



Environment & Society Portal



The White Horse Press

Full citation:

Schmidt, Heike. "'Penetrating' Foreign Lands: Contestations Over African Landscapes. A Case Study from Eastern Zimbabwe." *Environment and History* 1, no. 3, Zimbabwe special issue (October 1995): 351–76. <http://www.environmentandsociety.org/node/2861>.

Rights:

All rights reserved. © The White Horse Press 1995. Except for the quotation of short passages for the purpose of criticism or review, no part of this article may be reprinted or reproduced or utilised in any form or by any electronic, mechanical or other means, including photocopying or recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission from the publishers. For further information please see <http://www.whpress.co.uk>.

'Penetrating' Foreign Lands: Contestations Over African Landscapes. A Case Study from Eastern Zimbabwe.

HEIKE SCHMIDT

*Humboldt University at Berlin
Philosophische Fakultät III
Afrika-Institut
Unter den Linden 6
D-10099 Berlin*

SUMMARY

While it was happening, European expansion was often legitimised by evoking frontier images: pioneers setting off from the metropolis, penetrating wilderness in order to open access to resources, like minerals, living-space, and fertile lands. Central to the ideology of the frontier is the notion of 'no-man's land'. These 'pioneers', however, often had to face local inhabitants and their interpretations and uses of this land. Thus it will be argued that contestations over landscape were at the same time battles over the legitimation of European expansion, as well as over local perceptions of this process. Ideologically, contestations by Europeans and Africans become apparent in the sexualisation of landscape.

This paper is based on the case study of a Valley in eastern Zimbabwe on the border with Mozambique, and more specifically of two tea estates which were established in the rainforest. Unusually late for the region, European influence in this remote area only began to become significant in the 1950s which were an important turning point regarding land and landscape in the area. These years of great change will be analysed in order to map out different strands of interest by the main parties involved. It will be demonstrated that their readings of landscape translated into contestations over land. A recent example of such a conflict will be given.

INTRODUCTION

For the last few years Africanists have shown increasing interest in landscape. Themes like frontier, pioneers, explorers, and more recently, religious landscape, conservation, environment, national parks, and representations of land-

scape in literature and exhibitions, have been researched. A variety of disciplines is concerned with these topics, for example, history, and in particular spatial history, political geography, anthropology and literary criticism.¹

Dealing with images and identities historically usually poses methodological problems. The high period of European expansion in southern Africa was the nineteenth century, for which written sources tend to be scarce, while oral sources seem to lack differentiation for the purpose of reconstructing locality. However, as the events discussed in this paper are located in the more recent past, a variety of sources were available: government files in the National Archives of Zimbabwe and the National Record Centre, as well as in the Provincial and District Administrator's respective Offices, mission records in the American Methodist Episcopal Church Archives, and papers in private possession. Further, interviews were conducted with the actual participants. Those interviewed include chiefs and traditional healers, 'commoners' living in the area, as well as employees of the tea estates.

This paper is based on a case study from the Honde Valley in eastern Zimbabwe on the border with Mozambique.² In 1952 the resident population was estimated to be 400 families.³ Unusually late for the region, European influence only began to become significant in the 1950s. Although the northern part of the Valley had been owned by a succession of companies and multi-national concerns since the occupation in 1890, it was not surveyed until 1951 and 1952. In the following years two tea estates were established and in 1960 a road was completed which ran through the entire Valley.⁴ Thus the 1950s were an important turning point in the history of land and landscape in the area.

This paper tells the story of the beginnings of two tea plantations between 1951 and 1958. These are situated on the western slopes of the Honde Valley, chiefly on rainforest land.⁵ First, European and African readings of this landscape will be mapped out. Secondly, it will be demonstrated how competing imaginations followed from these readings which translated into contestations over land. Thirdly, a recent battle over spiritual landscape will be related. This is followed by a brief conclusion.

I. LOOKING FOR A SITE: DIFFERENT READINGS OF LANDSCAPE

In 1952 W.A.K. Igoe bought approximately 48,000 acres of land for £30,000 on behalf of Aberfoyle Plantations Limited, at that time a London-based company with rubber and sugar plantations in Malaysia and Mozambique.⁶ The land was part of Inyanga Block, a farm which had previously belonged to a succession of companies. The first title deed to the Block, which initially consisted of roughly 154,400 acres (60,000 hectares), had been granted to the Anglo-French Matabeleland Company in 1895 and issued in 1897. This was part of the British South Africa Company's attempts to draw capital into the developing colonial

economy.⁷ In 1930 the Block was split. The southern part, called Holdenby Block, was bought by the London Rhodesia Company (Lonrho), and the northern portion, approximately 90,000 acres, was bought by the Hanmer brothers.⁸ In 1948 Lonrho sold their part to the Rhodesian Government⁹ which in turn sold it to a group of Rhodesian businessmen. These finally entered the agreement with Igoe in 1952¹⁰.

Even such a brief sketch history of the ownership of Inyanga Block suggests a variety of interested parties over the years. It is important to differentiate a range of 'European' and 'African' interests in and attitudes to the land and landscape concerned, because these informed colonial land appropriation policies. Therefore the years from 1951 to 1952, when Igoe was looking for a potential site for a plantation in Rhodesia, will be analysed in depth in order to map out the different agendas of the main parties involved: multinational companies, explorers and experts, pioneers and settlers, colonial administrators, and Valley inhabitants.

EUROPEAN READINGS

Multinational Companies

In 1894 the Anglo-French Matabeleland Company applied to the Administrator of Rhodesia, Jameson, for land in Matabeleland. Instead, they were granted Inyanga Block in Manicaland on condition that they would spend '...£60,000 in mining or farming operations' during the following years.¹¹ By 1928, when Inyanga Block had been owned by the Company for more than thirty years, the land was still unexplored by Europeans. When the Anglo-French Matabeleland Company went into liquidation, they could not provide any detailed information to potential buyers. They had merely employed a European resident of the District, Major van Niekerk, as a ranger.¹² This was a practice often exercised by absentee landlords, and van Niekerk held the same position at other properties in the area. His main task was to collect rent from Africans tenants and mission outstations and to represent the owner's interests towards local government representatives.¹³ But it appears that he hardly knew the Block.

Therefore, interested buyers were forced to approach the Native Commissioner Inyanga in order to gain some information about the area. They inquired in 1928:

Would you be so good as to favour us confidentially with a report on this property, referring to the class of land, any work being carried out there on, its approximate value and if it has any development possibilities.¹⁴

The Native Commissioner wrote in response that he had only recently arrived in the District and therefore did not know the area under question. Instead, he suggested, the District Cattle Inspector might be of help as he had recently visited

the Block.¹⁵ As late as the early 1940s Lonrho relied on a ranger, by now Miss I E van Niekerk, for information on their property.¹⁶

The 'explorer'¹⁷ employed by Igoe in 1951 in order to find land for him in Rhodesia laconically summarised his view of the earlier owners of the Block:

It was previously held by Europeans purely as a speculation and was sold to the Native Department a few years ago.¹⁸

He further explained in a report to Igoe:

You must understand that in the early days large grants of land were made principally to mining companies. For instance the Inyanga block originally belonged to the Anglo French Corporation who of course took it off the map and never saw it until they sold it.¹⁹

Igoe expressed his surprise that the Block had hitherto been unexplored:

...it is still incomprehensible to me that the top plateau has never been completely explored and, except for a reconnaissance made 25 years ago by an old inhabitant, no Europeans have penetrated into the interior of this extremely large block.²⁰

Previous owners' interest had been restricted to an acreage which could be located on a map, or – in other words – to colonial land speculation. Igoe was fascinated by the opportunity this left for him and understood his own role differently. He was a company director, but first and foremost he saw himself as a pioneer and settler. The *Farming Gazette Supplement* characterised him in 1985 as 'a London Irish businessman, fighter pilot and international rugby trialist', certainly not as a man usually to be found at the boardroom table.²¹

