cattle who now have herds of fifty or more!’<sup>529</sup>

From 1904, native commissioners also complained that there was no quality ‘improvement’ at all among African cattle herds, and that Africans were averse to the introduction of ‘superior’ European bulls.<sup>530</sup> Many were frustrated that the beasts to which Africans clung were ‘unsalable’ due to serious in-breeding while their numerical increase had no commercial value and, therefore, constituted a ‘menace’ than an advantage.<sup>531</sup> The Chief Native Commissioner argued that the frequency with which cattle changed hands for *lobola* purposes meant that Africans had no motivation to ‘improve’ such herds as they were bound to pass them soon.<sup>532</sup> However, if one considers that *lobola* was essentially a circular transaction: daughters brought in cattle from other groups, and sons took them out again, the charge that there was serious in-breeding falls into question.<sup>533</sup>

### **‘Blooding’ of scrub beasts**

The previous section has shown that there were different types of cattle in Southern Rhodesia whose commercial value on the world market was low hence the need to ‘improve’ them. And

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<sup>527</sup> Mutowo, ‘Animal diseases and human populations in colonial Zimbabwe,’ 6.

<sup>528</sup> NAZ NBE 1/1/3 Two Yearly Report, Matobo, 31/03/1902.

<sup>529</sup> NAZ NBE 6/1/8 Annual report, NC Matobo, 1907.

<sup>530</sup> NAZ LO 4/1/30 Detailed reports: Original Papers 1910, CNC’s review of the NCs’ 1910 Reports.

<sup>531</sup> NAZ S235/503 NC Mazoe, Annual Report, 1925.

<sup>532</sup> NAZ LO 4/1/30 Detailed reports: Original Papers 1910, CNC’s review of the NCs’ 1910 Reports.

<sup>533</sup> Steele, ‘The economic function of African-owned cattle in colonial Zimbabwe,’ 37.

yet, as this section will show, ‘improvement’ was a nebulous term as its meaning was very fluid depending on the observer. Generally, an animal was considered ‘improved’ if it had some exotic blood while for the more commercially minded it referred to animals saleable on the international beef or dairy market. The Southern Rhodesian state, which was also a private commercial company (the British South Africa Company), had to run the colony as a business entity hence it played a very important role in the introduction of exotic breeds into the colony. However, the motivation of the state is difficult to explain in simple commercial terms as it was also influenced by different contradictory expectations. For instance, hidden behind scientific ideas about livestock improvement was the need to introduce aspects of a capitalist society to Africans but without giving them leverage to compete with white farmers.<sup>534</sup> Fear that Africans could out-compete settler farmers were more pronounced in central Matabeleland due to the existence of cattle with big stature that turned out to be competitive on the settler cattle market. Furthermore, large stockholding among Africans interfered with intended cattle ranching activities because their livestock utilised extensive grazing areas. In addition, large stock holdings guaranteed Africans economic security even in the event of their agricultural land being curtailed.<sup>535</sup> This notwithstanding, the officials in the Native Affairs Department (NAD), who considered themselves to be protectors of African interests, generally believed that technical development policies would benefit African farmers and their production systems.<sup>536</sup> Nothing is as revealing about this as the words of one native commissioner who wrote:

Native cattle unless fostered by the introduction of fresh and good blood must of necessity deteriorate, owing to its constant in-breeding from poor original blood, and what they will have to sell is a small light undesirable animal for which they will receive only the lowest of prices.<sup>537</sup>

However, technical development policies were as much about ‘recruiting the people into “modernity”, as a way of gaining ritual authority over them,’ as they were about increasing

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<sup>534</sup> B. Davis and W. Döpcke, ‘Survival and Accumulation in Gutu: Class Formation and the Rise of the State in Colonial Zimbabwe, 1900-1939,’ *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 14, 1 (1987), 91. See also A. Shutt, ‘The Settlers’ Cattle Complex: The Etiquette of Culling Cattle in Colonial Zimbabwe, 1938,’ *Journal of African History*, 43, 2 (2002), 265. G. Arrighi, ‘Labour supplies in historical perspective: a study of the proletarianisation of the African peasantry in southern Rhodesia,’ *Journal of Development Studies* (1970), 197 – 234.

<sup>535</sup> Davis and Döpcke, ‘Survival and Accumulation in Gutu,’ 91.

<sup>536</sup> Drinkwater, ‘Technical Development and Peasant Impoverishment,’ 295.

<sup>537</sup> NAZ N3/18/1/1 Livestock: General 1909-16, letter from NC Posselt to Superintendent of Natives, 1/3/1916.

agricultural production.<sup>538</sup> Thus, the livestock improvement idea was a form of ‘mental’ imperialism as it was used in the colonisation of the mind.<sup>539</sup> In fact, ‘improvement’ in certain cases also included the importation of people of ‘good’ British blood to ‘improve’ the local supply.<sup>540</sup>

Economic factors, external to southern Rhodesia, also shaped and informed the livestock improvement agenda. In particular, the growing demand for meat in Europe necessitated the opening of new sources of meat supply.<sup>541</sup> As a relative latecomer, Southern Rhodesia sought to learn how the livestock industries in New Zealand, Argentina, Australia and Uruguay were founded, and how they became the world’s major beef suppliers. Towards this end, the British South Africa Company (BSAC) played a leading role in the development of the beef industry through practical demonstration. For instance, in 1910, it purchased Rhodesdale Ranch and developed it into one of its important cattle ranches. By 1912, Rhodesdale Ranch had been extended to over 1 million acres; by 1914 it carried over 19,000 head of cattle, which had almost doubled to 40,000 by 1923.<sup>542</sup> The Ranch was strategically situated at the centre of the colony between the main line of railway from Salisbury, the capital, to Bulawayo in the west, and the branch line from Gwelo to Fort Victoria in the south.<sup>543</sup> Its proximity to local markets for dairy and beef produce offers a telling example of how the colonial state placed the interests of white capital over those of black livestock owners.

In addition to serving predominantly ideological and economic purposes, ‘improvement’ also resonated with the concerns of a fledging group of environmentalists. Conservation ideas influenced ‘breeding’ policy as they often featured as ancillary arguments for the promotion of

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<sup>538</sup> Drinkwater, ‘Technical Development and Peasant Impoverishment,’ 295. See also Phimister, ‘Discourse and the Discipline of Historical Context,’ 270.

<sup>539</sup> Swart, *Riding high*, 99.

<sup>540</sup> Swart, *Riding high*, 57. See also S. Swart, “‘It is as bad to be a black man’s animal as it is to be a black man’ – the politics of animals in the 1913 Natives’ Land Act,’ Paper presented at the Conference on ‘Land Divided: Land and South African Society in 2013, in Comparative Perspective’, University of Cape Town, 24 – 27 March 2013.

<sup>541</sup> L.E.W. Bevan, ‘Veterinary Research: Some facts and figures,’ *Rhodesia Agricultural Journal*, 11, 4 (1914), 514-28.

<sup>542</sup> P.S. Nyambara, “‘That Place was Wonderful!’ African Tenants on Rhodesdale Estate, Colonial Zimbabwe, c.1900-1952,’ *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 38, 2 (2005), 271.

<sup>543</sup> Nyambara, “‘That Place was Wonderful!’,” 271.

exotic and cross-breeds. This influence mirrored the growing environmental concerns within the British Empire.<sup>544</sup> Thus, from around 1912, environmental issues began to feature regularly in administrative reports of the Native and Veterinary Departments as bureaucrats developed interest in how livestock breeds held by Africans could be ‘improved’ for environmental purposes. State bureaucrats began to argue that keeping smaller herds of higher economic value would check incipient environmental degradation in the reserves. As a policy, the promotion of smaller herds had scientific justification as it was based on studies of how large a herd could be supported on a given parcel of land.<sup>545</sup> Furthermore, just as in neighbouring South Africa, state officials drew on their experience of, and information about, other parts of the world – India, Australia and especially the USA.<sup>546</sup>

### **Cattle breeding challenges**

As the previous section has shown, Southern Rhodesia’s participation on the world market was hinged on its ability to cross-breed cattle and develop a viable commercial cattle breed. This section argues that the major impediment to the introduction of exotic breeds was that they succumbed to tropical diseases. A contemporary understanding of these difficulties is provided by Stanley Hyatt, an ox transport trader in the colony between 1899 and 1904. Hyatt, who witnessed how exotic and cross-breeds succumbed to tropical disease during his journeys across the territory’s diverse ecological environments, remarked, ‘in Rhodesia nature had not provided at all for the coming of the white man, where, judging by the number of diseases she had in reserve, she objected, and still objects, most strongly to anything imported, whether man, or beast, or vegetable.’<sup>547</sup> While Hyatt’s observations reflect an ordinary white settler’s perspective on the challenges presented by the local physical environment to the settler community at large and livestock owners in particular, reports from veterinary scientists corroborate them. Indeed, delegates from British colonies in Africa who gathered at the Pretoria Zoological Conference (26-28 January 1920) issued a report which acknowledged that ‘No continent presents such a

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<sup>544</sup> See H. Tilley, *Africa as a living laboratory: Empire, development, and the problem of scientific knowledge, 1870 – 1950*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2011).

<sup>545</sup> Beinart, ‘Soil erosion, Conservationism and Ideas about Development,’ 61.

<sup>546</sup> Beinart, ‘Soil Erosion, Conservationism and Ideas about Development,’ 56.

<sup>547</sup> S. Hyatt, *The Old Transport Road*, (London; Andrew Melrose, 1914; Reprint: Bulawayo, Books of Rhodesia, 1969), 107.

variety of zoological problems as Africa, and the southern area, by reason of its past history, presents a field almost unrivalled...<sup>548</sup>

Tropical diseases - to which exotic and cross-breeds were particularly susceptible – were a bane to the capitalist livestock economy. By 1901, settler livestock owners had come to know, albeit through harsh experience and at great cost, that Southern Rhodesia was a Redwater area. Successive Redwater outbreaks in various parts of the territory especially in Marandellas and at Gwebi forced veterinary experts to advise livestock owners to:

Only introduce stock from the low lying districts of Cape Colony, Natal and or from other such districts. People from there would also be comparatively immune from gall sickness and *boschzikte* (Heartwater). I think young cattle best to introduce... if farmers are lent money to bring in stock – it is of importance that they should do it wisely.<sup>549</sup>

This correspondence reveals that the livestock improvement scheme depended on the importation of stud bulls from South Africa for breeding purposes. Many farmers, however, could not import on financial grounds.<sup>550</sup> The major problem with the Southern Rhodesian livestock industry was that, just as in Britain during that time, diseases of production were considered the farmer's responsibility – something which resulted in poor white farmers to resort to popular therapeutic practices.<sup>551</sup> The introduction of a cattle scheme under which the government provided greater facilities to farmers for obtaining breeding stock to the tune of £60 000 was introduced but did not change the situation significantly.<sup>552</sup> Neither did the purchase at low cost of looted Boer cattle after the South African War (1899-1902). An agreement entered into with Lewanika, an African king in Bechuanaland, for the purchase of breeding stock from his kingdom did not help since Lewanika was averse to cows leaving Barotseland, and, therefore, prohibited his people from parting with them.<sup>553</sup> Furthermore, as Phimister has argued, state subsidies on imports of high-grade stock and its relaxed policy on the introduction of new cattle

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<sup>548</sup> NAZ V1/11/1-4 Veterinary Research, letter from CVS to the Secretary of Treasury, 17/2/1920.

<sup>549</sup> NAZ A11/2/2/3 Cattle importation: 1901-8, Surveyor General to Administrator, 29/03/1901.

<sup>550</sup> Samasuwo, 'Food Production and War Supplies,' 490.

<sup>551</sup> A. Woods, 'Breeding Cows, Maximizing milk: British veterinarians and the livestock economy, 1930-50,' K. Brown and D. Gilfoyle (eds), *Healing the Herds: Disease, Livestock Economies and the Globalisation of veterinary medicine*, 60.

<sup>552</sup> NAZ A11/2/2/3 Cattle importation: 1901-8, General Manager United Rhodesia Goldfield Ltd to the Administrator, 05/09/1901.

<sup>553</sup> NAZ A11/2/2/3 Cattle importation: 1901-8, telegram from Hole to Administrator, 22/3/1902.

strains did not bear immediate results since most livestock owners lacked the experience and capital to up-grade such animals successfully.<sup>554</sup> The success they envisaged was, nonetheless, possible subject to supplementary feeding but this entailed higher production costs for at least three or four years before any returns would be seen – something which many white farmers could not afford.<sup>555</sup>

Even the activities of farmers who afforded to import exotic breeds for breeding purposes such as an Insiza (Matabeleland) farmer, P.D. McGuffie, who bought breeding stock (100 cows and 300 ewes) North Western Rhodesia, did not improve the situation.<sup>556</sup> Cross-breeding fell short as the initial success obtained with crosses between imported bulls and indigenous cattle could not be sustained resulting in subsequent crosses being poorer.<sup>557</sup> State assistance notwithstanding, as late as 1919, the territory was 5 000 herd less than the required national pool of breeding stock.<sup>558</sup> Thus, the foundation stock on white-owned ranches and indeed the great bulk of settler-owned herds continued to be derived from, and composed of, ‘indigenous’ cattle breeds.<sup>559</sup>

While the lack of finance among settler farmers explains the failure of ‘improvement’, that alone does not tell the whole story. In fact, the efforts of the better-equipped state animal scientists and veterinarians to rectify some ‘defects’ of local livestock through the production of bulls of ‘improved’ varieties also bore undesirable results. For instance, in cross-breeds, resistance to diseases was reduced, but since such animals were ‘attractive’ to ticks they were very vulnerable to tick-borne diseases.<sup>560</sup> Some of the other, difficult challenges included the death of imported breeding stock, shortage of bulls for improvement of local stock, unsatisfactory calves from

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<sup>554</sup> Phimister, ‘Meat and monopolies,’ 399.

<sup>555</sup> Phimister, ‘Meat and monopolies,’ 399.

<sup>556</sup> NAZ A11/2/2/3 Cattle importation: 1901-8, letter from D. E. Brodie Sec. BSAC to P.D. McGuffie, 07/11/1906.

<sup>557</sup> Phimister, ‘Meat and monopolies,’ 399.

<sup>558</sup> Bevan, ‘Inoculation of Cattle against Redwater and Gall-Sickness,’ *Rhodesia Agricultural Journal*, 16 (1919), 99-106.

<sup>559</sup> N. Samasuwo, ‘Food Production and War Supplies: Rhodesia’s Beef Industry during the Second World War, 1939–1945,’ *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 29, 2 (2003), 490.

<sup>560</sup> Bevan, ‘Veterinary Research,’ 524.



imported stock, loss of growth and or delayed maturity. By 1914, the national loss from these causes was perceived to exceed half a million pounds per year.<sup>561</sup>

Before the introduction of dipping in 1904, at least 90 per cent of all cattle imported for the improvement of local stock succumbed to diseases.<sup>562</sup> Where it was thoroughly implemented, systematic dipping offered limited protection from a number of tropical diseases to cross-breeds. Yet when ticks were totally eradicated from a farm, livestock born and reared on it remained susceptible and contracted diseases when shifted from a 'clean' area to an 'infected' veld.<sup>563</sup> Thus, livestock owners who completely eradicated ticks by dipping were also placed at some disadvantage if their livestock were sold or transferred into areas where dipping was not carried out effectively, as diseases tended to break out in a very virulent form and their cattle had no acquired immunity to the diseases.<sup>564</sup>

Efforts to 'tame' the local environment and make it conducive for exotic breeds were also made through the introduction of an inoculant. Such attempts involving the immunization of the imported bulls by inoculating them with infected blood of low virulence were made from 1909. However, these operations sometimes had disastrous results. For instance, a large inoculation camp that was opened at Letombo in Salisbury District in 1911 was forced to close down three years later after an attempt to inoculate 70 animals resulted in their death.<sup>565</sup>

Some of the diseases amongst exotic breeds defied conventional veterinary medical knowledge. Contagious abortion in dairy cows and quarter evil are good examples. The 1916 Quarter evil outbreaks in Bulalima-Mangwe and Matabeleland revealed that its nature and symptoms, and the methods of dealing with it possessed peculiar characteristics.<sup>566</sup> These outbreaks were a

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<sup>561</sup> Bevan, 'Inoculation of Cattle against Redwater and Gall-Sickness,' *Rhodesia Agricultural Journal*, 16 (1919), 99-106.

<sup>562</sup> Bevan, 'Inoculation of Cattle against Redwater and Gall-Sickness,' *Rhodesia Agricultural Journal*, 16 (1919), 99-106.

<sup>563</sup> Bevan, 'Veterinary Research,' 525.

<sup>564</sup> Bevan, 'Inoculation of Cattle against Redwater and Gall-Sickness.'

<sup>565</sup> Bevan, 'Inoculation of Cattle against Redwater and Gall-Sickness.'

<sup>566</sup> *Report of the Committee of Enquiry in respect of African Coast Fever, Quarter Evil and Epizootic Diseases of Cattle, 1917.*

veterinary mystery because the Southern Rhodesian strain was epizootic and spread rapidly, while, elsewhere, it was enzootic.<sup>567</sup> Its peculiarity rendered hitherto conventional treatments useless forcing Southern Rhodesia to develop a unique vaccine for the local strain. No local therapeutic remedies existed as Africans regarded the 1916 outbreaks as the first case. In fact, Africans wrongly diagnosed quarter evil as snake bite until the frequency of cases showed that to be impossible.<sup>568</sup>

Similarly, the lack of veterinary knowledge concerning the local peculiarities of contagious abortion precluded the Veterinary Department from instituting satisfactory methods during the first recorded outbreak in 1917. Its prognosis necessitated a closer examination of the disease both in the field and the laboratory.<sup>569</sup> Outbreaks of contagious abortion among exotic cattle and cross-breeds occurred in their most virulent form in 1921. In response, the CVS took the unconventional step of consulting elderly Africans in the larger cattle districts, asking whether the disease existed before Rinderpest swept the country.<sup>570</sup> This is particularly significant as a rare occasion in which a veterinary specialist officially sought African veterinary knowledge. His investigations revealed that the disease never made any headway among African- owned livestock because they slaughtered any cow that aborted.<sup>571</sup> The findings, however, were not adopted as the Veterinary Department was in favour of a vaccine and focussed its efforts in the search for one. While this search was on-going, the CVS merely recommended the removal of all ‘aborters’ from the herds, removal of all bulls for 4 to 6 months from the infected cows, regular dipping and inoculation of a ‘devitalised vaccine’ prepared by surgeons at the veterinary laboratories.<sup>572</sup>

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<sup>567</sup> *Report of the Committee of Enquiry in respect of African Coast Fever, Quarter Evil and Epizootic Diseases of Cattle*, 12.

<sup>568</sup> *Report of the Committee of Enquiry in respect of African Coast Fever, Quarter Evil and Epizootic Diseases of Cattle*, 23.

<sup>569</sup> *Report of the Committee of Enquiry in respect of African Coast Fever, Quarter Evil and Epizootic Diseases of Cattle*, 28.

<sup>570</sup> NAZ N3/18/2-3 Livestock: General 1917- 23, letter from CVS to CNC, 26/10/1921.

<sup>571</sup> NAZ N3/18/2-3 Livestock: General 1917-23, letter from NC Mrewa to Superintendent, Salisbury, 08/12/1921.

<sup>572</sup> *Annual Report of the Chief Veterinary Surgeon* (1919).

The pursuit of a contagious abortion vaccine was short-lived as a series of inconclusive experiments forced the CVS temporarily to concede defeat. The CVS wrote ‘our endeavours to restrict the spread of contagious abortion of cattle by quarantine and other measures having met with no better results than in other countries, it was decided during the year to remove it from the schedule of “destructive” diseases under the “Animal Diseases Consolidation Ordinance, 1904.”’<sup>573</sup> The peculiarity of the disease’s aetiology also forced Southern Rhodesia to reconsider its reliance on Onderstepoort Research Laboratory in Pretoria (South Africa).<sup>574</sup> Vaccines obtained from Onderstepoort proved inefficacious, forcing Southern Rhodesian veterinary scientists to adopt the thinking that local problems must be investigated on the spot.<sup>575</sup> However, the search for a vaccine developed locally was in vain.

Besides the impact of veterinary diseases, the absence of a clear regulatory framework on cross-breeds impacted negatively on the goal of building a commercial cattle breed. A contemporary comment by one Professor Wallace on the purchase of breeding cattle for Southern Rhodesia is revealing as to the confusion existing in the sector,

there is no country in any part of the world that I know of, taking animals of such low quality, and it would be disastrous to the reputation of Rhodesia and an injury which might take many years to shake off, if it is acquired the reputation of being willing to accept the off-scourings of the pedigree cattle market, the outcasts of the Shorthorn and other breeds of cattle that no other foreign buyer would look at because they ought to have been castrated. The Company would do the country a good service if it declined to assist farmers or others to ship anything but good cattle.<sup>576</sup>

This state of affairs was attributed to the ‘praiseworthy desire by each farmer to experiment and ascertain for himself the breed best suited to his farm.’<sup>577</sup> However, this often resulted in a nondescript result at considerable cost of time and in bulls. Furthermore, the extent to which any ‘European’ blood could be infused without the necessity for occasional reversion to hardy type,

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<sup>573</sup> *Annual report of the Chief Veterinary Surgeon* (1924), 5-6.

<sup>574</sup> See L.E.W. Bevan, ‘Contagious abortion in cattle in Rhodesia,’ *Rhodesia Agricultural Journal*, 16 (1919), 117-118.

<sup>575</sup> *Report of the Committee of Enquiry in respect of African Coast Fever, Quarter Evil and Epizootic Diseases of Cattle*, 32.

<sup>576</sup> NAZ A3/2/5/3 Cattle General: 1912-3, undated statement by Prof. Wallace on the purchase of cattle for Rhodesia.

<sup>577</sup> *Southern Rhodesia: Handbook for the use of prospective settlers on the land*, (London: W.S. Cowell Ltd, 1924), 32.

such as the ‘native’ breed or Afrikaner, remained controversial.<sup>578</sup> The use of any bulls led to the intermingling of types in a heterogeneous assortment of breeds and crosses in one herd. Thus, the number of pure-bred bulls consisting of Afrikanders, Shorthorns, Lincoln Reds, Devons and Herefords expanded slowly from 906 in 1915 to 2765 in 1923.<sup>579</sup> The chief dairy breeds were as follows: Frieslands were 1 313; Aberdeen Angus numbered 700; South Devons 424, Sussex Red Poll 77, Ayrshires 20 and other breeds 12.<sup>580</sup>

The implementation of a carefully planned programme for the gradual improvement of the herd was delayed by the conflicting interests of participants in the capitalist cattle economy. On the one hand, some large white stock owners aimed at beef for export hoping that there would always be an ample supply of hardy ‘native’ and Afrikaner stock obtainable for draught purposes.<sup>581</sup> Others wanted to create a class of grade beef and dairy cattle for local consumption – a highly profitable line. On the other, there were mere breeders of numbers who usually aimed at creating very hardy cattle types, regardless of productiveness of flesh or milk. These competed with Africans in the over-supplied market for compounds and canners.<sup>582</sup> Some white farmers struggling to improve their livestock, just as was the case in South Africa, perceived African-owned cattle as both a commercial threat and a health threat to white-owned European breeds of cattle.<sup>583</sup> Some farmers, like Leavitt’s Southern farmers in the USA, sold their best stock to the butcher, and used their poorest for breeding as the better breeds degenerated when given the food that was fed to indigenous cattle, which is why they found it wiser to keep the latter.<sup>584</sup>

The *ad hoc* and haphazard nature of breeding activities within the territory created conditions for conflict between the state and white farmers who had either advised or helped to buy ‘improved’ breeds. The state had, through the Agriculture Department, assisted some farmers in acquiring

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<sup>578</sup> *Southern Rhodesia: Handbook for the use of prospective settlers on the land*, 32.

<sup>579</sup> *Southern Rhodesia: Handbook for the use of prospective settlers on the land*, 31.

<sup>580</sup> *Southern Rhodesia: Handbook for the use of prospective settlers on the land*, 33-4.

<sup>581</sup> *Southern Rhodesia: Handbook for the use of prospective settlers on the land*, 31.

<sup>582</sup> *Southern Rhodesia: Handbook for the use of prospective settlers on the land*, 31.

<sup>583</sup> A.S. MacKinnon, ‘The Persistence of the Cattle Economy in Zululand, South Africa, 1900-50,’ *Canadian Journal of African Studies / Revue Canadienne des Études Africaines*, 33, 1 (1999), 120.

<sup>584</sup> C. Leavitt, ‘Attempts to Improve Cattle Breeds in the United States, 1790-1860,’ *Agricultural History*, 7, 2 (1933), 56.

stud bulls at reasonable rates. H. Barnes-Pope's experiences may well have been a reflection of pervasive disgruntlement among 'unfortunate' white livestock owners who were dissatisfied with the quality of the bulls. He complained:

The BSAC must relieve me of the bull and pay me the balance I have paid in. I can honestly tell them the bull is not worth the balance they demand much more the money I paid in – and congratulate their buyer for being sold such a miserable animal... Personally, I am advised that I have a very good case against paying for the bull as I have had him now two years and he has not produced a single calf.<sup>585</sup>

Despite his disappointing experiences with pedigree animals, Barnes-Pope epitomises a group of white farmers who believed in the fundamental idea of livestock 'improvement.' And yet, the existence of settlers who contested the promotion of 'improved' breeds put the heterogeneity of the Southern Rhodesian settler society into perspective. Disparaging remarks made about 'native' cattle that permeated reports of various state experts contrast sharply with the rise of a thriving cattle trade in such livestock among European traders, and even among native commissioners who were tasked with discouraging the rearing of such livestock among Africans. In fact, between 1897 and 1908 some native commissioners became big 'native' cattle owners, large enough to threaten European livestock traders hence the state had to ban them from owning cattle.<sup>586</sup> A telling example of the expropriation of the so-called inferior herds by white settlers is the Orlandini affair, discussed extensively by Davis and Döpcke in their examination of capitalist accumulation in Gutu district. Within a 22-year period, Orlandini who had arrived in Gutu in 1914 as a missionary with just a horse, a plough and 60 head of cattle had among his other possessions at least 900 'native' cattle grazing in the district.<sup>587</sup> Thus, just like in South Africa, many whites were an integral part of the African cattle economy, and easily overcame prejudice against 'native' cattle when it suited them.<sup>588</sup>

An unexpected outcome of the bureaucratic discouragement of local breeds was that trade involving African-owned cattle in the border areas was usurped by foreigners, especially

<sup>585</sup> NAZ T2/29/28/1-5 Cattle dipping, letter from H. Barnes-Pope to the Secretary of Agriculture, 26/08/1915.

<sup>586</sup> NAZ A3/2/5/1 Cattle General: 1910. See also NAZ A3/2/5/5 Cattle Trading by Native Commissioners (1907).

<sup>587</sup> See B. Davis and W. Döpcke, 'Survival and Accumulation in Gutu: Class Formation and the Rise of the State in Colonial Zimbabwe, 1900-1939,' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 14, 1 (1987), 64-98.

<sup>588</sup> A.S. MacKinnon, 'The Persistence of the Cattle Economy in Zululand, South Africa, 1900-50,' *Canadian Journal of African Studies / Revue Canadienne des Études Africaines*, 33, 1 (1999), 113.

Afrikaners from Messina (Transvaal) who came to buy cattle and small stock from Africans. James Hartley, a cattle trader affected by this practice, complained

it seems to me hardly fair as a licenced trader like myself to have to put up with competition from people outside the country who are not paying any penny in licence or in support of this country and it has come to my knowledge that permits are flaunted to these people by officials of the BSAP [British South Africa Police] rather indiscriminately and are being misused... these people should not be allowed to buy in this country from the native and certainly not without being licensed, and manoeuvre, I think all this buying of cattle and small stock from natives for white masters should be put an end to. Otherwise Sir, I am afraid the people in the Union, will ultimately acquire the native trade in this country.<sup>589</sup>

In 1909, pressure from such affected traders resulted in restrictions being put on the importation of livestock into Southern Rhodesia. Under Govt. Notice No. 60 (1909), pedigree stock from Great Britain, Ireland, United States, Netherlands, Cape Province, Orange Free State and Transvaal were imported subject to licences confirming their status but under no circumstances were cattle of any description to be imported from N. Rhodesia, Bechuanaland Protectorate and Portuguese East Africa, except slaughter cattle from the latter. Pigs, sheep and goats could be imported from Bechuanaland and South Africa subject to a veterinary certificate of health.<sup>590</sup> Competition from abroad was, however, not the only cause for concern among white farmers, since the viability of the African livestock economy limited opportunities for white capitalist accumulation. A letter sent to the editor of the *Rhodesian Herald* captures settler fears in a revealing way. An anonymous writer who adopted the ironic pseudonym ‘Optimist’ complained:

We also hear of proposals for bettering the native stock, of teaching him how to farm cheaply and yet we see the Chartered Company advertising Rhodesia as a land for settlers! What will happen in a few years’ time when Northern Rhodesia wants all its labour?<sup>591</sup>

### **‘Bigger, better and fewer cattle’: The African Cattle Quality Clause, c.1912-30**

The ensuing discussion shows that the state aimed at a certain commercial cattle breed and that white farmers also attempted to develop one. While the need to participate in the world cattle market lay at the heart of state and white settler efforts to ‘improve’ cattle, a set of conditions

<sup>589</sup> NAZ N3/18/4 Dip tanks on unalienated land: 1917-20, letter from James Hartley to the NC Gwanda.

<sup>590</sup> NAZ RG –P/ LAW63 Acts, Ordinance and Government Notices Affecting Livestock in Southern Rhodesia.

<sup>591</sup> *Rhodesia Herald*, 22/11/1912.

existing in the African reserves partly as a result of overcrowding and partly as a result of the proliferation of undesirable 'native' cattle, forced colonial officials to intervene. This matter attracted the attention of self-styled conservationists within the Native Affairs Department into examining livestock and veld management practices closely. Looming large in their motivations was the thinking that Africans would benefit from 'bigger, better and fewer' cattle. The 'bigger, better and fewer' cattle argument was generally referred to as the African Cattle Quality Clause. In the absence of any legislation that banned the rearing of 'undesirable' strains of cattle, Native Commissioners used their discretion in encouraging a more 'enlightened' attitude to stock wealth whereby big herds would be replaced by smaller herd of bigger beasts.<sup>592</sup> From 1912, the Superintendent of Natives – a government official appointed to deal with the social welfare of Africans – came to play a very important role in this endeavour through the provision of state-owned stud bulls for use by Africans. The benefits thought to accrue to the country as a result of this initiative were that such stock would be consumed locally, or exported either as carcasses or on hoof. However, linked to this delicate matter were state attempts to prevent Africans from developing a commercial cattle economy that could compete against white settlers. This explains the hesitancy with which African agriculture in general, and the cattle quality clause in particular, was approached. Thus, until 1916 there was no clear policy in respect of African agriculture, nor had it been decided how Africans were to be helped in agriculture and animal husbandry.<sup>593</sup> This meant that cattle improvement did not become part of official policy but was an issue left to Native Commissioners to exercise their discretion.

Despite the lack of a clear-cut livestock policy, activities by Native Commissioners towards livestock 'improvement' began to take shape from around 1912. Unlike in Lesotho, where the state encouraged Africans to rear small stock between 1910 and 1920, in Southern Rhodesia the focus was mainly on cattle.<sup>594</sup> The 1912 drought offered an opportunity to state bureaucrats to push their 'bigger, better and fewer cattle' argument. However, rather than fixing the maximum number of livestock per owner as was the case during the destocking campaigns in the 1940s,

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<sup>592</sup> Waller and Homewood, 'Elders and experts,' 79.

<sup>593</sup> Eric Nobbs quoted in Machingaidze, 'The development of settler capitalist agriculture,' 16.

<sup>594</sup> See K.B. Showers, *Imperial Gullies: Soil erosion and conservation in Lesotho*, (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2005) 43.

administrators believed Africans would, by force of circumstances (restrictions in the available grazing lands), gradually cease being (or even aspiring to become) big cattle owners, and begin to consider smaller herds of pedigree animals. One Native Commissioner succinctly captured this way of thinking when he remarked:

We will not coerce them in any way to decrease the ownership of cattle. The pressure will be inevitable. The ownership of cattle must become similar to that of white farmers who can only own as many cattle as they have grazing for. Today a very large proportion of native cattle graze over land which does not belong to their owners.<sup>595</sup>

Though the structural re-engineering of the reserve landscapes for conservation purposes which native commissioners advocated was necessary given the circumstances there, the broader impact of such an intrusion into African livelihoods were not adequately considered. Indeed, certain African farming practices then in use were not sustainable as they posed threats to the environment but conservationist concerns were ironically blind to the existence of the same on white farms, and did not take into consideration that this was a national problem affecting both African and European areas.<sup>596</sup>

Environmental problems (overcrowding and overstocking) that begun to attract the attention of native commissioners from around 1912 were largely a result of the colonial land policies. The passage of the Masters' and Servants Act and the Private Locations Ordinance (1907), which made it illegal for Africans to reside on settler farms except as labour tenants or sharecroppers, were a major assault on African access to land in the country.<sup>597</sup> In Mashonaland, livestock owners were forced to leave settler farms for they did not have the money to pay rent.<sup>598</sup> Some Africans residing in the eastern parts of the colony migrated with their livestock to Portuguese East Africa.<sup>599</sup> In Matabeleland, where the land was drier, where there were large African livestock owners and European farms larger than in Mashonaland, land shortages and

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<sup>595</sup> NAZ ZAD 3/1/1 Southern Rhodesia Native Reserves Commission (1915): Oral Evidence by NC Bubi District, Robert Lanning, 22/09/1915.

<sup>596</sup> Phimister, 'Discourse and the Discipline of Historical Context,' 274.

<sup>597</sup> A.R.M. Ruwita, 'Matopo National Park and Rhodesdale Estate: A comparative study of African underdevelopment in a colonial state, 1890 – 1960,' MA History Thesis, U.Z, 1988, 33.

<sup>598</sup> NAZ N9/1/11 Mashonaland Native Commissioners' Reports: Year ending 31 December 1908, Chief Native Commissioner's Report.

<sup>599</sup> NAZ N9/1/11 Mashonaland Native Commissioners' Reports: Year ending 31 December 1908, Chief Native Commissioner's Report.



competition over it were particularly fierce.<sup>600</sup> By 1915, overcrowding had become worsened badly in the region. There were also shortages in grazing land. For example, in the 51,200 acre Matopo Reserve, there were three chiefs who owned 10 000 head between them and yet the reserve could not carry more than 3 000 head at the most even in a good year.<sup>601</sup> On a regional basis, livestock herds in Matabeleland rose from 16 000 in 1902 to 155 410 in 1914 while in Mashonaland they increased from 39 155 to 250 763 during the same period.<sup>602</sup> These figures suggest that there was a seven fold increase in the number of African cattle at a time when their access to grazing land was being curtailed severely. If one considers that statistics for African-owned livestock were largely inaccurate throughout the colonial period given the well-known tendency of Africans to understate their livestock holdings, one can argue that the rate of increase was much higher than was assumed at the time.<sup>603</sup> Even the Director of Agriculture, Dr Eric Nobbs, knew about this practice, ‘...in regard to native’s livestock, you will no doubt have in mind the admitted tendency to an underestimation, more noticeably in respect of the number of horned cattle in their possession.’<sup>604</sup>

Limited access to grazing lands resulted in an increase in cattle losses due to malnutrition. For example, one Barirwong of Raditladi’s Reserve, along the border with Bechuanaland, succinctly revealed these grazing challenges when he said, ‘We have lost a great many cattle through poverty. That is two years ago. We lost many and then we got a permit and shifted them. We are sorry we came here because of the scarcity of grass. There is grass further south and that is where we have our cattle.’<sup>605</sup> Gambo, an important Matabele chief in Nata Reserve, also complained that there was not enough water for livestock.<sup>606</sup> In 1913 alone, Gambo lost 34 head of cattle in the

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<sup>600</sup> Palmer, ‘The agricultural history of Rhodesia,’ 233.

<sup>601</sup> *Report of the Southern Rhodesia Native Reserves Commission (1915)*, 11.

<sup>602</sup> *Report of the Southern Rhodesia Native Reserves Commission (1915)*, 11.

<sup>603</sup> See Ghost herds in Chapter 3.

<sup>604</sup> NAZ N3/18/1/1 Livestock: General 1909-16, the Director of Agriculture, Dr Eric Nobbs, to the CNC, 24/01/1916.

<sup>605</sup> NAZ ZAD 3/1/1 Southern Rhodesia Native Reserves Commission (1915): Oral Evidence Barirwong of Raditladi’s Reserve, 16/06/1914.

<sup>606</sup> Gambo was an important Ndebele Chiefs because he had commanded a Ndebele impi during the 1893 war. See an account by a Wesleyan Methodist missionary C.D Temple, ‘A ride through Matabeleland,’ *Work and Workers in the Mission Field*, September 1897, 385.

reserve from malnutrition.<sup>607</sup> An application made in March 1915 by Chief Mpini to move and graze his livestock (700 head of cattle and 250 small stock) on unalienated land in the Bulalima-Mangwe District was turned down. The Acting Director of Land Settlement explained:

We cannot allow Mpini to move his cattle to the neighbourhood indicated. We have several applications from Europeans for land there and the district has recently been inspected and provisionally set out into farms. Are we under any obligation to provide land for Mpini's cattle? He apparently obtain grazing on Lion's Park and Pleasant View but he objects to pay rent and presumably expects to occupy British South Africa Company's land rent free or at a nominal rent...<sup>608</sup>

Such was the dilemma facing many African livestock owners at the time. Mpini was permitted to move to unalienated land on the west bank of Semokwe, where he was supposed to pay monthly rent of £3 for the grazing lease. He was warned, however, that he could be removed at a moment's notice.<sup>609</sup> In South Africa, Sol Plaatje painted a vivid picture of the horrors African-owned livestock suffered in the aftermath of the Native Land Act (1913).<sup>610</sup>

Land shortages forced Africans into seeking grazing pastures in contiguous farms, and to enter into grazing agreements with settler farmers. However, NCs from across the country noted with concern the tendency of unscrupulous settler farmers who had not beneficially occupied their farms a living by extorting exorbitant damages from African cattle owners whose livestock trespassed onto their farms. The CNC wrote, 'The natives greatly resent being exploited in this manner, especially as the farms are unfenced and their boundaries undefined by any visible lines.'<sup>611</sup> This exploitation prompted the CNC, who feared that at some point the Africans were going to retaliate, to suggest that:

If a landowner finding native-owned cattle trespassing on his land were compelled, under penalty, to report such trespass to the Native Commissioner within a reasonable period,

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<sup>607</sup> NAZ ZAD 3/1/1 Southern Rhodesia Native Reserves Commission (1915): Oral Evidence by Gambo, 19/06/1914.

