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FACULTY OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

**EMPOWERMENT OR CONTROL? : THE HISTORY OF THE TONGA
AND FISHING COOPERATIVES IN BINGA DISTRICT 1950s-2015**

BY

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APPROVAL FORM

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DECLARATION

I, Honour M.M Sinampande declare that, Empowerment or Control? : The history of the Tonga and fishing cooperatives in Binga District 1950s-2015 is my own work and it has never been submitted before any degree or examination in any other university. I declare that all sources which have been used have been acknowledged. I authorize the Midlands State University to lend this to other institution or individuals for purposes of academic research only.

Honour M.M Sinampande

.....

2016

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my father Mr. H.M Sinampande and my mother Ms. J. Muleya for their inspiration, love and financial support throughout my four year degree programme.

ABSTRACT

The history of the Tonga have it that, the introduction of the fishing villages initially and then later the cooperative system in Binga District from the 1950s-2015 saw the Zambezi Tonga lose their fishing rights. The study traces events paying particular attention to the changes which were introduced to the Tonga fishing practices from the period of the forced relocations to the period 2015. The argument advanced in this research is that the fishing cooperatives system has never benefitted the Tonga people instead other races and ethnicities which were not affected by the induced displacements have. The Tonga fishing rights were taken immediately after the construction of the Kariba Dam. This was followed by the white government also taking control of the lake's fishing industry both for commercial and sporting reasons. To make matters worse the Tonga who had lived along the Zambezi River were relegated to being mere spectators. This was done by the colonial government's introduction of fishing communities which were still situated far from where the relocated Tonga had been resettled. The study also looks at the post-colonial government's policies, notably the cooperative system and the licencing system. These policies were implemented with the aim of empowering the Tonga but in reality they further exploited them. The study also advances the argument of the Tonga not benefitting from the post-colonial government policies by unpacking the effects which were brought by ESAP and the CAMPFIRE programmes to the fishing cooperatives. These two policies came to tighten the already strict policies guarding the Zambezi River leading to continuously clashing of local authorities and the fishermen. In a bid to produce a balanced research a combination of oral, written sources in form of interviews, internet sources, newspapers as well as published and unpolished texts were used.

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A world gratitude is owed to my supervisor Dr Mashingaidze, for guiding me and giving me direction on how to come out with the best out of my research topic, not forgetting Mrs Milcah Kapoka a holder of an HDS Degree whose guidance, comments and criticisms were just too good to ignore, she directed me in the right direction. I also wish to extend my acknowledgement to individuals as well as organizations which contributed to the success of this research in saying that words cannot really express my gratitude for your immense contribution, I say THANK YOU once more.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CAMPFIRE-	Communal Areas Management Plan For Indigenous Resources
CFRI-	Federation Central Fisheries Research
DNPWM-	Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management
ESAP-	Economic Structural Adjustment Programmes
GTDP-	Gwembe Tonga Development Project
KLC-	Kariba Lake Committee
KLCC-	Kariba Lake Coordinating Committee
MDC-	Movement for Democratic Change
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
RDC-	Rural District Council
UNDP-	United Nations Development Fund
ZANU-PF-	Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front
ZRA-	Zimbabwe River Authority
ZRP-	Zimbabwe Republic Police

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INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER

1.1 Introduction

This study seeks to unpack and examine the developments as well as various stages of the Tonga fishing activities or practices in Binga District. It carefully traces the events from the colonial period just after the construction of the Kariba dam up until the post-colonial era. The study analyzes the problems which were brought to the fishing industry of the Tonga people due to the displacement and subsequently the introduction of initially the fishing communities(fishing villages) as a compensatory like measure by the colonial government and secondly the introduction of the fishing cooperatives by the post-colonial government being influenced by the socialist policies.

It is a well-known fact that these large-scale developments in any setup always make references to benefit the general populace but experience and evidence on the ground has since shown that the social effects of these new moves are often borne by the affected indigenous communities.¹ This study exposes the history of the Tonga and their fishing cooperatives. The Tonga were displaced in order to pave way for the construction of the Kariba Dam which then led to their adoption of new economic activities apart from fishing which had previously been their main economic activity. Free fishing was replaced with the community cooperatives and then fishing cooperative systems which were to be governed by the government of the day of their introduction, which became a clear indication of the change of fishing practices from free fishing to the advent of cooperatives in Binga District. The research paper further shows the inter-relatedness of the Tonga way of life in case of adapting to these new introductions of the fishing cooperative system. The aim of such a move by its authors and engineers was/is the encouragement of combined efforts to maximise profits, thus if whether those profits did maximise for the benefit of the Tonga, other tribes or

individuals which were not affected by the advent of these introductions at the expense of a more free fishing practises. The fishing cooperatives' initiative frustrated other fishing parties which led to them opting out of fishing to try other economic activities like farming and pastoralism. This then becomes a clear evidence of the disturbance of the Tonga traditional way of life. These above observations comes against the background that actually the Tonga people are the original inhabitants of the Zambezi River as it is believed that they did not migrate from anywhere. According to G.T Ncube, the Tonga people expanded along the Zambezi River as this same river assured them of perennial water supply.² This meant with the perennial supply of water, their activities in the river also were perennial rather than seasonal. This guaranteed the Tonga people of food security since their whole life depended on the Zambezi River. As if that was not enough, stringent control measures were also introduced in the post-colonial period by the coming of CAMPFIRE and partly ESAP programmes which had a strong bearing on this already unfriendly fishing environment for the Tonga people.

1.2 Statement of problem

The subject of the history of the Tonga and their fishing cooperatives has been widely ignored in many academic circles; this has been as a result of the group of people under discussion being regarded as a minority grouping or ethnic in Zimbabwe. This study seeks to unpack and analyse the subject without biasness but in a bid to bring out how the Tonga and their fishing activities has been treated since their forced relocation from the Zambezi Valley in 1957 up until the period 2015. This refers to establishing the reason for the formation of the cooperatives given the fact that these people used to fish freely before the relocation. The

issue of who really is this practice or system of cooperatives is benefitting is also going to be clearly brought out using facts on the ground.

It is a fact that fishing has been the major source of livelihood for the Tonga people of Binga District since time immemorial. The objective in this case is to seek to establish whether the fishing cooperatives project is a viable source of livelihood or income generation practice for the Tonga people. Having established this fact then the next stage will be the unpacking of challenges (factors) hindering the flourishing of this initiative, thus also looking into the various laws enacted by the government in support of the fishing cooperatives as well as the perception of the Tonga people on these laws. Thus in simpler terms the aspect of fishing cooperatives has never benefitted the Tonga people.

Objective of the study

1. To unpack and analyse the impacts of the 1950s displacements on the Tonga people of Binga District from the pre-colonial to the post-colonial periods and did this initiative impact on the Tonga traditional fishing practises.
2. To explain Tonga fishing rights in the Zambezi Valley as well as bring out the impacts of war (the war of liberation) on the fishing practises for the Tonga people in the Kariba dam, bearing in mind that the Tonga were used to free fishing as well as at the period and environment which was war and conflict free as evidenced in their harmoniously co-existing with the Zambezi river and its inhabitants.
3. To discuss and carry out an in-depth study of the post-colonial government policies of empowerment based on local resources benefitting the Tonga fishing cooperatives, as well as the challenges which were faced by the people of the great Zambezi River in the use of the newly introduced cooperative system.