The attempt by Igoe and 'his explorer' to set their own interests aside from those of previous owners can only partly be convincing. Despite Igoe's preparedness to explore and invest, he did not look for plantation land for any specific use. Rather, he applied what could be called a negative definition of land: he was interested in those properties left over from the 'scramble for Africa'. This is exemplified in a report by 'the explorer', in which he tried to convince Igoe to buy Inyanga Block:

I think that this bit of country is quite unique and I doubt whether the opportunity to acquire land suitable for the planting of crops requiring a heavy rainfall is likely to occur anywhere else in Rhodesia. This is in fact the last large block of undeveloped land in the heavy rainfall area in the Colony.²²

Explorers and Experts

In the 1950s Igoe and Aberfoyle Plantations Ltd. were prepared to invest in this – as one of his sons later called it – '...comparatively isolated and little publicised

land on the east side of the Nyanga escarpment'.²³ Once the Block was located, it was necessary to send explorers and experts in order to establish the value and potential of the property, and thus to permit useful future investment.

Again the explorer set himself and his task apart from earlier speculators:

These large grants of land tended to prevent development in this area. Now they were gradually being cut up.

And he continued to explain,

You must appreciate that Rhodesia is really not much more than fifty years old, and that until roads penetrated into these districts that [sic] the large holdings did not become broken up.²⁴

What emerges from this report are images of potential and need for development. Once these were established, experts were employed in order to assess the viability of specific projects. This was the case with a tea expert who was hired to establish the tea growing potential on an inspection tour when the second plantation was being established. He recommended in a report written in 1955:

We should go ahead in this good, rich and developing country. There may be better land in Africa but Inyanga is at least as good as the Anamallais, and we should lose no time in assessing the position in detail so as to ascertain the ultimate possibilities with the minimum of delay.²⁵

Arguably, the images created by experts and explorers of the land and their own involvement with it differed in one regard. Whereas the expert stressed possibility, the explorer appears to have seen his specific role as overcoming the impossible by venturing into the 'unknown'. Both, however, emphasised that their project was different from that of settlers and early speculators, and both were interested in the development potential of land. Also, both stressed the inaccessibility of the area. One of the tea experts contended in 1952 that exploration had been limited to the fringes of the Block and that there was need for better means of communication:

The whole area is very inaccessible and it is only within the last few months that a start has been made towards driving an inlet into the property; very slow progress is, however, being made, mainly owing to the nature of the country to be traversed coupled with the fact that very little labour is at the moment available, and a road-head has not yet penetrated sufficiently far to be of any practical use; the only means of access at the moment is therefore a very rough and mountainous jeep-track as far as the head of the Sumba River Valley, some three miles into the property from the northern boundary. From there on any investigation must be carried out on foot, and a thorough traverse of the block would entail several weeks in camp and much heavy walking.²⁶

Pioneers and Settlers

Readings of landscape by pioneers and settlers produced probably the most dramatic counter-images. Peter Anderson in his work on the Fish River Bush in South Africa argues that the trekboers' '... wagons were the vehicles of frontier, the agents of encounter'.²⁷ Pioneers and settlers were the ones who created the frontier, who defined the boundary between the known and the unknown, between settlement and 'no-man's land'. Anderson shows how these people were successful in overcoming the apparent chaos of the undefined by inhabiting the foreign lands.²⁸

The explorer, however, saw himself in this role of crossing and thus defining the frontier, and for this reason needed to point out the limitations of settler involvement in the imagination of landscape compared to his own capacity. Thus, he argued in the context of the absence of road construction on the Block, due to difficult terrain:

... this is, of course, one of the reasons why the country has not been developed as most places where an ox-wagon could be taken have been developed.

And he continued:

In the early days you only developed places where you could get an ox-wagon in, and places where you could grow maize successfully.²⁹

But a counter-image to the above exists, which gives a sense of unlimited power in the imagination and making of landscape. Because settlers and pioneers dared to 'penetrate the impenetrable', they had the great opportunity to transform 'wilderness' into 'known space'. This is, for example, apparent in Father Lewis's autobiography. He had been the resident Anglican priest in the Honde Valley in the 1960s and personally knew most of the 'European' population in the District. Writing about the northern part of Inyanga Block and adjacent land, both on the plateau, just beyond the Valley, he states:

The Downs themselves, with their settled European population and their holiday cottages, were largely the work of a handful of pioneers who arrived in the nineteen-thirties. Major McIlwaine and the Hanmer brothers found bare wind-swept hills, planted trees (especially pines which spread like wildfire) and ended up with another Scotland, complete with man-made lakes and waterfalls and trout-streams. The steep and winding lanes were often shrouded in a Scotch mist.³⁰

Native Commissioners

Finally, colonial administrators were also involved in the reading of African landscape. Their images mainly relate to the vastness, and to some degree to the improbability of their task: the administration of unknown and inaccessible

lands. In 1951, the same year when 'Igoe's' explorer began 'penetrating' Holdenby Block, the Native Commissioner was commissioned to explore Holdenby Special Native Area. This area consisted of two territories on the Valley bottom, one directly adjacent to, and both east of Holdenby Block. The Native Commissioner described the area as follows:

For the greater portion it is mountainous and has rivers flowing across it which pass through huge and grotesque gorges. It has been entered to a distance of six miles by road and it now remains to penetrate to the central parts and along the long narrow strip of the recently added Crown land adjacent to the Portuguese border.³¹

Thus features of the landscape were perceived to be 'grotesque' and the Valley '...a geographical oddity, its natural entrance being from Port territory.'³² Six years later this area was still unexplored and another Native Commissioner reported:

Holdenby, north of the Pungwe, is roadless, hilly, covered with tropical vegetation, and practically unknown.³³

And in 1958 he stressed the need for a road:

Lack of a road of any sort in the North East section of Holdenby is a handicap to the development of that area. This part of Holdenby is a wilderness of hills, streams and swamps, and a road will be difficult to construct there, but if funds are available next year an exploratory track will be cut into the area for a start to enable us to get in there.³⁴

Now it was argued that exploration depended on the construction of roads – a curious image emerges: a Native Commissioner ordering a road gang of local people who know the area perfectly well to build a road which he can follow in order to find out where it leads to.

To sum up some of the interests and images evoked: The representative of a multinational insists that he does not speculate, but that he is prepared to gather information about the land in order to invest and develop. The explorer and the expert have a sense of potential of the land and their task is to investigate this potentiality. The explorer sets himself apart as the main perpetrator in moving beyond the frontier and sees the role of pioneers and settlers in the imagination of landscape as limited. A missionary on the other hand emphasises their great capacity to 'make' landscape. The Native Commissioner accentuates the vastness of his task and the inaccessibility of the land.

These European, and (as remains to be shown) African, constructions of the rainforest land served different interests. On the one hand, this surfaced in counter images. These are competing notions which need to be cross-referenced in the analysis in order to reconstruct a more complete picture. It appears that for all those involved it was important to set themselves apart from others in order

to define and thus legitimate their specific role in the enterprise of European expansion. On the other hand, these images also informed each other. The most obvious examples are those of African agency, Africans as carriers, interpreters, and providers of food, and those of explorers and experts who were employed by the companies.