<sup>608</sup> NAZ N3/18/1/1 Livestock: General 1909- 16, letter from the Acting Director of Land Settlement to the CNC, 27/03/1915.

<sup>609</sup> NAZ N3/18/1/1 Livestock: General 1909 - 16, letter from the Acting Director of Land Settlement to the CNC, 27/03/1915.

<sup>610</sup> S. Swart, "It is as bad to be a black man's animal as it is to be a black man" – the politics of animals in the 1913 Natives' Land Act,' Paper presented at the Conference on 'Land Divided: Land and South African Society in 2013, in Comparative Perspective', University of Cape Town, 24 – 27 March 2013.

<sup>611</sup> NAZ N3/18/1/1 Livestock: General 1909-16, letter from the CNC to the Secretary, Department of Administrator 23/11/1914.

and were also obliged to submit his claim for damages to the arbitration of the assistant Magistrate, I think the interests of the natives would be sufficiently protected.<sup>612</sup>

Kadgausai's case against a white farmer Mr Dyke reveals the difficulties Africans faced when trying to reclaim livestock improperly confiscated by settler farmers. Kadgausai, who lived at a kraal adjacent to Dyke's farm, testified in the Magistrate's Court that he made several journeys to the farm to try and get his livestock back but on each occasion was told to 'voetsek' (go away) and that his cattle would not be returned.<sup>613</sup> He also witnessed the branding of his animals, and the castration of one of his bulls, by his neighbour, a white farmer.<sup>614</sup>

In order to avoid the pitfalls of the Africanist argument, which portrays Africans as innocuous victims of colonialism, and as environmentally conscious land users, it is important to note that changes in African agriculture after colonisation also had profound effects on the environment. Beinart writes that during the early twentieth century, like settlers, many Africans in Southern Africa were experimenting with new agricultural methods, new crops and animals.<sup>615</sup> In Southern Rhodesia, some African farmers quickly identified the value of the plough, hence the dramatic increase in its use. For instance, Scoones notes that only eighteen ploughs were counted in Chivi district in 1902, there were 1 300 a decade later, and over 5 000 by 1939.<sup>616</sup> However, ploughing was done rather haphazardly, and this resulted in sheet erosion.<sup>617</sup> Thus, arguments for environmental control were partly justified.

From 1913, when measures for pasture improvement (paddocking and fencing grazing areas) were passed, veld management concepts began to influence practice.<sup>618</sup> That year, a Water Ordinance was passed to apportion use of public water, and an Herbage Preservation Ordinance to prevent the indiscriminate burning of grass. The *Rhodesia Agricultural Journal* (1913) also

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<sup>612</sup> NAZ N3/18/1/Livestock: General 1909-16, letter from the CNC to the Secretary, Department of Administrator 23/11/1914.

<sup>613</sup> NAZ A3/2/16/1 Stock theft, Kadgausai's sworn statement to the Hartley Magistrate, 30/04/1915.

<sup>614</sup> NAZ A3/2/16/1 Stock theft, Kadgausai's sworn statement to the Hartley Magistrate, 30/04/1915.

<sup>615</sup> Beinart, 'Soil erosion, Conservationism and Ideas about Development,' 66.

<sup>616</sup> I. Scoones, 'Landscapes, Fields and Soils: Understanding the History of Soil Fertility Management in Southern Zimbabwe,' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 23, 4 (1997), 619.

<sup>617</sup> Scoones, 'Landscapes, Fields and Soils,' 620.

<sup>618</sup> Wolmer, *From wilderness vision to farm invasions*, 128.

issued its first bulletin on soil erosion, extolling the virtues of contour ploughing and grass strips. This was soon followed by legislation to prevent tree removal within 50 feet of streams. Between 1921 and 1934, the Department of Agriculture ran a series of articles on erosion, while officers of the Irrigation Department were assigned to assist European settlers in the art of conservation.<sup>619</sup>

The way in which these activities intersected with breeding issues in African areas was clearly captured in the 1913 Report of the Chief Native Commissioner. The CNC stated that partly owing to the passage of the Herbage Preservation Ordinance in July 1913, and partly owing to the 'increasing good sense' of the Africans, grass fires had become practically non-existent. However, in several districts, Africans approached Native Commissioners asking for a relaxation of the law in the reserves. They argued that long grass attracted large carnivores which attacked their herds. Africans also claimed that as a result of the preservation of the pasturage, ticks and mosquitoes had become endemic.<sup>620</sup>

Colonial officials generally believed that efforts to improve local cattle would be more successful among African herds owned by tenants on settler farms. The assumption was that the presence of 'superior' bulls owned by settler farmers would result in the improvement of African herds. This was considered to be a form of charity from the settler farmers to Africans:

Among the more progressive natives there is an intelligent disposition to improve the breed of their cattle. A factor tending towards the improvement of native-bred stock is the European stock farmer, who very rightly insists, as one of the conditions on which his native tenants may be permitted to run their cattle on his land, on all native bulls of an inferior quality being castrated, the farmer granting them the use of his own superior bull.<sup>621</sup>

This was cheap propaganda since an earlier discussion revealed that the 'superiority' of settler cattle was just a fallacy. As has already been shown, settler farmers cross-bred animals without regard to biological traits leading to the development of animals which were largely biologically poor. Above all, this brand of 'charity' was not acceptable to most white farmers as they believed

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<sup>619</sup> M. Stocking, 'Soil Conservation Policy in Colonial Africa', *Agricultural History*, 59, 2, (1985), 151.

<sup>620</sup> Editorial, 'Cattle owned by natives,' *Rhodesia Agricultural Journal*, 11, 5 (1914), 663.

<sup>621</sup> Editorial, 'Cattle owned by natives,' *Rhodesia Agricultural Journal*, 11, 5 (1914), 663.

that ‘native’ cattle, if grazed on their farms, would be in competition for grazing with their commercial herds.

Besides the suspicion that African herds would spread diseases to pedigree breeds, white farmers, like their South African counterparts, feared that interaction would result in the degradation of their stock breeds.<sup>622</sup> Telegony appears not to have been a factor, but there were concerns that uncastrated bulls among African cattle if left to mix with exotic cows could deteriorate the value of the latter’s progeny. Nonetheless, some native commissioners in outlying districts, such as Belingwe, believed pessimistically that the improvement of African stock in their districts was failing because the district had too few white farmers to set a ‘good’ example.<sup>623</sup> This thinking obfuscated the possibility that the negative African response towards the ‘improvement’ of their stock was clearly decided by hundreds of years of cattle rearing in the area. During severe droughts, especially in 1912, the European breeds of cattle had suffered most while African stock withstood the drought better.<sup>624</sup>

### **Africans and exotic breeds**

The previous section has demonstrated what livestock improvement sought to achieve in the reserves. Nonetheless, it is important, as will be shown in this section, to note that the ‘bastardisation’ of ‘native’ cattle did not result in the state assuming a more coercive stance as was the case with the introduction of dipping tanks or centralisation policies from the 1930s.<sup>625</sup> Yet in their attempts to ‘improve’ cattle breeds across the territory, colonial experts failed to understand why Africans held on to their supposedly inferior beasts. It will show that although African livestock owners had a differently constructed view of reality from that presented by the state, their views had their own validity too.<sup>626</sup>

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<sup>622</sup> T. V. McClendon, “‘Hiding Cattle on the White Man’s Farm’”: Cattle Loans and Commercial Farms in Natal, 1930-50,’ *African Economic History*, 25 (1997), 47.

<sup>623</sup> Zachrisson, ‘An African area in change, Belingwe 1894 – 1946,’ 216.

<sup>624</sup> Zachrisson, ‘An African area in change, Belingwe 1894 – 1946,’ 216.

<sup>625</sup> W. Wolmer and I. Scoones, ‘The science of ‘civilised’ agriculture: The mixed farming discourse in Zimbabwe,’ *African Affairs*, 99 (2000), 575-600.

<sup>626</sup> Drinkwater, ‘Technical Development and Peasant Impoverishment,’ 289.

Before one can discuss the impact of colonial livestock policy on animal husbandry in the reserves, it is important to acknowledge that African livestock regimes were not immune to external influence, and that the capitalist economy expanded and impacted on Africans in different reserves differently. For instance, the spread of the plough and African participation in the trade of agricultural products with mining communities is evidence of this ability to experiment with new ideas as well their adaptation. Rural differentiation that became evident a few years after colonisation also suggests that Africans reacted and adapted to changes in the capitalist society differently. Nyambara's study of the experiences of African tenants who resided on different parts of the Rhodesdale Estate reveals how social differentiation arose partly as a result of differential access to critical productive resources as well as climatic and soil differences in various parts of the estate.<sup>627</sup>

While reporting on the effects of the 1912 drought, the NC for Insiza noted that the hardy 'native' cattle had not felt its effects to such an extent as had exotics. More importantly, he observed that, 'the natives who have exercised an intelligent interest in improving their stock suffered the most.'<sup>628</sup> This unfortunate turn of events for Africans who had adopted 'superior' breeds raises questions about the transfer of 'technology' to Africans as well as attempts by colonial veterinarians and animal scientists in tropical Africa to deal with breeds of stock whose hereditary characteristics, feed, and whose environment were so different from the corresponding factors within their previous experience.<sup>629</sup> On the other hand, the NC's report comment reveals that there were Africans who were interested in settler breeds, and acquired them. Whilst it is unclear for how long they had had exotic breeds and with what effect, this demonstrates that African livestock owners were not homogenous. Nevertheless, the unpleasant experiences of some African livestock owners who tried rearing exotic breeds reinforced widespread local thinking that these were unsuitable. Furthermore, imported stock required extra feeding, hence

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<sup>627</sup> Nyambara, "That Place was Wonderful!" 277-8.

<sup>628</sup> NAZ NB 6/1/12 Annual Report, Insiza, 1912.

<sup>629</sup> NAZ Cmd 3261 Colonial Veterinary Service: Report of a Committee appointed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, 1929, 6.

when asked why they did not want these new breeds some Africans argued that, 'their progeny would probably be far less able to find their own living.'<sup>630</sup>

The heterogeneity of African experiences, however, does not obscure the fact an overwhelming majority, as can be seen in Veterinary and Native Commissioners' reports, appear to have resisted exotic breeds. Besides the criticism they faced from the settler community, colonial administrators faced resistance from African livestock owners among whom they tried to inculcate the thinking that the size and amount of meat obtained per beast were the most important characteristics of cattle. This was a difficult task given that autochthonous Africans had their own value systems. As custodians of an extraordinary knowledge of the local environment, Africans knew its capacity, and the best way to utilize it for cattle production. This knowledge partly explains their scepticism about the viability of raising pedigree cattle. Similar problems were faced in Lesotho, a related colonial context, where the administration pursued a policy to eliminating 'off-breeds' of small stock and attempted to discourage the Basotho pony.<sup>631</sup> Although the administration, like that in Southern Rhodesia, realised the need for cattle improvement programmes, it did not attempt to take action arguing that the matter required a 'careful consideration in view of the severe winters and the scarcity of cattle feed.'<sup>632</sup>

The hardy Mashona type which from the 1890s became the major target of disparaging remarks, was in fact the most popular breed among Africans in Mashonaland. Africans had their own version of rationality for preferring 'native' cattle but these were not solely economic. These ranged from ecological – certain breeds were known to die in certain environments and cultural aesthetics of cows, that is, African wanted cattle which looked and behaved in a certain way. Cultural conservatism was also paramount in the resistance of exotic breeds. Local breeds were a cultural property in relation to their role as a 'historical' witness – a very important a point of

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<sup>630</sup> *Annual Report of the Chief Native Commissioner*, 1948.

<sup>631</sup> K.B. Showers, *Imperial Gullies: Soil erosion and conservation in Lesotho*, (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2005), 44-5.

<sup>632</sup> Showers, *Imperial Gullies*, 45.

reference in local traditions, and, therefore, a ‘custodian of local tradition.’<sup>633</sup> Thus, it was observed, ‘Africans do not use the bulls or they use them as sparingly as they can. The reason advanced in one district was that where a native beast will have a calf a year, a better beast will often miss a year.’<sup>634</sup> Some native commissioners noted that ‘many Africans prefer their own type of stock and the only reason they give is that they do not stray so much when grazing is scarce as do better bred animals.’<sup>635</sup> The Shona also saw hard Mashona cattle as more useful as they could be kept in better condition through being able to feed full in a short time, could be hidden easily in rock kraals, and in huts if necessary.<sup>636</sup> In the Marandellas District, it was customary to keep one or two cows inside living-huts at night to escape from being burnt during cattle raids, while small compact oxen were more convenient for riding and packing than large ones.<sup>637</sup> In certain areas, African perceptions of masculinity were extended to cattle. For instance, in Matopo (Matabeleland), cross-breeds were for a long time considered weak animals following a bull-fight in which a ‘native’ bull emerged victorious. The NC Matobo reported, ‘Two or three [stud bulls] have been wasted in combat with bulls of the mongrel breed, with the owner receiving a reflected glory from the issue and he has a sneaking admiration for the victorious animal.’<sup>638</sup> That ‘native’ bulls got engaged in fights with cross-breeds was not by accident as it is common for herd boys to start bull fights with the intention of finding the ‘king’ of the grazing lands. The bull that conquers all is thus perceived to be strongest. Thus, the bullfights in themselves were a cultural measure of what a good bull was. This was an extension of the thinking that an animal that can subsist in harsh environmental conditions was the best animal to have. Cross-breeds failed this test when they were defeated by ‘native’ bulls. However, this contradicted the official position that the bigger the stature the better the animal that was being brought forward by the colonial officials.

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<sup>633</sup> G. Gandini and K. Oldenbroek, ‘Strategies for moving from conservation to utilisation,’ in K. Oldenbroek (ed) *Utilisation and Conservation of farm animal genetic resources*, (Wageningen Academic Publishers, The Netherlands, 2007), 30.

<sup>634</sup> NAZ ZAZ 2/1/4 Natural Resources Commission: Oral Evidence, F A Phayre, NC Rusapi, 15/12/1938.

<sup>635</sup> NAZ S1563 Chief Native Commissioner: Annual Reports for Mashonaland, 1938, Vol. 1, report of the NC Lomagundi.

<sup>636</sup> NAZ WE 3/2/6 Weale’s reminiscences of the 1896-7 Uprisings.

<sup>637</sup> NAZ WE 3/2/6 Weale’s reminiscences of the 1896-7 Uprisings.

<sup>638</sup> NAZ S1563 Chief Native Commissioner: Annual Reports for Mashonaland, 1937, report of the NC Matobo.



Cattle improvement was suggested in a certain political context thus political interpretations were also drawn. Africans noticed that cattle marketing systems favoured white-owned cattle hence ‘improvement’ of livestock was not expected to bring much material benefit. For instance, the NC Hartley reported, ‘the progeny of grade bulls introduced several years ago are distinctive but the natives say they get no better prices for them and the provisions of improved grade bulls from Dipping Funds was voted against two years ago by the Native Board.’<sup>639</sup> The NC Marandellas reported, ‘there are eleven grade bulls in the district. Natives do not want these bulls and refuse to look after them. No further bulls are being purchased.’<sup>640</sup> However, the unpopularity of stud bulls was not always based on practical considerations. At times rumour played a very important role in influencing African perceptions of the stud bull programme. The following statement captures a popular belief among Africans during this period. Inquiries made in the 1930s into understanding the unpopularity of this programme revealed very interesting information. For instance, the NC for Mt Darwin reported that, ‘in one remote part where a grade bull was placed a few years ago, it was difficult to overcome the popular belief that the Government would take the offspring of the bull in question.’<sup>641</sup> Such rumours were to be expected if one considers, and as has also been shown in earlier chapters, that the relationship between the colonial state and African livestock was largely parasitic with much of the state revenue generated either from taxing Africans or the sale of African livestock. The provision of livestock to Africans, whose memories of the cattle looting after the First Chimurenga, and forced sales to raise money for taxes, was hardly to be seen as act of benevolence but as a seemingly generous gesture with the hidden intention of claiming their entire herds.<sup>642</sup> Indeed, as White has argued, rumour ‘is not events misinterpreted and deformed, but rather events analysed and commented upon.’<sup>643</sup> Thus, rumours that the offspring of stud bulls would be taken away was commentary on the ambiguity of state policy – a by-product of its top-down implementation.

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<sup>639</sup> NAZ S1563 Chief Native Commissioner: Annual Reports for Mashonaland, 1936, Vol. 1, report of the NC Hartley

<sup>640</sup> NAZ S1563 Chief Native Commissioner: Annual Reports for Mashonaland, 1936, Vol. 1, report of the NC Marandellas.

<sup>641</sup> NAZ S1563 Chief Native Commissioner: Annual Reports for Mashonaland, 1937, report of the NC Mt Darwin.

<sup>642</sup> In fact there is a popular proverb among the African people in Zimbabwe which says: *Itsitsi dzeitsvimborume kubvisa mwana wemwana dzihwa?* - loosely translated Is it just good gesture when a bachelor wipes the nose of a single mother’s child?

<sup>643</sup> White, *Speaking with Vampires*, 58.

The ensuing discussion shows that Africans had their own brand of rationality. Criticisms levelled against their livestock were also racialised as native commissioners believed that they were replacing ‘primitive’ with ‘modern’ breeds. Likewise, certain criticisms were unjustified. Colonial officials exaggerated in-breeding problems among ‘native’ cattle. Africans had a number of cultural checks. For instance, the *lobolo* or bride wealth payments ensured, through the practice of exogamous marriage, that the interchange of stock among villages prevented in-breeding.<sup>644</sup> Furthermore, in a society where bulls were not popular due to their tendency to break out of kraals (small night pens) and damage crops, they were protected for breeding purposes by means of the *mombe yemidzimu* (Shona) or *inkomo yamadhlozi* (Ndebele) in which a bull was dedicated to an ancestral spirit.<sup>645</sup>

Practical considerations meant that in many districts stud bulls provided by native commissioners could not find either buyers or Africans who wanted their services. For instance, in 1914 Native Commissioners in Sebukwe-Magungabuzi, and Insiza Districts reported to the Superintendent of Natives (Gwelo) that they had heard of no native stock owners who required that stock. However, the NC Belingwe wrote to the Superintendent, ‘I have the honour to report that I have interviewed the most advanced natives on the subject of purchasing bulls, but it is most difficult to effect a sale without the animal being in view.... There is too much risk involved in my making a similar suggestion as regards goats and sheep rams.’<sup>646</sup> This correspondence reveals that there were Africans who were willing to cross-breed their livestock and that these were considered to be ‘advanced.’ In 1916, the issue of improving Africa cattle once again arose but this time from Africans in the Charter District who allegedly wanted to exchange with NC Posselt hardy Mashona stock for ‘better’ class bulls which he possessed.<sup>647</sup> However, concern

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<sup>644</sup> O. Cluer, ‘The assessment of rural development and planning in the tribal areas of Zimbabwe under the Rhodesian settler government: 1890 – 1980,’ Master of Social Planning and Development, University of Queensland, 1980, 77.

<sup>645</sup> Cluer, ‘The assessment of rural development and planning,’ 78.

<sup>646</sup> NAZ N3/18/1/1 Livestock: General 1909-16, letter the NC Belingwe to the Superintendent of Natives, 09/06/1914.

<sup>647</sup> NAZ N3/18/1/1 Livestock: General 1909-16, letter from NC Posselt to Superintendent of Natives, 1/3/1916.

was raised since government regulations prohibited such an exchange by a Native Department official.<sup>648</sup>

Claims that Africans were interested in these breeds were, however, challenged by missionaries and liberal-minded settlers. Their main concern was that Africans were made to make contributions for the purchase of pedigree bulls. Lobbying by the anti-bulls group forced the Chief Native Commissioner to clarify matters to the Secretary, Department of the Administrator. Regarding the imposition of the levy he argued that certain headmen and chiefs in Marandellas District had approached the NC with a request that dipping tanks be erected, and that well-bred bulls be bought from their funds to improve their herds.<sup>649</sup> He argued that this was a voluntary collection by the Africans from which a European cattle inspector they ‘requested’ was appointed and paid. Missionaries were advised from confusing the natives since NC officials were there to help Africans. He wrote, ‘I would emphasise the desirability of encouraging and educating the native mind to the advantages to be gained by the systematic care and improvement of their main source of wealth – their herds – and it is obvious that any manifestation of a desire to improve, as in this instance, merits the greatest encouragement from the government.’<sup>650</sup> However, Reverend Cripps was not deterred for he questioned both the thinking that chiefs and headmen really represented ‘native’ interests, and protestations of innocence:

Should the government desire to help progressive natives, by all means let it provide bulls of a good class, and charge a moderate fee for their use, recovering from those particular Native Headman or stockowners who require their services. I submit that there is no machinery in shape at present for gauging the mass opinion in the back blocks of any really large Native Reserve, whether in Marandellas or any other district known to me.<sup>651</sup>

Success among Africans who ignored colonial experts meant that the claim that exotic breeds were better than local could not be made without question. There were several examples indicating that individual Africans could reach better results with their hardier cattle than with

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<sup>648</sup> NAZ Government Notice No. 215 of 1910.

<sup>649</sup> NAZ N3/18/2-3 Livestock: General 1917- 23, letter from the CNC to the Secretary, Dept. of the Administrator 12/06/1923.

<sup>650</sup> NAZ N3/18/2-3 Livestock: General 1917- 23, letter from the CNC to the Secretary, Dept. of the Administrator 12/06/1923.

<sup>651</sup> NAZ N3/18/2-3 Livestock: General 1917-23, letter A. Cripps to CNC, 25/06/23.

European types. Some Africans were willing to embrace western breeding ideas but on their own terms. They did not do this by adopting or cross-breeding to develop a suitable type to their environment as did the Basotho in developing a local horse but did so through utilising European modes of livestock husbandry to fatten local types.<sup>652</sup> The NC Belingwe described how in 1916 an African cattle-owner in Mpateni had raised about a hundred head of cattle from two cows during twenty years of in-breeding, ‘undoubtedly the finest lot of cattle I had seen in this country including European stock of that class.’<sup>653</sup>

Some Africans hid their herds from the meddling of colonial experts. In cases where Africans seemingly adopted these so-called ‘improved’ breeds new developments linked to their efforts to meet the demands of a rapidly changed African economy to a capitalist society threatened to reverse the ‘gains’. In particular, some Africans castrated all their bulls in an attempt to make them amenable to the plough, with the added incentive that when they were no longer useful, they would fetch higher prices than bulls.<sup>654</sup> The emasculation of larger animals had unfortunate long-term consequences as the quality of African stock degenerated and their saleability diminished. European cattle traders operating in African areas were particularly affected by this as cattle offered to traders were sometimes elderly and had little further economic value. A comment made by one Native Commissioner in 1918 is particularly revealing. He noted that:

Those who own big oxen are loath to part with them, while “weeds” do not command a ready sale. Breeding stock are very rarely sold. In time, this practice provoked many official grumbles about African ignorance of market forces, but in point of fact breeding and draught animals were too valuable to be sold to outsiders except in a very buoyant market or in cases of extreme adversity.<sup>655</sup>

Approximately 2 383 429 cattle were in the territory in the late 1920s but the majority were largely ‘unimproved’ despite livestock improvement schemes.<sup>656</sup> Only a few African-owned cattle, especially those running along settler herds, had had a little ‘European’ blood. It was in the 1930s that the government’s resolve to provide European cattle dealers with a ready source

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<sup>652</sup> Swart, *Riding High*, 96.

<sup>653</sup> Zachrisson, ‘An African area in change, Belingwe 1894 – 1946,’ 216.

<sup>654</sup> Steele, ‘The economic function of African-owned cattle in colonial Zimbabwe,’ 39.

<sup>655</sup> NAZ N/9/1/ 21, Native Department Annual Reports: N. C. Lomagundi, Annual Report (1918).

<sup>656</sup> NAZ RG4 Report of the Chief Veterinary Surgeon, 1927, 7.

of wealth and to reduce African cattle herds led to the creation of a state-run livestock improvement station at Msengezi Experimental Farm.<sup>657</sup> Further breeding stations for the improvement of hardy African cattle breed known as the *Sanga* were established at Makholi, Tjolutjo, Tuli, Lupane, Maranke, Mangwende, Shangani and Ndanga. However, even these schemes had by 1955 not fully achieved their intended result as most African cattle still belonged to the compound and inferior grades.<sup>658</sup>

## Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the development of the Southern Rhodesian cattle industry through the lens of livestock improvement activities. It has shown that contrary to popular belief the colonial state took an interest in African livestock management much earlier than is assumed, and that this interest began much earlier than the more pronounced betterment policies of the 1930s. Thus, what happened during the 1930s was the cementation of policies that had a much longer history in the colony. It also shows that the settler attempts at ‘taming’ the local environment through the introduction of better breeds was accompanied by disease outbreaks which were particularly virulent among imported cattle or cross-breeds, and that efforts to control these through either breeding or development of an inoculant made very slow progress with the major failures being that of quarter evil and contagious abortion. Conflicting views regarding the position of Africans in the colony also meant that colonial policy was often contradictory as the state sought to balance the fears of the white settler community while making African reserves amenable to capitalist livestock production. The role of state animal scientists and veterinarians in the colonial bureaucracy – as tools for subjugating epizootics and enzootics to pay way for colonial domination – saw them playing a leading role in influencing opinion and creating conditions under which scientific asset management could be imposed in both African and European areas. The need to rear pedigree animals fitted very well into the intentions of the colonial state to participate in the world beef market. Africans, among whom the ‘better, bigger and fewer’ argument was encouraged, also had a set of reasons for not adopting ‘better’ breeds hence by 1930 no significant change had occurred in African livestock regimes.

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<sup>657</sup> NAZ RG4 CNC Annual Report, 1939.

<sup>658</sup> Jamu, ‘The growth and control of African herds,’ 41.

## Chapter Five

### **‘It is no use advising us! Command us and we will obey’ Livestock management, centralisation, and soil conservation, c.1930-51.**

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The previous chapters have explored the interaction between scientific and local diagnostic, therapeutic, and prophylactic ideas as well as the diverse ways in which biomedical approaches seeped into state polity. Chapter 2 established how hegemonic veterinary apparatus came into being while Chapters 3 and 4 revealed how African livestock regimes interacted with dipping, and livestock improvement activities respectively. This chapter argues that from the 1930s, this fluid interaction crystallised, becoming rigid, and the state’s previously nebulous programme became both intrusive and coercive. It will show how state-induced conservation policies manifested a sustained state intention to eradicate a variety of African religious, cultural and social engagements that centred on farming.<sup>659</sup> More specifically, this chapter examines, firstly, conservation policies and the various ways through which veterinary challenges and measures intersected with centralisation efforts, and, secondly, how these attempted to reshape African livestock regimes. Thirdly, it looks at African reaction to this intrusion.

#### **Environmental Conservation Historiography**

Apart from examining how the reorganisation of land into farming and grazing areas as well as how the reduction of livestock numbers to meet the perceived carrying capacity of the land affected livestock management in the reserves, very little has been written regarding how veterinary and soil conservation policies related to each other from the 1930s. The available literature has outlined how calls for intervention in African reserves were motivated by the thinking that African agriculture and livestock management practices were responsible causative agents for soil erosion, but fails to interrogate how this intervention informed, shaped, or

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<sup>659</sup> W.O. Mulwafu, *Conservation song: A history of peasant-state relations and the environment in Malawi, 1866-2000*, (Cambridge: The White Horse Press, 2011), 1.

changed African livestock regimes. Although conservation in practice consisted of a motley of technical measures, scholarship has largely restricted itself to land and water conservation methods at the expense of the various ways through which this affected livestock management practices.

The impact of soil conservation practices on African livestock management in southern Africa has been mentioned tangentially in environmental conservation historiography. The trajectory of Zimbabwean scholarship has also followed a sub-regional trend. For instance, in Botswana and Malawi respectively, Morapedi and Mulwafu's latest studies emphasize colonial state policies in crop production at the expense of subtle interventions in livestock improvement and disease management.<sup>660</sup> In South Africa, historians have examined the twin policies of centralisation and culling of livestock emphasising that betterment was conceived and carried out within the ideological confines of separate development but mentions little on the impact of such practices on the African livestock economy other than the reduction in numbers.<sup>661</sup> South African 'betterment' historiography has shifted from Beinart's initial focus on conservation activities on white farms to discussing their environmental, agricultural and social impact in African reserves.<sup>662</sup> For instance, unlike Beinart<sup>663</sup> whose focus was the Cape and conservation on white farms, Delius and Schirmer traces and compares the evolution of state conservation policies in relation to both white farmlands and African reserves in the Transvaal.<sup>664</sup> Notwithstanding their

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<sup>660</sup> W.G. Morapedi, 'The State and its Failure to Transform African Crop Production in Botswana, 1930–1939,' *South African Historical Journal*, 65, 2 (2013), 199–221; W.O. Mulwafu, *Conservation song: A history of peasant-state relations and the environment in Malawi, 1866–2000*, (Cambridge: The White Horse Press, 2011). See also A.S. McKinnon, 'Chiefs, cattle and 'Betterment': Contesting Zuluness and segregation in the Reserves,' in B. Carton, J. Laband and J. Sithole (eds), *Zulu identities: Being Zulu, past and present*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 250–255.

<sup>661</sup> See C. De Wet, 'Betterment planning in a rural village in Keiskammahoek, Ciskei,' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 15, 2 (1989), 326–345; P. Delius and S. Schirmer, 'Soil conservation in a racially ordered society: South Africa, 1930 – 1970,' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 26, 4 (2000), 719–742.

<sup>662</sup> I. Hofmeyr, *"We spend our years as a tale that is told" Oral historical narrative in a South African Chieftaindom*, (Portsmouth: Heinemann, 1993); C. De Wet, *Moving together, drifting apart: betterment planning and villagisation in a South African homeland*, (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press 1995); N.J. Jacobs, *Environment, power and injustice: A South African History*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

<sup>663</sup> W. Beinart, 'Soil Erosion, Conservationism and Ideas about Development: A Southern African Exploration, 1900–1960,' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 11, 1 (1984), 52–83.

<sup>664</sup> I. Phimister, 'Discourse and the Discipline of Historical Context: Conservationism and Ideas about development in Southern Rhodesia 1930–1950,' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 12, 2 (1986), 263–275. See also Delius and Schirmer, 'Soil conservation in a racially ordered society.'

varied arguments, South African historians generally argue that centralisation policies in Southern Rhodesia from the late 1920s marked the first instance in which there was a concerted push for villagisation in southern Africa, and that these policies later influenced betterment in South Africa.<sup>665</sup> Like these, this chapter will focus on conservation programmes in Southern Rhodesia, a related colonial context.

Moreover, more specifically to Zimbabwe, Kramer simply argues that ‘centralisation operated on many levels’ without disaggregating these, thus, the way it related with or was packaged as a veterinary method is yet to be analysed.<sup>666</sup> This chapter also contributes to a historiographical debate pertaining to the position of centralisation in the conservation matrix. McGregor suggests, contrary to the generally accepted view in the recent literature, that centralization was not conservation oriented. Instead, she argues, that conservation was a by-product of agricultural improvement and rational land use, and that the motives behind centralization were a mixture of agricultural intensification, modernization, control and aesthetics.<sup>667</sup> Her conclusion was that conservationist arguments became more important in the late 1930s, both as a justification for centralization itself and as an excuse for its forcible implementation.<sup>668</sup> However, as already shown in Chapter 3, conservation was at the centre of intervention in the reserves long before the 1930s. McGregor’s reliance on Alvord, the architect of the centralisation policy, is understandable but it is methodologically incorrect to assume, as she does, that conservationism in Southern Rhodesia was a by-product of the centralisation policy. Primary evidence suggests that at its inception, Southern Rhodesia already had a fledgling group of conservationists who expropriated and mobilised ideas central to centralisation to develop a conservation argument. In particular, the Native Affairs Department played a leading role in this programme right from its inception, and, as already been shown in Chapter 3, there already existed within that department

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<sup>665</sup> See for instance W. Beinart, *The rise of conservation in South Africa: settlers, livestock, and the environment, 1770-1950*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

<sup>666</sup> E. Kramer, ‘The clash of economies: Early centralisation efforts in colonial Zimbabwe, 1929-35,’ *Zambezia*, XXV, I (1998). See also L.L. Bessant, ‘Coercive Development: Land Shortage, Forced Labor, and Colonial Development in the Chiweshe Reserve, Colonial Zimbabwe, 1938-1946,’ *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 25, 1 (1992), 39-65; T. Ranger, *A peasant consciousness and guerrilla war in Zimbabwe: A comparative study*, (London: James Currey, 1985).

<sup>667</sup> McGregor, ‘Woodland resources,’ 103.

<sup>668</sup> McGregor, ‘Woodland resources,’ 103.



a fledgling group of self-styled conservationists whose reports from as early as 1912 reveal their strong sense of environmental degradation in the reserves. In fact, in another work McGregor concedes that there was a barrage of conservation legislation in Southern Rhodesia in late 1920s such as the Water Act (1928), the Native Reserves Forest Produce Act (1929) and the Game and Fish Preservation Act (1920).<sup>669</sup> Thus, it is not surprising that reports from the NAD, Agricultural, irrigation and forestry officials reveal that this was understood and implemented as a conservation method right from the start.

Studies on cattle destocking have also not examined its specific relationship with livestock disease management. For instance, though Shutt makes an important contribution to our understanding of African farming practices not only in the reserves but also in the Native Purchase Areas<sup>670</sup> and acknowledges that destocking was a matter of animal control, her focus was not on environmental and veterinary arguments that justified this policy but rather on the economic function of African cattle, and the conflicting positions of different white classes over the culling of African cattle.<sup>671</sup> Scoones and Wolmer have made the valuable observation that the livestock control measures by the Veterinary Department targeted at both wildlife and cattle on account of Foot and Mouth had severe implications for landscapes and livelihoods as they were mainly structured to suit the imperatives of beef production, rather than wider livestock and disease management objectives. Yet they fall short of identifying the various ways these impacted on environmental degradation.<sup>672</sup> Their examination of the various ways mixed farming discourse has informed agricultural research and policy in Zimbabwe over the last century is also useful in understanding the country's agricultural history.<sup>673</sup> However, the various ways concentration impacted on, and reshaped ideas about and actual human-animal relations in concentration areas has not yet been analysed.

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<sup>669</sup> J. McGregor, 'Conservation, Control and Ecological Change: The Politics and Ecology of Colonial Conservation in Shurugwi, Zimbabwe,' *Environment and History*, 1, 3 (1995), 258.

<sup>670</sup> A. Shutt, 'Pioneer Farmers and Family Dynasties in Marirangwe Purchase Area, Colonial Zimbabwe, 1931-1947,' *African Studies Review*, 43, 3 (2000), 59-80.

<sup>671</sup> A. Shutt, 'The Settlers' Cattle Complex: The Etiquette of Culling Cattle in Colonial Zimbabwe, 1938,' *Journal of African History*, 43, 2 (2002), 263-286.

<sup>672</sup> I. Scoones and W. Wolmer, 'Land, Landscapes and Disease: The Case of Foot and Mouth in Southern Zimbabwe,' *South African Historical Journal*, 58 (2007), 42-64.

<sup>673</sup> W. Wolmer and I. Scoones, 'The science of 'civilised' agriculture: The mixed farming discourse in Zimbabwe,' *African Affairs*, 99 (2000), 575-600.

This chapter will also challenge Scoones' view that government interventions in African areas during the 1920s and 30s were concentrated on breed improvement, and that this gave way to the destocking policy of the following two decades where government tried to intervene directly and reduce stock to 'acceptable levels'.<sup>674</sup> It will show instead, as has already been demonstrated in the previous chapter, that livestock improvement programmes started long before the 1920s, and that these policies continued even during the period of destocking. Thus, it will be argued that destocking did not replace but complemented livestock improvement in the reserves.

### **Unpacking centralisation policies**

Before an analysis of the major influence of conservation methods on livestock management can be made, it is necessary to sketch the key ideas behind conservation programmes. At the heart of conservation policies was the assumption that sustainable forms of agriculture and livestock rearing could only occur with effective planning.<sup>675</sup> Although the American Dust Bowl experience of the 1930s came to play an important role in shaping the sense of environmental degradation among colonial experts and hence provided further justification for centralisation, its introduction as a policy predated the American Dust Bowl.<sup>676</sup> In Southern Rhodesia, conservation policies were manifest in the centralisation policy – measures meant to reorganise land owned by Africans into farming and grazing areas. These were first introduced in 1929 by the Agriculturist for the Instruction of Natives (later Director of Native Agriculture), A.E Alvord, and entailed drastic and coercive transformations of interactions of land, animals and people in the African reserves.<sup>677</sup> Alvord's work in improving African agricultural practices had been noticed during his stint as an agricultural missionary at Mount Silinda Mission hence the state

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<sup>674</sup> I. Scoones, 'Economic and ecological carrying capacity implications for livestock development in the dryland communal areas of Zimbabwe,' Paper presented at a Seminar, Department of Biological Sciences, University of Zimbabwe, 24 September 1987, 3.

<sup>675</sup> Scoones, 'Range management science and policy,' 45.

<sup>676</sup> The Dust Bowl, or the Dirty Thirties, was a period of severe dust storms causing major ecological and agricultural damage to American and Canadian grasslands in the 1930s. The phenomenon was caused by severe drought combined with a failure to apply dryland farming methods to prevent wind erosion. See Z.K. Hansen and G.D. Libecap, 'Small farms, externalities, and the Dust Bowl of the 1980s,' *Journal of Political Economy*, 112, 3 (2004), 665-694.