4. To show the direct and indirect influence which was brought about by the government's socialist policies on the actors in the fishing industry of the Tonga people which were the fishermen since these were the ones to feel the impacts greatly.
5. To bring out and analyse the difficulties or challenges which affected the Tonga cooperatives system as a result of the coming of ESAP as well some programmes such as CAMPFIRE projects.

1.4 Research questions

1. What were the impacts of the 1950s displacement on the Tonga traditional fishing practises?
2. Did the colonial government make any promises of fishing rights and how did the colonial administration policies affect Tonga fishing rights in the Zambezi Valley?
3. Did the post-colonial government policies of empowerment based policies of empowerment based on local resources benefit the Tonga fishing cooperatives?
4. What were the challenges which were encountered by the Tonga in the use of fishing cooperatives?
5. How did the government's socialist politics of the 1980 influence Tonga fishermen?

1.5 Historical Background

In 1955 the Tonga were forcibly removed or “uprooted” from their land they occupied for many generations by the Zambezi River. When the Kariba Dam was built, their river

transformed to being a lake. They had to be resettled on inferior land away from the Zambezi river.³ In this case the colonial masters did not seek the Tonga permission to flood their land and create an artificial lake. Uprooted from their land, they have left behind an important part of their life and a culture that was built around their relationship and closeness to the river.⁴ This meant that a new dictated way of life was to follow from the same people who engineered and authored their relocation.

During the first two years of resettlement to areas which were infested with tsetse fly the government was to provide basic commodities for those who were relocated in Binga District. Each Chief was allocated an area near the lake for a fishing camp, because of distance from the lake, estimates from the Zambezi River suggest that only a few hundred men, not exceeding a thousand, seasonally resided at these fishing camps. The colonial government made efforts to respond to health, education and general welfare needs of the River Tonga. This lack of planning and poor timing caused much untold suffering.⁵ The fishing economic activity was now transformed and duly under the monitoring of the Chiefs who were at this time very highly respected meant the putting in place of restrictions to free fishing. One then may be tempted to believe that it was indeed a build up to the history of fishing cooperatives in Binga District.

M. Tremmel is of the view that, the complaining by the River Tonga that sufficient water was no longer available to them, like it was along the Zambezi, becomes a clearly indicator on what the river meant to them and generally the relationship which existed between them and their river. According to M. Tremmel, during the gatherings, one of the women, Simpongo Munsaka, kept repeating over and over again, "*We left with our property and our bodies, but we left our water behind. We would like our water to follow us. They promised that the water would follow us*"⁶. These statements by the Tonga people also showed how

fishing and all the river related activities were a vital aspect if not a linchpin of their livelihood.

1.6 Literature review

Scholars who have since attempted authorship on the history of the Tonga people of Binga seem not to pay particular attention to the study of the history of the Tonga and fishing cooperatives in Binga district. In simpler terms actually the Tonga history has not attracted much serious authorship. Scholars who did try and look at the Tonga history comprise of Michael Tremmel, Pamela Reynolds, J. McGregor, G.T Ncube, B. Mayena et'al, D.

Mushongera, Brenda Lulu Musonda as well Diana Conyers with a main focus at the impact of the project on the relocation affected Tonga people of the Zambezi Valley.

In his works M. Tremmel highlighted how the relocation of the Tonga people from the Zambezi River robbed them of their closeness, land, a way of life and culture which was built and premised on the river, as he further says that "In 1955 they were uprooted from their land. They had lived for many generations by the river Zambezi, on both sides of the river. Upon the building of the Kariba Dam, their river became a lake. They were resettled and on inferior land away from the river. Permission was not sought to flood their land and create an artificial lake. Forcibly removed from their land, they left behind culture and a way of life that was built around their closeness to the river. Their story is one of many".⁷ In this submission the direct and tremendous effect the relocation had on the fishing as well as the aspect of the history of fishing cooperatives is not clearly brought out.

Apart from the issue of the relationships that existed between the Tonga and the river Tremmel also points out the important engagement of the Tonga chiefs by the District Commissioner and Minister of Native Affairs of Southern Rhodesia on the relocation developments. To that effect he notes that; In 1955, a momentous event occurred which

brought about a complete change in the life of this marginalized Tonga people. The Chiefs and elders were informed that all River Tonga were to evacuate their lands and abandon their homes because the entire area would become a lake.⁸ The Tonga were soon to learn about the resettlement which would happen even without their approval, and settle in areas with poor soil for farming and limited access to water.⁹ This further shows how the respected leaders were engaged leaving out the developments of how really did the issues in the history of the Tonga and Fishing cooperatives come into life, this left out the issue of how the advent of the fishing cooperatives came up.

The developments leading to the formation of the fishing cooperatives at the expense of free fishing by the Tonga people as compelled by the government is further carefully traced by P. Reynolds in her work titled *Lwaano LwaNyika: Tonga Book of the Earth*. "The Kariba Dam, in this case flooded the whole of the Zambezi Valley upstream of it and force the resettlement of that population which inhabited both north and south banks of the river.¹⁰ More attention was paid to the animals and rescuing them, than to people. The Tonga became losers in this case. They faced a very difficult journey, as they were transported in open trucks, and going to be resettled far away from their area of origin. Once there, they had to build from scratch, clearing the bush and constructing huts. The Tonga people now were completely cut off from each other. Relatives were separated and never to see or hear from each other again. They also lost highly fertile lands on the edge of the Zambezi and had to opt for dry land farming.¹⁰ Thus this suffering of being moved has not yet been chronicled".¹¹ The issue of how the correct documentation of the fishing activities came to now being cooperatively carried out is ignored in this case.

J, McGregor in her work titled *Crossing the Zambezi: Politics of the Landscape on the Central Africa Frontier*, writes in detail on the issue of fishing cooperatives and certain

government institutions mandated to control the Zambezi River activities. She postulates that fishing on Kariba's southern shores is shaped by a complex interaction between the ecology of the lake and the political economy of access and trade, as it is developed in the decades after the dam.¹² She further says although even if the lake was freed on racialist operations after Zimbabwean independence, there were notable continuities in the lake regime.¹³ She focuses of the repressive laws enacted by the government on the fishing aspect after the relocation process. The plans of these laws were mainly for the development of Binga District in the early 1980s through the likes Lusumpuko plan which is a Tonga word for Development. None of this materialized, and the council's one *kapenta* rig, identified to invoke Tonga connections to the Zambezi – '*Kasambavesi*': meaning 'only those who know can cross' – was eventually sold off.¹⁴ The party politics was then dived in two which led to security arms of the state being politicized after the MDC's success in the referendum of 2000, thus gillnetters believed they were being punished as not loyal and being opposition supporters.¹⁵ This book clearly reflects on the few gains of relocation that were reversed by the government meant for the Tonga people. However the issue of the merits which such kind of restrictive measure has brought in the long run has been ignored.