It is important to note that all the European images had one aspect in common, sexualisation of landscape: again and again there are images of penetration, opening up, getting in there, cutting into an area. It would be useful to deconstruct this sexualisation of foreign lands further and to show how far this related directly to European discourses on sexuality at the time.³⁵ In a different context Albert Wirz has argued that the construction of the primeval forest in nineteenth century Africa mirrors the construction of the male bourgeois self at the time.³⁶

Another argument was put forward by the Comaroffs in their work on the first encounter between Tswana people and European missionaries. They emphasised the significance of the reading and transformation of African landscape by missionaries employed in order to establish power relations. To early nineteenth century missionaries, the vanguards of British colonialism, the African interior presented itself as virgin ground to be broken, landscape to be invested with history.³⁷ Here they follow T O Ranger and his argument that the colonial project, that is 'the transforming energies of capitalism, of literacy, of Christianity would at long last historicise the African landscape.'³⁸ Therefore sexualisation in European narrative enabled the construction of landscape as wilderness, as uninhabited even if occupied,³⁹ and thus legitimated penetration. For this reason 'penetration' is an expression of more than mere imagery: real control over land was at issue.

AFRICAN READINGS

The rainforest is highly sexualised and gendered in mythology and prohibitions. Thus, local African men and women tell stories of trees with breasts and pools inhabited by female water spirits (*njuzu*).⁴⁰ There is not the space to attempt a complete reconstruction of African discourses. Rather, some dimensions will be highlighted in order to show the link between the imagination of landscape and the claim over land.

According to local belief, the rainforest on the slopes of the Valley is inhabited by spirits. If people dare to walk into the forest, the spirits will be tempted to tease them. They will appear in the shape of young girls, and trees themselves can look like women. Should the 'intruder' pay attention to the woman, or in particular, in the case of a man, show sexual interest, he or she is likely to disappear. An old man, 'traditional' healer (*n'anga*) and local 'kraalhead' (*sabhuku*) explains about the rainforest on the tea estates:

All this area; if you walk through there, and you see, say, a tree – if you say something nasty about that tree, you get lost... There are strange trees there, which you might mistake for a person, and if you then say ‘look at that girl’ when actually it is a tree, you get lost.⁴¹

The reason given for this prohibition is that trees demand respect. The same belief concerns specific mountains which should not be talked about badly in their vicinity and fingers should not be pointed at them.⁴² To give a current example: in 1992, a meeting was held at which government officials and male elders discussed the possibility of a pipeline from a pond on mount Nyangani to the city of Mutare. Chief Zindi, who understands himself as the keeper of the mountain, objected. Chief Zindi questioned the feasibility of the abstraction point and said it was a clear provocation of Nyangani, ancestral spirit.⁴³

Another example is that of female water spirits (*njuzu*). They live in ponds up in the forest and appear as beautiful young women.⁴⁴ Again, the prohibition has a similar effect. If you see them in the distance and you pass by without paying attention, you are safe. But if you approach them, there are two alternatives. In the case of a man, if he attempts to have sex with a *njuzu*, he – or vital parts of his body – are likely to disappear. There are numerous stories of *njuzu* offering the ‘intruder’ to live with them at the bottom of the pond. In turn they are prepared to teach him or her to be a *n’anga*. If this offer is refused, the person disappears. Many *n’anga* claim to have started their career after having lived for days, or sometimes years with *njuzu*.⁴⁵

An old man presented an interesting inversion of this narrative. He related that there is a pool on mount Nyangani, the slopes of which are covered with rainforest. In that pool there are *njuzu* who attract people by making the water look like gold. Hence white men tried to reach the pool. In this case not the people, but the pond itself disappeared:

The white men tried to penetrate that place by dropping from planes using parachutes, but all was in vain: the place would disappear.⁴⁶

All these stories have in common that they sexualise the rainforest. Or more specifically, they construct male human sexuality as being endangered by feminised landscape. This translates into gendered prohibitions: men are allowed to enter the forest for hunting, women for gathering of firewood, food and herbs, men post-sexual activity and post-menopausal women for annual rain rituals. Female discourses also depict the forest as a place of empowerment: in the forest young men are endangered through their sexuality, old men are teased for the absence of it.⁴⁷

Arguably, the ‘tabooisation’ of the rainforest serves to protect environmental resources. Africans protected their agricultural production systems ecologically, by constructing the forests as spiritual landscapes.⁴⁸ As all the rivers and most

streams in the area originate in the forest, it is of vital importance that the waterway should be protected from human waste. Also, prohibitions regarding approaching, not even to mention, of cutting down trees, protect the ecological balance between the high rainfall slopes and drier Valley bottom.

African readings of the rainforest state that the forest should only be entered on specific occasions, and not for daily land use. The landscape should be left untouched as far as possible. 'Not knowing the rules' and 'penetration' pose danger, which can be fatal. This exemplifies Ranger's argument that (pre-colonial) African claims to authority and to ownership of land were asserted through political and spiritual readings.⁴⁹

To sum up, ideologically, contestations over land by Europeans and Africans become apparent in the sexualisation of landscape. Europeans legitimised their expansion into African territories by propagating the image of 'penetrating virgin forests'. For local Africans, on the other hand, penetration meant danger, a threat which arguably prevented forests from being turned into agricultural production areas.

II. ESTABLISHING A PLANTATION: HOW COMPETING IMAGINATIONS TRANSLATED INTO CONTESTATIONS OVER LAND

Recent literature on landscape in Southern Africa has emphasised the importance of cultural appropriation. The Comaroffs argue that European colonialism as a cultural project,

.... depended, especially at first, on the construction of novel horizons and frontiers; on the export of signs and practices that would displace indigenous forms, recreating them in Europe's image.⁵⁰

And Said, in the introduction to his book *Culture and Imperialism*, stresses the significance of narrative to imperialist land policies:

The main battle in imperialism is over land, of course; but when it came to who owned the land, who had the right to settle and work on it, who kept it going, who won it back, and who now plans its future – these issues were reflected, contested, and even for a time decided in narrative.⁵¹

Nonetheless, it is important not to rest analysis with these imaginations and interpretations, as they translated into very real struggles over land and other environmental resources. Thus, the process of legitimising European expansion is related to African responses and perceptions.⁵² Arguably, four changes occurred in European attitudes to land in the years 1952 to 1958, when Aberfoyle and Eastern Highlands tea plantations were established.

EUROPEAN TRANSFORMATIONS

First, recording turned into renaming. During the search for a site and in the process of establishing potentiality, the explorer's main task had been to record names, to draw maps, to learn about the locality. Now that the land had been bought, the emphasis shifted to making the unknown known and part of this was the introduction of new names which sounded more familiar. Anderson in his work on the Eastern Cape emphasises the significance of naming in the making of landscape:

Naming, like travelling, is a primary activity in space. In this simple activity is prefigured settlement, survey, cartography, a whole history of spatial activity. A name is a tool for the further cognition of space, each one is a germinal noun in a sentence of spatial history.... Names are roots. They tell stories, they remember, they describe, they celebrate.⁵³

Thus Igoe wrote in 1958 when he reconnoitred the land for the second tea estate:

In order to prevent confusion arising with so many rivers in the area prefixed 'Nyam' we have renamed the principal ones as follows: the first river on the way in from the north entrance is the Honey, the next the Butterfly, and the third, the Buffalo.⁵⁴

Secondly, 'wilderness' turned into acreage and rainforest into production area. Whereas by 1952 it was still considered to be extremely difficult to 'penetrate' the Block and establish acreage of the different areas, by 1954 exact acreage had been measured. Some production areas were beginning to be planted with tea, while others were set aside for future use. The tea fields appear to have tamed the wilderness of the forest.

Thirdly, the apparent remoteness was countered with a great effort to create communication networks. Both estates could only be approached from the plateau, down the escarpment on steep jeep tracks in the forest. As a result the European staff was forced to live in tents and to depend on local food supplies. They hardly ever had the opportunity to leave the Valley, the journey to the closest city for a weekend trip being too long and too cumbersome. This impaired the wellbeing of staff, and one of the early managers was forced to resign, as he failed to cope with the situation.⁵⁵ In order to improve the living condition of the European staff, but mainly for the transport of labour and produce to markets, the management began constructing roads in 1954.