<sup>677</sup> For more on Alvord's agricultural qualifications and spiritual beliefs see J. McGregor, 'Woodland resources: ecology, policy and ideology; an historical case study of woodland use in Shurugwi communal area, Zimbabwe,' DPhil Thesis, Loughborough University, 1991, 83-85.

gave him the mandate to expand these to reserves across the territory.<sup>678</sup> Centralisation was also characterised by the allocation of standardised plots to each landholder. It was partly, as Ranger has argued, a direct assault targeted at ‘rural entrepreneurs’ – a distinct group of African farmers who had responded to capitalist demand for food items to expand their crop farms in an extensive manner.<sup>679</sup> In South Africa related policies were initially legislated in 1939 but were refined in 1949 as Betterment.<sup>680</sup>

Centralisation arguably became the major colonial activity in African reserves in the 1930s. It was as much about the perception by colonial officials that ‘primitive’ African farming methods were causing environmental degradation in the reserves, as it was an attempt to revise the position of the African reserves in the fledgling economy. Prior to the 1920s, the reserves had been seen as temporary enclaves which would ultimately vanish as the peasantry was drawn into the exchange economy. However, after the attainment of responsible government status in 1923, they came to be seen as areas where Africans could develop in their own manner.<sup>681</sup> A clause in the Land Apportionment Act (1930) stipulating that all Africans living on White land were to move into reserves within a period of six years, meant that reserves were supposed to be developed so as to increase carrying capacity, and not merely maintained as had been the previous policy.<sup>682</sup>

A predominant view among colonial officials and justification for their intrusion was that Africans did not know what their own ‘real’ interests were and without government direction they would destroy their environment through ‘ignorant’ farming practices.<sup>683</sup> Curiously, there was a remarkable transition in the state’s stance towards successful African peasants from seeing them as ‘heroes of progress,’ progressive converts to the ‘gospel of the plough’ to ‘destroyers of

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<sup>678</sup> G.C. Passmore, ‘Historical Rationale of the Policy of Community Development in the African Areas of Rhodesia,’ *Zambezia*, 2, 1 (1971), 62.

<sup>679</sup> T. Ranger, *A peasant consciousness and guerrilla war in Zimbabwe: A comparative study*, (London: James Currey, 1985), 70.

<sup>680</sup> N.J. Jacobs, *Environment, power and injustice: A South African History*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 173.

<sup>681</sup> Kramer, ‘The clash of economies,’ 84.

<sup>682</sup> Kramer, ‘The clash of economies,’ 85.

<sup>683</sup> M. Drinkwater, ‘Technical Development and Peasant Impoverishment: Land Use Policy in Zimbabwe's Midlands Province,’ *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 15, 2 (1989), 292.

the environment.<sup>684</sup> Thus, besides playing a crucial role in conservation, centralisation was also meant to put the activities of these ‘reserve entrepreneurs’ to a halt. The perceived threat was that, over time, these entrepreneurs would till more land and thereby create a landless class of Africans whose discontent might imperil the political order. Underpinning this fear was the presumption that reserve entrepreneurs were already using more land than the government deemed necessary for one family.<sup>685</sup>

However, as Showers points out in a related Basutoland context and more generally in the southern African context, ‘despite the general acceptance of these “truths” there is room to question whether they do, in fact, represent the situation accurately.’<sup>686</sup> Indeed, these policies rested on colonial power relations as colonial experts had the power and machinery to communicate and implement their version of conservation truth without either consulting Africans or carrying out research into the actual environmental conditions.<sup>687</sup> The fallacy that all would suffer from environmental degradation had a flip side which assumed that all would benefit from conservation fuelled intervention.<sup>688</sup> These policies also played another politico-strategic role especially control and surveillance of the colonial state since the creation of village settlements under a headman allowed for more effective control in the rural areas.<sup>689</sup> Thus, C.S. Lewis’s words that ‘What we call Man’s power over Nature turns out to be a power exercised by some men over other men with Nature as its instrument,’ resonate with the Southern Rhodesian experience.<sup>690</sup>

Besides the state’s environmental mantra that accompanied centralisation, it is important to note that it also was an attempt to deal with perceived land shortages in African reserves as a result of

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<sup>684</sup> Initially ‘plough’ entrepreneurs had been seen as ‘progressive’ because they had adopted a new technology but later they were criticised for ‘misusing’ of the plough. See Ranger, *Peasant consciousness*, 69; J. McGregor, ‘Woodland resources,’ 80.

<sup>685</sup> Shutt, ‘Pioneer Farmers and Family Dynasties,’ 62.

<sup>686</sup> Showers, *Imperial Gullies*, 135.

<sup>687</sup> See M. Leach and R. Mearns (eds), *The lie of the land: Challenging received wisdom on the African environment*, (London: Heinemann, 1996); Jacobs, *Environment, power and injustice*, 178.

<sup>688</sup> M. Stocking, ‘Soil erosion: Breaking new ground,’ in M. Leach and R. Mearns (eds), *The lie of the land: Challenging received wisdom on the African environment*, (London: Heinemann, 1996), 153.

<sup>689</sup> Scoones, ‘Range management science and policy,’ 45.

<sup>690</sup> C.S. Lewis quoted in Jacobs, *Environment, power and injustice*, 31.

racialised land policies. Faced with a growing demand for more land in the reserves, colonial administrators began to argue that a permanent solution to the problem lay in intensifying African agriculture. Thus, Africans in the reserves were also encouraged to plant improved varieties of grain and cash crops in a four-course rotation, with the whole system being sustained by large inputs of cattle manure.<sup>691</sup> From the 1930s, these measures were initially implemented through ‘forceful persuasion’ rather than ‘direct compulsion.’<sup>692</sup> As has been shown in the previous chapter, persuasion rather than coercion was at the centre of state-sponsored livestock improvement activities in African reserves, and in the 1930s the state at first tried to utilise this approach. However, resistance (mostly passive) by Africans in the reserves, and the disillusionment of certain colonial officials who felt that Africans needed to be forced influenced the state to adopt a coercive stance.

While the changing environment as a result of new livestock diseases, and land shortages generally made it impossible to pursue extensive livestock management practices, it is important to note that centralisation affected different categories of African livestock owners differently.<sup>693</sup> Africans responded to the changes in the economy in varied ways. Inside the reserves, there was increasing differentiation with some Africans doing much better to produce a surplus while others were struggling to come to terms with the capitalist society.<sup>694</sup> Some owned more livestock than others, while some were ‘struggling’.<sup>695</sup> Successful ‘self-peasantisation’<sup>696</sup> among some Africans in the reserves resulted in the rise of ‘enterprising ploughmen,’ cattle barons, rural entrepreneurs or ‘men of cattle.’ These succeeded in manoeuvring the colonial system to purchase land for themselves in the Native Purchase Areas, while others made use of their riches

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<sup>691</sup> I. Scoones, ‘Landscapes, Fields and Soils: Understanding the History of Soil Fertility Management in Southern Zimbabwe,’ *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 23, 4 (1997), 623. See also W. Wolmer and I. Scoones, ‘The science of ‘civilised’ agriculture: The mixed farming discourse in Zimbabwe,’ *African Affairs*, 99 (2000), 575-600.

<sup>692</sup> Davies and Döpcke, ‘Survival and Accumulation in Gutu,’ 95.

<sup>693</sup> See G. Thompson, ‘“Pumpkins just got in there”: Gender and generational conflict and “improved” agriculture in colonial Zimbabwe,’ *International Review of Social History*, 55 (2010), 175-201.

<sup>694</sup> Ranger, *Peasant consciousness*, 59.

<sup>695</sup> Ranger, ‘Growing from the Roots,’ 110.

<sup>696</sup> Ranger, *Peasant consciousness*, 26, 31.

to negotiate more land from their resource poor neighbours or spread around their livestock in continuing with the pre-colonial practice of cattle loaning (*kuronzera*).<sup>697</sup>

Local conditions differed geographically and the implementation of policy often bowed down to the personality of the colonial official concerned with some being stern conservationists while some were more pragmatic and sought to improvise policy according to local conditions. For instance, colonial communications and state power developed comparatively slowly in Madziwa much later than in districts such as Makoni, Goromonzi and Victoria which were far closer to towns and areas where European farms were concentrated.<sup>698</sup> However, since this thesis is specifically concerned with experiences of African livestock owners in the reserves, it is pertinent to state that by the 1930s only an ‘enterprising few’<sup>699</sup> had gained while the majority of the African population in the reserves could not escape the deliberate impoverishment pursued by the colonial state.<sup>700</sup> This was partly because of the Land Apportionment Act which limited land accessible to Africans in the reserves and partly due to the Depression and veterinary measures which precluded trade in grain and livestock.

The impulsive implementation of centralisation proved problematic in Native Purchase Areas since African purchase farmers, unlike those in the reserves who had only communal rights, owned the land they farmed. Unlike those in the reserves, African in the purchase areas were not under the Native Affairs Department but under the Native Lands Board (NLB) which proved to be less radical in pursuing the soil conservation policies. Unlike the NCs (who were under the NAD) who operated the reserves as their personal fiefdoms, NLB officials were hamstrung by personal relations and influence which NPA farmers had within the echelons of the colonial state. Policy was difficult to enforce because most NPA farmers worked for the state as clerks, police-men, and teachers hence local native commissioners and police chiefs sometimes

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<sup>697</sup> Ranger, *Peasant consciousness*, 61.

<sup>698</sup> Thompson, “Pumpkins just got in there,” 179.

<sup>699</sup> Ranger, *Peasant consciousness*, 62.

<sup>700</sup> R. Palmer, ‘The agricultural history of Rhodesia,’ in R. Palmer and N. Parsons (eds), *The roots of rural poverty in central and Southern Africa*, (London: Heinemann, 1977), 243-4. See also P. Mosley, *The settler economies: Studies in the economic history of Kenya and Southern Rhodesia, 1900-1963* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

personally petitioned the NLB on behalf of their employees made intervention in NPAs difficult.<sup>701</sup> Furthermore, when confronted by the state over their ‘primitive’ farming practices these farmers presented a brash defense of their family values which they connected to their farming methods. Instead of disciplining the farmers for their ‘waste’ of land, the state conceded certain development patterns to the farmers, foremost being the permanence of family farms, thereby enabling extensive farming.<sup>702</sup> Thus, overall NPA farmers frustrated the state’s intention to establish enclaves of ‘modern’ or ‘civilized’ farming. These administrative differences account for dissimilarities in policy implementation and when this was acknowledged officially the state made amends by passing the NLHA which did not separate the implementation of such policies in the two different areas.

Despite the relentless implementation of centralisation in the 1930s, it did not immediately halt environmental degradation. By 1938, 13 of the 96 Reserves were 25-50 per cent ‘badly’ eroded (sheet and gully erosion), while 5 were 50-75 per cent ‘badly’ eroded. Between 1930 and 1937 erosion in African areas had increased by 60 per cent while 8 per cent of the entire native reserves was badly eroded, and this translated to 1 665 360 acres.<sup>703</sup> Although the logic of separating grazing from farming land was partly the noble idea of preventing cattle from destroying crops, the spatial reorganisation of the countryside meant that certain geographical spaces that had hitherto been available for grazing stock ceased to be, and, thus, added to overstocking in certain reserves. This called for further state intervention in the African livestock economy especially cattle culling in order to reduce numbers to the perceived land carrying capacity. This, as will be shown, had important ramifications on African livelihoods in the reserves. Cases of Africans who resented state-induced cattle sales in Gutu and Victoria in 1937-8 reveal antagonism to the state-desired livestock management style.<sup>704</sup> The passage of the Natural Resources Act (1941) finally gave power to the state to force Africans into adopting soil conservation methods. This further entrenched state intervention in the reserves.

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<sup>701</sup> Shutt, ‘Pioneer Farmers and Family Dynasties,’ 63.

<sup>702</sup> Shutt, ‘Pioneer Farmers and Family Dynasties,’ 61

<sup>703</sup> NAZ ZAZ 2/1/4 Natural Resources Commission: Oral Evidence, Native Agriculture Department, E.D. Alvord, 7/11/1938.

<sup>704</sup> See Shutt, ‘The Settlers’ Cattle Complex.’

### Breaking the ‘bank’

State intervention notwithstanding, livestock holdings remained high which, among other reasons, precipitated the passage of the Native Land Husbandry Act (1951). Though widely understood as evidence of African ‘irrationality’ by colonial officials, the continued existence of large herds even after state-led destocking partly demonstrates how Africans adapted to this intrusion. Although agriculture remained an integral part of African subsistence, the cattle economy was better able than subsistence agriculture to withstand the onslaught of the wider capitalist economy – as Africans produced less food from their fields after state land expropriations severely restricted the amount of arable land available to them. Furthermore, cattle were easy to bring together and to move to market than agricultural produce.<sup>705</sup> Oral interviews suggest that the thinking that cattle were a Black man’s ‘bank’ thrived.<sup>706</sup> For instance, one interviewee, Titus Mutindori of Chimanimani explained:

The idea was that too many cattle will destroy grazing land. So people spread their livestock amongst their male children because it was the only bank we had when preparing for the future. We didn’t accept explanations that land was short because in our view there were many open spaces for pasturing than is the case now.<sup>707</sup>

Other than the availability of open land for pasturing animals, there were other state-induced pressures which made the animal husbandry more attractive to Africans.<sup>708</sup> In particular, the passage of the Maize Control Act (1931), introduced partly to protect white producers from falling international price and their fear of black producers undercutting them, gave European traders a monopoly to purchase maize in the reserves. This, coupled with the impact of the depression, meant that maize prices fetched by peasant farmers fell from 6/- to 7/6 per bag in

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<sup>705</sup> T. Ranger, ‘Growing from the Roots: Reflections on Peasant Research in Central and Southern Africa,’ *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 5, 1, (1978), 109.

<sup>706</sup> Interview with Majoni Hombarume, born 1914, Sadza, Chivhu, Mashonaland East 29/03/ 2012; interview with Raphael Svikiro, born 1943 Sadza, Chivhu, Mashonaland East, 29/03/ 2012; interview with Ngwarai Maraire, born 1924, Mhandarume, Chimanimani District, 06/04/12. See also MacKinnon, ‘The Persistence of the Cattle Economy,’ 101. See the story of ‘men of cattle’ in G.C Mazarire, *A social and political history of Chishanga, South Eastern Zimbabwe, c.1750-2000*, DPhil Thesis, University of Zimbabwe, 2009, 198.

<sup>707</sup> Interview with Titus Mutindori, born 1939, Chasiyama, Chimanimani District, 06/04/12.

<sup>708</sup> K.B. Wilson, ‘Trees in Fields in Southern Zimbabwe,’ *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 15, 2, (1989), 372



1928-30 to around 2/- per bag in 1932.<sup>709</sup> In many African Reserves Africans ended up selling grain to each other or barter for stock at prices they could regulate.<sup>710</sup>

Environmental challenges which soil conservation policies sought to check were not only confined to the reserves as the situation was worse on land owned by absentee Europeans but occupied by African ‘squatters’.<sup>711</sup> Native Department officials argued that this was because, unlike in the reserves where there was some control through headmen, chiefs and NCs, where ‘kaffir farming’ prevailed there was little if any, restraint.<sup>712</sup> Furthermore, such areas had inadequate dipping facilities leading to the driving of cattle to distant dipping tanks, with the attendant trampling out of the soil and vegetation and consequent erosion.<sup>713</sup> The situation in European-farmed areas, especially maize and tobacco farmers was not any better. In an effort to maintain or increase their output, some farmers ploughed up natural hollows, hillsides and narrow valleys between hills which resulted in dongas.<sup>714</sup> Although erosion due to overstocking and overgrazing had not assumed serious proportions on land occupied by whites as was the case in the reserves, some damage was done by the driving of cattle to and concentrating them at watering places and dipping tanks. McGregor has argued convincingly that, other than being a useful cog in Southern Rhodesia’s segregationist politics, the representation of the causes of environmental problems in official discourse reflected regional trends and was part of a wider colonial scientific culture. She argues that ‘backward’ ‘native’ populations’ wasteful destruction of natural resources was a dominant theme of Empire-wide discourse in the 1930s. Consequently, this became part of officials’ training, was repeated in conference presentations,

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<sup>709</sup> NAZ S235/509, NC Belingwe, Annual Report 1931.

<sup>710</sup> Mazarire, A social and political history of Chishanga, 199.

<sup>711</sup> *Report of the commission appointed to inquire into the preservation, etc., of the natural resources of the colony, 1939*, 13. See also J. McGregor, ‘Conservation, Control and Ecological Change: The Politics and Ecology of Colonial Conservation in Shurugwi, Zimbabwe,’ *Environment and History*, 1, 3, (1995), 257-279; S. Maravanyika, ‘Soil conservation and the white agrarian environment in colonial Zimbabwe, c.1908-1980,’ DPhil Thesis, University of Pretoria, 2013.

<sup>712</sup> NAZ RG4 Report of the commission appointed to inquire into the preservation, etc., of the natural resources of the colony, 1939 (Chairman: R McIlwaine), 13.

<sup>713</sup> NAZ RG4 Report of the commission appointed to inquire into the preservation, etc., of the natural resources of the colony, 1939 (Chairman: R McIlwaine), 13.

<sup>714</sup> NAZ RG4 Report of the commission appointed to inquire into the preservation, etc., of the natural resources of the colony, 1939 (Chairman: R McIlwaine), 16.

technical reports and scientific journals.<sup>715</sup> Thus, the fact that these views were ‘scientific’ and were propounded by scientists gave them weight and an appearance of objectivity.<sup>716</sup> Furthermore, this also betrays the overwhelmingly agrarian vision which the colonial experts had for Africans, that is, they did not accept that the colonised could live any other than a rural, agriculture life and therefore the need for agricultural intensification.<sup>717</sup>

However, soil conservation policies were not carried out in a few reserves, which were perceived as not needing immediate intervention. For instance, environmental concerns did not extend to the tsetse-fly prone north-western African reserves in Sebungwe (Sanyati, Sebungwe, Sibaba and Pashu) which in 1930 had just ten cattle, and the percentage of worn out land was ‘nil’ making agricultural demonstration efforts of any kind ‘unnecessary’.<sup>718</sup> In some areas where centralisation had been carried out, NCs claimed success, and that their activities were deeply appreciated by Africans. For instance in 1937, the Agricultural Demonstrator for Mondoro stated, ‘reserve people are thanking us very much for the centralisation done in this reserve for they have now seen the good results of centralisation. Its good result is plenty of grass. Cattle are also fat and strong.’<sup>719</sup> However, as will be shown in the following sections, conservation policies generally impacted heavily on African livestock management systems.

### **Livestock disease management in the 1930s**

The previous section has shown how state intrusion in the reserves was motivated by the thinking that African farming systems were flawed. This section seeks to show that the history of anthropogenic erosion has been fragmentary, requiring an examination of the activities of colonial experts (specifically veterinary officials), which this chapter offers. Understanding the various ways through which environmental degradation may have been fuelled by colonial activities must begin with an assessment of livestock disease management policies of the state

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<sup>715</sup> McGregor, ‘Conservation, Control and Ecological Change,’ 260. See also Phimister, ‘Discourse and the Discipline of Historical Context,’ 267.

<sup>716</sup> McGregor, ‘Conservation, Control and Ecological Change,’ 260.

<sup>717</sup> J.M. Hodge, ‘Colonial experts, developmental and environmental doctrines, and the legacies of late British colonialism,’ in C.F. Ax, et al (eds), *Cultivating the colonies: Colonial states and their environment legacies*, (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2011), 304.

<sup>718</sup> See E. Worby, ‘“Discipline without Oppression”: Sequence, Timing and Marginality in Southern Rhodesia's Post-War Development Regime,’ *Journal of African History*, 41, 1 (2000), 101-125.

<sup>719</sup> NAZ, S138/72, Centralisation, Mondoro Reserve, letter from Alvord to CNC, 26/5/1937.

experts. Thus, this section examines the various ways through which veterinary policies shaped and informed rural land use in a way that sometimes contradicted the overarching conservation discourse.

The formalisation and intensification of the struggle to control environmental degradation in the reserves coincided with the outbreak of Foot and Mouth disease in 1931. This disease joined the list of serious veterinary challenges in the territory which included East Coast Fever, Screw worm, Quarter evil, Heartwater and Contagious abortion in cattle. While veterinary control measures for tick-borne and tick related diseases centred on the dipping tank (yet another source of environmental degradation – discussed separately in the next section), cattle concentration methods specifically necessitated by FMD, as this section shows, were a bane to the environment. For fear of losing the export markets for its beef industry the state considered Foot and Mouth control to be a matter of high priority hence the implementation of extreme measures to curb it. As this section will show, these radical measures ignored conservation methods with the result that while checking the further spread of diseases they actually worsened environmental conditions in the reserves.

Veterinary measures necessitated by Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) outbreaks in the post-1930 period reveal the extent of ecological degradation in the reserves. The 1931 outbreak originated at Nuanetsi Ranch along the Fort Victoria-Beitbridge road in the southeast from where it spread to Victoria, Enkeldoorn and Gwelo. In Bulawayo Veterinary District, the disease broke out at Liebig's Ranch from where it spread to surrounding areas: Beitbridge, Tuli, Dendele, Buby River, Siyoka, Belingwe Reserve, Insiza District, Bubi District, and Gwelo District.<sup>720</sup> Its prognosis was somewhat different from elsewhere as it was only traced to direct contact with infected cattle. In no instance did suspicion point to other means, such as equines, mechanical transport, humans, game, wild animals, drinking water or foodstuffs.<sup>721</sup> Its mildness meant that Africans hardly considered it a dangerous disease hence they were reluctant to report outbreaks. Since the disease occurred during the dry season when cattle were neither herded nor kraaled

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<sup>720</sup> *Annual Report of the Chief Veterinary Surgeon (1931)*, 2.

<sup>721</sup> *Annual Report of the Chief Veterinary Surgeon (1931)*, 2.

efficient veterinary supervision was very difficult. At first, veterinarians suspended dipping, and prevented close contact but this later turned out to be an incorrect policy. Sometimes, the disease occurred at several dip tanks where it was thought to have passed through and died out. Such cases of recrudescence were a result of restarting dipping operations.<sup>722</sup> This was because dipping offered opportunity for cattle from different areas to converge and made it possible for the disease to spread through direct contact. There was, however, a general trend that where dipping was restarted FMD disappeared.<sup>723</sup> The Veterinary Department's inability to deal with the short term dangers of resuscitating dipping versus its long term benefits consequently resulted in policy inconsistency. Veterinary districts were given the leeway to exercise discretion hence in certain areas weekly dipping was reinstated and kraaling was made compulsory while in some (such as Bulalima-Mangwe, Gwanda, Matobo, Bubi and Belingwe reserves) dipping was not resuscitated.<sup>724</sup> In the later, there was increased tick infestation resulting in mortalities due to tick-borne diseases especially Heartwater.<sup>725</sup>

The Veterinary Department also started a system of infecting cattle in areas adjoining active infection through contact and the intra-nasal injection of infective blood. The direct contact method – the introduction of diseased animals – was carried out on a large scale in the Victoria area with satisfactory results.<sup>726</sup> Its success emanated from the creation of cattle-free belts between areas under inoculation and the perceived clean belts.<sup>727</sup> Since this outbreak coincided with the Great Depression, it meant that it occurred at a time when the system of inspection of cattle was being reorganised. Reorganisation was characterised by the reduction in the number of cattle inspectors throughout the country with several veterinary districts being merged to form larger ones under cattle inspectors, and in some cases veterinary duties being taken over by a special police force whose supervision devolved entirely from the district police officers.<sup>728</sup>

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<sup>722</sup> *Annual Report of the Chief Veterinary Surgeon (1931)*, 3-4.

<sup>723</sup> *Annual Report of the Chief Veterinary Surgeon (1931)*, 4.

<sup>724</sup> *Annual Report of the Chief Veterinary Surgeon (1931)*, 4.

<sup>725</sup> *Annual Report of the Chief Veterinary Surgeon (1935)*, 3.

<sup>726</sup> *Annual Report of the Chief Veterinary Surgeon (1932)*, 11.

<sup>727</sup> *Annual Report of the Chief Veterinary Surgeon (1932)*, 11.

<sup>728</sup> NAZ S1215/183/52/23/37 Veterinary Department Reorganisation, 1932-36, letter from J.M. Sinclair (CVS) to A. C. Bagshawe, Secretary, Department of Agriculture and Lands, 20/10/1931. See also *Annual Report of the Chief*

Special native police officials responsible for guarding quarantine fences (*zvipeshura*) became a permanent feature in FMD areas to ensure compliance to veterinary measures. By 1933, FMD had disappeared, albeit temporarily. However, while Southern Rhodesia was still enjoying its success, outbreaks occurred in Bechuanaland Protectorate and Barotseland in the same year.<sup>729</sup> In 1934, a new outbreak suspected to have originated in Portuguese East Africa led to inter-state consultations with the Union government culminating in an agreement that cattle were to be kept away from the Limpopo River where possible.<sup>730</sup> New outbreaks in Mtilikwe Native Reserve and Victoria Native Reserve in 1937 resulted in changes to the inoculation method to include slaughter of all calves born during the period of infection after inoculation; institution of disinfection stations at all points of exit from the infected areas.<sup>731</sup>

These veterinary methods not only contradicted livestock management methods central to the centralisation policy but also exacerbated the shortage of pasture. While promoting centralisation, Alvord, the Director of Native Agriculture, had drawn attention to the fact that scattered arable lands in the midst of pasturage meant that cattle could not be let into these areas during the growing season for fear of damage to crops. After centralisation cattle could no longer traverse arable land in order to reach water supplies or dip tanks as these were now located in the grazing area but the results of the new system were equally disastrous. The separation of lands into grazing and farmland meant that cattle grazed in areas set aside specifically for this purpose, and these areas became overgrazed and barren long before harvest time.<sup>732</sup> This emanated from Alvord's conviction, at least until 1936, that the major problem affecting the reserves was not overstocking but overpopulation. The concentration method, as it came to be applied, also had a serious oversight but of a different nature – which derived from its emphasis on disease eradication over conservation. Thus, as will be shown, the price of concentrating large numbers

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*Veterinary Surgeon (1931)*, 4 and *Annual Report of the Chief Veterinary Surgeon (1932)*, 1. Cattle free belts usually extended from three miles upwards: see *Annual Report of the Chief Veterinary Surgeon (1934)*, 7.

<sup>729</sup> *Annual Report of the Chief Veterinary Surgeon (1933)*, 1.

<sup>730</sup> NAZ S1194/SC42/181/1 Foot and Mouth Disease: Correspondence with Pretoria, telegram from Ministry of Agriculture to Agriculture Department, Pretoria, 15/04/1931.

<sup>731</sup> *Annual Report of the Chief Veterinary Surgeon (1937)*, 4.

<sup>732</sup> Alvord quoted in Kramer, 'The clash of economies,' 91.

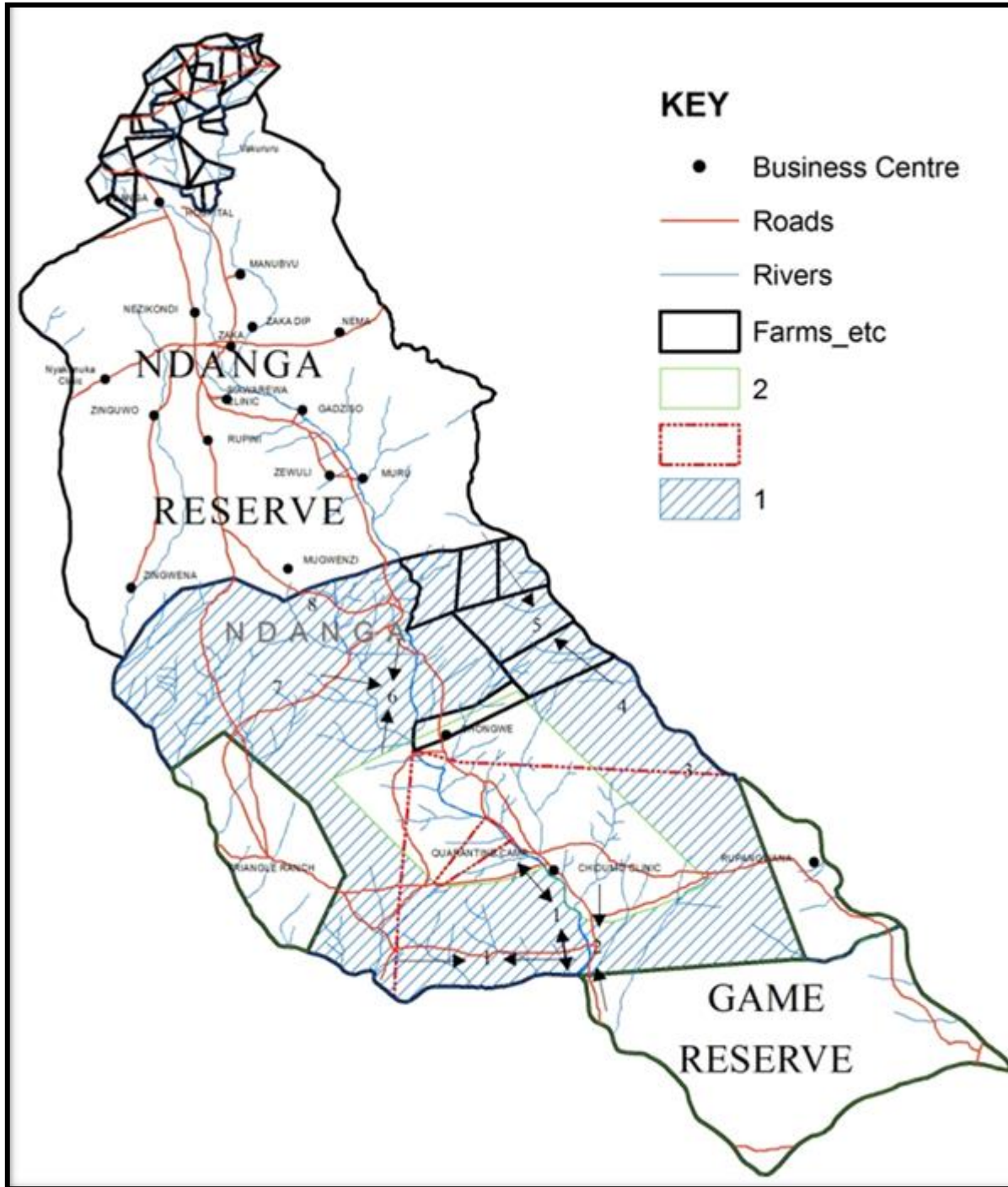
of cattle in small geographical spaces to check FMD resulted in serious environmental degradation in the reserves.

Besides the problems inherent in the centralisation policy, state officials had difficulties in reconciling veterinary and land use improvement policies. Thus, though veterinary policy required Africans to provide cattle-free belts, no regard was taken of the effect which such enforced concentrations of stock had on pasture, water and soil. Yet this was an important question worthy inclusion in any assessment of soil erosion and its causes in the reserves. An acknowledgement of this fact would have necessitated the state to make some provision from public funds to counteract the consequent ill-effects of concentration on African land as well as to provide compensation for stock that starved as a result of the concentration policy.<sup>733</sup> Fig 5.1<sup>734</sup> below is an example of what a cattle concentration camp looked like.

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<sup>733</sup> NAZ S1563 Chief Native Commissioner: Annual Reports for Mashonaland, 1936, Vol. 2, report of the NC Chibi.

<sup>734</sup> Adapted from a sketch map drawn by the Assistant Chief Veterinary Surgeon in 1938. See NAZ S1215/183/52/23/37 Veterinary Department Reorganisation, 1932-36, letter from the Secretary, Department of Agriculture to the Secretary for Native Affairs, 01/04/1938.



**Figure 5. 1: A cattle concentration camp in Ndanga Reserve**

In this illustration, large numbers of cattle were moved from 8 different locations (area shown in blue stripes) to a very small quarantine camp (in red dots) at the centre of the Reserve. The size

of the quarantine camp betrays the oversight by veterinary officials to grazing matters. As will be shown, cattle starved in cattle concentration camps, and the impact of cattle trampling on the soil was also disastrous.

There are a number of compelling cases illustrative of the insensitivity of the state to the fact that African lands were generally poor, and also the rural struggles and hardships triggered by both spatial reorganisation and veterinary policy. The concentration of infected herds placed a burden upon African livestock owners and the environment. In Chilimanzi in 1934, there were 76 390 head on 753 475 acres, from which 43 000 acres of land were under cultivation and a very large area covered by ranges of rocky hills which carried no grazing at all. In addition to cattle, the area also had 10 300 sheep, 36 850 goats and 1 600 donkeys.<sup>735</sup> Thus, livestock starved for lack of pasture. Furthermore, following an outbreak at Nuanetsi in 1934, Africans in Ndanga had to drive their cattle between 100 and 116 miles to the quarantine areas where their cattle (5000 head) were closely herded in small overgrazed areas.<sup>736</sup> Approximately, 483 head of cattle from Matsai Reserve and 73 from Sangwe Reserves died while in June 1935 over 100 had to be left behind in the Ndanga District as they were too weak to travel when they were further moved to Bikita Reserve.<sup>737</sup> By May 1936, the number of cattle facing death by starvation had risen to 15 000.<sup>738</sup> These beasts were moved to a bad grazing area and this resulted in appalling mortality rates. This even precipitated a change in African preferences for domestic animals. Amidst this great suffering of cattle in concentration camps, a peculiar and unprecedented demand for donkeys was reported since they did not succumb easily to malnutrition and were not hampered by veterinary restrictions.<sup>739</sup>

The creation of a cattle-free belt along the Northern boundaries of the Zimutu Reserve and the Mshagashe Area (Fort Victoria District) resulted in cattle being brought into the centre of the

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<sup>735</sup> NAZ S1563 Chief Native Commissioner: Annual Reports for Mashonaland, 1934, Report of the NC Chilimanzi.

<sup>736</sup> NAZ S1563 Chief Native Commissioner: Annual Reports for Mashonaland, 1934, Report of the NC Nuanetsi.

<sup>737</sup> NAZ S1542/F11 Foot and Mouth Disease: Chief Native Commissioner, 1934-39, letter from NC Bikita to CNC, Salisbury, 26/06/1935.

<sup>738</sup> NAZ S1542/F11 Foot and Mouth Disease: Chief Native Commissioner, 1934-39, letter from NC Ndanga to CNC, 14/05/1936.

<sup>739</sup> NAZ S1563 Chief Native Commissioner: Annual Reports for Mashonaland, 1937, report of the NC Matobo.



reserve for three consecutive years between 1935 and 1938. In this reserve, Africans had a difficult task in guarding cattle to prevent damage to standing crops. Their livestock were in a starving condition as there was no grass for them to graze.<sup>740</sup> Sympathising with the livestock owners, the NC for the area demanded that the Chief Veterinary Surgeon cancel the cattle-free belt and allow Africans to drive their cattle home. He remarked, 'The Government should not for a moment countenance this cruelty to animals.'<sup>741</sup> That a colonial official could raise the issue of cruelty to animals in his argument for the cessation of concentration is not an oddity. This was a remarkable case of the state falling prey to its own propaganda. One popular view peddled in the public press and official circles especially during cattle culling in Gutu and Victoria Districts was that Africans' poor treatment of cattle had forced the state to act.<sup>742</sup> In fact, a few years later the Natural Resources Board, as will be shown, pushed for compulsory destocking in the reserves partly on the basis of anti-cruelty to animals.

The impact of veterinary restrictions on the rural economy and the ability of Africans to meet their financial obligations to the state, especially in South Eastern Zimbabwe where Foot and Mouth outbreaks were concentrated, have been delineated.<sup>743</sup> The unprecedented suffering saw Africans in Fort Victoria sending a deputation the CNC complaining that, among other things, they were deprived of their oxen and could not plough their lands.<sup>744</sup> In this they had the support of the native commissioner who observed that:

Not only is the marketing of native crops affected but in two of the most congested reserves in this district, namely the Victoria and Mtilikwe Reserves, no one will buy the Native's cattle because the reserves are in quarantine, and it is not known when cattle from there will be allowed access to the Liebigs factory... My suggestion is that an advance of £500, to be augmented by a further £500 if necessary, be made to me for the

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<sup>740</sup> NAZ S1542/F11 Foot and Mouth Disease: Chief Native Commissioner, 1934-39, Letter from the NC to the CNC, 7/4/1936.

<sup>741</sup> NAZ S1542/F11 Foot and Mouth Disease: Chief Native Commissioner, 1934-39, Letter from the NC to the CNC, 7/4/1936.

<sup>742</sup> For more analysis on how the Native affairs Department utilised state-owned media houses such as the *Bulawayo Chronicle* and *Bantu Mirror* see Shutt, 'The Settlers' Cattle Complex,' 273.

<sup>743</sup> See B. Davis and W. Döpcke, 'Survival and Accumulation in Gutu: Class Formation and the Rise of the State in Colonial Zimbabwe, 1900-1939,' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 14, 1 (1987), 64-98.