Manyena et'al's works on the Tonga fishing cooperatives in the Northwestern part of Zimbabwe is one interesting piece of work on the Tonga people and their history. In his work he clearly brings out how the present Tonga fishermen are struggling to cope with the fishing cooperatives system. He further make great comparisons of the fishing practices prior the Kariba Dam construction and the post-colonial time as he asserts that, during the past five decades, the communities in the mid-Zambezi Valley specifically the Tonga which is a minority ethnic group residing on the Zimbabwean side of the Zambezi River, have experienced a sustained conflict between authorities to regain entitlement to fishing resources.¹⁶ However this work is biased towards the post-colonial period leaving out the

colonial period were the communal cooperatives were put in place by the colonial regime. This is important in the case that it had an influence on the post-colonial fishing cooperatives idea. Thus the nature of exploitative of this initiative and not benefitting the aimed population aspect substantiate this view. Such unintentional gaps will be addressed in this research.

1.7 Sources and Methodology

In a bid to produce a balanced study of the topic at hand mainly the two types of sources namely oral sources and written documents were used in the course of this study. The oral sources part entail the use of oral evidence were the part of the people affected will testify in an interview setup. These because important primary sources which were used in the carrying out of this study to produce a study paper free from speculations, assumptions and biases.

Written documents also formed a part of the sources which included detailed information on which this study paper is premised on. These again served as main sources which I entrust did justice to the study of the history of Tonga and fishing cooperatives in Binga District. The choice of such sources also comes with the careful consideration of the environment being used as a case study of this research paper. Mostly people with rich information are the involved fishermen who know the everyday challenges they faces as well the advantages of the current fishing methods being used.

Scholarly texts formed the basis of blending this research as a wide array of sources at the end of the day which gave detailed and objective submissions. These sources mainly were obtained from the University library, the local authorities' archives in this case being the Binga Rural District Council and the District Administrator's offices. Thus were such detailed histories documents are used and houses for such cases. There are also newspapers, articles and journals which have been written concerning the study of the history of Tonga people and fishing developments.

Interviews were also part of the sources for this study. This then helped as some of these local chiefs, headmen and members of the fishing cooperatives were part of the published and unpublished history books or documents of the Tonga people.

Travelling in person in rural areas and fishing camps along the Zambezi Valley was done also as these targeted sources are not found in one place. These places targeted by the researcher included Binga Centre fishing camps, Simatele Fishing projects mainly run by female fishers to get information from a gender perspective as well the one Mlibizi Fishing camps. The mentioned places turns out to the main bases where thorough fishing was not left due to the issue of cooperatives and restricted fishing activities.

The researcher was rest assured that the above mentioned sources were going to be accessible. Thus the government organizations really support the correct writing of the Tonga history and the daily activities which make up the community like fishing in specific. This is one assurance that the researcher do possess. The fishermen who were aimed to be interviewed are also one patient and understanding group of people. These strive to have their side of the story be heard and were the laws are too repressive to be amended so that there are citizen friendly. The only way that such challenges can be heard is through writing of such scholarly dissertations and articles. Thus the fishermen were forthcoming to these interviews which also make one of the yardsticks that guaranteed the accessibility of the sources aimed at being used by the researcher.

The use of primary sources in the study of this nature guarantees a production of an original source. In this case the use of oral evidence or oral sources made sure the researcher gets first-hand information. The employing of a multiplicity of these primary sources which was later complimented by secondary sources left no stone unturned in as far as this research was concerned. Thus the production of an original study of the subject was guaranteed having deployed and employed these various types of sources.

1.8 Dissertation Layout

Chapter 1: The construction of the Kariba dam and its impacts on traditional fishing practices

The first chapter will seek to unpack the process of the construction the World Bank sponsored Kariba dam and the impacts which were as a direct result of this initiative of the Tonga traditional fishing practices, which occurred in the colonial era. The relationship which also existed between the Tonga people and the River will be also under scrutiny in this chapter hence being named the Tonga of the River. It will go on to examine the fishing methods which were used before being displaced and eventually how the Tonga people became the ones adopting the cooperative method of fishing in the twenty first century. Lastly, the chapter brings out the aspect of fishing rights which the Tonga were promised by the colonial government which was responsible for the forced Tonga displacement if there were any.

Chapter 2: The colonial government and Tonga fishing rights to the Kariba Dam

The second chapter focuses on the colonial administration policies and how they affected the Tonga fishing rights which existed before the forced displacement and the subsequent construction of the Kariba dam. The chapter also dwells on the deeper mechanisms which were implored as a result to quickly be on point with the new stipulations despite an attempt at resisting this oppressive type of fishing. It also looks at the irregularities which came about with the coming of the initiative of fishing cooperatives. The evidence of who really benefitted most with the coming of such initiative is revisited in this chapter. Thus basically

the methods employed to adapt to these new developments and challenges faced for sustainability purposes were dealt with are also brought out.

Chapter 3: The post-colonial government and fishing cooperatives: A tool for empowerment or control?

The third chapter will seek to bring out the answers and supporting evidence on whether the fishing cooperatives initiative was a tool for empowering or controlling the local Tonga people and their economic activities. The other interesting aspect which has raised a lot of debate from the Tonga people is whether the so-called post-colonial government policies of empowerment based on local resources benefitted the Tonga people. This can be simply translated to being the main reason why the Tonga voice was deemed as falling on deaf ears in terms of agitating for the reversal or relaxation of the laws governing fishing in the Zambezi River. Various challenges which were faced and still faced by the Tonga people in the use of the fishing cooperatives system will be discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 4: Fishing cooperatives beyond the socialist dispensation.

This chapter will be premised on the influence which the government's socialist politics of the 1980s had on Tonga fishermen. It will seek to discuss in depth on whether the plight of the Tonga in relation to the fishing cooperatives were heard in a socialism encouraged environment, thereby whether it led to the success of this initiative or there are struggling economical as a result of this initiative. Challenges which were brought about through the coming of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP), and the CAMPFIRE project programmes on cooperatives will be also under consideration in this chapter. This

being the fact of the matter that the coming of CAMPFIRE as one of the government department which monitor the Zambezi river activities brought about umpteen challenges to the fishing cooperatives as well individual fishermen plying their trade in the Zambezi river. The issue of fishing permits as well the manner in which the CAMPFIRE treats the Tonga people in relation to fishing is highlighted.

Endnotes

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CHAPTER 1

THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE KARIBA DAM AND ITS IMPACTS ON TRADITIONAL FISHING PRACTICES

Introduction

To the Tonga people the Zambezi River is not just a river, but it is actually part of their livelihood culturally, spiritually, socially as well as religiously. Religiously it was and still considered as a sacred place where their forefathers' mass graves were covered by the water during the construction of the dam as well as when the forced relocation was undertaken. The Zambezi river is actually also considered by the Tonga people as the inhabitant of their river god called *Nyaminyami*, thus even in modern times if something is attached a spiritual meaning surely it will be very important to that part of the population. Socially the Tonga depended on the river for food in form of fish, and religiously their ancestors who they communicated with to reach their *gods* were buried in the places now covered by the water, hence one can never mention the history of the Tonga without mentioning the Zambezi River. In fact the word Zambezi is corrupting, the River it is actually called *kasambabezi* meaning the river can only be crossed by those with deep knowledge of it.