This leads to the fourth, and probably most important, change. During the exploration of the Block African labour and expertise appears to have been obtained predominantly from areas adjacent to the Valley, and not from the Block itself. Once the plantation was being established, new need for an increased labour force arose. By 1952 Igoe still assumed that local labour would be cheap, as African tenants on the Block could be forced to enter into a labour agreement. Similar agreements were employed at the time throughout the

'PENETRATING' FOREIGN LANDS

Colony in order to create a stable workforce. Families were allowed to stay on the estate and cultivate limited areas of land, if, in return, the male adult members of the household worked at least 150 days per year for the Company.⁵⁶ Initially, therefore, Igoe reasoned that, 'being squatters, the natives are forced to work for us under pain of eviction'.⁵⁷

However, soon the management had to realise that the task was more difficult. High hopes were set on the new road which would facilitate enforcement of tenant labour. This is reflected in a letter by Igoe from 1954:

Male labour is still a little shy and difficult to coerce because of the scattered and remote positions of their rondavels. Better results will be obtained when the road is completed and it is made possible for us to use native policemen to round up absentees. The fact that the Native Commissioners can come into the Block by car (some are well beyond middle age) will make a great difference. As far as I know, no Native Commissioner has been right through our Block, although they are assumed to have intimate knowledge of the areas they control.⁵⁸

But this attempt was not successful either, as their 'tenants' preferred to move off the land. Men refused to work on the plantations, only women, juveniles and children could be gained for seasonal work.⁵⁹

In order to cope with their labour demands, attempts were then made to recruit men from neighbouring Portuguese East Africa, and indeed later from Malawi.⁶⁰ The management thought that the proximity to the border, which could easily be crossed, would be a major incentive. However, Igoe assumed that the apparent remoteness would pose problems:

Labour which comes out at the present time is cut off from every type of commodity, food utensils, clothing and equipment, which civilisation, such as it exists there, has brought into the native's life as a necessity... to purchase even a needle is now two days' walk for a native. Therefore, it is important that one of the first buildings to be erected, even if it is of a temporary nature, is the native store. Wages will mean nothing without a purchasing point.⁶¹

CONTESTING IMAGINATIONS

It has been argued that European readings of the landscape changed when the plantations were being established. At the same time it began to become apparent that local African readings clashed with the dominant European image of remoteness. There are three dimensions to this disagreement which translated into acute shortage of local labour on the plantations.

First, the initial assumption by the plantation management had been that the Valley was so remote and inaccessible that there was little competition from other employers. This impression of isolation is easily gained, even today, when



FIGURE 2. A tea plantation in the Honde Valley

approaching the Valley from the western direction, i.e., the Zimbabwean plateau and the Nyanga mountains. A sudden, at times vertical drop, of up to 1000 meters and dramatic climatic change when entering the Valley, as well as its location along the border with Mozambique, underline this notion.

Yet Valley inhabitants have always crossed the border, since it was first drawn in 1898, and by the 1930s the Valley had become one of the routes migrant labourers took on their way into Rhodesia.⁶² Old men relate how they began working at Penhalonga, a neighbouring mining area, in the 1930s.⁶³ Thus, by the late 1940s local African men were linked to information networks about local and regional labour markets, and many young men already had first hand experience of wage employment. In 1949 the Labour Officer for the Eastern Districts complained that new settlers in Inyanga District had great difficulty in recruiting labour. Africans preferred domestic work in nearby holiday resorts to the heavier and usually less-well paid farm work:

There is a fairly acute shortage of labour among the new settlers on the Crown Land in the Inyanga area, where it seems possible that the proper development of farms may be held up on that account.

He further advised that the only solution would be for farmers to settle tenant labour on their farms. The labour officer reasoned:

In this particular area, the labour position appears to be complicated by the better conditions and higher wages paid to hotel employees, and by holders of holiday plots, of which there are a considerable number in the locality.⁶⁴

Secondly, the plantation management, as well as government agricultural extension workers, assumed that cash crops would be welcomed by Valley people. In the process of establishing the estates, a test plot was planted with sugar cane, exotic fruit and spices from Asia and other parts of Africa in order to establish suitability of the soil.⁶⁵ So far people in the northern part of the Valley had been largely excluded from the Government's attempts to introduce new crops to Africans. They grew millet (*rapoko*) as the staple food crop, dry-land rice, and vegetables, like yam (*madhumbé*). Fruit was also part of the daily diet.⁶⁶

But local people were sceptical, not only towards growing cash crops themselves, but also towards the newly established tea estates. Again, contrary to the European notion of remoteness, people appear to have been very much aware of colonial land appropriation policies in adjacent areas. Just outside the Valley, in an area under the same paramount chief, a chieftainess had lost her land to the Lonrho-owned Wattle Company and other people were evicted when the Forestry Commission began planting on their estates.⁶⁷ Even though details are blurred in old people's memory, many do remember that the Wattle Company had first introduced exotic trees to Africans. When the soil proved to be suitable and the trees did well, the plantation took over and the local inhabitants were evicted, if they refused to enter a labour agreement.⁶⁸ By the 1960s, and particularly 70s, tea had become a political issue. An old man remembers that those in his community who resisted the introduction of tea did so, because they related this effort to earlier evictions from the forestry estates.⁶⁹

Finally, there was a direct clash in perceptions of the rainforest. Whereas, as argued above, Europeans justified 'penetrating' the forest with its remoteness, African men refused to work in the forest. Arguably, local ideas of preservation, which clashed with those of penetration, prevented men from cutting down trees in the rainforest. Given the choice between a labour agreement and eviction, the local chief, Zindi, and most of his people decided to abandon the land. The resulting conflict again reflects different readings of landscape.

CONTESTATION OVER LAND

In 1954, when planting commenced in Aberfoyle,⁷⁰ Chief Zindi and his people moved into Holdenby Reserve. His new home was a mere 250 yards from the boundary with the plantation.⁷¹ This move infuriated the manager of Aberfoyle who complained to the Native Commissioner Inyanga about it:

We know you had already told all the Headmen and most of the natives in the area, that they could not move into the reserve, and that they are flagrantly disregarding your orders in doing so now.

We have also been advised that Zindi has told all the boys not to carry their situpas [identity cards] when moving in our area, and that he is responsible for advising his followers to disobey your instructions.

He is an extremely undesirable character to hold the position he has, and, if the above allegations against him are proved, I would suggest that you remove him from the district and demote him to shovelling coal at Wankie.⁷²

Chief Zindi thus acquired a reputation of being rebellious. Later, during the war of liberation, he was sent into detention, because he supported guerrillas operating in his area.⁷³

It seemed unlikely that the 'veteran rebel' had given up part of his land so easily. When talking to Chief Zindi in 1992, still in office since 1951⁷⁴ and now a very old man, assisted by an old male councillor and *sabhuku*, he remembered the beginnings of the plantation:

When they [Aberfoyle] came here, we assumed they wanted to plough only a small portion of land.... And we let them be... I was not moved from there, no. They had told me that I was free to settle there, but then they would give me work to do. But I felt this was not beneficial – I could not stay on a farm – when I was ruler of the land. That is why I did not take long to leave that place. When they marked their boundary – I found myself living within their tea plantation. I was within the tea plantation. So I decided to move. I then shifted and came to stay here.⁷⁵

But why did Zindi and his people move without putting up any resistance, particularly as only twenty years later, land and cash crops had become a major issue in the nationalist struggle in the area? Arguably, the reason was a boundary not visible to Europeans at the time.