<sup>744</sup> NAZ S1542/F11 Foot and Mouth Disease: Chief Native Commissioner, 1934-39, Letter from NC Victoria to CNC, 06/04/1936.

purpose of buying cattle from the older natives in the reserves. Only sufficient stock would be bought from each middle aged man to enable him to pay his current tax.<sup>745</sup>

Thus, other than the damage to the environment, quarantines also had the effect of limiting the ability of Africans to meet their tax obligations to the state. In particular, the experiences of Africans in the concentration areas are captured trenchantly in Chief Maroza Mukanganwi's complaint:

We are aware of the fact that the Government is giving the considerable good help to us natives, we know that the government is giving a big sum of money per month, therefore we do not want to make the Government sorry, as though we do not see what is being done for us, but because of these practical difficulties we beg to submit the following: 1. Cattle are not affected by the disease, but why should they remain there then? 2. We are sorry to hear that people are dying, not knowing why. 3. Cattle are like pests to those people where they are. 4. We are not all have enough food [sic] for boys who are herding, some are not sending food to the cattle kraals, this create a lot of trouble in kraals. 5. The grass is getting finished, they go far for grass, calves die on the way. 6. We always buying and selling among ourselves for taxes, this cannot be done this year. 7. As we always go to the cattle kraals, are we not bringing disease to the cattle? 8. May we know when will the cattle come? We will be pleased to be given the right directions in all.<sup>746</sup>

Mukanganwi's plea exposes several key issues. Firstly, it reveals the difficult position African chiefs faced in the system – they were torn between the interest of the state that paid them monthly salaries, and protecting the ordinary people whom they were culturally supposed to protect. Secondly, it also reveals the inability of Africans to understand the concentration system at a time when cattle had no visible signs of illness for to them a diseased animal must necessarily look sickly. Thirdly, question 5 shows that Africans had also grasped key aspects of pasture management as they questioned the idea of concentrating cattle. Fourthly, question 7 exposes the inability of Africans to follow settler policy as it was always shifting – at times to the point of absurdity. It also demonstrates that veterinary rules were malleable as they were utilised to protect the interest of white livestock owners – a dominant preoccupation of the settler state in the 1930s. Question 2 referred to the death of two youths from malaria. One took place at Mufuwa's cattle post where cattle from Chief Maroza's area were being herded and the other

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<sup>745</sup> NAZ S1542/F11 Foot and Mouth Disease: Chief Native Commissioner, 1934-39, letter from NC Victoria to CNC, 17/08/1936.

<sup>746</sup> NAZ S1542/F11 Foot and Mouth Disease: Chief Native Commissioner, 1934-39, letter from Chief Marozva Mukanganwi to the NC Bikita, 04/02/1935.

near the Mujichi tank where Chief Jiri's country had been placed.<sup>747</sup> In their thinking these deaths could not have happened had the government not moved their cattle. This grievance also touches on African thinking that certain environments are not suitable for settlement.<sup>748</sup>

In instances where the state flagrantly violated its own policy, some Africans were quick to point out the contradiction. For instance, S. Maambe, argued:

Why is it that Mr Cameron's cattle are going into the fence? Will they not get sick when they get in there? They are going down to Nyajena Reserve where they are transporting mining machinery; are they not bringing the sickness out with them when they come out again. If mine would bring out the disease, they would as well.... They (Cameron's cattle) pass the kraal (Nyajena Reserve) where I reside, because I was at the gate. I was told that my cattle might have taken the disease out. My cattle were right at the gate.<sup>749</sup>

Perhaps the biggest oddity to some African cattle owners was that their diseased cattle were sold for consumption. Gombiro summed up the feeling among Africans, 'We are afraid to say a lot, because it appears to us that the Europeans are more than the natives. I do not want to say much because if I start talking a lot the authorities will say that I am mad.'<sup>750</sup> The word 'mad' is used in a metaphoric sense that is those who accepted colonial policy were seen as 'progressive' and those opposed to it 'senseless'. Thus, this statement reveals the political interpretation of colonial policy, and more specifically it is evidence to the popular belief among Africans that the white community was a 'concentration of irrationality.'<sup>751</sup> One African chief indicated his resignation in the face of colonial experts' power as he sighed simply, 'it is no use advising us! Command us and we will obey.'<sup>752</sup> This statement conjures a picture of a powerless people whose major form of response to intrusion was peaceful acquiescence. This fits into the broader argument that during this time Africans were not concerned about removing the system that oppressed them but

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<sup>747</sup> NAZ S1542/F11 Foot and Mouth Disease: Chief Native Commissioner, 1934-39, letter from Acting NC Bikita to CNC, 05/02/1935.

<sup>748</sup> See chapter 2.

<sup>749</sup> NAZ ZAX 1/1/2 Commission into certain sales of cattle in Native Areas: Evidence, Oral testimony by S. Mambe, 10/11/1938.

<sup>750</sup> NAZ ZAX 1/1/2 Commission into certain sales of cattle in Native Areas: Evidence, Oral testimony by Gombiro, 16/11/1938.

<sup>751</sup> Drinkwater, 'Technical Development and Peasant Impoverishment,' 295.

<sup>752</sup> NAZ S1563 Chief Native Commissioner: Annual Reports for Mashonaland, 1936, Vol. 3, African Chief quoted by the NC Inyati.

wanted to reform it. Though speaking specifically about destocking, Raphael Svikiro explained why Africans seemingly resigned to their fate:

All I can say is that during this time blacks had no say (option). Whatever the white men introduced, no one would question. The white man was in power. They could do whatever they wanted because it was their time. The blacks had to accept this albeit grudgingly. Many people lost their cattle. *Nhimura/Muchiso* (destocking) was a strategy to dispossess the black man of his animals. It was not for environmental reasons (erosion). Whites used to send *majoni* (policemen) and these were feared hence there was no one in our area who disobeyed orders from white men.<sup>753</sup>

Some Africans resisted destocking overtly. For instance, in 1933 Maplanka of Essexvale was taken to court and found guilty for being contemptuous to Christie Bertie Twyman, a government cattle inspector after he refused to give the number of his livestock.<sup>754</sup> In Umzinyathi, Seka Jaya of the Matshena Dip had 100 of his cattle shot and in reaction demanded that he too be shot – because he had been deprived of his source of living.<sup>755</sup> Collaborators were sometimes attacked, for example, one Lonyovu was assaulted by Sekenyala because the former had collaborated with the whites in taking the latter's cattle and was even boasting about it.<sup>756</sup>

Given their disillusionment over the way the bureaucratic system operated with regards to soil conservation and livestock concentration methods, some Africans hid the infection. For instance, a popular practice which made it difficult for veterinary officials to tell whether the disease was present involved Africans substituting calves when there had been mortality among their herds.<sup>757</sup> To obviate this, dip supervisors visited villages to check numbers, and furthermore spleen smears were taken from all cattle dying in their areas.<sup>758</sup> That Africans were apprehensive is not surprising for there was suspicion towards both soil conservation and livestock concentration methods. Thus, one African reported, 'my fear is that if I were to go to a Demonstrator and be taught, my land would be cut up and I would be given a very small area to

<sup>753</sup> Interview with Raphael Svikiro, born 1943 Sadza, Chivhu, Mashonaland East, 29/03/ 2012.

<sup>754</sup> NAZ S634 Essexvale Civil Cases, 1933.

<sup>755</sup> Oral interview with Sihluku Ncube quoted in F.P. Ntabeni, 'Land deprivation – the root of underdevelopment in Mzingwane District: 1930 – 1960,' MA History Thesis, University of Zimbabwe, 1986, 26.

<sup>756</sup> Sihluku Ncube quoted in F.P. Ntabeni, 'Land deprivation,' 26.

<sup>757</sup> NAZ S1542/F11 Foot and Mouth Disease: Chief Native Commissioner, 1934-39, letter from the CVS to the CNC, 12/06/1936.

<sup>758</sup> NAZ S1542/F11 Foot and Mouth Disease: Chief Native Commissioner, 1934-39, letter from the CVS to the CNC, 12/06/1936.

plough . . . we feel that if we follow these people there is a danger that some of our land will be taken away from us.<sup>759</sup> Suspicions that teachers and agricultural demonstrators were government agents ‘sent to sniff out the best land and make new expropriations possible’ also abounded.<sup>760</sup> That civil servants were feared in this manner was understandable because their increased activities in the reserves came in the wake of the early land alienations, forced labour and tax collection.<sup>761</sup>

Complaints such as those raised by Chief Mukanganwi were thought to be issues of national security hence native commissioners sometimes refused to carry out veterinary instructions. For instance, in Chipinge, the native commissioner refused to the proposal from the Veterinary Department that African-owned cattle along the Eastern side of the Sabi River from Wangezi to Mahenye be moved away from their owners’ kraals into the higher ground adjoining the European occupied plateau. Such movements were considered not ‘fair’ to Africans because water in the local rivers was not sufficient even for all the cattle whose movement was asked for. He argued:

Even if the proposed movements were practicable, the cattle would be continually bolting back to the River where they have been raised, and general dislocation and confusion would result, all to no useful purpose... for the reasons already adumbrated it is most desirable to avoid causing further irritation.<sup>762</sup>

He suggested that the Sabi River be used as a means of protection. This was approved hence cattle were moved 2 miles from the river and not from Wangezi to Mahenye. When they were eventually moved Africans complained that they were being moved to tsetse-fly prone areas. Seeing that there was nothing they could do to stop state-sanctioned cattle movement to some forty miles away, Chief Mahenye and his people, as an act of defiance, quietly killed most of their cattle for consumption such that by 1946 there was only 17 head of cattle left.<sup>763</sup>

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<sup>759</sup> *Report of the Native Production and Trade Commission*, 25.

<sup>760</sup> See C. Summers, ‘Giving Orders in Rural Southern Rhodesia: Controversies over Africans’ Authority in Development Programs, 1928-1934,’ *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 31, 2 (1998), 279-300.

<sup>761</sup> McGregor, ‘Woodland resources,’ 87.

<sup>762</sup> NAZ S1542/F11 Foot and Mouth Disease: Chief Native Commissioner, 1934-39, Letter from NC Chipinga to the CNC, 16/03/1936.

<sup>763</sup> NAZ S1563 Annual Report, NC Chipinga (1946).

By 1938, modifications to veterinary restrictions had been effected with the consequence that movement of cattle from the Chikwanda and Zimutu Reserves into Victoria Veterinary District were allowed without undergoing a preliminary period of three weeks quarantine in the vicinity of the Reserve of origin.<sup>764</sup> These were meant to enable Africans to sell their livestock. But these sales, happening as they were in Foot and Mouth areas, meant that these beasts were sold for a pittance – something particularly welcome to colonial officials who were keen to prevent white beef producers from African competition.<sup>765</sup> All the cattle culled in Victoria and Gutu thus went to the Liebigs meatpacking factory in West Nicholson, which specialized in ‘scrub’ cattle.<sup>766</sup>

A policy of fencing prohibited areas was inaugurated in 1937 to allow freer movements of animals, and vegetable products outside the fence. Accordingly the following areas were fenced: Victoria, Mtilikwe and Nyadjena Native Reserves and the Mshawasha Native Purchase Area in the Victoria Native District; the South-eastern portion of Gwanda and Chibi native districts east of Nuanetsi Ranch; the Ndanga Native District and the Bikita Native District south of the Turgwe River, including Nyahunda Native Purchase Area. In addition to these areas, the farms Morgenster, Mzero, Oatlands, Le Rhone, Clifton, Kyle and Retreat were included.<sup>767</sup> The fence covering over 250 miles was also erected on the boundary of the prohibited area, in addition to existing fencing on Nuanetsi and Devuli Ranches. An internal fence (about 133 miles long) was also erected with the object of preventing contact of immune cattle in the Ndanga, Mtilikwe and Victoria Reserves with susceptible cattle to the West.<sup>768</sup> These fences also performed another role which is clear in administrative reports as they were, as Wolmer and Scoones have already shown, rooted in a desire to safeguard the commercial beef ranching landscape through separating it from a communal herds and game.<sup>769</sup>

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<sup>764</sup> NAZ S1542/F11 Foot and Mouth Disease: Chief Native Commissioner, 1934-39, letter from H. Mundy, Secretary Department of Agriculture and Lands, to Secretary, Department of Natives, 04/04/1938.

<sup>765</sup> See N. Samasuwo, ‘Food Production and War Supplies: Rhodesia’s Beef Industry during the Second World War, 1939-1945,’ *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 29, 2 (2003)

<sup>766</sup> Davis and Döpcke, ‘Survival and accumulation,’ 96-7.

<sup>767</sup> *Annual report of the Chief Veterinary Surgeon (1937)*, 4-5.

<sup>768</sup> *Annual report of the Chief Veterinary Surgeon (1937)*, 5.

<sup>769</sup> Scoones and Wolmer, ‘Land, Landscapes and Disease,’ 51.

In addition to the above challenges, as a veterinary policy concentration faced sustained attacks from entomologists and native commissioners (all white) given its ramifications on tsetse-control efforts. The Secretary for Natives argued, ‘The depopulation of considerable tracts of country brings in its train wilderness conditions. There is also the danger of tsetse fly invasion through the presence of game in the depopulated area (more particularly buffalo) and that area was once a ‘fly’ area.’<sup>770</sup> In this case, Africans were supposed to be a buffer against the spread of the fly in the south-eastern corner of the colony. The Chief Entomologist explained:

Depopulation is on the face of it, a retrograde step.... The great patch of dense forest between the angle made by the Lundi and Sabi Rivers may make it difficult to keep a wide enough game free zone along the border in that region. If the fly were to get through, game reduction operations would probably need to be undertaken on a very large scale to drive it out again. The less populated the country, the more difficult and expensive the task would be. The presence of cattle is also an excellent safeguard against undetected advance of the fly. In actual experience, most of our warnings concerning the advance of fly have been received through the appearance of Trypanosomiasis amongst cattle. In the long view, therefore, I should regard the depopulation of the southern end of the Ndanga District as a handicap in reference to tsetse fly control.<sup>771</sup>

However, the eradication of FMD – a disease posing direct danger to the country’s prospects for beef exports – was deemed a priority higher than the long term entomological concerns over tsetse-fly control. Consequently, the most important state bureaucrat, the Minister of Agriculture, remarked, ‘The longer the concentration is delayed, the greater the risks, and in my opinion it should be proceeded without further loss of time.’<sup>772</sup> This resulted in the fencing of the Gutu Quarantine Camp in 1938 amidst complaints from the Native Commissioner.<sup>773</sup> The fencing of Victoria Reserve restricted access to grazing land as it was reduced to half of its 1937 size while the purchase of farms by elite Africans in the new Mshagashe Purchase area meant some communal land farmers no longer had access to land they had formerly used for grazing.<sup>774</sup> Other quarantine camps that were fenced included Chikombedzi, Magudus, Mazuna, Chiduma,

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<sup>770</sup> NAZ S1542/F11 Foot and Mouth Disease: Chief Native Commissioner, 1934-39, Letter from the Secretary for Natives to the Secretary Department of Agriculture and Lands, 21/04/1938.

<sup>771</sup> NAZ S1542/F11 Foot and Mouth Disease: Chief Native Commissioner, 1934-39, Letter from the Chief Entomologist to the Secretary Department of Agriculture and Lands, 04/03/1938.

<sup>772</sup> NAZ S1542/F11 Foot and Mouth Disease: Chief Native Commissioner, 1934-39, Letter from the Minister of Agriculture to the Prime Minister, 13/05/1938.

<sup>773</sup> NAZ S2136/S58/779/59/2 Foot and Mouth Disease Correspondence: Victoria Veterinary area, 1936-44, letter from the NC Gutu to the CNC, 19/02/1938.

<sup>774</sup> Shutt, ‘The Settlers’ Cattle Complex,’ 268.

Tshaikembedza. However, in areas such as Chiduma and Tshaikembedza (Ndanga District) the abundance of game rendered the maintenance of the fencing exceedingly costly hence they were disbanded in 1940.<sup>775</sup> Thus, the erection of veterinary fences by the veterinary department as a preventative measure against FMD, added rather than reduced pressure on the environment.

Besides revealing the tensions within the bureaucracy, cattle movements for concentration purposes unearthed possibilities for reclaiming lost pasture, and the adoption of better pasture management systems. There were certain areas in Matabeleland and Mashonaland where there were remarkable results after cattle had been moved elsewhere for as part of creating cattle-free belts. For instance, in Chilimanzi District, it was found that in an overgrazed area, the young and older grass never had a chance to seed properly, with the result that every year the impoverishment of grazing land occurred. However, the shifting of all cattle out of an area of between 50 and 60 miles in length and varying from 5 to 8 miles in width vividly illustrated how the veld regenerated. The area from which they were removed was bare when they left but went back to the old original state before the return of the cattle six months later.<sup>776</sup>

### **Soil erosion and dip tanks**

Concentration was not the only veterinary policy in contravention of conservation policies. Major issues overlooked by the state in its centralisation policies (other than the impact of the concentration method on environmental degradation) concerned the location and numbers of dipping tanks as well as the way African cattle were driven to the dip.<sup>777</sup> Of particular concern amongst conservationists was the manner 'native' cattle were 'causing' rivers to dry through grazing at the river sources (headwaters), and gully erosion at dip tanks.<sup>778</sup> These contrasted sharply with those of the Veterinary Department which considered the eradication of FMD and other tick-borne epizootics a more important matter demanding the observance of veterinary

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<sup>775</sup> NAZ S2136/S58/779/59/2 Foot and Mouth Disease Correspondence: Victoria Veterinary area, 1936-44, Letter from the Secretary Department of Agriculture and Lands to the Secretary to the Treasury, 03/09/1940.

<sup>776</sup> NAZ ZAZ 2/1/4 Natural Resources Commission: Oral Evidence, W J Richards, a native commissioner and assistant magistrate, Chilimanzi District, 05/12/1938.

<sup>777</sup> NAZ ZAZ 2/1/1 Natural Resources Commission: Oral Evidence, E.J.K. Edwards, the Conservator of Forests, 13/10/1938.

<sup>778</sup> NAZ ZAZ 2/1/1 Natural Resources Commission: Oral Evidence, inspector in the Native Development Department, J.H. Farquhar, 31/10/1938.



regulations, their impact on the environment notwithstanding. By 1938, this subject had become so controversial to merit the attention of the Natural Resources Commission. M.W. Ingram, revealed:

There is a definite increase in soil erosion during my 29 years' experience and increase is cumulative. A reason for this is having nearly all dipping tanks built on rivers and consequently many tracks to dips which are now dongas. This also leads to water not reaching the *msenyas* and to the silting up of the rivers and streams. When water is plentiful in rainy seasons there is no necessity for the cattle to go to the rivers and the result is cattle tracks and tramping in of the river banks.<sup>779</sup>

Irrigation officials protested that efforts to reclaim sources of rivers and *vleis* (moisture retaining soils and wetlands) which dried as a result of overstocking and trampling at Mutsago Dip Tank in the Maranke South Reserve had been in vain. One irrigation engineer testified:

That place used to have a small spring bubbling out of the ground and it was the only source of water in the district. A dip tank was built near this water supply and the cattle congregated at the dip and all the land round it was turned into a sale-yard. They so demolished the area that the spring ceased to flow. Protection works were started. The area was fenced round and the eroded ground was filled with loads of sands. The area was also protected from fires, and all these measures caused the stream to flow again.<sup>780</sup>

Naturally, this elicited questions whether the benefits of dipping were bigger than those of veld management. It was indeed a matter of compromise: as has been shown already, sometimes the cattle got so poor that the bad effect of taking them the dip was greater than the beneficial effect of getting rid of the tick! The effect of these contrasting discourses between colonial officials from different departments on Africans must have been negative as well as confusing since they had dipped as per regulations, and yet their animals were still considered an environmental hazard.

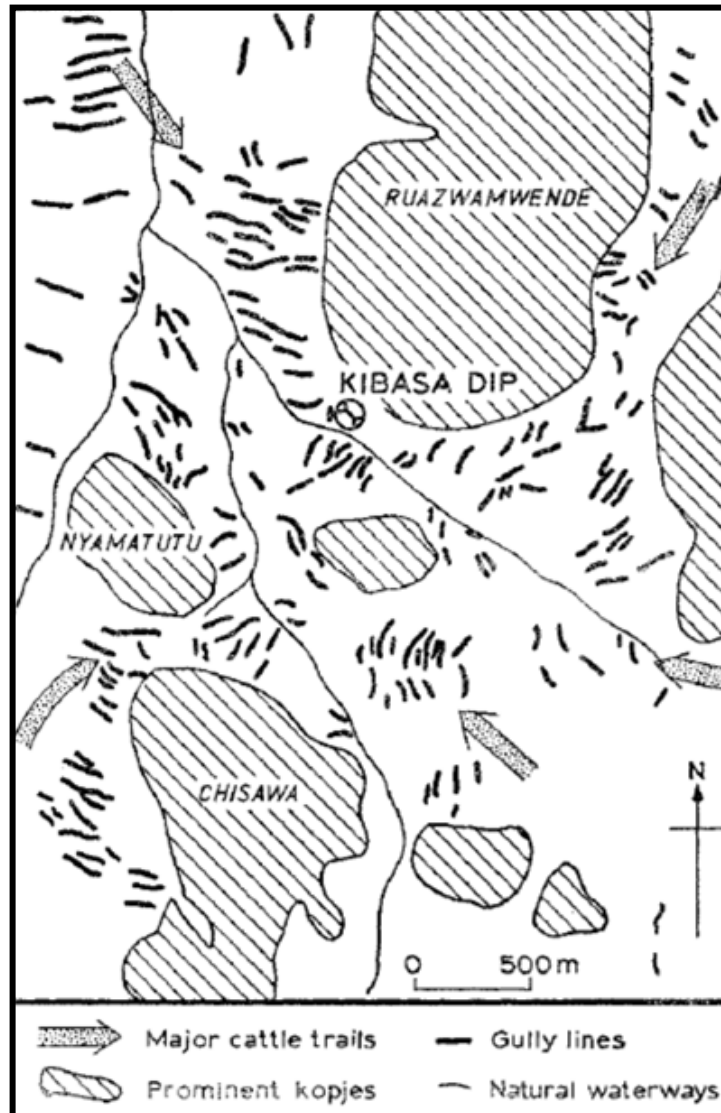
Yet it is important to note that conservationists raised a question that was not addressed appropriately at the time largely because Africans livestock management and farming practices were considered the only threat to the environment – a dominant theme of Empire-wide

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<sup>779</sup> NAZ ZAZ 2/1/4 Natural Resources Commission: Oral Evidence, M.W. Ingram, Dip Supervisor in Plumtree District, 22/11/1938.

<sup>780</sup> NAZ ZAZ 2/1/4 Natural Resources Commission: Oral Evidence, H.W.E. Wallis, an assistant irrigation engineer, 08/11/1938.

discourse in the 1930s which became part of officials' training.<sup>781</sup> Though showing the development of gully erosion around dip tanks at a much later period, Figs. 5.2<sup>782</sup> and 5.3<sup>783</sup> vividly illustrate the impact of dip tanks on the immediate environment, and environmental challenges posed by the agglutination of large numbers of cattle at dip tanks in Mtoko and Mondoro-Ngezi Reserves.

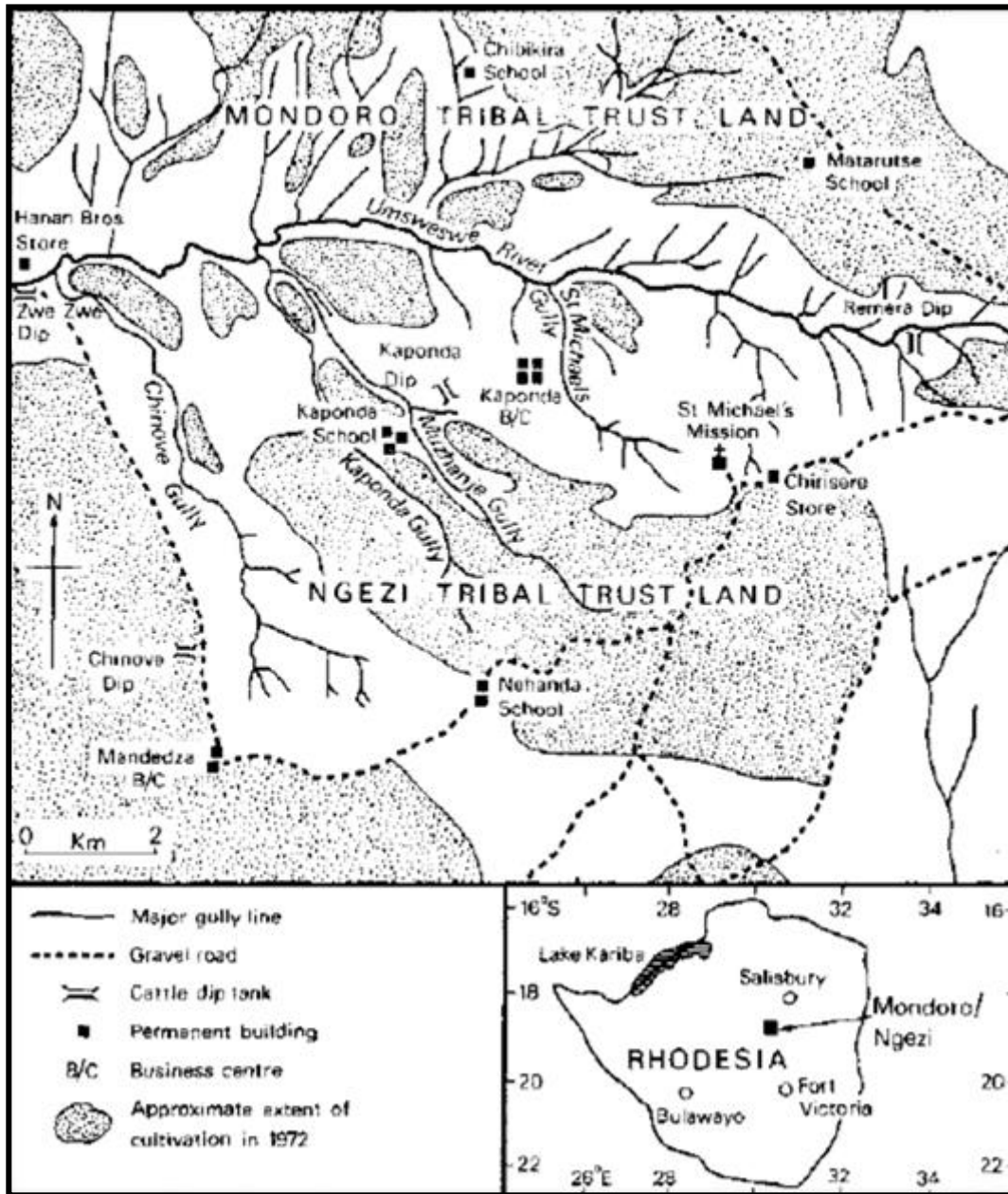


**Figure 5.2: Incidence of gully erosion around a dip tank in Mtoko**

<sup>781</sup> McGregor, 'Conservation, Control and Ecological Change,' 260. See M. Leach and R. M'arins (eds), *The lie of the land: Challenging received wisdom on the African environment*, (London: Heinemann, 1996).

<sup>782</sup> M. A. Stocking, 'Aspects of the role of man in the spread of erosion in Rhodesia,' *Zambezia*, 2, 2 (1972), 6.

<sup>783</sup> M.A. Stocking, 'Relationship of agricultural history and settlement to severe soil erosion in Rhodesia,' *Zambezia*, 6, 2 (1978), 131.



**Figure 5. 3: Gully erosion in Mondoro-Ngezi**

These figures reveal that there was indeed a connection between the agglutination / convergence of large numbers of cattle at dip tanks and the development of gully erosion. Indeed, evidence to the Natural Resources Commission reveals that throughout the territory administrative officials working in African reserves were concerned with the fact that there was increased erosion activity close to dip tanks. However, finding an amicable way to settling conflicting

veterinary and conservation needs proved futile. Some colonial officials suggested that cattle be allowed to approach the dipping tanks by many deviations but this,

[i]s not possible, for either the cattle must take one or two paths or, alternatively, trees have to be cut down to allow them to approach by many paths. One way method has been suggested of stopping erosion round dip tanks where it is most noticeable ... is to pave a considerable distance round about each tank, because in every instance the tank is near a river and the approach to it is very steep. It is impossible to approach a dip tank by many ways, because you have the river which will stop the cattle coming from one direction, so that all the paths must converge at some distance from a tank owing to the steepness of the hill running down to the dip tank.<sup>784</sup>

An enduring solution to this problem lay in reducing the number of cattle using a single dip tank through the construction of many more. Limiting the distance cattle travelled to the dip tank was generally considered helpful but there were financial and other pressing ecological limitations to achieving this. Although the Veterinary Department acknowledged their importance, increasing the number of dipping tanks was not being followed to any great extent for lack of funding.<sup>785</sup> In Matabeleland, the provision of dipping tanks and thus the reduction of cattle's travelling distance thereto did not solve the problem of water shortages. In that region, cattle drank water once in three days and were, in some cases, driven all day to drink water sources and then back to the grazing area.<sup>786</sup> Thus, besides dip tanks cattle trekking to watering places was also a serious environmental threat.

Though efforts were being made to reduce the number of cattle utilising a single dip tank, logistical implications of filling such dip tanks with water meant that the Veterinary Department continued with its not so environmentally friendly practice of constructing dip tanks close to vulnerable water bodies such as rivers. With regard to availability of water at dip tanks, the acting CVS explained, 'that is the difficulty, and we have to build our dipping tanks close to a river. I would rather not do it but it would mean getting water by boring or some other means if you go any distance from a river.'<sup>787</sup> He downplayed this matter and chose to blame Africans for

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<sup>784</sup> NAZ ZAZ 2/1/4 Natural Resources Commission: Oral Evidence, F.A. Phayre, NC Rusapi, 15/12/1938.

<sup>785</sup> NAZ ZAZ 2/1/4 Natural Resources Commission: Oral Evidence, The acting CVS, B.L. King, 29/11/1938.

<sup>786</sup> NAZ ZAZ 2/1/4 Natural Resources Commission: Oral Evidence, The Assistant Agriculturist, G.R.R. Palmer, 10/11/1938.

<sup>787</sup> NAZ ZAZ 2/1/4 Natural Resources Commission: Oral Evidence, The acting CVS, B.L. King, 29/11/1938.

keeping ‘too many’ cattle against the advice of veterinary officials. Upon realising that the state neither afforded increasing the number of dip tanks nor constructing them far away from rivers, did state conservationists shift their attention to their long standing argument about the manner cattle were driven to dip tanks to question the prudence of dipping even when cattle were tick free. By implication this meant that the Veterinary Department was supposed to leave the onus of dipping to livestock owners, a position they were not prepared to agree to given past experiences when dipping was not yet compulsory. The compromise was that they kept authority over dipping while they reduced, in certain circumstances, the frequency of dipping whenever there were no outbreaks.

By 1939, these issues had become subject of a commission of enquiry set up to inquire into the preservation of natural resources in the colony – the Natural Resources Commission. Despite acknowledging that veterinary matters were hazardous to the environment, the Committee could not solve these contrasting views as it reported,

it is difficult under the circumstances to suggest a complete remedy, but an increase in both watering places and dipping tanks would obviously be beneficial, as would dipping at less frequent intervals.... It has been suggested that, in the case of Native cattle, to save undue concentration, the numbers to be dipped in one day should be restricted and operations at the same dip tank spread over a longer period, but this would increase the work of the Dip Supervisors correspondingly and it is doubtful if the advantages claimed would not be altogether set off by the increased number of days in which dipping took place.<sup>788</sup>

### **Restating the ‘bigger, better but smaller herds’ argument**

The acknowledgement that state-imposed and settler-desired veterinary methods were destroying the environment did not result in measures being taken to combat the damage they were causing. Instead, the state opened new avenues for restructuring African livestock management systems in the countryside. Although effort was, as will be shown, eventually put on livestock improvement and destocking, a number of possible solutions had been proffered. Some colonial officials like Alvord thought that the real problem in African reserves was overpopulation not overstocking hence the argument that unless active steps were taken to make more land available to blacks, or,

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<sup>788</sup> *Report of the commission appointed to inquire into the preservation, etc., of the natural resources of the colony*, 59.

to get the surplus people, in some manner off the land, the position could only get worse.<sup>789</sup> Alvord suggested the following schemes: transferring excess population to under-populated areas, restricting rural population to those people who had a special aptitude for farming, establishing African towns in reserves to be occupied by non-farmers, establishing orderly African villages in the vicinity of European towns and industrial centres and requiring the families of men employed there to live with them in those towns. Furthermore, he recommended the establishment of training farms in the Reserves, introducing collective farming in Reserves, developing irrigation schemes, and establishing supervised tenant farming in European areas.<sup>790</sup> Though not immediately implemented, these ideas were to influence the Native Lands Husbandry Act (1951) which intensified state intrusion in the reserves. Destocking and livestock improvement were implemented simultaneously as they were two sides of the same coin.

Livestock improvement activities encapsulated in the African Cattle Clause<sup>791</sup>, which had been side-lined by Alvord's centralisation policy in the 1930s, were from the 1940s repackaged to accommodate the dominant environmental ideas of the time. Language accompanying livestock improvement activities in the reserves from the 1940s suggests that colonial officials began to perceive it as a viable conservation method. This policy shift came in the wake of the Natural Resources Act (1941) which intensified the process of reorganising African livelihoods in the reserves through empowering native commissioners to 'depasture stock, give orders on methods of cultivation, prohibit the cultivation of land and control water.'<sup>792</sup>

Unlike in the pre-1930 period, when introducing cross-breeds was thought to be the best way to assist Africans into adopting 'economic' herds, a new school of thought rose in the post-1930 period. In the 1930s, colonial officials had begun to argue that 'it would be of no avail to introduce the best imported pedigree bulls into the Native Reserves, if their progeny are to starve.'<sup>793</sup> Those in support of this idea further argued that since Africans were, 'oblivious to the

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<sup>789</sup> NAZ S2998/3 Native Reserves: Destocking, 1943, letter from E.D. Alvord to the CNC, 21/02/1945.

<sup>790</sup> NAZ S2998/3 Native Reserves: Destocking, 1943, letter from E.D. Alvord to the CNC, 21/02/1945.

<sup>791</sup> Vide supra, Chapter 4.

<sup>792</sup> D.J. Murray, *The Governmental System in Southern Rhodesia* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), 35.

<sup>793</sup> NAZ S2998/3 Native Reserves: Destocking, 1943, Circular No.29, 17 August 1932.

evils attendant on overstocking and are opposed to reducing the numbers of their flock. The solution of the matter maybe found in an endeavour to improve Native stock by selection, rather than in a continuance of cross-breeding.<sup>794</sup> Thus, from the 1940s they began to assess the livestock improvement operations of the Department of Native Agriculture since its creation in 1929. They decried the fact that during centralisation, work towards the improvement of local livestock had not gone beyond castration – a policy aimed at eliminating animals of perceived poor quality.<sup>795</sup> In fact, since demonstration work began in 1927, demonstrators yearly castrated large numbers of scrub bulls, which over a period of years ending December 1940, totalled approximately 140 000 head.<sup>796</sup> In a context that believed that Africans were having uneconomic herds, destocking or the sale or ‘scrub’ beasts tended to prevail over other pertinent issues pertaining to pasture and stock improvement.<sup>797</sup> This neglect meant that by 1939 no proven breed, strong enough to withstand conditions in the reserves and market conditions, had been introduced. The Afrikaner was still being introduced on an experimental basis, and no definite answers as to their suitability could be given.<sup>798</sup> The following statement by R.L. Cooper (Lands Inspector, Native Affairs Department) is a fair assessment of this official neglect of African livestock regimes:

Today the people have advanced so far in their knowledge of the soil cultivation and crops, that they practice crop-rotation and seed selection, yet from an animal husbandry point of view, they are very little better than they were one hundred years ago, I might even go so far as to say they are worse off. It is certainly true that never were Native cattle such a poor, mixed, scrubby lot as is to be found today, and the position is becoming steadily worse.<sup>799</sup>

Some progressive colonial officials accepted the fact that African reserves were located in inferior environments where it was difficult to rear livestock. Thus, they argued that the poor

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<sup>794</sup> NAZ S1542 N4 Native Reserves Trust, reports, 1933- 1940, Trustees’ report for the year ending March 1934.

<sup>795</sup> NAZ S2997/2/4 Animal husbandry: improvement of methods and stock, 1941-942, Memo written in Sept 1938 by R.L. Cooper (the Land Inspector, Native Affairs Department) entitled ‘Improvement of stock and animal husbandry methods in native reserves’.

<sup>796</sup> NAZ S2997/2/4 Animal husbandry: improvement of methods and stock, 1941-942, letter from the Agriculturist for Natives, E.D. Alvord, to the CNC, 10/11/1941.

<sup>797</sup> NAZ S2997/2/4 Animal husbandry: improvement of methods and stock, 1941-942, letter from the Agriculturist for Natives, E.D. Alvord, to the CNC, 10/11/1941.

<sup>798</sup> *Report of the commission appointed to inquire into the preservation, etc., of the natural resources of the colony, 1939*, 50.

<sup>799</sup> NAZ S2997/2/4 Animal husbandry: improvement of methods and stock, 1941-942, Memo written in Sept 1938 by R.L. Cooper (the Land Inspector, Native Affairs Department).

type and quality of ‘native’ cattle was largely due to the very low level of nutrition on which they were maintained since some reserves were ‘hopelessly’ overstocked that animals lived on practically ‘a starvation ration.’<sup>800</sup> Therefore, they concluded that cross-breeds would not survive under such conditions making any attempt at ‘improvement’ a waste of the state’s time, money and effort.

### **Creating the ‘Native beast’**

In order to address these concerns, in 1941 the state took a serious step towards ‘creating’ a standard type of ‘Native’ beast by selection and breeding. Such an animal was to ‘breed true to type and prove itself eminently suitable to the conditions and management under which Native cattle are required to live.’<sup>801</sup> They now officially accepted that the local breed had the constitution, and the natural resistance to disease and adverse conditions, hence Cooper’s remark:

No breed developed by the Europeans, – not even excepting the Africander – will stand up to the present Native methods of stock management, under which these cattle thrive. It is in this connection that the Natives are solely in need of instruction and assistance, for it is sad to see how scarce the true native beast is becoming. The scrub that is so prevalent today is the result of a lack of knowledge of animal husbandry, for it is my firm opinion that the deterioration has been brought about more by the use of unsuitable European bulls, than by any other cause. The Native, with his lack of knowledge, thinking to improve milking or other properties of his cattle, introduces some pampered blood other than that of Native origin, little realising that by doing so he is at once lowering the constitution of his animals.<sup>802</sup>

Alvord also weighed in,

it can honestly be said that Native Stock as a whole has steadily deteriorated year by year in spite of the valuable work done by the Veterinary Department through Dip Supervisors and cattle inspectors, and sporadic attempts to improve the standard of the Native beast by the introduction of European breeds and cross-bred bulls by certain Native Commissioners.<sup>803</sup>

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<sup>800</sup> NAZ S2997/2/4 Animal husbandry: improvement of methods and stock, 1941-942, letter from the Senior Animal Husbandry Officer-in-Charge to the Superintendent of Natives (Matabeleland), 5/5/1941.