2.1.1 The displacement of 1950s and how it affected Tonga traditional fishing practices.

It is an open secret that the Tonga livelihoods as well as their fishing practices were greatly affected by the 1950s displacement to pave way for the construction of the Kariba dam. The Kariba dam a man-made lake, rose in 1957, but its impact on the relocated Tonga ethnic group is still felt. The creation of Kariba dam required the resettlement of a larger population

of Tonga speaking ethnic of Zimbabwe and Zambia as well as the evacuation of endangered animal species. The dam was an initiative of the Federation existing of the then British ruled Northern and Southern Rhodesia (now Zambia and Zimbabwe) and Nyasaland (Malawi).¹ The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), “State of the World Population 2001 Report”, is a testimony to how these unplanned moves bear tremendous effects. The report indicates then further indicates that, “war or over-exploitation”, is not a recent move. What is recent is the potential for large relocation of people resulting from resource depletion”, reads the report.²

The construction of the dam was met with mixed feelings from many Africans as it was said to be some sort of symbol for the then unpopular Rhodesian-Nyasaland Federation. This initiative was then accepted albeit destroying the mainstay of the Tonga people’s economy which was their traditional fishing practices. Thus considering the aspect in a broader spectrum, it was also accepted due to its inexpensive or cheap electric power it provided to the Zambian copper industry.³

It should however be underlined that the displacement carried with it tremendous effects on the Tonga fishing practices, which were the backbone of their economy for sustenance and livelihood. Another key source of food for the Tonga before resettlement was fish. Fishing opportunities and methods have since changed in the Tonga area since the coming of Lake Kariba into the picture. Many Tonga who used to fish in the Zambezi River lost this privilege when they were resettled into areas deep in the bush. Jairo explains: *“At Old Chipepo, most of the people lived by the river whereas [where we are now] it is only just a few..”*⁴ The Tonga had unlimited access to fish which was the common food among this tribe of people. The lives of many animals and humans were lost in the creation of Lake Kariba. An estimated number of about 23,000 Tonga people were moved upland, leaving their alluvial land and flourishing traditional fishing practices.⁵ Prior to the 1950s Tonga displacement, their

traditional fishing practices characterized their economy. These traditional practices comprised of free fishing on any part of the river now a lake, fishing to the quantity of one's satisfactory as well as fishing without certain laws governing the fishing areas, times, quantities and fishing materials. In the case of being given such a situation one could see how life was easy for the Zambezi river banks inhabitants. This was how empowered the Tonga were with the natural resources at their disposal before the control aspect by successive governments or regimes came into the picture.

In the case of the government of that time which was the Rhodesian government having explored the area during their dam construction initiative, they then moved to control also the fishing industry doing away with free fishing traditional practices which is evidenced being done by the Tonga before the 1950s dam construction. The conditions that were not conducive for animals and man habitants also conspired to produce an instant paradise for the fish.⁶ The chemicals which could have been emitted or erroneously dropped in the river during the construction process subsequently gave growth to lake fauna. Kapenta and tiny sardine-like fish was introduced and the move was a success.

Commercial catches and quantities were obtained in the 1970s after a disappointing start. Today, a flourishing kapenta fishing industry has developed with a large number of rigs operating on the lake, but as the pressure increases, tonnage will decline and licensing will have to be carefully monitored.⁷ The mentioning of the license issue in the above statement becomes then a clear evidence of how the Tonga fishing practices were negatively affected. In loose terms the empowered Tonga traditional fishing practices were done away with paving way for a more "controlled" fishing form or practice to benefit a few individuals as well as the government not the affected Tonga displaced population.

It is evident with the above discussion that those who were resettled rarely had their livelihoods restored, as resettlement programmes have focused on physical relocation rather

than the economic and social development of the displaced.⁸ Resettlement imposed forces and conditions on people that may completely transform the Tonga people lives, ushering clear changes, in productive activities, in environment, organization socially, in leadership and political structure, and in worldview and ideology.⁹ In the case of the Tonga their traditional fishing practices (*kuteya-nswii*) were greatly disturbed by such projects as the so called Gwembe Tonga Development Project (GTDP). Resettlement also mean that people may be relocated to a new place, where they may have little first-hand knowledge and experience.¹⁰ Most the people who have been displaced having lived their life on highlands, are then displaced to low lands meaning a changed way of life, notable cases are those of Kariba, Lesotho, Cahora Bassa and Sardar Sarovar dams, just but to mention a few. These were resettled to land which proved difficult to cultivate hence food insecurity and water shortages. Starvation and depression led to loss of lives.¹¹ Thus the Tonga are also another vivid example of the victims of displacement and relocation away from their traditional *kasambabezi* river which robbed them of their free and healthy major economic practices. The river itself was paid much respect and some of its pools were regarded as sacred places associated with magical activities and distant communities of ancestors which protected their cultural heritage.¹² This could be interpreted in that traditional fishing practices as well the catches which were done freely and in groups had the blessing of their *gods*, thus taking them away from their places of their ancestors was surely a great injustice to their beliefs and source of food. This comes against the background that the Tonga tribe attached their activities and their surroundings to their *gods* or ancestral spirits-*mizimu yabo*.

It must also be noted that the Tonga displacement was done without compensation. As if this was not enough, a proper economic, social and environmental impact assessment was not carried out, meaning the Tonga were settled in the areas far away from 'their' *kasambabezi* river. In the colonial period, Europeans monopolised the exploitation of the fishery and

tourism businesses around the Kariba waterscape.¹³ This is a clear indication of how the Tonga were easily pushed off their territory by two types of people leaving them without any chance of benefitting from the river again. This was in other ways announcing the European and Ndebele-Shona types of fishing practices; hence it was the fading of the traditional Tonga fishing practices so to say.

2.1.2 The impacts of the Kariba Dam construction initiative on traditional fishing practices.

Mainly negative impacts were felt by the Tonga as a result of the initiative on their traditional practices being disturbed. Notably the controlled fishing practices by the government, the remaining of a handful and chosen Tonga fishermen to work for the colonial government projects as well the development of other non-Tonga places are the factors which clearly supports the assertion that their traditional fishing practices were negatively affected. Now that the Tonga traditional fishing practices had been dealt with a major blow, Tonga activism to address some of their grievances on the initiative was necessary starting from such a period going onwards. T.M. Mashingaidze notes that, the Tonga implored the government to set aside exclusive quotas of fishing permits, safaris and tourism business opportunities for the victims of the Kariba Dam induced displacements and their descendants¹⁴ as a move to jealously guard their resources. Previously fishing was done mostly in pools along the shores of the Zambezi River and its tributaries, because the fast flowing waters made it difficult for the Tonga to catch fish in the middle of the river.