In 1925 the Native Commissioner Inyanga reported that Zindi and his people lived on the fringes of the farm:

The kraals on Inyanga Block are practically all on the borders of that farm, the centre being empty country.⁷⁶

And again in 1947, the Provincial Native Commissioner wrote that the population on Holdenby Block lived in the foothills, neither up in the forest, nor on the Valley bottom.⁷⁷ Most of the Block was covered with rainforest, but it also extended to the Valley bottom just west of the Mapokana hills. It was on the very boundary between the two ecological zones that most settlements were located. Arguably, local people made a distinction between rain forest and forest which covered lower-lying areas, which consisted mainly of Msasa trees and bamboo. It was only the latter which was considered to be a potential agricultural production area. Therefore Zindi moved not only across the boundary between

'PENETRATING' FOREIGN LANDS

the plantation and the reserve, but also between landscape which was to be preserved, and landscape which could be utilised.⁷⁸

The management of Aberfoyle, which could do nothing to prevent this move, appealed to the Native Commissioner for help. They defined the boundary at stake in yet another respect by drawing on the legal definition of land in Southern Rhodesia. The 1950 amendment of the Land Apportionment Act of 1930 stipulated that Africans should be evicted from European land, Crown land, and Native Purchase areas and that they were to be resettled into Reserves within five years.⁷⁹ In the following year the Native Land Husbandry Act was passed, which specified that the reserves were to be surveyed and the land to be newly allocated according to the Government's directives of land use. No African was allowed to move into a reserve during this process of evaluation. Neither could an African man apply for land rights who was not resident in a reserve at the time of the 'kraal appreciation'.⁸⁰ Thus the manager of Aberfoyle presented his interpretation of the new legislation to the Native Commissioner and demanded the enforcement of the Native Land Husbandry Act:

We would be extremely grateful for your assistance in squaring the move before it really gets out of hand. We rely on these natives and their wives to assist us in the development of the Estate, and as we are potential food growers and therefore an asset to the country, we feel that we should have the support of all concerned in stopping the present movement of our labour force which is detrimental to our producing the crops we intend producing, and therefore detrimental to the country.⁸¹

But for a few years, the new legislation left the Government in a limbo: on the one hand, Africans were supposed to be evicted from European land unless they entered a labour agreement, but on the other hand, an uncontrolled move into one of the reserves was not allowed.⁸² Thus, according to law Chief Zindi and his people could neither be forced to return to Aberfoyle, nor should they be allowed to stay in Holdenby Reserve. The matter was referred to the Provincial Native Commissioner who saw the Government unable to help Aberfoyle, as according to the Land Apportionment Act Africans could not be moved onto privately-owned land. He gave his opinion on the case to the Native Commissioner:

I very much doubt if you can force them to return to Aberfoyle Plantations, because by doing so you would be forcing them to commit a statutory offence i.e. illegally entering a European area.... However, I realise that the natives should be encouraged to enter into a labour agreement and I suggest you do what you can to bring this about.⁸³

Zindi and his people refused to return to Aberfoyle and local labour supply remained a problem.

III. EPILOGUE: A RECENT BATTLE OVER SPIRITUAL LANDSCAPE

This paper deals with the 1950s, and here is not the space to discuss in any detail the contestations over land in the nationalist period of the 1960s, nor during the liberation war in the 1970s, nor the so-called squatter problem of the 1980s. But one battle which Chief Zindi and his elders fought over the forest after independence should be briefly mentioned: his claim to spiritual landscape has remained an issue to the present day.

In 1954 Aberfoyle plantation was sold and renamed Eastern Highlands Plantation Ltd.⁸⁴ When the production area was expanded and the forest increasingly cut down, the management came to an agreement with Chief Zindi that the ancestral graves were to be spared.⁸⁵ These graves are situated on a hill top on the estate. Today it is striking to see the intensity and skill of landscape gardening, with tea fields covering entire hills. One of the few areas indeed spared is the ancestral grave yard where the annual rain ritual is performed.⁸⁶

In 1991 the plantation management planned once more a major transformation of landscape: they decided to cut down the trees on the grave yard in order to construct a helicopter landing place. The argument put forward was that top level management of the parent company needed easy access to the estate. The trees were cut, notwithstanding the fact that during the liberation war a landing strip was built nearby which can comfortably be reached from the estate offices in less than thirty minutes by car on a tarred road.⁸⁷

In 1991-92 Zimbabwe experienced a severe drought and in the Valley this was the worst drought in living memory. By September, when the elders started preparing for the rain ritual, they were told that they had no longer a right of access to the graves. The rains failed to break. This caused heated debate in the homesteads of villagers, as well as in the labour compounds on the estates.⁸⁸ The drought was attributed to the cutting down of the trees, the desecration of the grave yard. When Chief Zindi was interviewed in early October the issue was brought up repeatedly. He emphasised his ritual duties:

My duties include performing rituals for the area... Yes, and also to maintain order in the area, by performing rain-rituals. The people come to assemble here.... If the dry season persists, the people assemble here and try to work out a solution.

And his councillor added that even the estate manager used to consult the chief in matters of rainfall:

The white man who was there used to visit here and tell us that the tea was getting dry due to lack of rain, so we had to do something.

He continued to explain the current conflict:

'PENETRATING' FOREIGN LANDS

The changamire [Zindi] went to them and told them not to desecrate the graveyard, if they did not want to disturb rainfall. They refused to listen to him, saying that they had bought the land.... And that whoever had died would not resurrect, so they refused to compensate for the graves.... 'He died, he is dead – finish. We don't bury any more', so we had to keep quiet.... We were no longer allowed to visit the 'dense foliage' and perform our rituals.⁸⁹

The drought persisted. Aberfoyle was forced to close down completely for one month in November, and Eastern Highlands was forced to reduce their capacity and lay off labour. Finally, the management was prepared to make a concession: compensation of a small amount of money and some bags of millet for the brewing of beer for the ritual were paid to Chief Zindi. The following day, on the 10th of November, torrential rains broke – exactly within the boundaries of Chief Zindi's territory (*dunhu*)!⁹⁰

CONCLUSION

An attempt has been made to demonstrate the link between images of landscape as ideological metaphor of space⁹¹ and the legitimation of European expansion in a case study from Africa. It has been argued that Europeans sexualised African rainforest through images of 'penetration' and imagined it as 'wilderness'. However, this 'no-man's land' was inhabited by Africans with their own sexualised and gendered reading of the forest. These European and African imaginations of landscape translated into real contestations over resources and informed the strategies employed by the parties involved. Arguably, similar processes can be located elsewhere.

Methodological drawbacks in some of the literature on landscape arise from the limitation of sources. This is particularly apparent where attempts are made to portray African identities through European narrative.⁹² The deconstruction of text in order to depict counter-discourses, as propagated by 'post-modernist literary criticism' should be part of any historian's skills. But arguably, this is not sufficient: Moore and Vaughan, in their recent book *Cutting Down Trees*, aspire to 'develop new methodological practices for the writing of African historiography and anthropology'.⁹³ They claim that in order usefully to reconstruct identities historically, it is important to draw on different discourses, as well as on local practices.⁹⁴ This paper is an attempt to show that a variety of oral and written sources needs to be 'blended in' and to be read in different ways in order to come to an understanding of some of the complexities of the process of European expansion.

NOTES

Earlier versions of this paper were presented to the Third European Science Foundation Course on the History of European Expansion, Sant Feliu de Guixols, Spain, 18-24 July 1994 and to the African Studies Association of the UK Biennial Conference, University of Lancaster, 5-7 September 1994. I would like to thank the participants, as well as Christian Wagner and Georg Deutsch for useful comments. I am grateful to Albert Wirz for drawing my attention to European images of the rainforest. Thanks also to the Centre for Modern Oriental Studies, Berlin, for financing the final writing up period of my D.Phil. thesis.