<sup>801</sup> NAZ S2997/2/4 Animal husbandry: improvement of methods and stock, 1941-942, Memo written in Sept 1938 by R.L. Cooper (the Land Inspector, Native Affairs Department).

<sup>802</sup> NAZ S2997/2/4 Animal husbandry: improvement of methods and stock, 1941-942, Memo written in Sept 1938 by R.L. Cooper (the Land Inspector, Native Affairs Department).

<sup>803</sup> NAZ S2997/2/4 Animal husbandry: improvement of methods and stock, 1941-942, letter from the Agriculturist for Natives, E.D. Alvord, to the CNC, 11/03/1942.



These ideas, coming from different technical experts within the colonial bureaucracy, were often contradictory but the various ways through which they contradicted were conveniently ignored while emphasis was put on the way they resonated with the destocking discourse. Like Alvord, Cooper emphasized that colonial livestock policy had not adequately addressed the introduction of exotic breeds among Africans but further opined that state efforts had been frustrated by Africans. These ideological differences notwithstanding colonial officials were agreed that some form of intervention was needed in the reserves.

The thinking that a new breed was needed reveal a veiled capitulation of the state bureaucrats who had entertained the belief (already discussed in Chapter 4) that nature in the end would rectify the balance between stock and feed, that is, some animals would die due to thirst and hunger and teach the Africans the virtue of raising smaller herds of bigger cattle.<sup>804</sup> In the 1940s, this thinking had lost currency partly because of its insensitivity to animal cruelty, and, partly because of the effects of large herds on the vegetation and soil. It was argued that since ‘indigenous stock are toughness personified and almost every vestige of vegetation and soil will have disappeared and much of the soil will have been lost before the adjustment is effected... indigenous cattle are capable of outlasting their food supply.’<sup>805</sup>

This new livestock policy emphasised the rearing of the pure ‘Sanga’ cattle which existed in the country before the Europeans arrived. In the spirit of the new policy Sanga cattle became protected species from 1944. From that year, native commissioners were encouraged to make full use of animal husbandry officers in spreading of propaganda and to indicate to Africans which cows they could not sell. The sale of ‘pure’ (Sanga) cattle as breeding stock was discouraged, and sales were only to be of cows which had distinct indications of European breed blood while ‘the best Native cattle should be kept as breeders to improve Native owned cattle.’<sup>806</sup> Research was also encouraged into the suitability of the Afrikaner in ‘grading up’ ‘native’

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<sup>804</sup> Vide infra Chapter 4.

<sup>805</sup> *Report of the commission appointed to inquire into the preservation, etc., of the natural resources of the colony*, 42.

<sup>806</sup> NAZ S2998/3 Native Reserves: Destocking, 1943.

cattle. Breeding projects meant to keep the original ‘Sanga’ race of cattle with its hereditary and resistance to disease, to improve it in size and quality by selective breeding were started. From 1945 work on ‘Sanga’ breeding projects was expanded by the location of sites for five large herd breeding stations as follows: at Makoholi, an all-black type; at Tjolutjo, a red and white spotted type; at Tuli, a light golden dun type; at Mzingwane, a red and white ‘Nkone’ type; and at Buhera, a herd of all varieties of colours.<sup>807</sup> Herds from these breeding stations were then to be distributed to Africans throughout the country and as the breeding stock in each herd was ‘improved’, the surplus heifers and cows were also disposed either to Africans or sold to European stock buyers.<sup>808</sup>

Another important change in livestock policy during this time was the standardisation of breeding practices across the territory. Until that time each district had been treated as a separate area whose activities and methods of dealing with African cattle breeding had no effect on or relation to areas outside its immediate boundaries. The result had been that there developed numerous livestock policies throughout the country, some of which were diametrically opposed. In some districts, a Native Commissioner merely adopted a scheme which appeared to him suitable, and his ideas and programme could be upset entirely by the official who followed. Colonial officials thought standardisation would benefit all cattle interests in the country: Africans were expected to benefit from the changes through the elimination of ‘scrub’ cattle, and the resultant better grade of beast while white cattle traders and commercial farmers were to benefit through the general improvement of ‘Native’ cattle they purchased from Africans and more hardy cows on which to use their pure-bred bulls for the production of beef.<sup>809</sup> The country would benefit as a direct result of the benefits to both Africans and Europeans, and in the conservation of natural resources resulting from a ‘sound’ livestock policy.<sup>810</sup> However, one unforeseen development of the destocking campaign on livestock improvement activities was that Africans were disposing of good type ‘Native’ bulls which native commissioners thought, in

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<sup>807</sup> *Annual report of the Director of Native Agriculture (1945)*, 236.

<sup>808</sup> *Annual report of the Director of Native Agriculture (1945)*, 236.

<sup>809</sup> NAZ S2997/2/4 Animal husbandry: improvement of methods and stock, 1941-942, letter from the Agriculturist for Natives, E.D. Alvord, to the CNC, 11/03/1942.

<sup>810</sup> NAZ S2997/2/4 Animal husbandry: improvement of methods and stock, 1941-942, letter from the Agriculturist for Natives, E.D. Alvord, to the CNC, 11/03/1942.

the interests of African livestock improvement, could be retained for breeding purposes.<sup>811</sup> Though prevalent in many areas, this tendency became more pronounced during the 1946-7 drought when Africans were forced by circumstance to sell livestock to sustain themselves.

In order to prevent or reduce the destocking of 'good' bulls, and to save and redistribute those that were offered for sale, the following schemes were approved that season: the establishment of bull camps for the holding of young bulls until they had matured or matured bulls until sold; when culling for destocking purposes families were permitted to keep one selected bull which was exempted from destocking; native commissioners were authorised to purchase bulls of 'good' type which would otherwise be sold for slaughter; bulls so purchased were branded as selected bulls and made available for sale to Africans at 50 per cent of the purchase price; pending the sale of these bulls, NCs were to make arrangements for keeping them; these selected bulls were to be sold to Africans in a dip tank area other than that in which the bull previously served.<sup>812</sup> This was an important intervention as it reduced the sale of 'good' animals that may have fallen to the butcher's knife. For instance, in 1946 alone breeding efforts were improved when a total of 1 011 bulls and 3 812 breeding cows were selected during the destocking programme.<sup>813</sup> By 1951, three central breeding stations had been established permanently: Tuli (Lowveld Station), Makaholi (Middleveld Station) and Mrewa (Highveld Station). Bull camps were also established in Matabeleland and Southern Mashonaland.<sup>814</sup>

There were also pasture improvement projects done in reserves. Grazing surveys were carried out in a number of reserves in Matabeleland, Southern Mashonaland, Midlands and Manicaland circles. Rotational grazing was started in various parts of the country: Southern Mashonaland (at Victoria, Zimutu and Western Gutu reserves), while Midlands grazing areas had been created in Charter district. In Matabeleland, Inyati Reserve was paddock fenced and came under a system

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<sup>811</sup> NAZ S2998/3 Native Reserves: Destocking, 1943, Circular No.29 from the CNC to all NCs, dated 7 January 1948.

<sup>812</sup> NAZ S2998/3 Native Reserves: Destocking, 1943, Circular No.29 from the CNC to all NCs, dated 7 January 1948.

<sup>813</sup> *Annual report of the Director of Native Agriculture (1946)*, 48.

<sup>814</sup> *Annual report of the Director of Native Agriculture (1951)*, 104.

of rotational grazing as was Mzingwane and Ntabazinduna Reserve.<sup>815</sup> For instance, in Chilimanzi Reserve an area of 480 acres which was practically devoid of grass and thickly covered with *msasa* scrub (*Brachystegia spiciformis*) was fenced in 1948 while in Zimutu Reserve (Southern Mashonaland) all the grazing areas were demarcated into paddocks resulted in a major improvement of grass cover throughout the reserve.<sup>816</sup> All these interventions were in line with the 1944 recommendation of the Native Production and Trade Commission of Enquiry which stated:

In our opinion, the maximum benefits, both for the State and for the Natives, from Native agriculture and animal husbandry can only be obtained by compulsory planned production whereby a statutory body should be empowered to direct what crops, acreage and areas should be planted, and *what livestock should be kept, to enforce good husbandry conditions.*<sup>817</sup>

Following this sustained attack on African livestock management practices, changes, although irregular, began to be seen across the country. After years of propaganda, in the late 1940s some native commissioners reported that Africans were beginning to take a keen interest in their cattle,

ceasing to regard as so many units of stock, respective of quality. Where central breeding stations and bull camps are established, there is a keen demand for improved bulls.... A significant change from the days when an ox, if not merely a four-legged beast was judged by the size of its frame rather than what was on the frame.<sup>818</sup>

However, this change of attitude appeared not to have extended to pasture methods since some native commissioners reported, ‘few Africans, however, yet appreciate the value of selective grazing, and too often herds cover the same ground month in month out when there is untouched pasture within easy reach.’<sup>819</sup> Officials also generally spoke of the successes of the culling and destocking campaigns and that Africans were beginning to appreciate the resulting improvement in the quality of their stock, adding that in some cases Africans themselves accepted responsibility for these measures. They gave the example of the Mzingwane Reserve Native

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<sup>815</sup> *Annual report of the Director of Native Agriculture (1951)*, 105.

<sup>816</sup> *Annual report of the Director of Native Agriculture (1950)*, 70.

<sup>817</sup> *Report of the Native Production and Trade Commission (1944)*, 36.

<sup>818</sup> *Report of the Secretary for Native Affairs, Chief Native Commissioner, Director of Native Development (1951)*, 19.

<sup>819</sup> *Report of the Secretary for Native Affairs, Chief Native Commissioner, Director of Native Development (1951)*, 19.

Council which carried out the destocking of its small area, and from Mrewa District where two of the chiefs carried out the culling. With the NC commenting, ‘When the chief undertakes this unpleasant task it is cheerfully accepted by the people and no trouble is experienced.’<sup>820</sup> Chiefs were also undertaking this unpleasant task of destocking in the Bulalima-Mangwe district.

### **Destocking, 1945-51**

The previous section has shown that by the end of the 1930s, challenges posed by veterinary measures had forced the state to consider more intrusive methods for the environmental control in the reserves from the 1940s. This section examines how destocking came to play an important role in conservation policies from the beginning of the 1940s. As a concept, destocking was not an entirely new phenomenon in the territory. In fact, the state had tried it in certain African reserves in the 1930s – the most popular being the 1938 culling of cattle in Gutu.<sup>821</sup> The initial excuse for culling in Victoria District had been the need to eradicate disease but this later shifted to alleviating over-stocking in the quarantine area resulting from disease restrictions and the movement of cattle from European land to Reserves while in Gutu overstocking and deterioration of stock, rather than quarantine restrictions, provided the rationale for destocking.<sup>822</sup> At the time, the folly of implementing such a move without any legislative instrument had resulted in widespread discontent especially among white liberals – the most vocal of them being Mrs R. Comberbach (wife of the NC for Chibi and former NC for Gutu, Harold Comberbach), Reverend Arthur Cripps (a radical Anglican missionary), Arthur Creech-Jones (Member of Parliament) and Reverend A.C. Jackson (Dutch Reformed Church minister) whose views had forced the state in 1939 to institute an inquiry into destocking activities in Gutu and Victoria Districts (see Fig 5.4<sup>823</sup> below).<sup>824</sup>

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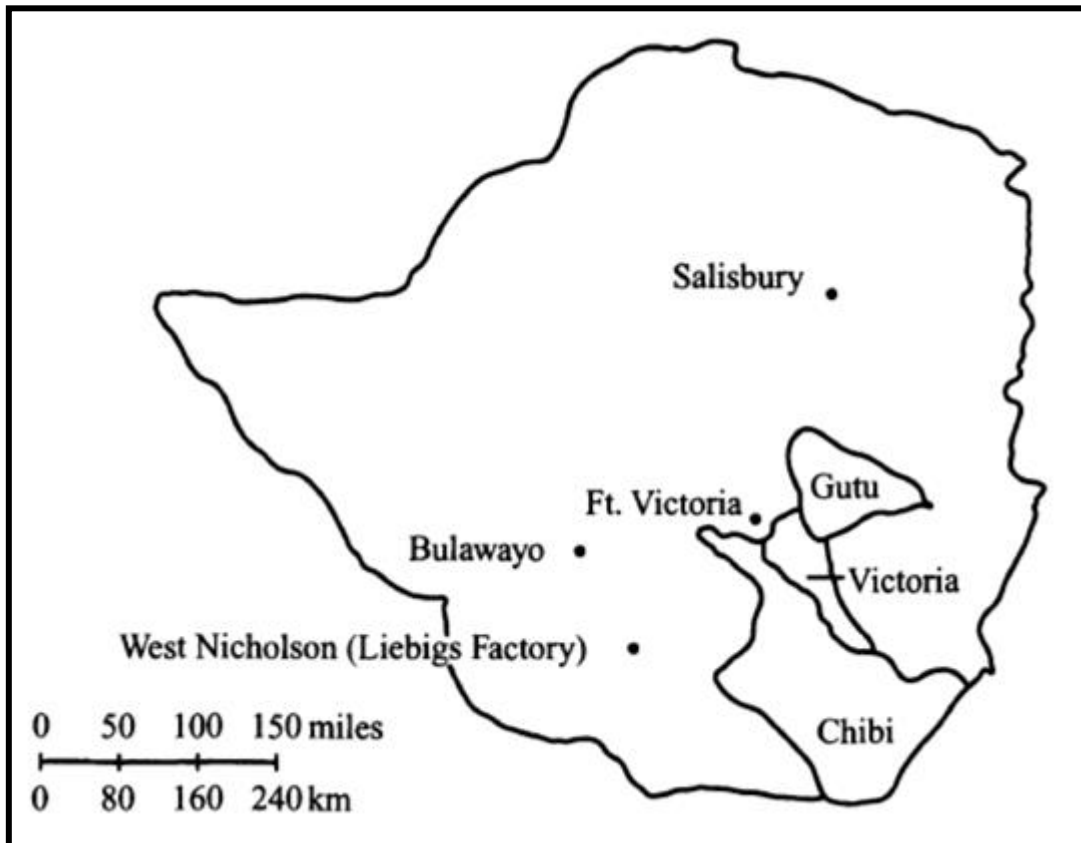
<sup>820</sup> *Report of the Secretary for Native Affairs, Chief Native Commissioner, Director of Native Development (1951)*, 20.

<sup>821</sup> See A. Shutt, ‘The Settlers’ Cattle Complex.’

<sup>822</sup> Davies and Döpcke, ‘Survival and Accumulation in Gutu,’ 96.

<sup>823</sup> Source: A. Shutt, ‘The Settlers’ Cattle Complex,’ 266.

<sup>824</sup> For an in-depth discussion of their activities see A. Shutt, ‘The Settlers’ Cattle Complex.’



**Figure 5. 4: Southern Rhodesia**

With the memory of opposition to cattle culling in 1938 still fresh, when the idea was resuscitated in 1941 the state now had a legal instrument allowing it to destock compulsorily across the whole territory. However, at that time the state was still ‘somewhat divided and insecure about enforcing the “ecological imperative”’ hence this was a ‘political experiment in coercion.’<sup>825</sup> Destocking was still perceived by the NC and veterinary officials as a means by through which the spread of livestock diseases spread could be reduced.<sup>826</sup> They argued that if an area had a higher percentage of animals than its carrying capacity then if a disease broke out, it would spread quickly and affect more cattle than it would have where there are fewer herds.<sup>827</sup> Thus, from a veterinary point of view, destocking had two advantages: enabling effective control of disease, and assuring sufficient grazing for the cattle. Southern Rhodesia was open to the destocking idea having seen a similar proclamation in the Union of South Africa (No. 31 of 14

<sup>825</sup> Davies and Döpcke, ‘Survival and Accumulation in Gutu,’ 95. See also A. Shutt, ‘The Settlers’ Cattle Complex.’

<sup>826</sup> *Annual report of the Chief Native Commissioner, 1944.*

<sup>827</sup> NAZ S138/38 Chief Native Commissioner’s 1926 circular on the control of livestock diseases.

February 1939.), which stated that all inferior beasts, irrespective of ownership, be culled until the number allowed for the area concerned had been reached.<sup>828</sup>

The passage of the Natural Resources Act (1941) marked the beginning of a systematic state-run reduction of livestock in Native Reserves on account of the perceived damage they were causing to the environment through overgrazing. Scientifically, grazing stock has some effect on soil properties since the weight of the animal can compress or compact soil while hooves can dig down below the soil surface, destroying the soil structure.<sup>829</sup> However, without dismissing the scientific basis for anti-overgrazing measures, it is important to emphasize the state's narrow understanding of the environment problems bedeviling the reserves. The overwhelmingly popular view among colonial officials that Africans were responsible *holus bolus* for environmental degradation precluded a fair examination of the problem.

Soil scientists have since challenged the basis on which soil erosion rates were calculated. In particular, Stocking has suggested that soil erosion may not have been man-made but just a result of the changing environmental conditions.<sup>830</sup> Indeed, Showers' findings in Lesotho – a similar colonial context – tallies with Stocking's argument that perceptions were more important than real scientific data. She does this by attempting to differentiate between normal from abnormal/accelerated erosion.<sup>831</sup> In fact, there is a general hypothesis that says that accelerated erosion was almost non-existent to southern Africa prior to the presence of Europeans in the region hence the identification of the factors that led to the 'origin and development of

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<sup>828</sup> *Report of the commission appointed to inquire into the preservation, etc., of the natural resources of the colony, 1939*, 44.

<sup>829</sup> Showers, *Imperial Gullies*, 13.

<sup>830</sup> M.A. Stocking, 'Aspects of the role of man in the spread of erosion in Rhodesia,' *Zambezia*, 2, 2 (1972); M.A. Stocking, 'Relationship of agricultural history and settlement to severe soil erosion in Rhodesia,' *Zambezia*, 6, 2 (1978); M. Stocking, 'Soil erosion: Breaking new ground,' in M. Leach and R. Mearns (eds), *The lie of the land: Challenging received wisdom on the African environment*, (London: Heinemann, 1996), 140-155. See also K.B. Showers, *Imperial Gullies: Soil erosion and conservation in Lesotho*, (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2005).

<sup>831</sup> Normal erosion being defined loosely defined as that which occurs as a result of the interaction between landscapes and climate; accelerated erosion is soil movement that occurs as a result of human activities. But of course there are differences in delineating the normal from the abnormal. She argues that European perceptions of abnormality informed the assumptions on which land use decisions and policies were based. The southern African region was very exotic in the eyes of those accustomed to the humid temperate regions of northern Europe and Britain. See Delius and Schirmer, 'Soil conservation in a racially ordered society,' 721-22; Showers, *Imperial Gullies*, 137.

accelerated soil erosion should be found in an analysis of changes in land use activities' after colonisation.<sup>832</sup> Under the sedentary form of living necessitated by land shortages in the reserves as well as colonial policies, it followed that the grazing management system used during shifting cultivation no longer applied. The imposition of sedentism meant that the soil was subjected to continuous compaction and soil disturbance by trampling made it more susceptible to erosion.<sup>833</sup> The concentration of cattle exacerbated this stress as it increased pressure on pasture.

From 1945, destocking sought to reduce this pressure through obtaining reliable estimates of the carrying capacity of each native reserve, that is, the number of mature animal units each reserve would carry without loss in a bad year. Cattle and small stock numbers were to be strictly limited to this number. It was believed that when done this would result:

In at least a 25% improvement in the type and quality of the animals apart from the fact that losses from poverty will be reduced to negligible figures. Incidentally, such reduction and limitation of the number of animals in the reserves will eliminate the main cause of soil erosion and reduced water supplies and prove the cheapest method of preventing these.<sup>834</sup>

While the environmental argument behind destocking is clear, it is important to explain why the state's ardent commitment to this policy. Besides reducing environmental degradation, destocking also appealed to Southern Rhodesia's war-time needs. Thus, Samasuwo argues that while 'the main reason given for the introduction of destocking regulations in Reserves was the need to arrest ecological degradation, the reactivation of the regulations themselves in the early 1940s was no simple accident of history.'<sup>835</sup> Between 1939 and 1945, the destocking policy was weaponised to pass the cost of war-time beef shortages onto African farmers. Since the commercial beef industry (dominated entirely by whites) could not cope with war-time demand for beef, the state targeted the so-called 'excessive herds of cattle held in the African Reserves' through giving the Cold Storage Commission (CSC) and Liebigs Extract Meat Company

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<sup>832</sup> Showers, *Imperial Gullies*, 148.

<sup>833</sup> Showers, *Imperial Gullies*, 23.

<sup>834</sup> NAZ S2997/2/4 Animal husbandry: improvement of methods and stock, 1941-942, letter from the Senior Animal Husbandry Officer in Charge to the Superintendent of Natives (Matabeleland), 5/5/1941.

<sup>835</sup> N. Samasuwo, 'Food Production and War Supplies: Rhodesia's Beef Industry during the Second World War, 1939-1945,' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 29, 2 (2003), 497.



(LEMCO) preferential buying rights at all cattle sales held in the reserves.<sup>836</sup> However, this state intervention in the African cattle market further polarized the African society by heightening suspicions that whites did not want to see a ‘successful’ black person.<sup>837</sup>

Under the destocking policy, the CNC stipulated a certain number of stock to be held by each resident and animals in excess of this number were to be culled on a selective basis, that is, ‘worthless’ stock would come first. Officials specially qualified in animal husbandry, referred to as ‘culling officers’ undertook the work. A culling officer had power to instruct the owner to dispose of or permanently remove from the area all culled animals within three months of the date of culling and it was only when the owner failed to comply with the order that the animals could be compulsorily sold with the owner receiving the proceeds thereof. Between 1945 and 1961, the state simultaneously carried out a destocking policy to regulate livestock numbers within the reserves’ carrying capacity. Africans came to associate destocking with dip tanks since it was at the dip tanks that decisions on whether cattle were to be sold or slaughtered were made.<sup>838</sup>

The problem with capping the maximum of livestock at a herd of six then thought to supply enough manure for farming was that African livestock owners did not agree to it. For instance, Furusa, the principle headman under Chief Ndema in Selukwe Reserve argued that at least twenty beasts would supply sufficient manure, ‘Those who have enough cattle have enough manure to use in their lands, but they don’t all have sufficient cattle to make manure.’<sup>839</sup> Mlambo, the agricultural demonstrator in the same reserve, concurred with Furusa, arguing some African farmers were only manuring a quarter of an acre because that is all manure they could

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<sup>836</sup> Samasuwo, ‘Food Production and War Supplies,’ 497.

<sup>837</sup> Interview with Titus Mutindori, born 1939, Chasiyama, Chimanimani District, 06/04/12. See also A.S. MacKinnon, ‘The Persistence of the Cattle Economy in Zululand, South Africa, 1900-50,’ *Canadian Journal of African Studies / Revue Canadienne des Études Africaines*, 33, 1 (1999), 126.

<sup>838</sup> T. T. Jamu, ‘The growth and control of African herds, 1910 – 1955,’ M.A African History Thesis, University of Zimbabwe, 1987, 37.

<sup>839</sup> NAZ ZAZ 2/1/7 Natural Resources Commission: Oral Evidence, Furusa, Principle Headman under Chief Ndema, Selukwe Reserve, 7/02/1939.

get from 15 head of cattle.<sup>840</sup> However, some Africans deployed mechanisms of informal redistribution of livestock (*kuronzera*) to avoid reaching destocking quotas.<sup>841</sup> For instance, in 1950 the CNC:

The native soon appreciated that the weight of destocking was being borne by owners of large herds and this led to a whole sale redistribution of native cattle holdings amongst the natives with the result that today the number of native owning cattle in these areas is many thousands more than in 1945 and the vast majority of them own small stock.<sup>842</sup>

This redistribution meant that the herds could not be destocked since doing so sufficed to leaving Africans with cattle below the perceived possible subsistence level. In the face of such passive resistance, the state passed a new regulation, the Native Reserves Destocking Regulations (1950), which empowered the destocking officer to decide who should be a stock owner, and to consider the extent to which the stock owner was dependent on his animals as a mean of livelihood for himself or his dependents. The result was that young able bodied men were denied the right to own cattle because they could go into waged employment. Africans resisted these regulations resulting in the increase of ghost herds. Some people reacted to these restrictions by having multiple dip cards as well as allocating some of their livestock to sons, cousins, friends and neighbours. Some even stopped going to the dipping tanks after their cattle had been marked for culling to avoid being caught in contravention of the law.<sup>843</sup> Andrew Rice explained:

My father had so many cattle and to protect his wealth he resorted to loaning them to his relatives and friends. This became a problem because after his death as people he loaned cattle did not return them. They simply said these are our cattle as they possessed dip cards for them. We had three cattle kraals because the cattle were many and also because he would want to tell the authorities that there are not his but belong to his relatives. He was also a farmer so he put them in different areas.<sup>844</sup>

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<sup>840</sup> NAZ ZAZ 2/1/7 Natural Resources Commission: Oral Evidence, Mlambo, the agricultural demonstrator Selukwe reserve, 7/02/1939.

<sup>841</sup> Interview with Raphael Svikiro, born 1943 Sadza, Chivhu, Mashonaland East 29/03/ 2012. See also Scoones, 'Landscapes, Fields and Soils,' 625.

<sup>842</sup> NAZ S482/145/3A Second Draft on the Destocking Campaign.

<sup>843</sup> Interview with Raphael Svikiro;

<sup>844</sup> Interview with Andrew Rice, born 1955, Muringazuva Dip Tank, Muzarabani Communal Area, Mashonaland Central, 15/03/12.

Thus, as a measure meant to control African livestock regimes, destocking also forced to deploy cultural livestock loaning practices. In the process, it also created conflicts among Africans as they sometimes squabbled over *kuronzera* livestock.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter has shown that the centralisation policies, pursued most actively by Alvord in the 1930s, were at variance with the state's own veterinary policies. Veterinary policies were more interested in preserving the country's position in the export beef economy at whatever cost while conservationist thinking considered soil conservation sacrosanct. Moreover, the state failed to deal with these contradictions as a result of the popular belief amongst the white community (and indeed many state officials) that problems faced in the colony were entirely caused by African 'primitive' farming practices. The concentration method intrinsic to efforts to eradicate FMD, actually encouraged overgrazing, and contributed to environmental degradation. Furthermore, the location of dip tanks and the manner in which livestock were driven to the tanks were partly responsible for gully erosion across the country. The inability to settle the conflicting positions of the conservationists and veterinarians resulted in the state looking elsewhere in its search for solutions hence the resuscitation of the livestock improvement idea in the 1940s as well as compulsory destocking from 1945. All these intrusive measures had a significant impact on the African rural landscape in general and livestock management practices in particular. There were a number of non-political responses to state intrusion. In particular, destocking resulted in changes in livestock ownership patterns and the cattle loaning system (*kuronzera*) as people tried to hide cattle from culling officers. Centralisation impacted on previously extensive grazing habits while livestock improvement practices reshaped the local idea of what a 'good' cattle breed was, and also the type of cattle Africans reared. Thus, by 1951 human-animal relationships in the reserves had changed significantly.

## Chapter Six

### **“Drought is an act of God but compulsory destocking is an act of government!”: African livestock management in the era of African nationalism, c.1950 – 1980.**

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The previous chapter not only revealed how the hegemonic state-run veterinary services marginalised rather than suppressed local African livestock regimes (diagnostic, therapeutic and reproductive ideas), but also how African livestock owners questioned technocratic interventions in the reserves in diverse ways. In particular, Chapter 5 argued that by 1951 livestock improvement activities and the destocking policy had somewhat affected human-animal relationships in the reserves. Against this backdrop, this chapter discusses the changing nature of state veterinary and livestock policy from the passage of the Native Land Husbandry Act (1951) to independence from white minority rule in 1980. It will be argued that by the 1950s, state intervention notwithstanding, colonial policies had actually resulted in overstocking and overpopulation in the reserves. This incubated a rural political consciousness which began to adopt an increasingly nationalistic tone. Thus, this chapter focuses on the ways through which this ‘rural nationalism’ manifested itself as an ideology actively opposed to state veterinary measures, and how, faced with the prospect of being replaced by versions of African vernacular veterinary system, the state veterinary bureaucracy sought to assert its control over African livestock regimes.

In Zimbabwean historiography, the Native Land Husbandry Act (hereafter NLHA), as Munro has observed, is perhaps one of the most extensively discussed piece of legislation.<sup>845</sup> There are two major historiographical analyses offered by Beinart and Phimister.<sup>846</sup> Beinart considers the

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<sup>845</sup> W.A. Munro, *The moral economy of the state: Conservation, community development, and state making in Zimbabwe*, (Athens: Ohio Center for International Studies, 1998), 97.

<sup>846</sup> See W. Beinart, ‘Soil Erosion, Conservationism and Ideas about Development: A Southern African Exploration, 1900-1960,’ *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 11, 1 (1984), 52-83; I. Phimister, ‘Rethinking the Reserves: Southern Rhodesia’s Land Husbandry Act Reviewed,’ *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 19, 2 (1993), 225-239.

Act as an exclusively conservationist measure, whereas Phimister's interpretation suggests it was a segregationist measure meant to buttress white industrial capital, farmers' and mining's demand for cheap black labour. Using the Shurugwi case study, McGregor, like Beinart, has argued that conservation ideas and policies played an active part in the passage of this Act.<sup>847</sup> This chapter draws on the Beinart-McGregor argument that policies justified as conservationist provoked some of the most widespread rural resistance, and also created new environmental problems.<sup>848</sup> Unlike Beinart, Phimister not only regards the NLHA as chiefly an instrument for segregation merely couched in conservationist camouflage, but also challenged an earlier view held by Machingaidze which suggested that the NLHA had been intensively implemented.<sup>849</sup> However, Phimister's views tallied with those of Machingaidze who examined the relationship between land policy and African 'proletarianisation.'<sup>850</sup> In particular, Machingaidze argues that it was quite common in official circles and for commissions of enquiry to talk and write of areas 'suitable for Europeans,' and by the same token meaning those areas not suitable for whites were the ones to be assigned to Africans.<sup>851</sup> While it is an excellent study of how state policy failed in the reserve, Machingaidze's study is mainly about land and centralisation in the reserves rather than how these methods impacted on human-animal relationships or how veterinary policy and state ideas on livestock management fared in the reserves. In a rejoinder to criticism levelled against him, Beinart later reworked his thesis which acknowledged that soil erosion had received attention from commentators at the expense of livestock.<sup>852</sup> However, the major flaw with this otherwise robust rejoinder lies in Beinart's synecdochic approach to the subject as he drew from South African experiences to portray the southern African situation.

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<sup>847</sup> J. McGregor, 'Conservation, Control and Ecological Change: The Politics and Ecology of Colonial Conservation in Shurugwi, Zimbabwe,' *Environment and History*, 1, 3, (1995), 257-279.

<sup>848</sup> McGregor, 'Conservation, Control and Ecological Change,' 257.

<sup>849</sup> I. Phimister, 'Rethinking the Reserves: Southern Rhodesia's Land Husbandry Act Reviewed,' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 19, 2 (1993), 225-239.

<sup>850</sup> V.E.M. Machingaidze, 'Agrarian change from above: The Southern Rhodesian Native Land Husbandry Act and African response,' *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 24, 3 (1991), 557-588.

<sup>851</sup> Machingaidze, 'Agrarian change from above,' 560.

<sup>852</sup> W. Beinart, 'Soil erosion, animals and pasture over the longer term: Environmental destruction in Southern Africa,' in M. Leach and R. Mearns (eds), *The lie of the land: Challenging received wisdom on the African environment*, (London: Heinemann, 1996), 54-72.

At present, no study has looked at livestock management practices in the reserves in the wake of the NLHA. Passing reference has been made in one study by Anderson who, using Buhera as a case study, argues that the impact of this policy was reduced by the lack of implementation of stock regulations. This, he argues, diminished the long-term impact of the NLHA as simple evasions of the stock regulations became widespread.<sup>853</sup> However, as this chapter will demonstrate, evasion of stock regulations was not the only form of resistance to veterinary policies in the reserves. Thus, though the impact of this Act on agricultural activities had been subjected to historical analysis, general attitudes to veterinary, and livestock improvement activities by the Veterinary Department during this period are still largely unknown. These lacunae in literature raise further questions on the impact of conservation and segregatory policies on livestock management. There is need to shift attention from land issues to other aspects of rural life, such as livestock management, that have attracted less academic interest.

Much more recently, some scholars have drawn syncretically on the Beinart-Phimister debate to argue that the NLHA appealed to both conservationist and segregationist concerns of the settler community. Thompson, who uses the Madziwa Communal Area in north-eastern Zimbabwe as a case study, discusses the origins and development of the NLHA in the colony's complex post-Second World War political economy. He highlights the economic challenges planners faced and the contradictory visions and interests of different groups within the white settler population and the government.<sup>854</sup> However, though illuminating certain aspects of state intrusion, there is a clear methodological weakness emanating from the tendency to centre on destocking as the chief weapon for intrusion without showing how other subtle interventions that accompanied it impacted on African livestock regimes. Therefore, it is pertinent, as this chapter intends, to examine how Africans in the reserves drew upon 'indigenous' and often highly localised systems of production in the face of state efforts to promote farming models derived from European practice.<sup>855</sup>

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<sup>853</sup> J. Anderson, 'Administrators' Knowledge and State Control in Colonial Zimbabwe: The Invention of the Rural-Urban Divide in Buhera District, 1912-80,' *Journal of African History*, 43, 1 (2002), 119-143.

<sup>854</sup> G. Thompson, 'Is it Lawful for People to have their Things taken away by Force? High Modernism and Ungovernability in Colonial Zimbabwe,' *African Studies*, 66, 1 (2007), 39-77.

<sup>855</sup> K.B. Wilson, 'Trees in Fields in Southern Zimbabwe,' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 15, 2, (1989), 69-83.

The perception and reception of conservation policies in African areas have also been examined. Bessant examines the intrusive state conservation policies but more specifically at the historical context from which Chiweshe families approached land shortage and soil conservation.<sup>856</sup> Although Bessant emphasises that Africans in Chiweshe considered state policies a burden, his emphasis was on centralisation and forced labour (*chibaro*) not livestock. Using Runde and Chirumhanzu as case studies, Drinkwater not only discusses concepts of ‘rationality’ mobilised by colonial officials and how they justified them but also attempts to show how the schemes were opposed by Africans.<sup>857</sup> Drinkwater’s study is important as it foregrounds the clash of civilisations. Building upon the conflicting positions of state technical experts and Africans in the reserves, research on the development of nationalism in Southern Rhodesia usually refers to the NLHA as having played a significant part in the development of African nationalism. Yet, there is also an inherent assumption that rural political consciousness was led by Africans who previously worked in urban areas where the Reformed Industrial and Commercial Workers Union (RICU), and the British African Voice Association, led by Benjamin Burombo were active. However, as this chapter will contend, this ignores the ability of rural Africans to challenge and negotiate with the state in other ways.<sup>858</sup> As Ranger and Munochiveyi have shown, many ordinary men and women in both rural and urban Rhodesia formulated their own critiques of colonialism, which led them to act in concert with those elite nationalists who formed and led African political organizations.<sup>859</sup> Thus, this chapter seeks to contribute in a fresh new way to the argument that ‘in the process of political cross-fertilization and dialogue, ordinary Africans, whether urban workers or peasants, were not merely led from above, or outside, as objects participating in “African nationalism.”’<sup>860</sup> Indeed, as Mulwafu has argued for a similar colonial context in Malawi, while nationalist feelings played an important role in peasant reactions, much

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<sup>856</sup> L.L. Bessant, ‘Coercive Development: Land Shortage, Forced Labor, and Colonial Development in the Chiweshe Reserve, Colonial Zimbabwe, 1938-1946,’ *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 25, 1 (1992), 39-65.

<sup>857</sup> M. Drinkwater, ‘Technical Development and Peasant Impoverishment: Land Use Policy in Zimbabwe’s Midlands Province,’ *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 15, 2 (1989), 287 - 305 .

<sup>858</sup> Machingaidze, ‘Agrarian change from above,’ 577.

<sup>859</sup> See T. Ranger, *Peasant consciousness and guerrilla war in Zimbabwe: A comparative study*, (London: James Currey, 1985); M. B. Munochiveyi, “‘We do not want to be ruled by foreigners,’” Oral histories of nationalism in colonial Zimbabwe,’ *Historian*, 73, 1 (2011), 65-87.

Munochiveyi, “‘We do not want to be ruled by foreigners,’” 66.

of their resistance emanated from the way policies interfered with household relations and everyday economies. This chapter will show how these quotidian local concerns were important in shaping initial community responses.<sup>861</sup>

Notwithstanding the oft-made point that the NLHA resulted in widespread dispossession in the reserves, the scholarly silence on livestock is astounding. Besides destocking, scholars allude to the suffering in the African reserves without examining the position of livestock or the various ways destocking affected policies directed at livestock management and improvement. Thus, the sum effect of emphasizing African suffering in the reserves through the lens of destocking alone (without any parallel discussion of how as a policy it affected human-animal relations in the reserves) and concomitant human relations over animals has had the effect of flattening an otherwise complex socio-environment history of the countryside during this time.

### **The Native Land Husbandry Act (1951): Implications on African livestock management**

One of the recurrent themes of the previous chapters is the fact that since white occupation state attempts at reshaping African livestock regimes were not seamless as they faced several obstacles. In particular, the previous chapter demonstrated that, towards the end of the 1940s, it became clear to state planners that destocking alone would not change African practices and attitudes towards livestock in the reserves. Thus, from around 1947 colonial experts began to argue that the solution to overstocking lay not only in restricting the right to hold stock, but also in restricting the right to farm land in the African rural areas.<sup>862</sup> Therefore, the NLHA was not a break with the past but rather acted as an attempt to enforce conservation ideas that had informed centralisation and livestock improvement activities of the 1930s and 1940s. It reinforced the Natural Resources Act (1941) in that it also sought to provide for the ‘orderly’ and ‘economic’ occupation of land and use of pastoral resources in the reserves and Native Purchase Areas (NPAs). However, there were two major differences. Firstly, a new principle buttressing this Act was the acceptance that not every African could hold land while working in town. It was

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<sup>861</sup> W.O. Mulwafu, *Conservation song: A history of peasant-state relations and the environment in Malawi, 1866-2000*, (Cambridge: The White Horse Press, 2011), 143.