Fishing is said to have been done both sexes (women and men) using quitter simpler methods of hooks and baskets. One Monitor made reference to previous fishing activities by pointing out the Tonga new fishing with hooks and no other additional material were used like present

times were nets are used. He also says women fishermen caught a lot of fish too during these expeditions. According to the narrators, net fishing in the Zambezi River was only introduced to them through development projects initiated by the government in the 1960s.¹⁵

The issue of permits also determined who was legible to fish in the Zambezi River as a move for a controlled fishing practice. This initiative saw many displaced Tonga people even elderly and experienced fishermen being deprived of those permits and government preferential getting those permits. This can be evidenced during the Zimbabwean government era, where powerful politicians and Shona speaking people from the capital (Harare) possess those permits and the Tonga people who are supposed to be the direct beneficiaries of the river work for those people's fishing companies and in their fishing rigs.

It is said no permits were required for subsistence or commercial fishing during the early years of resettlement. According to the then Chief Siachilaba thinks in retrospect that fishing opportunities were good in the Zambezi River and how no permits were required and there was no problem if one fished in whatever quantities he/she felt like taking from the river.¹⁶

The Tonga marginalization factor comes into play also in unpacking the disturbances of their traditional fishing practices saga. Now that the Kariba dam initiative was complete it also meant the expansion of the Kariba river to a size where fishing using fish hook was no longer viable for consumption and commercial reason to match the current monetary economy.

These activists also wanted the government to generate local employment by facilitating the setting up of waterscape related industries in fish processing and net making.¹⁷ Thus as a result of Tonga being already marginalized and lagging behind being property owners, there were relegated to being workers at least in the fishing companies of those non-Tonga people.

Those being workers would at least create employment to the locals thereby indirectly benefitting the displacement affected Tonga. A good example of this the Binga Crocodile Farm, where white capitalists are major shareholders and the manager in charge of the Binga

area of Tonga situated farm is Trevor Dzikiti a powerful business Shona who is not from Binga. This company has many former Tonga fishermen who could not survive in the introduced fishing practice by the government due to high fishing fees introduced by DNPWM as well as lack of effective fishing as boats or rigs, thus as a result they had to settle for being workers in the white companies which are dealing in their *kasambabezi* river.

In having a glance at the Kariba report, it is also evident that the destruction of Tonga fishing practices was a matter which did happen and they were further crippled by being deprived of their rightful compensation in either way. The Kariba Report also argued that compensation packages for displaced people had to ensure an improvement in the livelihoods of displaced or affected communities.¹⁸ The Zimbabwean Tonga did not get any compensation from the Southern Rhodesian government. The Tonga on the Northern Rhodesian side received partial compensation which was a hut for a hut basis.¹⁹ This approach was inadequate because it did not consider compensation programmes that would “enable the displaced people a chance to participate in economic benefits arising from the transformation of their land resources”.²⁰ The aspect of the Tonga compensation being ignored as well as their marginalization is recorded as one of the many negative effects the Kariba dam initiative had on Tonga traditional fishing practices.

The Tonga people were finding it difficult to recover from the impacts of the destruction of their traditional fishing practices by the Kariba Dam initiative. The study by the Zimbabwe River Authority (ZRA) which was entitled “Operation Noah Relunched” also played a pivotal role in unearthing the impacts of the Kariba dam initiative on the Tonga people.

ZRA’s study revealed the multiple dimensions of the Tonga’s distressed livelihoods that were characterised by what it referred to as “chronic water shortages, annual food deficits and threats from wildlife that destroyed their crops in the uplands” were they had been relocated to.²¹ ZRA identified a number of self-sustaining community empowerment projects that it

could fund. These included grinding mills, goat rearing projects, Kapenta rigs for fishing and the construction of small earth dams, boreholes and irrigation schemes to reduce water shortages for agriculture and domestic use purposes.²²

From being direct beneficiaries, to being a part of those who should benefit is an apt description of the situation which the Tonga people were facing at this juncture. Some of these irrigation schemes would draw water from Lake Kariba allowing the Tonga to partially benefit from the Lake whose construction had caused their uprooting to the dry uplands in the late 1950s.²³ These impacts were and are still devastating since even the government refused to be held responsible of the unfortunate that had befallen the Tonga as a result of the initiative. ZRA itself, as the organisation responsible for managing the Kariba Dam, denied any legal obligations to the Tonga for the disruption of their way of life by the relocation process. M. Tumbare, ZRA's Chief Executive Officer, noted that: The ZRA, albeit not bound, felt it had a moral and social obligation to aid the displaced people bearing in mind that the benefits from the dam were being enjoyed by people who were never affected by the displacement.²⁴

Having been seriously affected by the displacements from carrying out their fishing practices, the Tonga had to resort to other alternatives which would match the current prevailing living circumstances. These comprised of small scale fishing practices for both commercial and subsistence reasons. J. McGregor postulates that "these relationships were now sour, as inflationary pressures had contradictory effects in Binga, this was as a result of an increased isolation from Zimbabwe's main urban centres, high fuel prices disconnected transport networks and undermined the viability of small-scale fish trading, in turn reinforcing the need for a stake in cross-border trades".²⁵ Free fishing '*kuliteyelele*' had been forcibly done away with in this case hence bearing the hard felt effects the Tonga mainly of Binga area had to resort to some alternatives in order to survive.

2.1.3 The colonial government and the promises made to the displaced Tonga people.

If one is referring to the colonial period or pre-independence period, surely this is a period where black people had no rights; in fact they did not exist according to their white counterparts. According to Mudimba Frank “the blacks even if they existed, they only existed to be exploited.”²⁶ He goes on to say that “this then could only lead to them completely ignoring the fact that there was an attachment or special relationship between the Tonga and the Zambezi River.”²⁷ This led to them being neglected and to put promises as well as fishing rights to the displaced Tonga was the least of their worries. In simpler terms no tangible or written promises of fishing rights were specifically made to the displaced Tonga. Immigrants are said to be noted first since they, like the urban users of Kariba’s generated electricity, were the main beneficiaries at the expense of local residents.²⁸ The knowledge on fishing populations of the Zambezi River prior to the Kariba dam completion was restricted to the indigenous knowledge of the River Tonga.

Scudder is the view that, “Though the depth and velocity of water in some river channels were restricted the skilled fishery to the river’s banks and to tributaries, the Tonga knew most of the species by name and used various techniques to catch them including traps, spears, baskets and poisons arrows. Apart from being a source of protein, fishing also had recreational and ritual characteristics.”²⁹ Given such a privilege of being familiar with their Zambezi river, one would have expected the colonial government to introduce policies which would compensate the forcibly displaced Tonga from their river, for the benefit of both that government of the day and the Tonga population of Binga District. Thus this was unlikely to be the case since already the nature of uncaring by the colonial government was evidenced by the forced displacement and those who refused to vacate their ancestral homesteads are said to have been killed by the water which occupied were there were Tonga homesteads previously.