¹ For the bulk of literature on landscape in Africa, see, for example, Kopytoff, I. (ed) 1987; Ranger, T.O. 1987; Comaroff, J. and J. 1991; Croll, E. and Parkin, D. (eds) 1992; Anderson, P.R. 1993; Moore, D. 1993; Wirz, A. 1994; and Felix Driver's current work on imperial exhibitions.

² The evidence for this paper was collected as part of fieldwork in Zimbabwe, conducted for my doctoral dissertation, 'The Social and Economic Impact of Political Violence in Zimbabwe, 1890-1990; A Case Study of the Honde Valley', (Forthcoming D.Phil. thesis, Oxford, 1995). A number of the issues only touched upon here, are discussed in more detail in my thesis.

³ National Archives of Zimbabwe, (NAZ), S2827/2/2/2, Annual District Reports, vol.V, Inyanga District 1952, p. 1.

⁴ Construction had begun in the early 1950s, but was only completed in 1959. National Archives of Zimbabwe (NAZ) S2827/2/2/7, vol.II, Annual District Reports, Inyanga District 1959, p. 6. In 1960 the estate road was linked to the main Manga road. NRC, boxnumber 62328, PNC Umtali, File: Annual Reports 1959 and 62, Inyanga District 1960, p. 5.

⁵ Inyanga Block, Eastern District, Southern Rhodesia, Report, George Williamson and Co Nairobi, 1952. Some of the written sources cited here are private papers and will henceforth be referred to as [Holdenby Papers].

⁶ Copy of Agreement of Sale, 1952. [Holdenby papers].

⁷ (NAZ), L2/1/6/1, Land Settlement Department, Letter from the Surveyor General's Office to the General Manager, Anglo-French Matabeleland Co. Ltd., Belingwe, 04.08.1905. In 1926 Inyanga Block changed hands several times in quick succession. S604, NC Inyanga, Letter from Native Commissioner (NC) Inyanga to Superintendent of Natives Umtali, 'Holdenby Private Location', 12.02.1926 and NC Inyanga to Chief Native Commissioner (CNC), 'Private Locations License', 20.07.1926.

⁸ (NAZ), S603, NC Inyanga, Letter from the local secretary of Lonrho Salisbury to NC Inyanga, 'Holdenby Native Location', 13.01.1930 and letter from NC Inyanga to the CNC, 'Private Location: Northern Portion of Inyanga Block: Hanmer Brothers (Inyanga) Ltd', 29.12.1930. For a detailed history of this land, see Donald Moore's Ph.D. thesis, (Stanford forthcoming).

⁹ The Government had been interested in Holdenby Block for 'native settlement' from as early as 1943 and bought the land, roughly 77,000 acres, at 6 shillings per acre in 1948. An area around the Mtarazi Falls, some 2,400 acres, was excluded from this transaction. National Record Centre of Zimbabwe (NRC), boxnumber 150768, NC Inyanga, File: LAN 4, 'CNC to NC Inyanga, 'Acquisition of Further Land for Native Settlement:

'PENETRATING' FOREIGN LANDS

Inyanga District', 06.09.1943 and boxnumber 62328, Provincial Native Commissioner (PNC) Umtali, Minute from CNC to Under Secretary, Department of Lands, 'Holdenby Estate: Inyanga District', 27.02.1948.

¹⁰ Wightwick, Umtali, to Igoe, Incomati Sugar Estates, Lourenco Marques, Portuguese East Africa, 21.11.1951. [Holdenby papers]

¹¹ (NAZ), L2/1/6/1, Land Settlement Department, Copy of letter from Little, Managing Director, Anglo-French Matabeleland Company, to the Manager of the British South Africa Company, 19.10.1900.

¹² Van Niekerk had come to Rhodesia with his wife in 1892 and settled in Inyanga district in 1897. (NAZ) Hist.Mss. WO 5/9/1, Pioneer Reminiscences, Letter from M. van Niekerk to Mrs de Groot, 29.11.1950.

¹³ Colonel van Niekerk, for example, collected the rent for a Methodist mission site on the Block between 1913 and 1923. Old Mutare Mission Archives, File: Correspondence Concerning Leases 1916-20 (Umtassa Reserve), north-wall, shelf A, boxfile 31.

¹⁴ (NAZ) S603 NC Inyanga, Letter from the Manager of the Standard Bank Umtali (for client) to NC Inyanga, 13.07.1928.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, Letter from NC Inyanga to the Manager, Standard Bank Umtali, 18.07.1928 and Letter from the Manager, Standard Bank Umtali, to NC Inyanga, 26.07.1928.

¹⁶ (NRC) boxnumber 150768, File: LAN 4, 'CNC Record No. 119: Land Apportionment Act, 1941, Part VI'. Major van Niekerk was employed at least as late as 1927. CNC to NC Inyanga, 'Private Location: Holdenby: Inyanga District', 04.10.1927.

¹⁷ The term 'explorer' appears appropriate in this context, even though D Wightwick is not referred to as such in the sources. His main task in the context of the case study was to explore land in order to provide information to Igoe. This he did on contract basis. Unfortunately, it has not been possible to establish Wightwick's professional or personal background other than that he was living in Mutare at the time.

¹⁸ D. Wightwick to W.A.K. Igoe, London, 19.03.1952. [Holdenby papers]

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ Report by W.A.K. Igoe, Inyangani (Inyanga) Estates Ltd, 09.07.1952. [Holdenby papers]

²¹ 'Aberfoyle: The Story of a Tea Estate', *The Farming Gazette Supplement*, 03.05.1985.

²² H.D. Wightwick, Umtali, to Igoe, Incomati Sugar Estates, Lourenco Marques, Portuguese East Africa, 21.11.1951. [Holdenby papers]

²³ This notion of remoteness of the land was given as a reason for the much later development of tea in the Valley, compared to Chipinge District, the only other tea growing area in Zimbabwe. There tea plantations were started in the 1920s. *The Farming Gazette Supplement*. Aberfoyle: The Story of a Tea Estate. 03.05.1985.

²⁴ D. Wightwick to W.A.K. Igoe, London, 19.03.1952. [Holdenby papers]

²⁵ Copy: 'Report on Inyanga Land', by Angus Cameron, 21.04.1955. [Holdenby papers]

²⁶ 'Report on the Tea-Growing Possibilities of the Inyanga Block, the property of Inyangombi Estates (Inyanga) Limited: Mr. W.A.K. Igoe', by H.O. Thomas, 23.10.1952. [Holdenby papers]

²⁷ Anderson, 'The Human Clay', p. 23.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

²⁹ D. Wightwick to W.A.K. Igoe, London, 19.03.1952. [Holdenby papers]

³⁰ Lewis, A.R. 1992. *Too Bright the Vision? African Adventures of an Anglican Rebel*. London: Covenant Books, p. 184. In 1952 Igoe had reported that the general appearance

of the Block was reminiscent of Scotland. Inyangani (Inyanga) Estates Ltd, report by W.A.K. Igoe, 09.07.1952. [Holdenby Papers]

³¹ (NAZ) S2827/2/2/1, Annual District Reports, vol.V, Inyanga District 1951, p. 11.

³² Inyangani (Inyanga) Estates Ltd, report by W.A.K. Igoe, 09.07.1952. [Holdenby Papers]

³³ (NAZ) S2827/2/2/5, Annual District Reports, vol.II, Inyanga District 1957, p. 8.

³⁴ (NAZ) S2827/2/2/6, Annual District Reports, vol.III, Inyanga District 1958, p. 6.

³⁵ For the growing literature on empire and sexuality, see, for example, Hyam, R. 1990. For the discussion of 'penetration' and expansion, see, Callaway, H. 1993, pp. 37-8 and Groot, J. de 1989, pp. 110-11.