<sup>862</sup> G.C. Passmore, ‘Historical Rationale of the Policy of Community Development in the African Areas of Rhodesia,’ *Zambezia*, 2, 1 (1971), 62.



premised on the tentative acceptance of the idea that some Africans would become urbanised.<sup>863</sup> Secondly, unlike previous pieces of legislation, it gave security of tenure to the ‘good’ farmer, limited stock holdings to the perceived carrying capacity of the land, and provided ‘protection’ for land not individually held.<sup>864</sup> As will be shown, these provisions had important ramifications for rural livelihoods. Considering these ambitious expectations, colonial officials viewed it as ‘a five year plan that will revolutionize African agriculture in the reserves.’<sup>865</sup>

Although the NLHA clearly applied to a number of issues in the reserves, specific changes that touched upon African livestock regimes included providing for a reasonable standard of good husbandry and for the protection of natural resources by all Africans using the land; limiting the number of stock in any area to its carrying capacity, and, as far as practicable, relating stock holding to arable land holding as a means of improving farming practice; and allocating individual rights in arable areas and in communal grazing areas. Only registered landholders could receive stock rights, ranging from six cattle (or the equivalent in sheep and goats) in areas with reliable rainfall to twenty in dry regions.<sup>866</sup> However, overcrowding in most reserves meant that people who did not own animals at the time the law was proclaimed did not receive grazing rights, and most stockholders had to reduce their herd below the prescribed standard individual holding.<sup>867</sup>

As a legislation that was clearly meant to control land, livestock and people in the reserves, its fundamental weakness was the failure to appreciate ‘not only the structural connections between farming and migrant labour but also the increasingly central role of cattle in the local economy.’<sup>868</sup> State-imposed stock control cut directly across emerging relationships of power, security and survival at the community and household level, and thereby exacerbated strains on

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<sup>863</sup> Thompson, ‘Is it Lawful for People to have their Things taken away by Force?’ 42.

<sup>864</sup> *Annual report of the Secretary for Native Affairs, Chief Native Commissioner, Director of Native Development (1954)*, 8.

<sup>865</sup> *Report on the Agricultural Development of Southern Rhodesia by Professor Sir Frank Engledow, (1950)*, 21.

<sup>866</sup> Thompson, ‘Is it Lawful for People to have their Things taken away by Force?’ 43.

<sup>867</sup> Thompson, ‘Is it Lawful for People to have their Things taken away by Force?’ 43.

<sup>868</sup> Munro, *The moral economy of the state*, 110.

social and economic relations.<sup>869</sup> This assault on livestock management proved to be a check against ‘entrepreneurial individualism’<sup>870</sup> and also had important repercussions on gender and generational dynamics as women and young men resisted new demands placed upon them by the implementation of the act.<sup>871</sup> Most affected by this regulation were young males who were out working on farms and urban areas as they no longer had an opportunity to raise herds for marriage purposes and other economic activities.<sup>872</sup> Furthermore, the demands of the fledgling economy which forced married males who worked in towns to abdicate their traditional household roles to their wives and children in the reserves. This resulted in the emergence of new human-animal relationships as women and children took a leading role in animal management. By 1980, the impact of the migrant labour economy which the colonial state had strove to produce to cater for the needs of white capital had resulted in 65-70 per cent of the 675 000 households in the reserves being headed by women farming alone or with husbands away most of the time while in some reserves up to 60 per cent of the men were absent during the most productive periods of their lives.<sup>873</sup> The cumulative development of a rural livestock economy largely in the hands of women simultaneously affected veterinary activities in the reserves especially extension services that often involved the explanation by veterinary officials (all male) of certain veterinary reproductive issues to women – a taboo in African culture.<sup>874</sup>

The allocation of farming and grazing areas meant that certain spaces that had previous been used for grazing were no longer accessible. This resulted in either starvation of cattle in the reserves or their having to exist in semi-starvation conditions as extensive grazing practices were no longer possible. However, this paved way for the development of new strategies of cattle retention by Africans especially by the reserve entrepreneurs. In the face of this assault, livestock owners were constantly adapting their grazing practices to suit the conditions of the reserves. Furthermore, the cattle which the state targeted for destocking were a form of investment by

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<sup>869</sup> Munro, *The moral economy of the state*, 110.

<sup>870</sup> Ranger, *Peasant consciousness*, 75.

<sup>871</sup> G. Thompson, “‘Pumpkins just got in there’: Gender and generational conflict and “improved” agriculture in colonial Zimbabwe,’ *International Review of Social History*, 55 (2010), 177.

<sup>872</sup> Thompson, “‘Pumpkins just got in there,” 194.

<sup>873</sup> Bratton, ‘Settler State, Guerrilla War and Rural Underdevelopment in Rhodesia,’ 57.

<sup>874</sup> D.M. Chavunduka, ‘A look at the past and future of artificial insemination in the tribal areas of Rhodesia,’ *Newsletter of the Veterinary Research Laboratory*, 3, 3 (1968).

Africans into their children's education hence their decimation also cut into their ability to invest in their children's education. Not surprisingly the colonial officials reported widespread resistance to cattle destocking. For instance, the CNC reported in 1955:

No person likes having to dispose of his property, and least of all the native cattle. This is one of the many problems, perhaps the most unpleasant of all, which faces the administrative officers of this department. But it has to be done in the interests of the natives and for the future.<sup>875</sup>

Furthermore, the biggest irony was that the colonial state expected and required African farmers to practice intensive cultivation on land not suited for it.<sup>876</sup> These concerns, notwithstanding, the state was eager to push forward the suggested changes which were hoped to transform African areas into 'modern' economic entities.

Among a number of problems associated with the expected changes in the reserves during the imposition of the legislation was the issue of rotational grazing. The actual assessment of carrying capacity was based on guesswork as visits by pasture assessment officers were extremely cursory. For example, Dr West visited Belingwe Reserve with a total area of 375,000 ha for a total of 6 days in the late dry season of 1948 to make his assessment.<sup>877</sup> Pasture assessment officers did not delimit the country's five ecological regions according to rainfall patterns. In measuring carrying capacity land classification, local soil and vegetation characteristics are important variables yet there was no attempt to adjust figures to the specific conditions of each reserve.<sup>878</sup> While official calculations for 'carrying capacity' were fixed, rainfall patterns varied between and within seasons and areas.<sup>879</sup> Thus, in Munro's words, the formula for carrying capacity though technically neat, 'actually imposed on farmers an unrealistic uniformity that took little account of existing production systems or social relations

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<sup>875</sup> *Annual report of the Secretary for Native Affairs, Chief Native Commissioner, Director of Native Development (1957).*

<sup>876</sup> Machingaidze, 'Agrarian change from above,' 559.

<sup>877</sup> I. Scoones, 'Economic and ecological carrying capacity implications for livestock development in the dryland communal areas of Zimbabwe,' Paper presented at a Seminar, Department of Biological Sciences, University of Zimbabwe, 24 September 1987, 11.

<sup>878</sup> Drinkwater, 'Technical Development and Peasant Impoverishment,' 292.

<sup>879</sup> Drinkwater, 'Technical Development and Peasant Impoverishment,' 301.

already being transformed under the impact of the colonial economy.<sup>880</sup> In reference to the sweeping changes which this Act introduced into African areas in the 1950s were, indeed, ‘a time of dramatic economic, social and political change, not least in the countryside where the state embarked on a hugely ambitious programme to recast the prevailing patterns of African agricultural practice.’<sup>881</sup>

The imposition of the NLHA happened in a specific historical context that is also worth disaggregating. Besides the passage of the NLHA, there were other political and economic developments which directly impacted on the territory but indirectly on African livestock regimes. The formation of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland (1953-63) saw some sectors of the Southern Rhodesian economy becoming the responsibility of the new Federal Government while others remained territorial. In particular, the formation of the Federation did not result in changes in the skewed and segregatory access to veterinary services in the country. The major benefit to Southern Rhodesia accrued to white farmers since white agriculture became a responsibility of the relatively resource-endowed Federal Government. However, despite other agricultural-related services being operated as federal units, veterinary services remained essentially territorial.<sup>882</sup> Thus, activities in respect of disease prevention and control, vaccine production and research remained essentially similar to those in the previous periods, though they began to be operated on a relatively larger scale as Southern Rhodesia retained some experts from Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland who had worked in the Federal capital at Salisbury but decided to stay after the dissolution of the Federation in 1963.

In 1952, a year after the enactment of the NLHA, there was a Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) outbreak which challenged the implementation of its livestock provisions (especially destocking). As has already been discussed in the previous chapter, FMD control measures adopted in the 1930s conflicted with the overarching state propaganda regarding soil conservation in the reserves. Nonetheless, two decades later, there were still continuities in the

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<sup>880</sup> Munro, *The moral economy of the state*, 106.

<sup>881</sup> Phimister, ‘Rethinking the Reserves,’ 225.

<sup>882</sup> D.A Lawrence, ‘The history of Veterinary Services in Rhodesia: 4. Period 1948-69,’ *Rhodesia Veterinary Journal*, 2, 1 (1971), 1.

implementation of such controversial policies.<sup>883</sup> Just as in the 1930s, the disease's direct effects were not as serious as the indirect ramifications. Quarantining of infected and adjoining districts, with consequent cessation of all movements and sales, and the concentration of large numbers of cattle in comparatively small areas to create cattle free belts round infected areas, resulted in tremendous damage to the veld and cattle fell off rapidly in condition.<sup>884</sup> Later when sales could be resumed, the cattle from these areas were so poor that they were practically all rejected for sale.<sup>885</sup> These challenges notwithstanding, state officials were determined to implement the provisions of the NLHA. However, an initial gradualist approach to the implementation of the act between 1952 and 1955 meant that veterinary regulations associated with FMD control dominated the countryside, and were, therefore, more strongly felt by African livestock owners than the land reclamation measures. Apart from FMD control measures, veterinary policy continued to be centred on dipping, and livestock improvement in the reserves.

Moreover, there were no changes in the way state veterinarians viewed FMD control measures regardless of the fact that the Natural Resources Commission had found them detrimental to the environment as early as 1939.<sup>886</sup> Similarly, in the 1950s statements from colonial officials were characterised by their concern over the fate of the destocking policy rather than the suffering it caused to both African livestock, and its owners. This inertia is typical of bureaucratic institutions. Although individuals may change their perspectives, institutions are slower so the opportunity for new ideas to spread is highly constrained, especially 'if they [the new ideas] have the potential to fundamentally shake up the rationale for the existence of the organisation.'<sup>887</sup> As the Superintendent of Natives complained:

When this disease appears the cattle are immediately concentrated to prevent the disease spreading, the animals must stand around for most of the day once a week for veterinary inspection, grazing and land deteriorates, deaths from poverty increase, no movement is permitted and all destocking measures, sales and culling cease. The work of this Division suffers a most serious setback and "implementation of destocking regulations can never

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<sup>883</sup> See Chapter 5.

<sup>884</sup> *Annual report of the Secretary for Native Affairs, Chief Native Commissioner, Director of Native Development (1952)*, 19.

<sup>885</sup> *Annual report of the Secretary for Native Affairs, Chief Native Commissioner, Director of Native Development (1952)*, 19.

<sup>886</sup> See Chapter 5.

<sup>887</sup> Scoones, 'Range management science and policy,' 52.

be certain with this apparently endemic disease in the offing all the time” as once Native Commissioner says. Even after quarantine is lifted stock are generally in such inferior condition that sales are undesirable. It is not only the districts in which the disease appears but all neighbouring areas that are quarantined and during the year Nuanetsi, Chibi, Gutu, Ndanga, Bikita, Buhera, Melsetter, Chipinga, Umtali and part of Victoria were all at a standstill. These districts account for some 24% of all the African owned cattle in the country so the disease is a formidable obstruction in this division’s plans for soil conservation.<sup>888</sup>

Whilst the official’s focus was on how concentration methods impacted on destocking, reading between the lines reveals how such policies amounted to a real problem for African livestock owners. Yet this also reflects another contradiction in colonial bureaucracy. While Native Department officials saw this as an impediment to the implementation of their policy, veterinary officials saw the challenges as evidence that the former’s policies were flawed. For instance, the District Veterinary Officer for Fort Victoria argued:

It is noticeable that grazing was forcibly controlled in reserves by Foot and Mouth disease concentrations, the stock maintained superior condition when restored to the rested grazing areas. This is a strong pointer to the necessity of grazing control in Reserves by the Native Department officials instead of the customary free range. In my opinion this is more important than the seemingly endless destocking of valuable reserves.<sup>889</sup>

Despite the apparent differences between vets and native commissioners, they generally shared one key attitude: an apocalyptic vision of the fate of reserves if no technocratic intervention took place. This resulted in the intensification of the implementation of the Act from 1955, and with this veterinary arguments were sometimes mobilised to justify destocking and livestock improvement measures.

Veterinary challenges that stalked the reserves from the early 1950s when the NLHA was being implemented satisfied the stereotype that African livestock were diseased, and was cast as evidence to the necessity of state intervention. Where FMD was a challenge to destocking in the south-eastern parts, in other parts of the territory a pervasive problem facing the colonial bureaucracy in general (and the Veterinary Department in particular) was passive resistance to

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<sup>888</sup> *Report of the Secretary for Native Affairs, Chief Native Commissioner, Director of Native Development (1953)*, 9.

<sup>889</sup> *Annual report of the Assistant Director of Veterinary Services (Field) (1952)*, 2.

dipping which threatened to derail destocking efforts as non-dipping made it impossible for colonial officials to enumerate and control cattle herds.<sup>890</sup> Although fundamental issues regarding African resistance to dipping that characterised the early colonial period (as discussed in Chapter 3) had subsided owing to general acceptance of the ritual among African livestock owners, problems faced in the early 1950s arose from tick resistance to the acaricides then in use.<sup>891</sup> This resulted in some livestock owners (both white and black) losing their trust in dipping. In fact, among the worst ‘offenders’ were poor European livestock owners who procrastinated until either an official inspection revealed their shortcomings or their herd was reduced through tick-borne diseases.<sup>892</sup> However, in African areas veterinary officials failed to deal with the suspected arsenical resistant tick problem because of their unwavering stance that where ordinary arsenical dips were used at correct strengths and under proper supervision there was no reason to suspect that this problem existed.<sup>893</sup> Like the ticks themselves, veterinary officials had developed immunity to evident change in local conditions. By 1955, other than destocking ‘native’ herds, nothing had been done to deal with this problem but dipping continued across the country with the state making trials with spray races in certain areas.<sup>894</sup>

### **Expanding ‘Native’ beasts**

As has been noted, the NLHA attempted to define and prescribe the type of beast which Africans could rear and how livestock could be pastured. This, as chapters 4 and 5 have shown, was not a new phenomenon as the ‘creation’ of ‘better’ breeds had driven livestock policy in African reserves from around 1912, and had been pursued much more vigorously in the 1940s. In the 1950s, the most popular aspects of African livestock regimes which Native Commissioners appeared to emphasize were overstocking and overgrazing in the communal lands but livestock improvement strategies were still being pursued simultaneously as they were perceived as vital to a system of controlled cattle numbers. It was part and parcel of the colonial matrix of ensuring the economic sustainability of livestock production while maintaining ecological sustainability in

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<sup>890</sup> *Annual report of the Assistant Director of Veterinary Services (Field), 1952, 2.*

<sup>891</sup> See Chapter 3.

<sup>892</sup> *Annual report of the Assistant Director of Veterinary Services (Field), 1953.*

<sup>893</sup> *Annual report of the Secretary for Native Affairs, Chief Native Commissioner, Director of Native Development (1954), 12.*

<sup>894</sup> *Annual report of the Secretary for Native Affairs, Chief Native Commissioner, Director of Native Development, (1955), 20.*

the reserves. Although playing an important counterbalancing act in the formula for checking environmental degradation in the reserves, pasture management and livestock improvement were two important policies intrinsic to the NLHA that have received little scholarly attention.

Besides ‘improving’ the ‘Native’ beast, reforming African grazing practices was considered by colonial officials as a useful antidote to the mounting pressure in the overgrazed reserves. Thus, under the NLHA rotational grazing was tried in African areas. This was an extension of pasture improvement projects which had been introduced in the reserves in the late 1940s for example, in 1948 in Southern Mashonaland (at Victoria, Zimutu and Western Gutu reserves), while in Midlands grazing areas had been created in Charter district.<sup>895</sup> In Matabeleland, Inyati Reserve was paddock fenced and came under a system of rotational grazing as was Mzingwane and Ntabazinduna Reserve.<sup>896</sup> This policy began to take shape in the 1950s but soon ran into operational problems which limited its impact on how Africans pastured livestock. Among the major problems was the fact that it relied on local voluntary labour to construct the grazing strips and this was not always forthcoming; stock could not be moved about easily due to the prevalence of FMD while grazing strips could not be found in all the quarantined areas; the success of the scheme depended on the compliance by locals, particularly herd boys.<sup>897</sup> Rigorous awareness campaigns spearheaded by the Provincial Agriculturist targeting kraal schools to inform children did not bear positive results. Indeed, grazing problems in the reserves were related to land shortages and so could have been solved by availing more grazing land for Africans – a move that was not welcome to the state.

Livestock ‘improvement’ had been introduced in tandem with pasture management in the first decade of the twentieth century but came to play a much more influential role in colonial livestock policy in African reserves from 1944 (see Chapters 4 and 5) as epitomised by the promotion of the ‘pure’ Sanga cattle type. The previous chapter revealed that by 1951 several bull camps had been established across the country and that in certain areas some ‘progressive’

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<sup>895</sup> *Annual report of the Director of Native Agriculture (1950)*, 70.

<sup>896</sup> *Annual report of the Director of Native Agriculture (1951)*, 105.

<sup>897</sup> Ideas in this paragraph were drawn from G.C. Mazarire, ‘A social and political history of Chishanga, South Eastern Zimbabwe, c.1750-2000,’ DPhil Thesis, University of Zimbabwe, 2009, 237.



Africans had started experimenting with the new cattle type. However, in the 1950s Native Commissioners continued to face problems in convincing the majority of Africans of the need to cull and destock 'scrub' stock prior to the development of 'better' but smaller herds.<sup>898</sup> Yet these difficulties did not stop the state from intensifying its efforts in 1953 as it introduced a nucleus *Kuvuvu* cattle herd at the Tjolutjo Experimental farm from cattle obtained in Gwanda. *Kuvuvu* 'dwarf' cattle were perceived to thrive under most adverse conditions throughout the year, and were thus considered suitable for the extensive predominantly 'gusu' reserves of Gwaai, Lupani and Shangani.<sup>899</sup> However, the state-imposed idea of 'good' herds yielded unexpected results mainly because of the manner certain Africans responded to changes in the economy especially the 'proletarianisation' of African males on farms and industry which shifted cattle herding to young boys. The new demand for education meant that the freshly minted herd boys could only pasture cattle after school with the result that these herd-boys ensured that the beasts did not meander far. Thus, the proximate area to settlements was grazed and re-grazed and quickly trampled out.<sup>900</sup> The pasturing of cattle in overgrazed lands affected their nutrition and, therefore, increased the number of scrub beast which the colonial officials were trying to rid through destocking.

Significantly, there were contradictory reports regarding the popularity of bull camps across the country. For instance, state propaganda was that by 1955 the bull camp established in the Semokwe Reserve in Matobo District was said to be popular among Africans.<sup>901</sup> Similar reports were also raised with regards to star bull schemes in Manicaland, Selukwe and Lundi Reserves, and in the Melsetter District while new ones were established in Mtoko, Mondoro, Bushu, Madziva Reserves in northern Mashonaland.<sup>902</sup> However, in 1956, despite the project having been in operation for over five years, the uptake of bulls supplied to Africans through these

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<sup>898</sup> *Annual report of the Secretary for Native Affairs, Chief Native Commissioner, Director of Native Development, (1958)*, 15.

<sup>899</sup> *Annual report of the Director of Native Agriculture (1953)*, 96.

<sup>900</sup> *Annual report of the Secretary for Native Affairs, Chief Native Commissioner, Director of Native Development (1954)*, 11.

<sup>901</sup> *Annual report of the Secretary for Native Affairs, Chief Native Commissioner, Director of Native Development (1955)*, 20.

<sup>902</sup> *Annual report of the Secretary for Native Affairs, Chief Native Commissioner, Director of Native Development (1956)*, 38.

camps suggests that many of these faced intractable difficulties in disposing stud bulls as a result of low public interest. For instance, in Matabeleland, there were 102 African stockholders using Tuli bulls while in the Midlands only 304 'star' bulls in Selukwe, Lundi and Buhera-Sabi areas were in use.<sup>903</sup> In a country with an estimated population of 2 073 592 head of African-owned cattle, this was a very tiny percentage to be of any significance.<sup>904</sup> By 1958, the colonial officials awakened to the fact that the allocation of council bulls to villagers had not been a success. The major problem was that 'responsible' people could not be found to look after them hence, 'several of them (bulls) became wild, trespassed in gardens, and had to be slaughtered.'<sup>905</sup> This meant that the state had not accomplished its ambition of destroying 'scrub' beasts while introducing smaller herds of better cattle through top-down livestock improvement policies.

By the late 1950s, the human-animal ratio had risen, from one beast for every ten persons living in the reserves in 1901, to one beast for every man, woman and child.<sup>906</sup> The frustration which colonial officials faced as a result of these increasing numbers meant that they became increasingly obsessed with destocking. This led to disparities in the rate at which new livestock breeds were being introduced into the reserves and the slaughter of 'scrub' beasts. Thus, destocking affected livestock ownership patterns in the reserves, and also affected many agricultural activities. By 1961, 37 per cent of the land holders were entirely without cattle while in some places like Mashonaland West the proportion was 49 per cent and elsewhere in Mashonaland it was 40 per cent.<sup>907</sup> By 1965, it was estimated that 48 per cent of African farming families had no cattle.<sup>908</sup>

During the same period, a livestock improvement scheme introduced in 1962 that centred on artificial insemination of cattle to remedy the effects of excessive destocking faced an uncertain

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<sup>903</sup> *Annual report of the Secretary for Native Affairs, Chief Native Commissioner, Director of Native Development (1956)*, 38.

<sup>904</sup> *Annual report of the Secretary for Native Affairs, Chief Native Commissioner, Director of Native Development (1958)*, 16.

<sup>905</sup> *Annual report of the Secretary for Native Affairs, Chief Native Commissioner, Director of Native Development (1958)*, 15.

<sup>906</sup> *Annual report of the Secretary for Native Affairs, Chief Native Commissioner, Director of Native Development (1958)*, 16.

<sup>907</sup> Machingaidze, 'Agrarian change from above,' 575.

<sup>908</sup> Machingaidze, 'Agrarian change from above,' 575.

future owing to lack of popularity among Africans in the reserves. Of the estimated 2 225 273 African owned cattle in the country in 1962<sup>909</sup>, only 105 cows belonging to 66 Africans had been subjected to artificial insemination.<sup>910</sup> By 1964, for instance, out of over 300 breeding cows in Shumba Reserve, an average of only 24 cows were artificially inseminated each year between January and March, and colonial officials complained that there was no evidence that, given time, the numbers would increase to any appreciable extent.<sup>911</sup> A contemporary official interpretation of its unpopularity was that Africans were simply organically unprogressive.<sup>912</sup> Writing about the discouraging history of artificial insemination in certain pilot African areas introduced between 1962 and 1965, Chavunduka concluded:

at the present time and stage of development, the prospects of artificial insemination being of practical value to livestock production in Tribal Trust areas [formerly Reserves] seems to be nil, however indications are that, at an appropriate time in the development of these areas, artificial insemination could play a vital role in promoting livestock production.<sup>913</sup>

What this meant is that there were some Africans who faced challenges in their agricultural activities due to the absence of draught power.

**‘Drought is an act of God but compulsory destocking is an act of government.’**

State intrusion elicited diverse African response. Technocratic ideas of livestock improvement, pasture management, herd size and grazing techniques were abhorred by Africans as the previous section explained and, as this section shows, fuelled their alliance with the urban-based political organisations. At the national level, hardships as a result of racialised state policies proved to be a rallying point for both rural and urban-based nationalists. However, the popular thinking among colonial officials was that rural Africans were incapable of pursuing political agendas of a national outlook hence the argument that rural political consciousness was caused by the ‘distortion of facts and deliberate falsehoods, to rural and unsophisticated people’ by African political leadership based on ‘imaginary grievances and hardships’ said to have been brought

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<sup>909</sup> *Annual Report of the Director of Veterinary Services (1962)*, 1.

<sup>910</sup> *Annual report of the Secretary for Agriculture (1963)*, 32.

<sup>911</sup> Chavunduka, ‘A look at the past and future of artificial insemination in the tribal areas of Rhodesia,’ 27.

<sup>912</sup> *Annual report of the Secretary for Agriculture (1963)*, 32.

<sup>913</sup> Chavunduka, ‘A look at the past and future of artificial insemination in the tribal areas of Rhodesia,’ 27.

about by the implementation of the NLHA.<sup>914</sup> This thinking was also aligned to a longstanding debate between different state departments over policy matters regarding the extent to which Africans could be pushed into adopting perceived better agricultural practices without precipitating a backlash.

In fact, the NLHA was framed with the partial objective of cultivating a culture of political consent in the reserves as colonial officials believed that:

Rapid implementation of government policy by application of the Native Land Husbandry Act right through all the Native Reserves is vital to establish and ensure a contented and progressive Native peasant. Inevitably, he will disregard the political sirens of the urban areas who themselves are making no headway with their self-aggrandizement schemes.<sup>915</sup>

Contra these aspirations, in the 1950s the NLHA drew a lot of attention from proto-nationalists campaigning against a plethora of colonial policies. Indeed, one African nationalist politician contended, ‘the Native Land Husbandry Act was the best recruiter we ever had.’<sup>916</sup> Some Africans who were working in towns such as Mazvita Tsandukwa, who attended a 1952 rally addressed by Benjamin Burombo in Bulawayo in which he castigated the basis of the destocking policy, developed a political understanding of the challenges his people were facing in the reserves.<sup>917</sup> By 1955, African opposition to the implementation of the NLHA had increased as African political activists began to undermine the authority of the chiefs and headmen who cooperated with government policy.<sup>918</sup> From September 1957 onwards, the African nationalist political parties: African National Congress (ANC) and its successors, the NDP (National Democratic Party), ZAPU (Zimbabwe African Peoples’ Union), and ZANU (Zimbabwe African National Union) became the chief organs through which African opposition to the Act was channelled.

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<sup>914</sup> *Annual report of the Chief Native Commissioner (1957)*, 10.

<sup>915</sup> *Annual report of the Chief Native Commissioner (1954)*, 11.

<sup>916</sup> George Nyandoro cited in I. Phimister, ‘Rethinking the Reserves: Southern Rhodesia’s Land Husbandry Act Reviewed,’ *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 19, 2 (1993), 225-239.

<sup>917</sup> Interview with Mazvita Tsandukwa, born 1925, Chaseyama, Chimanimani District, 06/04/12.

<sup>918</sup> Machingaidze, ‘Agrarian change from above,’ 578.

Commenting on the formative years of African nationalism in Southern Rhodesia, Ranger argued that peasants became 'conscious' of themselves as a class after failing to exercise the various options available for their prosperity.<sup>919</sup> Although this section draws from this framework, it is not about the development of nationalism per se but about how the context of resistance informs this analysis as it was affected by the NLHA and manifested itself in the manner Africans tended their livestock.

One of the most remarkable results of the implementation of the NLHA was the peopling of the hitherto sparsely populated north-western parts of the territory, especially Gokwe (Sebungwe). The late 1950s and early 1960s were characterised by some landless Africans moving into the previously tsetse-infested areas Zambezi valley. Most of the new arrivals came from Rhodesdale Crown Land, where they had been evicted by the colonial authorities, and some from the southern part of the country where land pressure in the reserves had become untenable.<sup>920</sup> Ironically, these movements had tacit state support which was aware of the overcrowding and landlessness in other African reserves. The state arguably believed it could act as a safety valve to check incipient political activities arising from land shortages in many reserves.<sup>921</sup>

As discussed, across the country Africans in the reserves came to view livestock policies through a heavily politicised lens. Veterinary reports from the late 1950s suggest that very few livestock improvement schemes were undertaken as a result of the above.<sup>922</sup> Veterinary officials complained about pressure which the ANC was putting on the chiefs and headmen during rallies which began that year in the rural areas, and expressed relief that a state of emergency was declared on 26 February 1959 leading to a ban on the ANC's activities and the detention of its

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<sup>919</sup> T.O. Ranger, 'Tradition and Travesty: Chiefs and the Administration in Makoni District, Zimbabwe, 1960-1980,' *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, 52, 3 (1982), 20-41.

<sup>920</sup> See P.S. Nyambara, 'Madheruka and Shangwe: ethnic identities and the culture of modernity in Gokwe, northwestern Zimbabwe, 1963-1979,' *Journal of African History*, 43 (2002), 287-306.

<sup>921</sup> P.S. Nyambara, 'Immigrants, 'Traditional' Leaders and the Rhodesian State: The Power of 'Communal' Land Tenure and the Politics of Land Acquisition in Gokwe, Zimbabwe, 1963-1979,' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 27, 4 (2001), 774.

<sup>922</sup> *Annual report of the Secretary for Internal Affairs (1963)*, 12.

leaders would make their duties much easier.<sup>923</sup> However, the banning of the ANC saw the rise of another African political outfit, the National Democratic Party (NDP), which exercised even more influence among both rural and urban Africans leading to:

Irresponsible political activity which, hitherto, had been unknown in the tribal areas, where to insult a chief was unthinkable and where the Native Commissioner was trusted and known as a man of integrity and whose authority was recognised as just and fair. The tragedy of it all lies in the fact that, for most of the rural population, the economic and local government schemes, designed and implemented for their benefit and for which the Native Commissioner is responsible, and for the success of which the cooperation of the tribal leaders is essential, were gravely retarded and in some districts came almost to a standstill.<sup>924</sup>

An attempt to stem opposition to state policies, in the form of the Native Land Husbandry Amendment Act (1959), which made it an offence for an African to refuse to move to a new dwelling site, and not to answer questions relating to information needed to grant farming rights, failed to yield the desired effect. Instead, Africans challenged state policies and propaganda even more openly. A particular point of contention was the 1959-60 drought which the state sought to repackage as a very visible and visceral example of the folly of African resistance to destocking. Cattle deaths attributable to the drought throughout the country amounted to 98 061, and the colonial officials took this heavy toll as justification for destocking and culling.<sup>925</sup> They contented ‘the effect of the drought in these high mortality rates has much improved an extremely serious situation, brought about by continued overstocking.’<sup>926</sup> However, Africans had a counter-narrative which they mobilised to resist the state’s official position. They reasoned, ‘Drought is an act of God but compulsory destocking is an act of government.’<sup>927</sup> Thus, the reshaping of livestock, land and people as envisioned by state bureaucrats continued to be

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<sup>923</sup> *Annual report of the Secretary for Native Affairs, Chief Native Commissioner, Director of Native Development (1958)*, 5.

<sup>924</sup> *Annual report of the Secretary for Native Affairs, Chief Native Commissioner, Director of Native Development (1960)*, 2.

<sup>925</sup> *Annual report of the Secretary for Native Affairs, Chief Native Commissioner, Director of Native Development (1960)*, 7.

<sup>926</sup> *Annual report of the Secretary for Native Affairs, Chief Native Commissioner, Director of Native Development (1960)*, 7.

<sup>927</sup> *Annual report of the Secretary for Native Affairs, Chief Native Commissioner, Director of Native Development (1960)*, 7.

challenged, and, as the next subsection suggests, ‘progress’ made hitherto was reversed in certain instances.

### **Freedom Ploughing**

By 1961, the colonial government was in a serious political crisis forcing it to suspend the NLHA. When this decision was made, state policy had been compromised severely such that the logic of technocratic policies was questioned increasingly. A large number of Africans who no longer had cattle could not manure their fields while even among those with cattle, many could not afford to own scotch carts with which to convey compost or manure to the lands.<sup>928</sup> Besides the shortage of cattle was the shortage of land. For instance, by the early 1960s there were 79 000 cultivators in South Mashonaland but only enough land for 32 000 ‘economic units’ while in Mashonaland West, there were 45 000 cultivators but only enough land for 34 000.<sup>929</sup> Given these difficult circumstances and with the strong encouragement of nationalist leaders, Africans in the reserves abandoned technocratic policies, and began to farm in a way that undermined official policy.<sup>930</sup> This was known as *kurima madiro* (freedom ploughing – an ideology of individual freedom to counter technocratic intervention) characterised by the indiscriminate opening up of new lands by individuals and households. In some reserves, Africans referred to *kurima madiro* as *madiro aNkomo* (Nkomo’s freedom), in reference to the influential role played by the nationalist leader Joshua Nkomo in encouraging this form of rural protest.<sup>931</sup>

Having abandoned the NLHA, the state adopted a new policy of community development (discussed in the next section) which closely incorporated compliant chiefs – something which resembled the promotion of African self-government as reflected in South Africa’s Bantu Authorities Act (1951). African nationalists in Southern Rhodesia were quick to draw comparisons between community development with developments in the neighbouring South Africa arguing that the creation of African homelands promoted the segregation policy, and was,

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<sup>928</sup> Machingaidze, ‘Agrarian change from above,’ 575.

<sup>929</sup> Machingaidze, ‘Agrarian change from above,’ 575.

<sup>930</sup> M. Drinkwater, ‘Technical Development and Peasant Impoverishment: Land Use Policy in Zimbabwe’s Midlands Province,’ *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 15, 2 (1989), 287.

<sup>931</sup> Nyambara, ‘Immigrants, ‘Traditional’ Leaders and the Rhodesian State,’ 782.

therefore, to be resisted by Africans.<sup>932</sup> Thus, the Southern Rhodesian state did not reap immediate results from its relaxation of the NLHA and subsequent attempts to implement technocratic policies through chiefs. Instead, some chiefs collaborated with their people in *madiro* farming with the prominent example being that of Chief Zambe Makoni while others like Chief Morame Chiendambuya were too weak to take effective action against dissenters.<sup>933</sup>

*Madiro* farming also extended to how Africans tendered their livestock thus it impacted negatively on the state-preferred livestock regime in the reserves. In several reserves where ‘progress’ had previously been reported by 1960, the situation had changed drastically or was perceived to be under threat from nationalist activities. For instance, paddocks that had been introduced in some African reserves from around 1948 were broken with fences being cut and redeployed around homes and vegetable gardens.<sup>934</sup> When they were introduced, some colonial officials had considered the creation of paddocks as a ‘positive policy in contrast to the unpopular destocking approach.’<sup>935</sup> The state’s attempt to reshape the ‘native’ beast was also reversed as negative response to previously ‘popular’ livestock improvement activities was reported. For instance, in Chinamora Reserve prior to 1960 African were reportedly becoming more receptive to proposals for improving the nutrition and the type of stock especially in the Shumba area. Similarly, four livestock improvement areas established in Bikita and Victoria districts were also thought to attract significant attention from African livestock but soon faced problems during the period of *kurima madiro*.<sup>936</sup> Thus, the frustrated Secretary for Internal Affairs reported:

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<sup>932</sup> To see how community development greatly resembled South Africa’s separate development see Jacobs, *Environment, power and injustice*, 176; F.T. Hendricks, ‘Loose planning and rapid resettlement: The politics of conservation and control in Transkei, South Africa, 1950 - 1970,’ *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 15, 2 (1989), 306-325.

<sup>933</sup> T.O. Ranger, ‘Tradition and Travesty: Chiefs and the Administration in Makoni District, Zimbabwe, 1960-1980,’ *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, 52, 3 (1982), 26, 27, 30.

<sup>934</sup> I. Scoones, ‘Range management science and policy: Politics, polemics and pasture in southern Africa,’ in M. Leach and R. Mearns (eds), *The lie of the land: Challenging received wisdom on the African environment*, (London: Heinemann, 1996), 46.

<sup>935</sup> Scoones, ‘Range management science and policy,’ 46.

<sup>936</sup> *Annual report of the Secretary for Native Affairs, Chief Native Commissioner, Director of Native Development (1961)*, 60.



Political pressures from African extremists have made themselves felt in the field of agriculture. Grass fires for example, were often left to rage through the tinder-dry grazing areas. Training centres were burned; accepted farming practices were abandoned: one District commissioner, for instance reports that farmers were advised to revert to the practice of broadcasting maize seed.<sup>937</sup>

Some dip tanks were destroyed by political extremists while in some areas, drought, disease, deliberate veld fires and political agitation all contributed to a situation in which livestock production and management showed little improvement and in some areas deterioration.<sup>938</sup> For instance, in the Chesa Purchase Area (Mashonaland East), where dipping facilities were inadequate, stock losses due to suspected Redwater occurred.<sup>939</sup> In this area, there was no dipping tank for 305 new farms resulting in African farmers trying to overcome the dipping problem by hand-spraying their stock but this method was not approved by the Veterinary Department.<sup>940</sup> In Matabeleland North, it was reported that the political situation in the province generally made any extension work extremely difficult.<sup>941</sup> Livestock improvement schemes were treated with suspicion and even such measures as dosing, vaccinations and inoculations met with renewed resistance.<sup>942</sup>

The temporary loss of state control over the reserves between 1959 and 1962 as reflected by *madiro* farming had important repercussions for both African livestock owners and veterinary officials especially those in the tsetse fly zones.<sup>943</sup> By the end of 1962 overt resistance was subsiding, and yet mutual suspicion between Africans and colonial officials did not vanish. This mutual suspicion hampered efforts by the Vet Department to inoculate cattle in the reserves against Trypanosomiasis. The problem, as one district commissioner reported (after losses of 10% in one area of his district), was that, 'Every rumour is believed. Because the inoculation for Trypanosomiasis is not the same colour as that used for other diseases on European farms, these

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<sup>937</sup> *Annual report of the Secretary for Internal Affairs, Chief Native Commissioner, Director of Native Development (1962)*, 18.

<sup>938</sup> *Annual report of the Secretary for Agriculture (1962)*, 24.