Although it will be incorrect to say the colonial government refused or completely ignored Tonga fishing rights hence not making any promises to the Tonga displaced population, the above statements surely are a reflection of the ignored affected tribe of people. Actually a disguise compensatory measure in fishing villages was put in place. This did not benefit the Tonga since those fishing villages were located far from the places which the Tonga were settled. It also needs to be highlighted that instead of compensating the affected populace the colonial government moved to benefit apart from their electricity generating project but also by taking over of the fishing activities of the lake for various reasons. Interest in the reservoir basin within the Federation and the two territories led to the creation of a Kariba Lake Committee (KLC) in 1955. This was later changed to the Kariba Lake Coordinating Committee in 1957 with two members appointed from the territorial and federal governments. The KLC initially formed a Kariba Lake Fisheries Committee which was to examine and report on the industrial, subsistence and recreational fishing potentialities of the Lake.³⁰ This can be a clear interpretation of the colonial governments' being reluctant to accommodate the rightful beneficiaries of the Zambezi River in as far as fishing was concerned. Although one may be tempted to be of the idea that these established committees were going to oversee both the affected population as well the colonial government activities, but evidence on the ground really showed that the committees were biased towards the promoting of the colonial fishing activities or fisheries so to say.

The blacks be it Tonga or any other tribe were all viewed as second class citizens by the colonial regime. In an interview with J. Chikozho the current BaTonga Museum Curator he had to say

“If they were viewed as people or citizens, they were inferior ones hence the need to see how the issue of the relationship between two races can directly answer the aspect or question on whether there were any fishing rights promised by the colonial government.”³¹ In this case one would then ask why would the colonial government even bother putting such measures in place to support the race which they viewed as befitting of continuous oppression?. In actual fact from the onset the Kariba dam

initiative did not come as a result of consultation from the displaced population. This is because the Tonga of who occupied the river banks of the Zambezi did not need electricity to start with; it was not an initiative of their own lobbying by the whitemens'.³²

Given such a scenario one may note that little attention would have been given to the affected Tonga thereof.

“With the question of stocking the Kariba Lake on the table, the first stocking attempt was done between 1959 and 1961 which did not succeed although aimed at increasing the inshore catches of fish. Thus further stocking was postponed until the establishment of a FAO/UNDP/Federation Central African Fisheries Research Institute (CFRI) 1963 as one of several such research institutions serving African man-made lakes. Under this newly introduced CFRI supervision, it is said *kapenta* a small fish was introduced from the then Lake Tanganyika.³³ In such an event or when all these activities were being executed in the then colonial Southern Rhodesia, the supposedly beneficiaries of the river were relegated to the terraces.

The developments which were being done were not meant to benefit the Tonga in that area and since there were now scattered across the Binga District their exploitation was now easy. The fact that they had to be forcibly removed in around 1955-56 showed that the aimed projects had absolutely nothing to do with them at that particular point of time.

If this was an agreed move, surely fishing rights to the Tonga were going to be rightfully expected from their colonial masters.

“The Tonga people were first warned on what the colonial government was planning, thus those who refused to cooperate only saw the water coming and subsequently submerged in the water. The part which cooperated actually was truck-loaded and transported upland away from the Zambezi river.”³⁴

Each of the three governments was to provide capital of a million pounds as was the Colonial Development Corporation. The KLC Company's operations never materialized due to differences in opinion as to the company's main purpose and who was to do the fishing.³⁵

The focus now shifted from the blacks who were expecting compensation in this case the

Tonga, to the two colonial governments who were involved from both the Northern and Southern Rhodesia. With such series of events transpiring during the colonial period it will be a misrepresentation of facts on Tonga history if one boldly declare that certain fishing rights were promised to the affected by forced displacement Tonga people.

In a nutshell, the story behind the construction of the Kariba Dam and the subsequent displacement of the Kariba Dam is quite touching and reflect the unfair treatment of the Tonga people mainly by the colonial government. This following the disruption of their fishing practices which was the mainstay of their economy during the period prior the forced relocations. The impacts of these relocations ushered a sad chapter to the affected population as the negative effect of this move is still felt among many Tonga population circles. Fishing rights were also not placed in place for the Tonga by the colonial government which meant this was the end of the Tonga free traditional fishing practice initiative.

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CHAPTER 2

THE COLONIAL GOVERNMENT AND TONGA FISHING RIGHTS TO THE KARIBA DAM

Introduction

This chapter will seek to deeply access how the colonial administration policies which were introduced and having a bearing both directly and indirectly in their fishing practises in the Zambezi Valley. This following the forced displacement which the Tonga of the Zambezi valley suffered, and to make matters worse the nature of the displacement as well as the places which they inhabited afterwards shows that the authors and engineers of the initiative did not even consider the Tonga in their plans as what was important was achieved their project which will benefit that same colonial administration at the expense of the docile and powerless Zambezi valley people. Having had enough of this ill-treatment by the colonial masters a war was waged against them by the black people in Southern Rhodesia in a bid to attain self-rule based on one man one vote, thus the impacts of this war on the Tonga fishing practices will also be examined in this chapter. The eventually introduction of the fishing villages by the colonial government and the fishing cooperative system in the early 80s and the reaction towards the initiative's stipulations by the Tonga people who are the rightfully owners of the Zambezi valley to be able to fish in the river will be also under consideration in this chapter.

3.1.1 The colonial administration policies and how they affected Tonga fishing rights in the Zambezi Valley

The building of a hydroelectric dam in 1957 at Kariba Gorge on the Zambezi River caused a permanent inundation of some 2000 square miles of land in Zambezi Valley.¹ The beginning of the “post-impoundment” phase as Manyena refers to it, began with the loss of entitlement to fishing resources which came to an abrupt end between the years 1956 and 1958 following the forcible uprooting or removal of the Tonga whose homes and lands were flooded by the building of the Kariba Dam.² The Dam construction resulted in forced relocation of an estimated number of more than thirty-five thousand people between 1957 and 1958. These relocated people were exclusively Tonga.³

This can be considered as the first policy which the colonial government made without the consultation of the locals and which was going to directly affect the Tonga fishing rights.

Thus the building of the Kariba dam and the subsequent relocation becomes the starting point in clearly tracing and bringing out the colonial administration policies and how they directly affected the Tonga fishing right both negatively and positively if any positive impacts are to be noted during this unfortunate event on the Tonga people.

Against this background is the fact that prior to the construction of the Kariba Dam, the Tonga people enjoyed so many fishing rights as the owners of the river which was their surrounding natural resource. The construction of the Kariba Dam thus meant that since the river was now part of the colonial administration’s project for the production of hydroelectricity surely, the river and all the activities were going to be monitored by that responsible colonial authority. This era saw the rise of fishing for commercial purposes in

their mother countries by the colonial administration; it also saw the advent of what the affected Tonga could call immaterial, which was fishing for competition purposes as well as a sport. During this period of resettlement no permits were required for commercial or subsistence fishing.⁴ This move by the government of that time clearly did away with free fishing in the Zambezi Valley which is one crucial right the Tonga enjoyed prior the Kariba dam construction.

Facts on ground have it that the Tonga were relocated to faraway places from the Zambezi River, place which include the present day Manjolo some 25 kilometres from the River, places like Siabuwa which also some 84 kilometres from the Binga Centre part of the Zambezi river and some 50 kilometres from the Mujere fishing camps. In loose terms this move completely took away easy access to the fish of the river even if the fishing was to be control laws free, despite the introduction of fishing villages which were also far from the places were the Tonga had been settled. According to Adam Mudenda, “it defies logic for one to walk for 25 kilometres just to obtain three or four breams for relish which was actually the main reason the Tonga of Binga District undertook fishing activities in the Zambezi Valley”.⁵ In this case distance served as the limiting factor for the displaced Tonga people in Binga District to access fish in their own Zambezi Valley, thus the policy of selecting areas where these Tonga were to inhabit took away their right to fishing.