³⁶ Wirz, 'Die Erfindung des Urwalds'. For the Rhodesian self-image as 'civilisers of wilderness', see Chennels, A. 1991.

³⁷ Comaroff, J. and J., 1988, p. 6.

³⁸ Ranger, 1987, p. 159.

³⁹ For the distinction between occupied and inhabited space, and land and landscape, see, Anderson, 1993, pp. 3 and 50.

⁴⁰ For simplification nouns in chi-Manyika, the local dialect of Shona, mentioned in the text are used in their singular form.

⁴¹ Interview with informant A, 05.10.1992.

⁴² Interview with Chief Zindi and 'Kraalhead' (*sabhuku*) Gogodi, 07.10.1992.

⁴³ (DAO) File: Chiefs and Headmen: Meetings and Assemblies Including Elections of Chiefs, Report on a Meeting Held by Traditional Leaders of Mutasa District on Friday 10.04.1992. See also, *Horizon* October 1994. Battle for the Pungwe, Pipeline Plan Raises Fears of Bleeding Honde Valley Dry, and Troubled Waters, Angry Gods, pp. 14-18.

⁴⁴ Interview with informant B, an old male *n'anga*, 06.10.1992 and with informant C, a young woman, 18.10.1992. From another area in Zimbabwe, the Midlands Province, stories are related which describe *njuzu* as beautiful white women with blond hair. See Hansson, G. 1994.

⁴⁵ Interview with informant D, an old woman, 01.02.1992 and with informant E, the young daughter of a *n'anga*, 05.10.1992. See for a recent example, Hansson, 1994.

⁴⁶ Interview with informant A, 05.10.1992.

⁴⁷ Interview with informants C and F, two young women, 10.11.1992. Even soldiers of the Zimbabwean army were mocked in such stories. Interview with informant G, a young woman, 26.10.1992.

⁴⁸ For the '...idea of social causation of environmental ills', see, for example, Werbner, R. 1993 and Schoffeleers, 1979, p. 8.

⁴⁹ Ranger, 'Holy Places', pp. 165-166.

⁵⁰ Comaroff, J. and J., 1988, pp. 7-8.

⁵¹ Said, E. 1993, p. xiii.

⁵² Donald Moore follows a similar objective in a paper on the northern part of Inyanga Block, where he seeks '...to show how struggles over land and environmental resources are simultaneously struggles over cultural meanings.' Moore, D 1992.

⁵³ Anderson, 1993, p. 22.

⁵⁴ Report to the Board of Directors of Aberfoyle Plantations Ltd on My Visit to the Company's Rhodesian Property – September/November 1958, by W.A.K. Igoe, November 1958. [Holdenby papers] Today the 'Nyam'-prefixed names of rivers are in use.

⁵⁵ Kirkwood and Peter Ring, for example, lived with their wives in tents for more than 15 months. Aberfoyle, Tea Report – 1954, by W.A.K. Igoe, 08.04.1954. [Holdenby papers]

'PENETRATING' FOREIGN LANDS

Ring worked for and lived at Aberfoyle since the beginnings, in 1952, until early in 1994, when he died. He is much talked about by employees of the estate, but rarely mentioned in the documentation. Paddy O'Shea, Aberfoyle's manager from 1954, was not able to take any leave for four years. Report to the Board of Directors of Aberfoyle Plantations Ltd on My Visit to the Company's Rhodesian Property – September/November 1958, by W.A.K. Igoe, November 1958. [Holdenby papers]

⁵⁶ In an adjacent area the Forestry Commission imposed a labour agreement which forced male tenants living in Nyamukwarara Valley, on Stapleford Forestry Estate, to work a minimum of 180 days a year for the estate. 'Report on the Tenant Area; Stapleford Forest Reserve', by K.W. Groves, October 1956, p. 15. [Stapleford Papers]

⁵⁷ Director Aberfoyle Plantations Ltd to W.W. Halliday, Directors of Aberfoyle Plantations Ltd, 'Inyanga', u.d. [1952]. [Holdenby papers]

⁵⁸ 'Aberfoyle, Tea Report – 1954', by W.A.K. Igoe, 08.04.1954. [Holdenby papers]

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ In 1954 Kirkwood visited the administrator of Vila Goveia in Portuguese East Africa in order to come to a rather unusual private agreement involving baby food and whisky for the father of four, in return for access to the supply of 'native labour'. Letter from Kirkwood to W.A.K. Igoe, 18.03.1954. [Holdenby papers]

⁶¹ Aberfoyle, Tea Report – 1954', by W.A.K. Igoe, 08.04.1954. [Holdenby papers]

⁶² For the boundary commission, see, (NAZ) L2/2/6/6-8, T2/30/8 and A3/4/1.

⁶³ Interview with informant H, an old man, 15.08.1992. Chief Zindi himself remembers that he worked in Rezende mine in Penhalonga with men from his area. Interview with Chief Zindi, 07.10.1992.

⁶⁴ (NAZ) S1012/27, NC Umtali, 'Report of Labour Officer, Eastern Districts, October 1949', p. 3.

⁶⁵ (NAZ) S2827/2/2/1, Annual District Reports, vol.V, Inyanga District 1951-52 and S2827/2/2/4, Annual District Reports, vol.II, Inyanga District 1956.

⁶⁶ Interview with informant I, an old man, 15.08.1992 and informant J, a middle-aged woman, 23.08.1992. (NRC) boxnumber 62328, File: Reports on Lands and Reserves, Land Inspector Umtali to the PNC, 'Preliminary Report on the Remaining Portion of Holdenby', 09.11.1948.

⁶⁷ For chieftainess Muredzwa's struggle over her land, see, Schmidt, H. 1993.

⁶⁸ Interview with informant K, an old man, relative of Muredzwa, and resident in the Valley from 1951 to 1977. A *sabhuku* in the Holdenby area emphasised the grievance when relating that the only people ever forced to live in the Honde Valley were those who had been evicted by the Wattle Company and the Forestry Commission. Interview with informant L, 08.06.1992.

⁶⁹ Interview with informant M, 16.08.1992.

⁷⁰ The first 36 acres of tea were planted in the 1954/55 season. 'Report on Mr. A.R.A.G. Cameron's Visit to Luleche, October 1957', by Angus Cameron, 27.10.1957. [Holdenby papers]

⁷¹ Before this move, Chief Zindi had been living about 250 yards from the boundary on the Block. (NRC) boxnumber 93786, NC Inyanga, File: CP6 to CP12, NC Inyanga to PNC Manicaland, 'Headman Zindi: Application for Removal by Aberfoyle Plantations Ltd', 21.09.1954. Today, after forced resettlement and the upheavals experienced during the war of liberation, Chief Zindi lives again in proximity to the boundary with the tea estate.

⁷² (NRC) boxnumber 93786, File: CP6 TO CP12, Letter from Kirkwood, Manager Aberfoyle Plantations Ltd., to NC Inyanga, 14.06.1954.

⁷³ Interview with Chief Zindi, 07.10.1992. District Administrator's (DA's) Office, File: PER 5 Headmen, Letter from H.C.A. Gomes for DC Mutasa to the Sec. for Internal Affairs, 'Headman Zindi: Allowance Payment Vouchers Book No. 0395', 23.06.1977 and Provincial Administrator's (PA's) Office, File: PER 5 Headman Zindi, A.J. Bundock, DC Mutasa District, to PC Manicaland, 'Fezayi 1A 1018: Headman Zindi', 17.07.1978.

⁷⁴ DA's Office, File: PER 5 Headmen, Letter from M.C. Hagelthorn to PNC Manicaland, 'Appointment of H/M Zindi', 11.06.1951.