<sup>939</sup> *Annual report of the Secretary for Agriculture (1962)*, 24.

<sup>940</sup> *Annual report of the Secretary for Agriculture (1963)*, 16.

<sup>941</sup> *Annual report of the Secretary for Agriculture (1962)*, 27.

<sup>942</sup> *Annual report of the Secretary for Agriculture (1962)*, 27.

<sup>943</sup> *Annual Report of the Director of Veterinary Services*, 30/09/1962, 8.

people firmly believe that the Veterinary Department is trying to kill their cattle and dogs. Overcoming such ignorance is difficult.<sup>944</sup> So huge was the suspicion that veterinary officials across the territory carried out their activities in an atmosphere of obstruction and civil disobedience. In July 1964, civil disobedience and non-production of cattle had brought the *Antricide* prophylactic regime to a halt in Nyanga North and Gokwe Tribal Trust Lands (TTLs).<sup>945</sup> The veterinary official for Nyanga North explained:

We had either to continue trying to enforce production and treatment against growing opposition or to withdraw entirely until the inevitable losses from Trypanosomiasis brought the inhabitants to their senses. Since the latter course was the wish of the people, the only practical way of proving our case and preventing similar difficulties spreading to adjacent areas we withdrew almost entirely from Inyanga North TTL.... By November the condition of the cattle was pitiful and rotting carcasses could be seen or smelt as one drove through the veld. Inspection of the area in January showed that the worst affected centres, Matisi, Mangesi, Ruangwe, Chifambe and Manwere had lost over 2000 herd and were left with 2 700 alive – 42% mortality.<sup>946</sup>

Similar developments were recorded in regard to dipping and production of cattle for inspection.

The Provincial Veterinary Officer (Salisbury) reported

one of the main features has been the return to normal dipping in Tribal Trust Lands. It will be remembered that in November 1964 civil disobedience had reached a position where it was impossible to obtain any co-operation from stock owners, the most truculent were those centred on Mrewa. In November individual call up notices were served on stockowners in Mangwende TTL. These were completely disregarded, prosecutions followed and over 1000 stockowners elected to take imprisonment; intimidation had reached serious proportion and lawlessness appeared to be winning the day, BSAP [British South Africa Police] and Army Units moved into Mangwende TTL to protect our staff and enforce the law.<sup>947</sup>

In Umtali Veterinary District, the Principal Veterinary Officer (PVO) also painted a similar picture as he reported that no cattle were dipping in the Tribal Trust Lands (TTLs) in the Makoni District and that resistance to dipping had started in the Tandi TTL before spreading to Weya, Chikore, Chiduku and Makoni TTLs.<sup>948</sup> In Chiduku and Makoni dipping began after intensive

<sup>944</sup> *Annual report of the Secretary for Internal Affairs (1963)*, 12.

<sup>945</sup> *Annual Report of the Assistant Director of Veterinary Services (Field)*, 30/09/1966, 6-7.

<sup>946</sup> *Annual Report of the Assistant Director of Veterinary Services (Field)*, 30/09/ 1965, 1.

<sup>947</sup> *Annual Report of the Assistant Director of Veterinary Services (Field)*, 30/09/ 1965, 2.

<sup>948</sup> *Annual Report of the Assistant Director of Veterinary Services (Field)*, 30/09/ 1965, 2.

supervision involving veterinary officials and all kraals. In Tanda, Weya and Chikore TTLs outward resistance collapsed after the police invaded the area in a show of force.<sup>949</sup> The intervention of the police resulted in African cattle dipping for the first time in two years. However, the long period of non-dipping led to a very heavy infestation with blue ticks in the Tandi TTL and many deaths from tick-borne diseases.<sup>950</sup> Tables 6.1<sup>951</sup> and 6.2<sup>952</sup> reveal the extent of resistance among African livestock owners during this time.

**Table 6.1: Animal Health Act Contraventions (mainly damage to dip tanks and facilities)**

District	No. Of cases	Fined	Remarks
Salisbury	35 Africans	£681	Or imprisonment 3 years each
	2 Africans	-	
Bulawayo	21 Africans	£70	
Fort Victoria	2 Africans	£60	£30 each
Umtali	21 Africans	£315	£105 collected
Chipinga	57 Africans	£208.10/-	
Sinoia	7 Europeans	£43	Plus 4 months suspended
	2 Africans	£20	
Gwanda	124 Africans	£664.5/-	
Total	7 Europeans	£43	
	264 Africans	£2018.15/-	
<b><u>Grand total</u></b>	<b><u>371</u></b>	<b><u>£2061.15</u></b>	

<sup>949</sup> *Annual Report of the Assistant Director of Veterinary Services (Field)*, 30/09/ 1965, 2.

<sup>950</sup> *Annual Report of the Assistant Director of Veterinary Services (Field)*, 30/09/ 1965, 2.

<sup>951</sup> Source: *Annual Report of the Assistant Director of Veterinary Services (Field)*, 30/09/ 1965, 9.

<sup>952</sup> Source: *Annual Report of the Assistant Director of Veterinary Services (Field)*, 30/09/ 1965, 10.

**Table 6. 2: Cleansing Regulations: Contraventions**

<b>District</b>	<b>No. of cases</b>	<b>Fined</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
Salisbury	9 Europeans 2559 Africans	£107.10 £26.567	Or imprisonment
Bulawayo	8 Europeans 52 Africans	£111 £242	
Fort Victoria	3 Europeans 85 Africans	£25 £175	
Gwelo	12 Europeans 33 Africans	£90.10 £139.10	
Umtali	6 Europeans 165 Africans 14 Africans	£80 £441 -	18 months imprisonment
Chipinga	2 Europeans 14 Africans	£40 £34	
Sinoia	4 Europeans 8 Africans	£40 £34	
Gwanda	2 Africans	£6	
<b><u>Totals</u></b>	<b>44 Europeans</b> <b>2932 Africans</b>	<b>£ 494</b> <b>£27 638.10</b>	
<b><u>Grand total</u></b>	<b><u>2976</u></b>	<b><u>£28 132.10</u></b>	

These tables reveal that there were a number of Africans who were either fined or imprisoned for either vandalising dip tanks or flouting dipping regulations. However, what they do not show is whether these prosecutions involved the same culprits. There was also a very tiny number of Europeans who were prosecuted. These were mainly common among poor resourced whites who could not meet the requirements for building dip tanks. But what is clear is that the state took

these anti-veterinary activities seriously, and where necessary made regulations to forestall the propagation. In fact, resistance to dipping forced the Rhodesian Government to tighten tick eradication measures through the Notice No. 450 (1965) which extended compulsory dipping to the months of July, August, September and October at 14 day intervals – thereby making dipping mandatory throughout the year. This was expected to have beneficial effect on the long neglected control of the build-up of certain tick species in winter – particularly the immature stages of the brown tick. This legislation also closed gaps in the Department's power to call up cattle for inspection. However, due to drought conditions then prevailing in the country, exemptions in many districts on account of lack of adequate water supplies became a major handicap to effective tick control.<sup>953</sup> Furthermore, an acaricide known as toxaphene had superseded arsenic as the most used acaricide in plunge tanks as the veterinary officials were under pressure to increase the availability of non-arsenical dips because of an increasing tolerance of ticks to arsenic and as a security measure.<sup>954</sup>

### **Community development and the changing nature of colonial livestock policy**

The previous section revealed that by 1961 the colonial state's intrusive policies were being challenged overtly in many African reserves. This section discusses the impact of African resistance on the colonial state, and, more specifically, how state response in the context of livestock management was shaped by this resistance. At the political level, the period after 1961 was characterised by the breakup of the Federation in 1963 which offered challenges to Southern Rhodesia (now called Rhodesia), and the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) in November 1965 which drew a lot of international attention leading to the imposition of sanctions. Economically, the breakup of the Federation meant staff losses to other countries but Rhodesia managed to recover from this loss through the investing in young white Rhodesian professional staff, and attracting personnel from the former members of the Federation.<sup>955</sup> Administratively, the early 1960s (as has been shown in the previous section) was marked by temporary loss of power of the state in the reserves (as shown by the prevalence of *madiro* farming) and brought a new political context and approach to colonial policy as Rhodesia shifted

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<sup>953</sup> *Annual Report of the Assistant Director of Veterinary Services (Field)*, 30/09/ 1965, 8.

<sup>954</sup> *Annual Report of the Assistant Director of Veterinary Services (Field)*, 30/09/ 1965, 9.

<sup>955</sup> *Annual Report of the Director of Veterinary Services*, 30/09/1962, 2.

from technocratic control to indirect rule involving chiefs and headmen in rural administration in implementing a policy known as community development.<sup>956</sup> Colonial officials who worked directly with Africans in the reserves abandoned their longstanding logic which had pervaded the bureaucracy since the 1930s which considered soil conservation, and not the cooperation of the people, the ultimate objective to be realised even at the expense of widespread resistance.<sup>957</sup>

Though it had been a popular form of governance in other former British colonies in the post-war period, in Rhodesia community development started in 1962 when elections in the then Southern Rhodesia brought to power the Rhodesian Front, and was to dominate policy after UDI.<sup>958</sup> These changes reached their peak with the passage of the Land Tenure Act (1969) which legislated the devolution of power to African Councils in the former reserves now renamed Tribal Trust Lands.<sup>959</sup> The timing of community development portrays the state's ambition to deal with rural opposition by redefining its relationship to property rights in a way that was less confrontational but at the same time avoid relinquishing control over rural areas.<sup>960</sup>

Community development saw the disbandment of the Native Affairs Department (NAD) with its agricultural functions being passed to relevant technical industries while in its place came the Ministry of Internal Affairs which now superintended district administration led by District Commissioners (DCs).<sup>961</sup> However, this arrangement failed, as will be shown, since by 1977, at least 20 per cent of 241 councils were bankrupt. Some of them had to be placed under the direct management of district commissioners thereby reversing the stated goal of community development.<sup>962</sup> Nonetheless, under this new dispensation, land allocation in African areas

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<sup>956</sup> T.O. Ranger, 'Tradition and Travesty: Chiefs and the Administration in Makoni District, Zimbabwe, 1960-1980,' *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, 52, 3 (1982), 22.

<sup>957</sup> Hendricks, 'Loose planning and rapid resettlement,' 319.

<sup>958</sup> Community development was fashionable in British colonies from the 1950s. It was first introduced in India in 1952 and later in African colonies including Kenya, Tanganyika and Northern Rhodesia. See M. Bratton, *Beyond community development: from Rhodesia to Zimbabwe*, (Harare: Mambo Press, 1978), 18.

<sup>959</sup> See W. Wolmer and I. Scoones, 'The science of 'civilised' agriculture: The mixed farming discourse in Zimbabwe,' *African Affairs*, 99 (2000), 583.

<sup>960</sup> P.S. Nyambara, 'Immigrants, 'Traditional' Leaders and the Rhodesian State: The Power of 'Communal' Land Tenure and the Politics of Land Acquisition in Gokwe, Zimbabwe, 1963-1979,' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 27, 4 (2001), 778.

<sup>961</sup> Bratton, *Beyond community development*, 19.

<sup>962</sup> Bratton, *Beyond community development*, 43.

became the responsibility of traditional leaders. It was up to them to decide whether to make an allocation and to determine the size and location of the allocation. Colonial officials now thought that ‘customary’ rights of access to land constituted an effective system of social control, and that individualising rights, as had been done under the NLHA, disturbed those relations.<sup>963</sup> This shift from the promotion of individual to communal land and grazing rights had important repercussions on certain veterinary interactions in the reserves.

Under community development, the state was more willing to investigate the source of resistance to veterinary measures in the reserves. This new approach was encapsulated in the increasing role given to the Department’s only black veterinary surgeon, Dr Dexter Chavunduka. Chavunduka took a leading role in the promotion of veterinary extension work in several African Purchase Areas and the Tribal Trust Lands through organising field days.<sup>964</sup> The presence of Chavunduka at the forefront of veterinary interactions in African areas revealed an attempt to understand African livestock regimes, and also an attempt to win hearts and minds (WHAM strategy) through desisting from the overtly coercive way of leadership that had characterised veterinary policy prior to that time.<sup>965</sup>

Chavunduka offers a complicated example of African response to state veterinary policy in the 1960s. Though working for the state apparatus, his views were essentially revisionist. As an educated African vet scientist, he looked down upon the activities of Africans in the reserves whom he considered to be hanging on to ‘superstitions’, and yet he also castigated the white veterinary officials for not taking time to explain policy and understand the cultural context. That he harboured such thoughts is not a surprise at all as he joined the Veterinary Department during

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<sup>963</sup> Nyambara, ‘Immigrants, ‘Traditional’ Leaders and the Rhodesian State,’ 779.

<sup>964</sup> *Annual Report of the Assistant Director of Veterinary Services (Field)*, 30/09/1967, 4.

<sup>965</sup> D.M. Chavunduka, who worked in the Veterinary Research Department, was the first African to be qualified as a veterinary surgeon. After independence he faced difficult problem in recruiting Africans into the service because black Zimbabwean who trained in Eastern countries between 1965 and 1980 could not be registered locally with the Council of Veterinary Surgeons. Before independence, the only persons who could be registered were those holding an MRCVS diploma, a degree recognised by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons in London or a degree from one of a small number of other universities whose standards were already known to the Council. On this basis graduates from Eastern and Third world countries were not registrable. See D.A Lawrence, ‘The history of Veterinary Services in Rhodesia: 4. Period 1948-69,’ *Rhodesia Veterinary Journal*, 2, 1 (1971); D.M. Chavunduka, ‘Veterinary manpower in Zimbabwe,’ *Zimbabwe Veterinary Journal*, 11, 3-4, 1980.

the turbulent early 1960s, and as an African he was an insider to the genuine challenges (many of which were man-made) facing African livestock owners. However, in the long run Chavunduka's efforts were doomed to failure since the NLHA had soured relations between the state and African communities that it was very difficult to build any trust in new state initiatives.<sup>966</sup>

Although his work came to be questioned by many Africans, Chavunduka made interesting observations regarding veterinary policy in African areas, and how veterinary interactions could be improved. His observations are, thus, an important prism through which we can understand the nature of veterinary interactions in both African Purchase Areas and TTLs during the 1960s. Amongst his most important observations was the fact that the Veterinary Department had failed to introduce to the African livestock owner the 'modern' approach and technical knowledge in a way that was both understandable and acceptable. However, he portrayed the popular thinking among vet scientists that because the African methods were 'unscientific' it followed that they were irrational. For instance, he wrote 'superstition is inherent and more deeply rooted in Tribal Trust Lands where the community tends to remain static, with strong tribal links and tradition.'<sup>967</sup> Indeed, he had 'concrete' examples to back his argument such as taboos about *mombe dzemudzimu/inkomo zamadhlozi* (cattle dedicated to ancestral spirits) which were not produced for dipping if there was any likelihood for them being interfered with than the mere act of dipping.<sup>968</sup> However, as has been shown already, it is not true that African livestock regimes in the reserves were static. His take on destocking particularly portrayed his ignorance of the position of livestock in rural livelihoods. He averred that destocking was on the whole a good policy though 'in some quarters destocking is to them one of those evils introduced by the Veterinary Department. Therefore any endeavour by a member of the Veterinary Department to count cattle has been done cautiously.'<sup>969</sup> What Chavunduka failed to grasp was that while destocking played an important role in reducing stress on the environment, implementing it

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<sup>966</sup> Munro, *The moral economy of the state*, 135.

<sup>967</sup> D.M. Chavunduka, 'Veterinary extension work in African areas of Rhodesia,' *Newsletter of the Veterinary Research Laboratory (Salisbury)*, 1, 1, April 1966, 8.

<sup>968</sup> Chavunduka, 'Veterinary extension work in African areas of Rhodesia,' 8.

<sup>969</sup> Chavunduka, 'Veterinary extension work in African areas of Rhodesia,' 8.



among a people whose lives depended on livestock was tantamount to robbing a ‘community’ bank. Keeping large herds enabled, among other things, Africans to cater for manure, fees for their children and taxes to the government. Thus, possession of large herds in that sense was a rational idea.

His writings reveal that he genuinely supported the logic of received wisdom even though he thought it could be packaged in a manner more acceptable to Africans. Thus, he suggested that all the departments concerned with livestock production put concerted effort in teaching the *individual* farmer how to select better breeding animals, and the feeding of livestock, control of worms and ticks, vaccinations for quarter evil, contagious abortion, dehorning, castration and marketing livestock. He argued:

These are not new ideas, for already a great deal of work is being done in this direction. Pamphlets are sent out, and radio broadcasts are made, aimed at instructing the African farming community. Field days are organised, but I’m here stressing the need of following up the work of the individual farmer, for the farmer will not tell you, at a field day, of his fears, beliefs or actual handicaps. The field day is of great importance in that it creates in him the general awareness of his responsibility as a farmer, but the actual practical demonstration is the only means of showing him the way.<sup>970</sup>

He hoped to produce, through extension, radio and publications, a *consciousness* in the minds of African livestock owners for the need to adopt ‘better’ methods of livestock husbandry.<sup>971</sup> However, most of his ideas did not see light of day since in practice very little if anything changed after 1962. A few years after initiating his extension service in the African reserves (especially the artificial insemination service, a project meant to improve calving rates among ‘native’ cows), his popularity began to wane. By 1967, the Assistant Director of Veterinary Services was reporting that, ‘the study of African extension work by Dr Chavunduka continues but it is evident that the cooperation offered to him initially is gradually falling off. Unless some immediate apparent benefit is on offer, then enthusiasm soon evaporates.’<sup>972</sup> The intensification of the liberation struggle from 1966 coupled with the fact that the technocratic language which

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<sup>970</sup> Chavunduka, ‘Veterinary extension work in African areas of Rhodesia,’ 8.

<sup>971</sup> D.M. Chavunduka, ‘Veterinary teaching methods in African areas,’ *Newsletter of the Veterinary Research Laboratory (Salisbury)*, 2, 1(1967) 7.

<sup>972</sup> *Annual Report of the Assistant Director of Veterinary Services (Field)*, 30/09/1967, 18.

Chavunduka communicated with meant that he was bound to be seen as not different from any other colonial official, and as a ‘sell-out’ as he spoke and seemingly promoted ‘exploitative’ veterinary policies.

The shift from technocracy to community development improved neither the material conditions of African livestock owners nor the quality of veterinary services they received. This largely explains the failure of the state’s WHAM strategy through the utilisation of Chavunduka. If anything, the period after 1962 did not result in the decrease of the obligations of livestock owners to the state. For instance, there was an increase of dipping fees from 2s.6d. per head to 3s. per head in 1964.<sup>973</sup> This was a very unpopular move and resistance was stirred up against the payment of dipping fees while difficulties were encountered in its collection. After UDI and the resultant sanctions, the state faced difficulties in sourcing acaricides and when it did, the prices were expensive. This also entailed passing on the cost to the livestock owner through raising the dipping fee.<sup>974</sup> A typical example of these difficulties is that of 1966 FMD outbreak in 1966 where because of sanctions and payment difficulties the vaccine arrived very late, and when it did, it failed to have any effect on the disease.<sup>975</sup>

An immediate response to the rising cost of dipping during community development was that there was an unprecedented increase in the number of applications by the then recently formed African Councils (now administering the former reserves) to take over dipping services. The official thinking fuelling this trend was the expectation that they (African Councils) would be able to operate dip tanks more cheaply.<sup>976</sup> Indeed, in certain areas where transfers took place, the dipping service appeared to operate smoothly, and, this seemingly justified the thinking that with communal effort and co-operation dipping tanks could be operated more cheaply.<sup>977</sup> However, a few years later problems were encountered. The major problem emanated from departmental wrangling as the Veterinary Department sought to recover power it had lost to African Councils

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<sup>973</sup> *Annual report of the Secretary for Internal Affairs (1964)*, 15.

<sup>974</sup> *Annual report of the Assistant Director of Veterinary Services (Field)*, 30/09/1966, 8.

<sup>975</sup> *Annual report of the Assistant Director of Veterinary Services (Field)*, 30/09/1966, 12.

<sup>976</sup> *Annual report of the Secretary for Internal Affairs (1964)*, 15.

<sup>977</sup> *Annual report of the Secretary for Internal Affairs (1964)*, 15.

over livestock disease control. Veterinary reports reveal two popular views that held sway among veterinary officials. Firstly, veterinary officials thought tick control in African areas had deteriorated because Africans were dipping in under strength washes.<sup>978</sup> Secondly, that African Councils were partly to blame for this. The second view is captured in the following statement, ‘dipping services operated by African councils are not, generally, of the same high standard as those run by this Ministry. In this respect, to quote the Provincial Commissioner, Mashonaland North, they “leave very much to be desired.”’<sup>979</sup> The Assistant Director of Veterinary Services argued that

where dipping is being run by local councils the control has seriously deteriorated and legislative difficulty is being experienced in placing responsibility for such failures; therefore correction is difficult. It is obvious that a complete new approach will have to be formulated to regain our past efficiency in tick control in the African areas. The registration of organic dips has been considerably tightened and none will now be registered for use unless a free testing service is provided locally to give results of tests within four days of submission of samples of dip wash. Courses of instructions for dip attendants, Council secretaries and councillors responsible for dipping in African areas have been given with resultant improvements in several districts.<sup>980</sup>

But this was mere propaganda as the official skirted yet another important issue that lay at the centre of veterinary conflicts between African livestock owners and the Veterinary Department. The quote above reveals not only a veterinary problem but the weakness of the community development policy, that is, it assumed that state experts would willingly hand over their responsibilities to African Councils, and assume a more indirect role in rural administration. In reality, administrators in technical ministries were reluctant to hand over functions to what they perceived as ‘immature’ and ‘irresponsible’ bodies.<sup>981</sup> Thus, officials who felt that their jobs were being made redundant worked to jeopardise the smooth transition of state veterinary services to African Councils.

However, the argument that some African Councils were failing to provide essential services to African livestock owners had substance. This holds true especially for the period after they were

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<sup>978</sup> *Annual Report of the Assistant Director of Veterinary Services (Field)*, 30/09/1966, 8.

<sup>979</sup> *Annual Report of the Secretary for Internal Affairs (1967)*, 4.

<sup>980</sup> *Annual Report of the Assistant Director of Veterinary Services (Field)*, 30/09/1967, 5.

<sup>981</sup> Bratton, *Beyond community development*, 21.

weaned from state grants. The major challenge was that though the colonial state recognised the need to stimulate the rural economy through the provision of essential services including dipping tanks, it had no interest in committing resources to this task. Initially, the main source of development financing remained the African Development Fund (ADF) levy on African marketed produce, which Africans resented to pay.<sup>982</sup> African Councils in the long run failed to self-sustain, thus, for African livestock owners, this period did not see any significant changes with regards to the availability of more dipping tanks. Instead the cash-strapped, overburdened rural councils failed to run existing infrastructure resulting in the deterioration of service. All this added to a sense of racial discrimination, and, thus, fomented rural resistance to the state rather than reduced it.

Bureaucratic wrangling between Africans Councils and the Veterinary Department also precluded the search for solutions to tick resistance. As has been noted already tick control problems were seen by veterinary officials as an administrative issue rather than a scientific problem demanding the change of acaricides. While there may have been some truth in the allegation that certain African Councils were dipping in weak acaricides, paying a blind eye to tick resistance proved to be an exercise in futility. It is revealing that tick resistance was known to the veterinary officials, and yet it took them long to act upon it giving the excuse that Africans were not dipping regularly. Blue tick resistance to the non-arsenical dip – toxaphene – had been recognised for some years, and had also been confirmed in red-legged ticks (*Rh. eversti*) and brown ticks (*Rh. appendiculatus*).<sup>983</sup> As early as 1947, some veterinary officials had, on account of tick resistance to arsenic, recommended the use of gammexine dipping fluid. However, this had not been followed through when it was discovered that: to maintain the tick destroying element of the fluid at sufficient strength to kill ticks, the fluid had to be replenished in the tank at a much higher rate than that recommended by the manufacturers, that the fluid was most effective when used with arsenic against the blue tick but was not effective against certain stages of tick life, especially the mouthing, larval and nymphal stages of the red legged tick.<sup>984</sup> Among Africans, as oral interviews suggests, there was a general thinking that better services were

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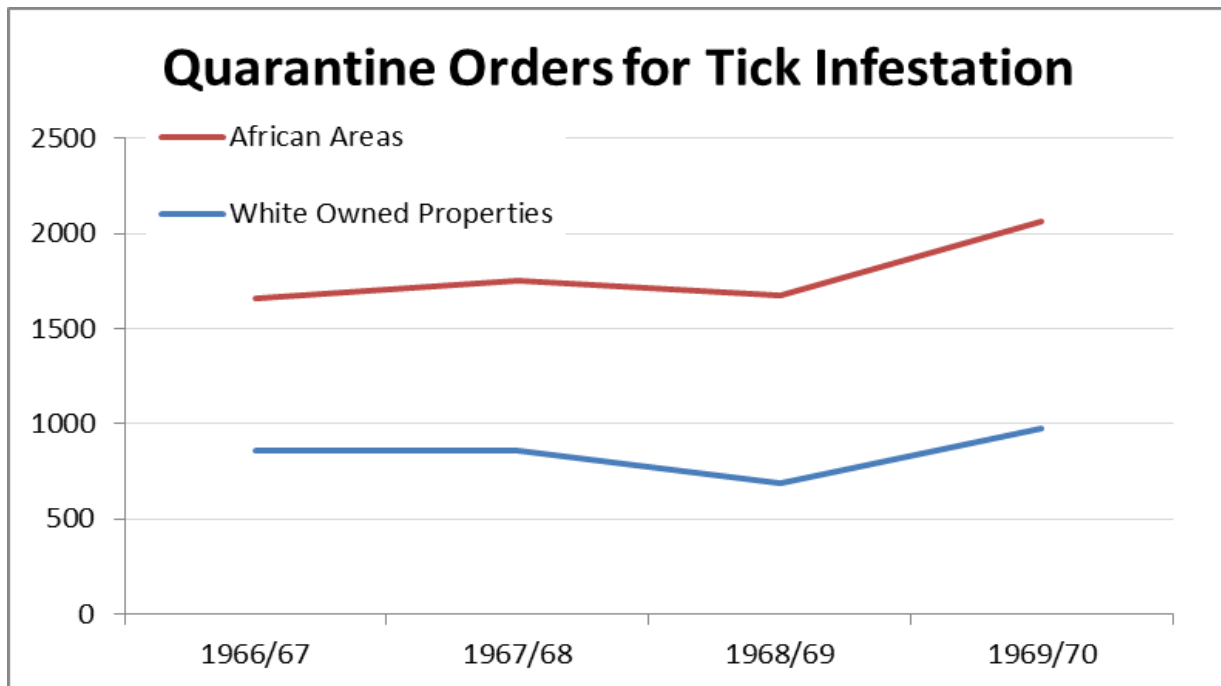
<sup>982</sup> Munro, *The moral economy of the state*, 171, 175.

<sup>983</sup> *Annual Report of the Assistant Director of Veterinary Services (Field)*, 30/09/1966, 8.

<sup>984</sup> *Annual Report of the Chief Veterinary Surgeon (1947)*.

offered to European farmers and hence some stopped dipping seeing that ticks were not being eradicated.

Surprisingly, the belated but important switch from arsenic to phosphatic dips – which were perceived as more efficient – in the late 1960s was followed by an increase tick infestation across the country. Fig. 6.1<sup>985</sup> below shows the prevalence of quarantine orders for tick infestation between 1966 and 1970.



**Figure 6.1: Quarantine orders for tick infestation**

As can be seen in the table there was a gradual increase in tick prevalence in the country in both European and African areas over a four year period. The official explanation was that previously when arsenic was the standard dipping preparation, it took no less than five immersions at five day intervals to cleanse a herd of cattle infested with blue ticks (*boophilids*) because arsenic did not kill this tick at certain stages of development while it took only one dipping in a phosphatic

<sup>985</sup> *Annual Report of the Assistant Director of Veterinary Services (Field), 30/09/1970, 8.*

dip to cleanse the cattle.<sup>986</sup> They argued that in African-owned cattle deaths from tick-borne diseases (Redwater, Gall sickness, Heart water and *Theileriosis*) were less in spite of gross tick infestation hence the practical significance of this was that dipping began to be neglected, and, therefore, cattle dipped less frequent. A further, scientific explanation to this paradox was that efficient dipping over the previous thirty to forty years had almost completely eliminated the carrier state in African-owned cattle.<sup>987</sup> However, this carrier state, vets argued, had re-established itself because veterinary duties had been put in the hands of inexperienced African Councils.<sup>988</sup>

The major weakness of the ‘scientific’ explanations is that they failed to account for the simultaneous increase in the number of quarantine orders issued to white farmers (who were regarded as leaders in the farming industry) during the same period. Thus, as previous analysis has alluded to, the problem was bigger than the alleged dipping amnesia among African livestock owners. Two issues arise: one was that of the increasing cost of dipping due to expensive acaricides in the wake of international sanctions on Rhodesia, and secondly, political polarisation in the country resulted in the rise of competing versions of veterinary etiquette and political ideas which hinged on nationalistic views that challenged state policies.<sup>989</sup>

Between 1964 and 1971, African dip tanks were subsidised from the African Development Fund but expenditure on dipping fluid following the shift to phosphatic fluid more than trebled forcing the state to effect a rise in the dipping fee of 30 cents per beast per annum in 1971.<sup>990</sup> In areas, where a different tick-destroying agent, *Delnav D.F.F*, replaced arsenical dips, there was six-fold increase in the cost of dip concentrate to a service which was already heavily subsidised.<sup>991</sup> Part of this increased expenditure was passed to the African owner by raising the annual dip fee from thirty cents to one dollar per beast, with a remission of fifty cents per beast if the fee was paid

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<sup>986</sup> NAZ SRG3/VET 2 Annual Report of the Assistant Director of Veterinary Services (Field), 30/09/1970, 8.

<sup>987</sup> *Annual Report of the Assistant Director of Veterinary Services (Field)*, 30/09/1972, 9.

<sup>988</sup> *Annual Report of the Assistant Director of Veterinary Services (Field)*, 30/09/1972, 9.

<sup>989</sup> Interview with Majoni Hombarume, born 1914, Sadza, Chivhu, Mashonaland East 29/03/ 2012; interview with Raphael Svikiro, born 1943 Sadza, Chivhu, Mashonaland East, 29/03/ 2012; interview with Ngwarai Maraire, born 1924, Mhandarume, Chimanimani District, 06/04/12.

<sup>990</sup> *Annual Report of the Assistant Director of Veterinary Services (Field)*, 30/09/1971, 9.

<sup>991</sup> *Annual Report of the Assistant Director of Veterinary Services (Field)*, 30/09/1972, 9.

promptly.<sup>992</sup> By 1972, the switch from arsenic to phosphatic dip washes in tanks controlled by the African Development Fund (ADF) was virtually complete and had resulted in improvement in tick control.<sup>993</sup> Although there was no overt resistance, this shift was accomplished at a heavy cost to African livestock owners.<sup>994</sup> Furthermore, there developed a tendency among stock owners in the council area to think that, because the dips were council run, they could dip at any time that suited them.<sup>995</sup> This impacted negatively on tick eradication efforts.

Overall, as a result of the changes that had been carried in the 1960s into the early 1970s which this section has discussed, by 1972 important changes in African livestock regimes, and African-veterinary official interactions were apparent. The cessation of coercion in 1962 had partly reversed the impact of the destocking policy. In particular, the increase of African herds caused concern among colonial officials who lamented that the end of the destocking policy had resulted in the number of African-owned cattle sold at state organised cattle sales crashing to ‘ridiculous’ figures resulting in an increase of 796 000 head between 1966 and 1972 over the 1959 census.<sup>996</sup> They warned that environmental and ecological degradation would result from this situation. With regard to the reluctance of Africans to sell their livestock notwithstanding the efforts of the Vet Department in organising sales, one colonial official complained, ‘With all this assistance, it is most distressing to have to comment annually on the reluctance of the African to sell his stock. This year on organised sales they sold just 95 040 head out of a total of African holding of 2 843 977 i.e. 3.34 per cent...’<sup>997</sup>

### **The liberation war, c.1972-80**

The previous sections have demonstrated the deteriorating relations between Africans and colonial officials over the NLHA, the changing nature of livestock regimes in the reserves, and also attempts by the colonial state to devolve administrative power to local bodies. This section discusses the intensification of the liberation war in the early 1970s focusing on how it added

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<sup>992</sup> *Annual Report of the Assistant Director of Veterinary Services (Field)*, 30/09/1972, 9.

<sup>993</sup> *Annual Report of the Assistant Director of Veterinary Services (Field)*, 30/09/1973, 7.

<sup>994</sup> *Annual Report of the Secretary for Internal Affairs (1972)*, 14.

<sup>995</sup> *Annual Report of the Secretary for Internal Affairs (1972)*, 14

<sup>996</sup> *Annual Report of the Assistant Director of Veterinary Services (Field)*, 30/09/1972, 12.

<sup>997</sup> *Annual Report of the Assistant Director of Veterinary Services (Field)*, 30/09/1971, 11.

another dimension to the way African livestock owners related to their livestock and colonial officials. Administratively, 1972 was a very important year in the history of rural administration and rural resistance in the territory as it marked the rejection of the proposals to give Rhodesia independence under a modified version of the 1969 Constitution. This occurrence demonstrated that community development had failed to meet the aspirations of rural African.<sup>998</sup> Politically, 1972 saw the resuscitation of the armed struggle and this had important ramifications on veterinary interactions in the countryside.<sup>999</sup> The official discourse of ‘modernity’ continued to be tainted by its association with the Rhodesian state, and was thus challenged overtly. In particular, advisory services broke down as extension officers fled and operated from the relative safety of the urban areas.<sup>1000</sup> Council buildings, primary schools and forest plantations were targeted while dip tanks – icons of state intrusion into the African livestock economy – were destroyed. Government and council roads were landmined and other targets included beer halls and bottle stores, lucrative sources of revenue to government and councils which to guerrillas were symbols of peasant dependence. By 1977, in the Ministry of Internal Affairs, 114 officials (both black and white) had been killed, 25 were either missing or abducted, and 243 had been wounded.<sup>1001</sup>

Livestock owners (both white and black) in Rhodesia did not escape the effects of the war. However, in the TTLs the contending forces jostled to establish control over the rural populace through a combination of force and persuasion – with devastating effects on both animal husbandry and livestock disease management. Africans living in TTLs became the focus of liberation veterans who were strongly influenced by Maoist (in the case of ZANLA, Zanu’s military wing) and Soviet-style (in the case of Zipra, ZAPU’s military wing) mobilisation of the ‘peasants’ into their guerrilla warfare. The Rhodesian security forces also utilised a combination of scorched earth policies and WHAM strategies on African peasants. Many African livestock owners came to identify with the guerrilla fighters hence they were sometimes caught in the

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<sup>998</sup> See Ranger, *Peasant consciousness*; Mazarire, ‘A social and political history of Chishanga, South Eastern Zimbabwe, c.1750-2000’; Bratton, *Beyond community development*, 35.

<sup>999</sup> Note: Though controversial, the most popular narrative is that the liberation war started in 1966.

<sup>1000</sup> Nyambara, ‘Madheruka and Shangwe,’ 304. See also N. Kriger, *Zimbabwe's Guerrilla War: Peasant Voices* (Cambridge, 1992).

<sup>1001</sup> Bratton, *Beyond community development*, 36.



crossfire. Having failed to win hearts and minds, and in a desperate attempt to stem the overwhelming support guerrillas received in TTLs, the colonial state gave power to provincial commissioners in 1973 to impose collective fines on communities in which contact with guerrillas was suspected.<sup>1002</sup> These fines were mainly in the form of the confiscation of cattle, as in Chiweshe and Mzarabani TTLs, and in the forced resettlement of communities (protected villages) in remote parts of the country (see Figure 6.2<sup>1003</sup> below).<sup>1004</sup> From around 1974, Africans were put into protected villages along main rural roads with the official argument being that they were being ‘protected’ from guerrillas, and secondly, that the guerrillas would then be isolated from sources of food, shelter, information and recruits.

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<sup>1002</sup> J.K. Cilliers, *Counter-insurgency in Rhodesia*, (London: Croom Helm, 1985), 67. See also A. K. H. Weinrich, ‘Strategic Resettlement in Rhodesia,’ *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 3, 2 (1977), 207.

<sup>1003</sup> Adapted from Weinrich, ‘Strategic Resettlement in Rhodesia,’ 209.

<sup>1004</sup> Weinrich, ‘Strategic Resettlement in Rhodesia,’ 207; M. Bratton, ‘Settler State, Guerrilla War and Rural Underdevelopment in Rhodesia,’ *Issue: A Journal of Opinion*, 9, 1/2 (1979), 56-62.