The Tonga people in the context of the fish in the Zambezi River, were one of the most responsible people. Thus an interview with J. Chikozho he says, “they had been fishing in the Zambezi Valley since time immemorial and way back before the construction of the Kariba Dam construction, as the still availability of fish after the taking over by the colonial government as well as even in this era fish is still there in the river shows how harmoniously they lived and capable of preserving their resources”.⁶ If the Tonga were careless individuals in their fishing, fish would have long ago ceased to exist in the lake even the colonial

government not to mention the post-colonial would have not found any fish, but still these successive governments found fish in the Zambezi Valley leading to their introduction of what they term(ed) conservative measures. To add on D. Howarth states that, during the early days, it is that Rhodesian District Commissioners saw a need to stamp their authority by being tough and at times whipping those who showed signs of disrespect. Actually this was inevitable since for long the affected populace had been under such brutal leadership and they were ruled by the iron fist.⁷ In an environment of this nature, preservation as well being accorded a policy on fishing rights as a way of at least being compensated for the displacement by the Tonga was a waste of time. The colonial government was one oppressive and brutal regime, thus the Tonga fishing rights which they had enjoyed before the shifting of focus by the colonial administration to the Zambezi Valley were not to be heard of again by the Tonga people. Prior to the invading of the Zambezi by the colonial masters, the time of fishing, the amount of catches as well the areas which one felt like fishing were all very possible and accessible. One fact to note is the coming of the colonial administration to monitor the river activities officially introduced the commercial part of the fishing activities.

In an interview with Duncan Sinampande he had to say,

The Tonga people were regarded as primitive individuals at this point of time, as they were and not exposed to the so-called civilized world leading to them not being familiar with fishing for commercial reasons but for consumption only. This might have a strong bearing on what to do to reclaim their fishing rights which were mainly free fishing and doing it in a nearby source.⁸

So in simpler terms the subject of colonial administration and Tonga fishing rights is a complex issue since the relationship between black and white was that of a cat and a rat. Thus the construction of the Kariba dam and the subsequent taking over of the Zambezi river by the colonial government temporarily took away Tonga fishing rights in form of restriction as well distance as the resettled Tonga were placed at very far places with poor road infrastructure.

3.1.2 The impacts of war on fishing practises for the Tonga people in the Kariba Dam

The role which the war played on the fishing practises of the Tonga forms a crucial part in understanding how the Tonga fishing activities and their current fishing cooperatives came into being. This comes against the background of the Zambezi Valley at some point of time during the Zimbabwean war of liberation being a warzone. To emphasize this point R.M. Giller-Netting propounds that, at the same time the Zambezi Valley, which lies on the border between Zambia and the then Rhodesia, became a warzone during Zimbabwe's war of independence.⁹ It is also said that, Rhodesian troops crossed into Gwembe Valley to conduct routine raids on guerrilla forces, and planted land mines throughout the valley.¹⁰ These activities which transpired during the peak of the war around 1976-79 meant a temporary suspension of the fishing activities in the Zambezi Valley. This was also during a period where the Tonga had also lost their fishing rights to the colonial governments in different terms. Thus the war also had far reaching consequences in the aspect of the Tonga fishing practises. The war in this case left a wave of serious fear among the Tonga who had never been involved in such kind of a heated struggle, involving guns and other serious weapons of war. This disrupted fishing activities within the Valley and resulted in the deaths of a number of Tonga.¹¹ As if this was not enough, after Zimbabwe's independence which came in 1980, services were not normalized like before in the Gwembe Valley, which led to living standards continued decline into the present.¹²

It is common logic that a war situation is just a nasty situation, where also there is a strong reason of either being involved in that war or waging that war so to say. "It is a fact that there was great need to rehabilitate the situation but in this context the great question will be to what extent were the Tonga rehabilitated or gain their fishing rights in all of this?"¹³ In this case of this war the aspects which were involved were physical and psychological

rehabilitation. In both cases the Tonga really suffered as it had a tremendous bearing on their fishing practices. This was due to the fleeing of the war away from the River for those who have recovered the effects of relocation to come back near the river to again try pursue the fishing life there used to. These places can be the modern day Binga Centre. The war further drifted away the Tonga population, take away live of other fishing expects, thus the fishing activity of the Tonga people was not going to be the same again after the war experience mainly due to fear and demoralization of the Tonga population such that others gave up an important part of their life which was the fishing.

This war period was the worst phase for those Tonga who had hopes of gaining their pre-colonial fishing rights which they enjoyed and mainly forming the basis of their livelihood. This period also makes it into the past five decades which the Tonga of the Zambezi Valley have been involved in conflict as a result of their fishing activities in the Zambezi Valley. B. Manyena et' al says that, for the past five decades, the Gwembe Valley communities, mainly the Tonga as a minority ethnic group residing on the Zimbabwean side of the Zambezi River; have experienced a unending conflict between authorities to regain entitled fishing right and resources.¹⁴ The war in this instance exacerbated the already on-going disruptions of the Tonga fishing activities in the Zambezi valley. These disruptions started immediately after the induced-displacements of the Tonga people in the 1950s but the effects became more visible and noticeable in the early 1970s, thus up to 2015 it will approximately five decades as alluded by the statement above.

This period of such unfortunate events in the Tonga fishing activities falls under what B. Manyena et' al referred to as the “post-impoundment colonial phase” which was from 1950-1980.¹⁵ It was also a period were the Tonga fishermen's psychological being went under so much test, to think that you have been forcibly uprooted from the land of one's ancestors to

them suffer the effects of the war was surely a very sad period in thinking of ever regaining their part of livelihood which was fishing in this case.

During the period of the war of independence movements were limited since the Tonga become wary of their safety or security. This extended to their economic activities as these activities like fishing as they reduced to the lowest level the fishing activities in the lake.¹⁶

That is how the war directly deprived the Tonga fishing cooperatives of their freely enjoyed fishing rights. This situation or period can also being seen as having very negative impacts since food production through fishing was temporarily done away with as well fish as a supplementary diet was also temporarily halted for safety reason as the heated war period demanded very limited movement. In loose terms the war just made fishing to be done at a very lower scale to the few Tonga people who still had access to the Zambezi river fish during this colonial period. The places where the fishing activities at the point of time was done was normally in small homesteads as the advent of Tonga fishing cooperatives was not yet in place, so many Tonga who were seen fishing at the point of time would have been accused of feeding the enemy by the guerrilla or even their opponent. Thus fishing at this risky period was misinterpreted for feeding one's enemy by those active parties who were fighting against each other.¹⁷

Those few Tonga who had established relationships to work for the colonial master for instance in catching fish for them since they were the one administering the river had access to small speed boats to cover a wider area when fishing for their masters. Thus this gave these employees surplus fish to feed their families. During the war these were halted to be used or operating in the river since they were not safe from the enemy. So the stopping of the use of what boasted the catches for both the masters and the workers during the colonial period led to also affected catches and the rates of exploring the fish in the Zambezi river by the few and

responsible Tonga people.¹⁸ This was also another negative effect which the Tonga fishing activities faced as a result of the Zimbabwean war of independence.