⁷⁵ Interview with Chief Zindi and *sabhuku* Gogodi, 07.10.1992.

⁷⁶ (NAZ) S604, NC Inyanga, NC Inyanga to the District Veterinary Umtali, 'Cattle Cleansing Ordinance', 13.11.1925.

⁷⁷ (NRC) boxnumber 62328, File: Reports on Lands and Reserves, PNC to CNC, 'Holdenby Farm', 26.02.1947.

⁷⁸ An exception to this taboo is being made during times of crisis. To give but two examples, in the late 19th century people living in the northern part of the Valley moved up into the rainforest in order to seek protection from invading Shangaan warriors. Also, in 1992, during the severe drought a senior spirit medium (*mhondoro*) gave permission to cut trees and to expand fields into a sacred forest.

⁷⁹ (NAZ), S2807/4 and S2807/7, Land Apportionment Act: 1941-1951 and S1194/190/27/6/1, Natives Occupying Crown Land. See also, Moyana, H.V. 1984. *The Political Economy of Land in Zimbabwe*. Gweru: Mambo Press, p. 129.

⁸⁰ See various correspondence in, (NRC), boxnumber 93785, File: Tribal Trust Lands.

⁸¹ (NRC) boxnumber 93786, File: CP6 TO CP12, Letter from Kirkwood, Manager Aberfoyle Plantations Ltd. to NC Inyanga, 14.06.1954.

⁸² By 1961 demarcation in Zindi's area had still not been conducted. (NAZ) S2827/2/2/8, Annual District Reports, vol.II, Inyanga District 1961, p. 8.

⁸³ (NRC) boxnumber 93786, File: CP6 to CP12, PNC Manicaland to NC Inyanga, 'Headman Zindi: Application for Removal by Aberfoyle Plantations Ltd', 30.09.1954.

⁸⁴ Igoe carried on to develop Inyangombi forestry estate on the northern part of Holdenby Block. From 1958 he begun planting tea on the eastern portion. This new tea estate was again, rather confusingly, called Aberfoyle Plantation.

⁸⁵ Aberfoyle, Report on visit to the Estate by Mr. B.I. Barry 21st Feb. to 18th March 1960. [Holdenby Papers]

⁸⁶ The ancestral graves of the neighbouring chieftainship, Chikomba, are situated on what now is Aberfoyle estate. Chief Chikomba and his elders have been allowed access to the graveyard and in recent years even been transported by an estate lorry to the annual rain ritual. Letter from H/M Chikomba to the Manager Katiyo, 'Request for Transport for the Annual Rain Ceremony to and from Aberfoyle 27th-10-1990', 22.10.90 [Chikomba Papers]. The higher-lying portion of Chief Zindi's land (*dunhu*), mainly mount Nyangani and forest areas, was appropriated to Nyanga National Park.

⁸⁷ The landing place attracted much interest in the local press, for example, in the *Manica Post*.

⁸⁸ Great interest in the contestation was also expressed to the author by young men from Zindi who are working in urban areas, as was the case with a bank teller and an airport customs officer in Harare.

⁸⁹ Interview with Chief Zindi and *sabhuku* Gogodi, 07.10.1992.

⁹⁰ The author was 'trapped' in the factory of Eastern Highlands tea estate, as for a few hours it was impossible to move outside.

- ⁹¹ Anderson, 1993, p. 60.
⁹² See, for example, Anderson, 1993, and Comaroff, J. and J., 1991.
⁹³ Moore, H.L. and Vaughan, M. 1994, p. xv.
⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. xviii to xxv.

REFERENCES

- Anderson, P.R. 1993. *The Human Clay: An Essay in the Spatial History of the Cape Eastern Frontier, 1811-1835*. Oxford: M.Litt. thesis.
- Callaway, H. 1993. Purity and Exotica in Legitimizing the Empire. Cultural Constructions of Gender, Sexuality and Race. In: Ranger, T.O., and Vaughan, O. (eds) 1993. *Legitimacy and the State in Twentieth-Century Africa*, pp.31-61. London: MacMillan.
- Chennels, A. 1991. Cultural Violence During the Pax Rhodesiana: The Evidence from Rhodesian Fiction. Paper presented to the Conference on Political Violence in Southern Africa, Oxford 25-27 June 1991.
- Comaroff, J. and J. 1988. Through the Looking-glass: Colonial Encounters of the First Kind. *Journal of Historical Sociology* I(1): 6-32.
- Comaroff, J. and J. 1991. *Of Revelation and Revolution. Christianity, Colonialism, and Consciousness in South Africa*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Croll, E. and Parkin, D. (eds) 1992. *Bush Base: Forest Farm. Culture, Environment and Development*. London: Routledge.
- Groot, J. de 1989. 'Sex' and 'Race': The Construction of Language and Image in the Nineteenth Century. In: Mendes, S. and Rendall, J. (eds) 1989. *Sexuality and Subordination*. London: Routledge.
- Hansson, G. 1994. Religious Innovation in Zimbabwe. Mbuya Juliana Movement. Paper presented at the Zimbabwe Research Day on Religion, St Antony's College Oxford, 23.04.1994.
- Horizon* October 1994. Battle for the Pungwe, Pipeline Plan Raises Fears of Bleeding Honde Valley Dry, and Troubled Waters, Angry Gods, pp. 14-18.
- Hyam, R. 1990. *Empire and Sexuality: The British Experience*. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press.
- Kopytoff, I. (ed.) 1987. *The African Frontier: The Reproduction of Traditional African Societies*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.
- Lewis, A.R. 1992. *Too Bright the Vision? African Adventures of an Anglican Rebel*. London: Covenant Books.
- Moore, D 1992. Competing Claims to Land and Legacy: Resource Conflicts in Nyanga, Zimbabwe. Paper presented at the Symposium entitled 'Parks, People, Crops and Wildlife: Contesting Terrain in Southern Africa' at the American Anthropological Association Meeting, San Francisco, December 1992.
- Moore, D. 1993. Contesting Terrain in Zimbabwe's Eastern Highlands: Political Ecology, Ethnography, and Peasant Resource Struggles. *Economic Geography* LXIX(4): 380-401.
- Moore, H.L. and Vaughan, M. 1994. *Cutting Down Trees. Gender, Nutrition, and Agricultural Change in the Northern Province of Zambia, 1890-1990*. Portsmouth: Heineman; London: James Currey; Lusaka: University of Zambia Press.

- Moyana, H.V. 1984. *The Political Economy of Land in Zimbabwe*. Gweru: Mambo Press.
- Ranger, T.O. 1987. Taking Hold of the Land: Holy Places and Pilgrimages in Twentieth-Century Zimbabwe, *Past and Present*, **117**: 158-194.
- Said, E. 1993. *Culture and Imperialism*. London: Chatto and Windus.
- Schmidt, H. 1993. Muredzwa Superwoman: Mapping Areas of Female Power in Eastern Zimbabwe. The Mutasa Mamboship. Oxford: Ms.
- Schmidt, H. 1995 (forthcoming). The Social and Economic Impact of Political Violence in Zimbabwe, 1890-1990; A Case Study of the Honde Valley. Oxford: D.Phil. thesis.
- Schoffeleers, J.M. 1979. Introduction. In: *id.* (ed.) *Guardians of the Land. Essays on Central African Territorial Cults* pp. 1-46. Gweru: Mambo Press.
- The Farming Gazette Supplement*. Aberfoyle: The Story of a Tea Estate. 03.05.1985.
- Werbner, R. 1993. The Making of Moral Knowledge: Local-Global Displacements. Paper presented at the Association of Social Anthropologists IV Decennial Conference, 26-30.07.1993.
- Wirz, A., 1994. Die Erfindung des Urwalds oder ein weiterer Versuch im Fährtenlesen. *Periplus*: 15-36.