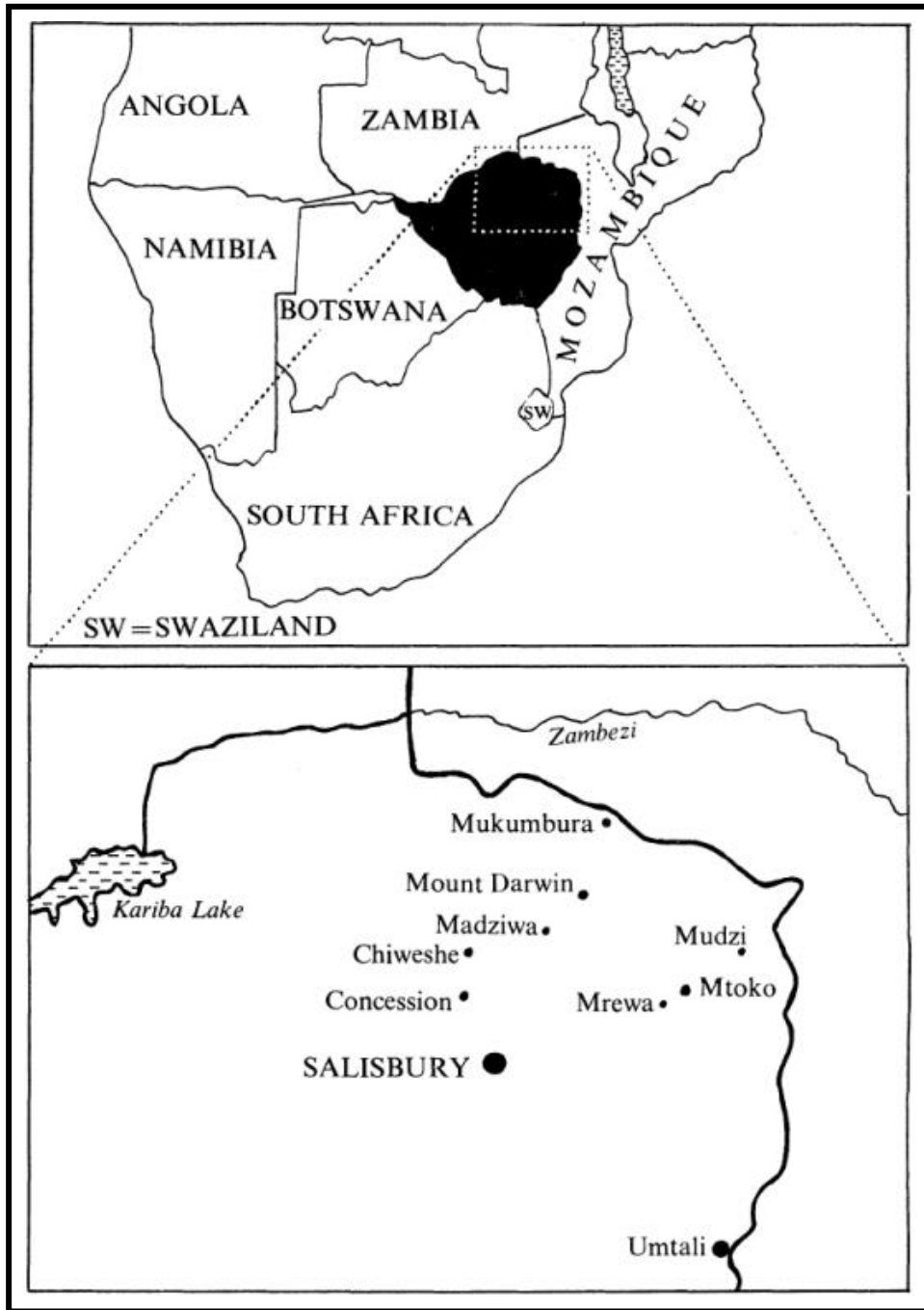


Figure 6.2: The location of protected villages in north –eastern Rhodesia

By 1977, there were a total of 159 protected villages in Mashonaland, 31 in Manicaland and 13 in Victoria Provinces with a total population of 580 832 people.<sup>1005</sup> The official number of protected villages had risen to 220 by mid-1978 while the total estimate for rural Africans affected by war and resettlement was between one and one and a half million.<sup>1006</sup>

The burning of crops and wholesale sale of African cattle, which became the centrepiece of Rhodesian military strategy in the reserves, affected patterns of livestock production in the rural areas. In effect, the creation of protected villages limited grazing lands for livestock. This meant that some Africans left them unattended in the reserves while they moved into protected villages. In some instances, such as that of the Zambezi valley in the northeast, the state forced them to sell their cattle for Rh\$5 or Rh\$6 – a quarter of price normally paid for ‘native’ cattle.<sup>1007</sup> Chatwell Mumbamuchena, who was put into a protected village during the war, captures trenchantly the way the livestock economy was affected by the war. He reminisced:

We were put into the kip during the war. We left our livestock here [Guruve, Zambezi Valley] alone and we had to get permission to come and tend our livestock... Because we could not get permission to leave the camps, most of our livestock went feral. When we finally came back to our village after the war we only recovered 3 of the 46 head of cattle we had prior to the war.<sup>1008</sup>

Rhodesian-era scholarship revealed how veterinary infrastructure was targeted for destruction during this time arguing that African livestock owners were being coerced by liberation fighters. For instance, Norval has brought forward an erroneous argument (as previous sections have revealed) that until the start of the political disturbances of 1972, tick control in African areas was extremely good while heavy tick infestations were rare and tick-borne diseases were virtually eradicated.<sup>1009</sup> However, it is true that with the resumption of the guerrilla war in 1972, the activities of veterinary officials in TTLs were curtailed leading to increases in the levels of tick infestation. Until the end of 1975, this problem was confined to north-eastern Mashonaland

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<sup>1005</sup> Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Rhodesia, *Rhodesia: The propaganda war*, (London: Catholic Institute for International Relations, 1977), 15.

<sup>1006</sup> Bratton, ‘Settler State, Guerrilla War and Rural Underdevelopment in Rhodesia,’ 60.

<sup>1007</sup> Weinrich, ‘Strategic Resettlement in Rhodesia,’ 212.

<sup>1008</sup> Interview with Chatwell Mumbamuchena, born 1924, Utete Race tank, Mbire District, Guruve, 15/03/12.

<sup>1009</sup> R.A.I. Norval, ‘The effects of partial breakdown of dipping in African areas in Rhodesia,’ *Rhodesia Veterinary Journal*, 9, 1-4 (1978), 9.

where the war first broke out. The reluctance meant that many Africans resented compulsory dipping. A number of reasons affecting dipping included inability to pay exorbitant dip fees, intimidation, lack of administration and impaired freedom of movement as result of the war. In fact, the collapse of normal dipping followed the spread of the armed conflict, that is, initially (1973-5) it was restricted to the North East and then spread along the eastern border (1976), from where it moved into the south and western parts of the country (1977) and finally into the central area (1978).<sup>1010</sup> By 1977, as shown in Table 6.3<sup>1011</sup>, throughout Rhodesia there was a large number of dip tanks that had been vandalised, and this worsened the tick problems that had first manifested in the late 1960s.

**Table 6.3: The number of dip tanks not operating in African Areas in Rhodesia (1977)**

Province	Total no. of dip tanks	No. of dip tanks not operating	% of dip tanks not operating
Manicaland	259	204	79
Victoria	315	234	74
Matabeleland South	133	125	94
Matabeleland North	273	30	11
Midlands	392	76	19
Mashonaland	388	43	11
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1 760</b>	<b>712</b>	<b>41</b>

Oral history reveals, with interesting detail, the reason for this countrywide destruction of dip tanks. For instance, Robert Rakabopa explained:

Guerrillas inculcated into us this simple thinking: no one should tell me what to do with my livestock because they are mine. The beasts are mine but then why must I pay the government for the cattle that I own? We needed to show the government that we were not happy. We stopped doing a lot of things during the war including going to church. We were too afraid to go to church. No one could go against the guerrillas. Dip attendants

<sup>1010</sup> See Chapter 6 in Ranger, *Peasant consciousness*.

<sup>1011</sup> Adapted from Norval, 'The effects of partial breakdown of dipping in African areas in Rhodesia,' 11.

were killed during the war because we were made to believe that it was for our own good. The problem I think lay with the whites themselves. They never told us the reasons behind most of their programmes. They wanted to monopolise knowledge. It's just like the contour ridge story. We only got to know at a later stage how good it was. Agricultural demonstrators had little time to explain these policies. Mashaya was killed because he was a dip supervisor and many kraal heads were killed because they encouraged people to contour ridge. They (African civil servants) were not told how to approach people. They were just told to make people to contour ridge. Kraalhead Mujaho was killed during the war. Even the dip supervisors were hated because they sometimes coerced.<sup>1012</sup>

The destruction of dipping tanks, the shepherding of people and their livestock into protected villages, and first stage phosphatic resistance in blue ticks first noticed in 1975, worsened tick propagation throughout the country.<sup>1013</sup> Veterinary officials reported the prevalence of Blue ticks and their resistance to organophosphate dips (first introduced in 1972) in TTLs. This type of resistance could have been dealt with easily in a non-conflict situation through using alternative dips but the absence of veterinary officials in many TTLs precluded this.

In the Lowveld, where game such as kudu and impala occurred in the TTLs, populations of certain tick species built up more rapidly, after the collapse of dipping, than in Highveld TTLs or in Lowveld TTLs in which there was no game. Redwater was restricted to the Southern Lowveld and western Matabeleland and *Theileriosis* to one locality in central Mashonaland. Sweating sickness was restricted to Manicaland and tick-associated screw-worm to the southern Lowveld and adjoining areas.<sup>1014</sup> In the absence of veterinary control, tick-borne diseases such as Redwater, Gall sickness, Heartwater, *Theileriosis* and other tick-associated factors such as sweating sickness and screw worm became a bane of African livestock owners at an estimated loss of half to a million head by 1976.<sup>1015</sup>

In European farms, where the breakdown in veterinary control occurred much later, the major sources of livestock loss were stock thefts promoted by guerrilla fighters. Cattle thefts from

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<sup>1012</sup> Interview with Robert Rakabopa, born 1960, Nyamakamba, Mutare South, 24/03/12. Note: Rakabopa's sentiments came out in all the interviews that I carried out with those that experienced the liberation war.

<sup>1013</sup> *Annual Report of the Assistant Director of Veterinary Services (Field)*, 30/09/1975, 7.

<sup>1014</sup> Norval, 'The effects of partial breakdown of dipping in African areas in Rhodesia,' 12.

<sup>1015</sup> *Annual Report of the Assistant Director of Veterinary Services (Field)*, 30/09/1976, 2.

commercial farmers, however, had the unforeseen result of importing FMD to TTLs where in the absence of veterinary control the disease spread unabated. For instance, the cutting of fences and the carrying of infected meat saw localised foci of the SAT2 infection spreading on farms in Victoria East and the bordering Wedza and Sabi North TTLs.<sup>1016</sup> A similar state of affairs occurred in the Midlands Province with infection spreading in a westerly direction with foci occurring in the Que Que District.<sup>1017</sup> Unsurprisingly, a cattle census carried out soon after the end of the liberation war in 1980 revealed a significant reduction in the national cattle stock.<sup>1018</sup> When one considers the impact of tick-borne diseases and that of anthrax, it is safe to argue that the net effect of all these was the impoverishment of Africans. This is because, ‘there is always hardship but if cattle die the family loses its source of wealth; without motive power for ploughing, crops cannot be planted, leading to no food, no money to purchase food, pay school fees, taxes, or buy the essentials of life.’<sup>1019</sup>

Besides, the disasters arising from lack of veterinary control, biological warfare started by the state security forces during this time also added to the range of man-made veterinary disasters. Although most disease outbreaks were discussed in the context of poor veterinary control, serious outbreaks of anthrax (between 1978 and 1980) which occurred only among African owned cattle have been traced to biological warfare tactics. Prior to these outbreaks, Anthrax had been a very rare disease in country thus both its occurrence in a very atypical form at the most critical stage of the long-drawn liberation war was not mere coincidence. These outbreaks spread from area to area until six of the country’s eight provinces were affected yet anthrax often appears ‘at a point source of contact without any geographical spread.’<sup>1020</sup> Although the breakdown of dipping facilities during the war contributed to tick-borne diseases, the same

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<sup>1016</sup> *Annual Report of the Assistant Director of Veterinary Services (Field)*, 30/09/1979, 7.

<sup>1017</sup> *Annual Report of the Assistant Director of Veterinary Services (Field)*, 30/09/1979, 7.

<sup>1018</sup> *Annual Report of the Director of Veterinary Services*, 30/09/1980, 2.

<sup>1019</sup> Pugh and Davies cited in M. Nass, ‘Anthrax epizootic in Zimbabwe, 1978-1980: due to deliberate spread?’ *PSR Quarterly* 2, 4 (1992), 205.

<sup>1020</sup> M. Nass, ‘Anthrax epizootic in Zimbabwe, 1978-1980: due to deliberate spread?’ *PSR Quarterly* 2, 4 (1992), 198-209.

reason cannot be used to account for the outbreak of anthrax when it did because livestock dipping does not contribute to anthrax prevention.<sup>1021</sup>

During these outbreaks, the state mounted a strong propaganda campaign through the distribution of pamphlets written in vernacular languages in an effort to persuade Africans to produce cattle for voluntary vaccination. However, despite being availed with the vaccine by the Veterinary Department, Africans did not take up the offer.<sup>1022</sup> Instead, they bought vaccines from private sources such as chemists rather than from veterinary officials as 10 000 doses were sold that way.<sup>1023</sup> Seeing that state assistance was not being taken up even amidst heavy cattle casualties, veterinary officials began to issue cataclysmic statements from the comforts of their urban hideouts. For instance in 1979, one veterinary official remarked, ‘it will never be fully appreciated by those who instigated the process of lawlessness and the abandonment of sensible prophylactic disease control measures, just how much misery they have inflicted upon their own people and the country as a whole.’<sup>1024</sup>

Oral history captures African suspicions over the spontaneity of this disease, and also the devastation that it left in its wake.<sup>1025</sup> For instance, one informant from the north-east, where the war was fought most viciously and was, therefore, a target area for biological warfare, remarked

even if you were to walk in the forests where their cattle were during the war, there are many skeletons that can be seen to this day. Very few people even as few as four people were left with cattle. The disease was known as *tungundu* [anthrax]. Its effects were so devastating that healthy cattle would suddenly get sick and die. It gave us no chance even to experiment with traditional remedies. This disease came for a short time hence we suspect that it was caused by our enemy. We only got livestock from farms after the war.<sup>1026</sup>

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<sup>1021</sup> Nass, ‘Anthrax epizootic in Zimbabwe, 1978-1980,’ 203.

<sup>1022</sup> *Annual Report of the Assistant Director of Veterinary Services (Field)*, 30/09/1979, 11.

<sup>1023</sup> *Annual Report of the Assistant Director of Veterinary Services (Field)*, 30/09/1979, 11.

<sup>1024</sup> *Annual Report of the Assistant Director of Veterinary Services (Field)*, 30/09/1979, 2.

<sup>1025</sup> Interview with Sydney Mutemaringa born 1951, Chomutukutu Dip Tank, Rushinga District, Mashonaland Central, 12/03/12; Interview with Luxmore Chabvunda born 1957, Chomutukutu Dip Tank, Rushinga District, Mashonaland Central, 12/03/12; interview with Robson Karimatsenga born 1946, Mukumbura Dip Tank, Mukumbura District, Mashonaland Central, 12/03/12; interview with Ndoza Kamacha born 1932, Mutasa Dip Tank, Chiswiti Communal Area, Mt Darwin, 0650hrs, 14/03/12; interview with Chatwell Mumbamuchena, born 1924, Utete Race tank, Mbire District, Guruve, 15/03/12.

<sup>1026</sup> Interview with Sydney Mutemaringa born 1951, Chomutukutu Dip Tank, Rushinga District, Mashonaland Central, 12/03/12.

After the war ended in 1979 and a new government was inaugurated in April 1980, the true extent of the war became apparent. The Zanu government quickly assumed the coercive instruments of colonial state while also introducing a free compulsory dipping service to livestock owners in the communal areas.<sup>1027</sup> However, war-time resistance to veterinary methods also spilled into the post-independence era as it was reported that the level of non-cooperation in certain communal farming areas precluded effective vaccination.<sup>1028</sup> The return to comparative normality in the TTLs (now christened communal farming areas) was only after the elections in February and independence in April 1980. This enabled the state to resume large scale mass vaccination programmes against foot and mouth, anthrax, rabies and quarter evil with no hindrance from combatants.<sup>1029</sup> This made it possible for the Department of Veterinary Services to reduce losses from tick-borne diseases. By 1981, some white veterinary officials felt vindicated that the breakdown of dipping in African areas had led to losses arguing that owners of cattle who had been ‘understandably’ quite unaware of the benefits of efficient dipping at a cost of 1 000 000 cattle, had through extreme loss tragically learnt the wisdom of adequate tick control.<sup>1030</sup>

## Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the changing nature of state veterinary and livestock policy from the passage of the Native Land Husbandry Act (1951) to the attainment of independence in 1980. This discussion has delineated how the NLHA impacted not only on human-animal relationships in the reserves but also veterinary interactions. From the 1950s to the early 1960s, the NLHA represented a concerted state effort to define and prescribe the type of beast which Africans could rear and how livestock could be pastured. This was in line with notions of livestock improvement that had driven livestock policy in African reserves from around 1912. Scholarly obsession with the most conspicuous state intervention in the form of overstocking and overgrazing has obscured how livestock improvement strategies were still being pursued simultaneously to destocking. Thus, they were part and parcel of the colonial environmental

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<sup>1027</sup> *Annual Report of the Director of Veterinary Services*, 30/09/1980, 2.

<sup>1028</sup> *Annual Report of the Director of Veterinary Services*, 30/09/1980, 4.

<sup>1029</sup> *Annual Report of the Director of Veterinary Services*, 30/09/1981, 2.

<sup>1030</sup> *Annual Report of the Director of Veterinary Services*, 30/09/1981, 3.



matrix of ensuring the economic sustainability of livestock production while maintaining ecological sustainability in the reserves. However, in practice the matrix was a dismal failure with serious political repercussions to the state. Technocratic ideas of livestock improvement, pasture management, herd size and grazing techniques were abhorred by Africans and fuelled their alliance with the urban-based political organisations. Rural nationalism also manifested itself against veterinary measures, as rural Africans resuscitated debates, among other things, on veterinary issues in their interactions with the African nationalist leadership.

These events occurred in a colonial context characterised by the colonial state's intention to reassert its control over the rural populace in circumstances where its authority came under intense scrutiny. Administratively, the temporary loss of power of the state in the reserves in the early 1960s brought a new political context and approach to colonial policy as the state shifted from technocratic control to community development. These changes, however, failed to sooth peasant-state relations over livestock in the rural areas. Instead, community development resulted in the development of new forms of resistance against the veterinary apparatus as cash-strapped African Councils struggled to maintain veterinary infrastructure in the reserves. Thus, the intensification of the liberation war in the early 1970s added yet another dimension to the way African livestock owners related to their livestock and colonial officials. During the liberation war, the jostling for political control amongst the feuding military forces resulted in the breakdown of veterinary control in the reserves. In particular, advisory services broke down as extension officers fled and operated from the safety of the urban areas. Council buildings, primary schools and forest plantations were targeted while dip tanks – icons of state intrusion into the African livestock economy – were destroyed. The creation of protected villages entailed limited grazing lands for livestock. This meant that some Africans left them unattended in the reserves while they moved into protected villages or were forced to sell. By 1980, veterinary diseases had increased due to both tick infestation, and also biological warfare perpetrated by the Rhodesian security forces.

## Chapter Seven

### Conclusions

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This thesis casts new light on the relationship between African livestock regimes and state veterinary services in Zimbabwe during the colonial period. Though located in veterinary history, this study has applicability to the histories of medicine and colonialism as it connects with the broader debate regarding the experiences of local healing practices under colonial set ups. It has discussed veterinary challenges which affected African livestock owners, how (together with the colonial state) they reacted to them and attempted to deal with them. It has examined how veterinary medicine, conservation policies, and the outbreak of hitherto unknown epizootics and the spread of biomedical approaches enforced by veterinary officials impacted on African livestock regimes.

It has responded to a wider debate in the sub-region regarding the importance of veterinary science in the development of livestock economies (both African and settler). It has challenged the Beinart-Brown-Gilfoyle theory which states that state veterinary services in Africa were formed to eradicate epizootics and enzootics rather than to push the interests of empire. It has demonstrated that state veterinary services expanded within a racial context and did not challenge the colonial state's perception of modernity which placed settler farming interests ahead of those of African livestock owners. Although there were changes in veterinary policy during the colonial period, the way state vets operated revealed their dual mandate: 'to serve the state and to serve science.'<sup>1031</sup> In fact, changes in veterinary policy, as has been shown, first took into consideration their potential impact on white livestock owners, and how negative effects on the white cattle economy could be mitigated. Furthermore, while white livestock owners took an active role in the making and remaking of veterinary policy and thus ensured that their interests were secured, African livestock owners' veterinary strategies hardly influenced policy. African

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<sup>1031</sup> This statement, though used by Ncube with specific reference to public health, is applicable to veterinary medicine. See G. Ncube, 'The Making of Rural Healthcare in Colonial Zimbabwe: A History of the Ndanga Medical Unit, Fort Victoria, 1930-1960s,' PhD Thesis, University of Cape Town, 2012, 14.

traditional livestock management ideas were either brushed aside or where unpopular policies pursued by state vets were reversed or modified, these changes were rarely made out of a genuine appreciation of the predicament of African livestock owners and the efficacy of this knowledge but mainly out of security concerns of the colonial state. It marks a major break with previous literature that has not addressed the therapeutic and reproductive experiences of African livestock owners despite acknowledging that cattle were an essential socio-economic aspect of Africans.

Notwithstanding marginalisation, both deliberate and unintentional, African traditional livestock regimes remained useful for Africans in the resource-poor reserves since they were easily available, inexpensive and often effective especially in the reserves where veterinary services were expensive, often absent or else irregular. Since quasi-veterinary activities in the reserves were performed by Native Commissioners, the reasons for state veterinary intervention were not communicated properly. As a result, state veterinary activities were eschewed. The majority of veterinary officers in Southern Rhodesia were white and often self-styled specialists in Africans and their customs. However, they often had a poor command of the local language and an arrogant attitude toward African traditional livestock regimes. The criticism of traditional livestock regimes at a time when there were no adequate veterinary facilities inadvertently helped to perpetuate non-Western forms of veterinary healing and livestock management practices.<sup>1032</sup> As shown in Chapters 2 and 3, the labelling of African traditional livestock management systems by state veterinarians and other public officials played a much bigger role in obfuscating an otherwise rich relationship that existed between African and white farmers in meeting the challenges they faced.

Moreover, as this thesis has shown, the responses of African livestock owners illustrates that they understood the multiple roles performed by state vets in availing therapeutic and livestock reproductive knowledge on the one hand, and also how they promoted colonial interests on the other. Indeed, the way veterinary services were extended throughout the territory reveal that they

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<sup>1032</sup> W.G. Clarence-Smith, 'Diseases of equids in South East Asia,' in K. Brown and D. Gilfoyle (eds), *Healing the Herds*, 138.

were based on an assumption that local livestock regimes were wrong and that Africans had to be recruited into a certain version of modernity. In an attempt to coexist with a veterinary system that was neither homogenous nor static and that, at times, vilified African livestock regimes, Africans selectively embraced perceived beneficial aspects of biomedicine while rejecting those that projected colonial power. This thesis has shown how the shifting, contradictory relationship involving three groups within the colonial state: the state which aimed at promoting a capitalist economy; the settler community which aimed at the impoverishment of the Africans for its benefits and native commissioners who were seen by the first two as the ‘black sheep of the family.’<sup>1033</sup>

Veterinary policy and its implementation were closely influenced by the conflicts (which were shifting but maintained the ultimate goal of insulating whites from black competition) within the colonial state. Three different broad epochs can be identified. Firstly, the period before 1930 when different white interests in the colonial state were interested in converting Africans into a proletarian class and also a capitalist society. Secondly, the period between 1930 and 1962, dubbed the technocratic phase, was characterised by efforts to convert African livestock regimes along intensive lines for the creation of a detribalised African. Thirdly, the creation of a ‘tribalised’ African and the emphasis on the state taking an indirect role in rural administration while leaving direct administration to local chiefs.

In explaining the changing, complex relationship between state veterinarians and African livestock owners in the reserves, this thesis started by interrogating firstly how the local disease ideas were influenced and at times shaped by the changed disease environment following colonisation, and also how state veterinarians operated in African reserves. To set a platform for the discussion of these issues, the thesis also discussed the period immediately leading to the occupation of Southern Rhodesia and how pre-colonial livestock owners first interacted and dealt with epizootics and enzootics introduced from abroad especially through both adaptation and transformation. It has shown that modes of African traditional livestock management were

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<sup>1033</sup> E. Kramer, ‘The evolution of policy: Trade and production in the reserve economy of colonial Zimbabwe, 1890-1952,’ DPhil Thesis, University of Zimbabwe, 2003, 5.

immediately challenged by the new colonial order which was characterised by the discouragement of local livestock management practices, and sustained state efforts to change livestock regimes in the reserves. Although the interaction of African livestock disease management practices and quasi-veterinary medicinal ideas (introduced by explorers and missionaries) started long before the white occupation of Southern Rhodesia, the attention of the colonial state to epizootics and enzootics increased substantially towards the end of the nineteenth century following the outbreak of Rinderpest in 1896.

This, thesis has argued that the creation of state veterinary services was closely related to the outbreak of Rinderpest in 1896. This marked the beginning of state veterinary services and also the first interaction of African livestock disease management and state-preferred biomedical ideas about livestock disease control. Unlike, the contention by Gilfoyle, Beinart and Brown that veterinary services arose as a result of the contribution of the contribution of blacks, whites and veterinary scientists and that they were meant to benefit livestock owners in a non-racial manner, in Southern Rhodesia as this thesis has shown, the distribution of veterinary facilities was highly racialised as there was no corresponding tendency by the administration to provide Africans with veterinary services in the reserves. Indeed, despite providing a very large proportion of state revenue, both in direct and indirect taxation, little, if any, was spent the provision of affordable veterinary facilities for the benefit of African livestock. Instead, like their owners, were driven to unfriendly environments. As is clear throughout this thesis, the state veterinary services were motivated by the desire to protect commercial herds from epizootics and therefore expanded state vet services to African reserves to serve that end.

Fuelled by misused Darwinian ‘scientific’ arguments to the effect that certain racial groups were superior to others, state veterinarians mobilised these arguments to mount an attack on local veterinary ideas, and attempted to change the African livestock regimes. This official position was affected by the limits of early state governments. For lack of professional vets and also to placate the British colonial Office, state veterinary services to African livestock owners were placed in the hands of Native Commissioners. However, as this thesis has shown these officials were not veterinary specialists by training thus the envisaged diffusion of western veterinary

ideas neither occurred at the desired pace nor was it smooth as many Africans generally retained their socio-cultural views of what constituted diseased and ‘clean’ animals. In the absence of epizootics, the state did not take a coercive stance in the promotion of veterinary control measures but the outbreak of Rinderpest in 1896 revealed in a telling way the limits of local veterinary knowledge and livestock regimes.

As was shown in Chapter 2, black people in Southern Rhodesia possessed a large body of effective veterinary remedies and that some of these were not entirely inimical to biomedical ideas. The interaction with Europeans before and after colonisation brought a variety of diseases which, prior to the advent of European occupation, were unknown to Africans. Notable examples are contagious bovine pleuropneumonia, a bacterial disease, which was brought by missionaries from South Africa into Matabeleland in 1861, Rinderpest in the 1890s and tick-borne East Coast Fever in the early twentieth century. The outbreaks of new diseases impacted on how African viewed and dealt with epizootics and enzootics which local therapeutic and livestock management practices were unable to deal with. Many Africans generally linked such diseases with European occupation and the expansion of capitalist production. This was not entirely wrong as research has since shown that most of the diseases were imported from other continents by European visitors to the region.

While the Rinderpest outbreak necessitated the creation of a state veterinary services department, the outbreak of a tick-borne disease, ECF, in 1902 resulted in a more systematic control of epizootics and enzootics through regular dipping of cattle. The introduction of dipping offered an opportunity for state control of African livestock both for disease and taxation purposes. As a form of disease control, dipping became a conspicuous weekly activity which resulted in the decrease of tick-borne diseases, and this partly explains the exponential growth of livestock herds across the territory from this time. As has been discussed already, dipping also performed another function as it came as an integral part of the growth of the capitalist economy offering an opportunity for herds across the country to be enumerated for taxation purposes, and for suggesting ways through which African livestock regimes could be kept in check from offering competition to the commercial cattle owners. However, as shown in Chapter 2, the process

through which dip tanks spread across the country was both non-linear and haphazard for the practical reason that some areas were not tick-infested, and veterinary policies were applied idiosyncratically in different areas. Dip tanks were not introduced in African reserves at the same time. There were differences in policy implementation as it usually bowed down to the personality of the native commissioner concerned. While the imposition of dipping signified an intrusion into African livestock regimes, Africans did not resort to overt forms of resistance as happened in the Transkei and Zululand in 1905-6 because they were aware of their inferior military power, and were loosely organised nationally.

Though dip tanks were first introduced in 1904 failure to dip became a punishable offence with the passage of legislation in 1914 and 1918. However, the absence and inadequacy (or both) of dip tanks in certain reserves and farms precluded the enforcement of dipping regulations, and this also placed them in a conflict situation with some settler farmers, who believed that African-owned livestock were essentially pathogenic. In the reserves, land shortages occasioned as a result of colonial land policies meant that Africans sought grazing pastures in contiguous farms, and at times entered into grazing agreements with settler farmers. Grazing agreements and arrangements to dip at private dipping tanks on white farms in the era of compulsory dipping exposed African livestock owners to exploitation. By 1930, dipping had become a very important tool of both social and livestock disease control, and in the years after continued to be an important point of state entry into African traditional livestock regimes.

As is shown in Chapter 4, besides tick control measures another intrusion into African economy involved livestock improvement activities. This thesis has shown that the colonial state took an interest in African livestock management much earlier than is assumed, and that this interest began much earlier than the more pronounced betterment policies of the 1930s. After years of prevarication, from 1912, the Veterinary Department came to play a leading role in the promotion of exotic breeds and the subversion of the African livestock regime. Initially, state rhetoric emphasised need for the promotion of exotic breeds but the influence of conservation ideas among vets and NCs from the beginning of the twentieth century finally forced officials to mobilise both veterinary and conservation arguments in pursuing this cause. However, attempts

at ‘taming’ the local environment through the introduction of better breeds were accompanied by disease outbreaks. Such outbreaks were particularly virulent among imported cattle or cross-breeds, while efforts to control them through either breeding or development of inoculants were futile as exemplified the failure to treat quarter evil and contagious abortion. In their dual capacity – as tools for subjugating epizootics and enzootics to pave way for colonial domination – state animal scientists and veterinarians played a leading role in influencing opinion and creating conditions under which perceived better, scientific forms of livestock management could be imposed in both African and European areas. The desire to rear pedigree animals fitted very well into the intentions of the colonial state to participate in the world beef market. Africans, among whom the ‘better, bigger and fewer’ argument was encouraged, also had a set of reasons for not adopting ‘better’ breeds hence by 1930 no significant change had occurred in African livestock management systems.

Despite coming as part and parcel of a segregatory system that disenfranchised African livestock regimes, as this thesis has shown, veterinary interactions in the reserves were at conflict with certain colonial policies. In the 1930s, as is shown in Chapter 5, other pressing needs fuelled by increased environmental awareness and Foot and Mouth Disease outbreaks also led to further intrusion in to the reserves. However, the centralisation policies, pursued most actively by Alvord in the 1930s, were at variance with the state’s own veterinary policies. The state failed to deal with contradictions as a result of the popular belief amongst colonial experts that problems faced in the colony were entirely caused by African ‘primitive’ farming practices. The concentration method intrinsic to efforts to eradicate FMD, encouraged overgrazing, and thus contributed to environmental degradation. The location of dip tanks – introduced in the wake of East Coast Fever and other tick-borne diseases – and the manner livestock were driven to the tanks were partly responsible for gully erosion across the country. The inability to settle the conflicting positions of the conservationists and veterinarians resulted in the state looking elsewhere in its search for solutions hence the resuscitation of the livestock improvement idea in the 1940s as well as the compulsory destocking from 1945. All these intrusive measures, as this thesis has shown, had a significant impact on the African rural landscape in general and livestock management practices in particular. Destocking resulted in changes in livestock



ownership patterns and the cattle loaning system (*kuronzera*) as people tried to hide cattle from culling officers. Centralisation impacted on previously extensive grazing habits while livestock improvement practices reshaped the local idea of what a ‘good’ cattle breed was, and also the type of cattle Africans reared. Thus, by 1951 livestock management – indeed, human-animal relationships – in the reserves had changed significantly.

From the 1950s to the early 1960s, the NLHA represented a concerted state effort to define and prescribe the type of beast which Africans could rear and how livestock could be pastured. This was in line with notions of livestock improvement that had driven livestock policy in African reserves from around 1912. By the 1950s, colonial policies had resulted in overstocking and overpopulation in the reserves, and had incubated rural political consciousness which assumed a nationalistic outlook. Scholarly obsession with the most conspicuous state intervention in the form of overstocking and overgrazing has obscured how livestock improvement strategies were still being pursued simultaneously to destocking. Thus, they were part and parcel of the colonial environmental matrix of ensuring the economic sustainability of livestock production while maintaining ecological sustainability in the reserves. However, in practice the matrix was a dismal failure with serious political repercussions to the state. Technocratic ideas of livestock improvement, pasture management, herd size and grazing techniques pushed by the colonial experts were abhorred by Africans and fuelled their alliance with the urban-based political organisations. Rural nationalism also manifested itself against veterinary measures, as rural Africans resuscitated debates, among other things, on veterinary issues in their interactions with the African nationalist leadership. These events occurred in a colonial context characterised by the colonial state’s intention to reassert its control over the rural populace in circumstances where its authority came under intense scrutiny.

Administratively, the temporary loss of power of the state in the reserves in the early 1960s brought a new political context and approach to colonial policy as the Rhodesian government shifted from technocratic control to community development. These changes, however, failed to sooth peasant-state relations over livestock in the rural areas. Instead, community development resulted in the development of new forms of resistance against the veterinary apparatus as cash-

strapped African Councils struggled to maintain veterinary infrastructure in the reserves. Thus, the intensification of the liberation war in the early 1970s added yet another dimension to the way African livestock owners related to their livestock and colonial officials. From this time, the official discourse of ‘modernity’ was tainted by its association with the Rhodesian state, and was thus challenged overtly while the jostling for political control amongst the feuding military forces resulted in the breakdown of veterinary control in the reserves. In particular, advisory services broke down as extension officers fled and operated from the safety of the urban areas. Council buildings, primary schools and forest plantations were targeted while dip tanks – icons of state intrusion into the African livestock economy – were destroyed. The creation of protected villages entailed limited grazing lands for livestock. This meant that some Africans left them unattended in the reserves while they moved into protected villages or were forced to sell. By 1980, veterinary diseases had increased due to both tick infestation, and also biological warfare perpetrated by the Rhodesian security forces.

Having highlighted the major findings made by this thesis, I bring the study to a close by offering history-sensitive policy recommendations, and suggestions for further studies. The role of professional historians in policy making, as Gavin has argued, is a contested notion. Yet a profound and understanding of the past remains important for policy makers.<sup>1034</sup> Since, ‘it is the past which forms the frame of reference by which [human beings] perceive the issues that confront them,’<sup>1035</sup> a comprehensive understanding of the local veterinary history, which this thesis offers, develops a ‘historical sensibility’<sup>1036</sup> useful to policy makers, veterinary scientists, administrators and farmers as they grapple with the contemporary challenges of veterinary diseases. Besides dismissing the seemingly ignorant farmers as being impervious to scientific advice as is currently the case in post-colonial Zimbabwe, veterinary policy makers and practitioners need to accept that the apparatus they oversee has a long history which remains

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<sup>1034</sup> F.J. Gavin, ‘History and policy,’ *International Journal*, 63, 1 (2007), 162-177.

<sup>1035</sup> R. Rennie, ‘History and policy-making,’ *International Social Science Journal*, 50, 156 (1998), 289. See also M. Grzechnik, ‘Making use of the past: The role of historians in Baltic Sea region building,’ *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 43, 3 (2012), 329-343; V. Johnson and C. Williams, ‘Using archives to inform contemporary policy debates: History into policy,’ *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, 32, 2 (2011), 287-303; P. McCrary and J.G. Hebert, ‘Keeping the courts honest: The role of historians as expert witnesses in Southern voting right cases,’ *Southern University Law Review*, 16 (1989), 101 - 128.

<sup>1036</sup> Gavin, ‘History and policy.’

engrained in the minds of many livestock owners some of whom were victims of colonial state veterinary coercion. The Veterinary Department needs to transform itself and begin to adopt a consciously post-colonial approach rather than the present perpetuation of colonial style intrusion and coercion in African communal areas. Other than the current rhetoric that they recognise alternative medicine, veterinary officials need to practically appreciate and to support certain enduring methods in African traditional livestock regimes. This shows the importance of new studies that trace how the post-colonial state has grappled with the legacy of the colonial system (including veterinary legislation which buttresses it) it inherited at independence, and how African livestock owners relate with the state in the post-colonial context. Indeed, at a time when prices of veterinary drugs are increasing and income earnings are depressed, this history is important as it offers possibilities for proposing animal health practices that are inexpensive, effective and environmentally friendly. Whereas the impact of FMD on the post-colonial cattle economy has drawn scholarly attention, very little is known about the history of specific diseases such as Heartwater, Lung sickness and Redwater in Zimbabwe.

An intriguing theme that emerged in this thesis also concerns the partial application of veterinary and livestock regulations by colonial state officials hence the studies related entirely to colonial veterinary legislation may unearth useful information on how they came into being and also how they compared with other regional contexts. This is pertinent given the fact that focus has been mainly on South African veterinary experiences. Academic silence on how the various colonial veterinary institutions (in Angola, Malawi, Zambia, Mozambique, and BNLS countries) dealt with regional veterinary challenges underscores the urgent need for regional comparative studies. Such perspectives are bound to bring out interesting nuances on, for instance, how the informal intrastate cattle trade impacted on the veterinary landscape, and how the different forms of colonial administration affected the way the colonial state approached veterinary challenges.

As the evidence in this study suggests, suspicion between vets and livestock owners is understandable given the colonial past, but at present communal livestock owners need to understand that their relationship with state veterinary services is not simple but is so complex to be dismissed as merely predatory. There exist a number of state veterinary services that may also

improve their herds which they need to consider. When this is appreciated by both parties, it will become clear that the success of any veterinary regulation does not lie in enforcement only but also acceptance, and compliance by livestock owners. Furthermore, there is need for further research both on the role played by women in African livestock regimes, and how they were affected by the hegemonic veterinary policy pursued by both the colonial and post-colonial state. At present, gender-sensitive historical studies have discussed women's experiences during colonial rule in general terms. The often made point is that the absence of men in villages due to their employment in the capitalist sector saw women playing roles previous done by men. However, very little, if any, has been written about their specific experiences with veterinary challenges and veterinary policy. Equally, it is important for scholars to examine how the reconfiguration of the Zimbabwean landscape by the Land Reform programme has impacted on women and African traditional livestock regimes.

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