3.1.3 The introduction of the fishing villages and later cooperatives and the response of the Tonga people to the initiatives.

The Zimbabwean war of independence had come and gone and so were the independence round-table negotiations on finally according the country independence albeit with certain conditional ties. This was now the period of what Manyena termed the post-impoundment independence phase.¹⁹ The post-impoundment independence period, for the Tonga of the Zambezi valley was characterised by the cooperative system which was one of the visible policy to be placed for the Zambezi valley people to adhere to if they wanted to continue plying their trade in the Zambezi river waters. This idea was influenced by the fishing villages' initiative in the colonial period which also did not benefit the Tonga people. Fishing cooperative is normally a grouping of a minimum of ten people without a stipulated maximum figure in this case. Currently it is under the Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises in Binga District.

This initiative was introduced as an compensatory and empowerment measure on the Tonga people initially before the coming of non-Tonga people as benefitting more from the initiative thereby relegating the ones who are supposed to benefit to being mere workers and spectators. In the initially phases the cooperative system was received with great anxiety and maybe hopes by the Tonga people since they were eager to retain or reclaim their lost fishing rights and increase the rate of using their God given natural resources in *kasamabezi*. This was because the first stages were not clear on what would be required for those groupings called fishing villages to start operating in the Zambezi valley under the colonial government. What was on the back of the minds of many Tonga people at this particular time was the

previously enjoyed fishing rights without restrictions not knowing that it was now a different activity by a different governments, so these successive regime have in simpler terms only piled more misery on the Tonga people instead of at least making them benefit from their Zambezi River.²⁰ Actually one would have expected the black government to be more understand and cognisant of the fact that one could not separate the Zambezi Tonga from the Zambezi river. Fishing, *kuzuba nswi*, was one of the major sources of livelihood for the Zambezi Valley Tonga. According to Weinrech, bream and tiger fish were caught with nets and buckets in small inlets when the flood receded from the Zambezi River and its tributaries, without any restrictions.²¹ This clearly indicate how fishing was attached to the Tonga people lives.

A new idea in this case was bound to face resistance since in this case this initiative was made for the Tonga without directly consulting them, so in simpler terms the initiative of fishing cooperatives built on the colonial fishing villages' idea was made by a board of people who actually were not part of the Tonga people but thinking that they were doing a policy which will benefit the Tonga and the government of the day. One Howard Muleya who ventured into the fishing industry during the advent of the fishing cooperative system described it as a stride ahead in the Tonga for getting their right of access to the river, but at the same time a step backwards as this was going to be a right with very strict stipulations.²² Thus out of not having options the Tonga people had to regroup in-fact the initially number of the cooperatives in the early 80s was surprising by it being higher, which was a sign of the Tonga people still willing to trace back to the land of the ancestors and not willing to give up easily. These cooperatives would have simply returned the Tonga pre-colonial set-up and way of life easily had they had been all allowed to operate in the *keteya baswi amantemba* activities freely.

This initiative was met with very high expectations or qualifications to start operating in the Tonga lake again from the regulating authorities like the Department of Parks and Wildlife Management, Binga and Nyaminyami Rural District Councils in Binga Centre and Kariba respectively. According to many old fishermen who still recall and able to compare the two periods which are the pre-colonial and post-independence periods the cooperative initiative served as a restriction instead of a fishing rights according initiative due to its stipulations. The interpretation which the issue of the cooperatives got from the local Tonga people was that it was controlling rather than an empowerment measure. Thus, the assumption that there was over-fishing in Lake Kariba was a myth as inshore fishing stocks are only moderately exploited and severely underutilized in Zimbabwe.²³

Besides, it is said that the water in the Zambezi River has power to restock fish even if it being exploited intensively.²⁴ The above statement came as a way of justifying the strict measures which were put forward by the colonial and post-colonial governments to establish fishing villages initially then later fishing cooperatives as a way of controlling the Tonga fishing rate in their Zambezi Valley.

Endnotes

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CHAPTER 3

THE POST-COLONIAL GOVERNMENT AND FISHING COOPERATIVES: A TOOL FOR EMPOWERMENT OR CONTROL?

Introduction

This chapter will seek to explain and bring out the aspect of fishing cooperatives in the post-colonial government era as it a post-colonial initiative believed to have been influenced by socialist policies. It will further on bring out the activities which have been and still are carried out in the Binga District fishing cooperatives and its membership from the owners of the cooperatives and the mere workers. The rationale of this kind of study in this chapter will be seeking to highlight whether the initiative is a form of empowering or controlling for the benefit of the induced-displacement Tonga people of Binga District on the Southern part of the Zambezi Valley in Binga District north-west part of Zimbabwe. Challenges which the fishermen encounter in the use of these fishing cooperatives in Binga District will be also looked at as it is the only way that will clearly bring out the facts on whether is this post-

colonial period initiative benefitting the local or the or the non-Tonga speaking who were never affected by the displacement of the 1950s.

4.1.1 The post-colonial government policies of empowerment based on local resources.

The period after 1980 to present is the one which is normally referred as the post-colonial period, and in the case of the Tonga people of the Zambezi Valley in Binga district this period came with its policies which were going to govern, monitor and regulate fishing activities in the Zambezi Valley. Notable policies of the post-colonial government on the fishing activities of the Zambezi river comprised of the fishing cooperative system itself, fishing licence system, regulating of gillnet fishing, the aspect of having restricted areas were one cannot fish as well policies which were said to be meant for developing attitudes.

Facts on the ground have it that development has been slow in the fishing activities as well in the whole of Binga District. This comes against the background that people need to be educated about their resources so as to utilize those resources to maximum as well as on how best they can conserve those same resources.¹ According Joshua Chikozho

“this serves as the first step if one aims to empower a certain community based on their local resources at their disposal, and this has not been achieved in Binga District which then becomes unclear on whether the post-colonial government policies were really aimed at empowering the rightfully owners of the Zambezi river natural resource to the local Binga District people.”²

The amount of development which is in the Binga District area does not tally with other districts who were not affected albeit producing quite some catches of fish which might have been used to plough back to the community through some of government’s empowerment policies.

The aspect of the fishing cooperatives which are the main focus in this research paper is a post-colonial government novel idea to the people of the Zambezi valley.³ According to this policy aimed at empowering the Tonga people cooperatives are supposed to have a minimum of ten people as a first step in that bid ply their trade in the Zambezi river waters. McGregor

postulates that, in 1980 Michael Bourdillon, Angela Cheater and Marshall Murphree on their first social science research on the Zimbabwean side of the lake, they questioned the assumptions of over-fishing and declining catches and the intentions for closing a quarter of the shoreline to gillnetting as well as emphasis on cooperatives and making fishing a professional activity aimed at developing attitudes of responsibility.⁴ These kind of policies are seen being introduced with the aim of empowering the Tonga, but in actual fact they tend to do the opposite and the reason being they are not drafted with enough consultation of the local people which are going to be bound by such policies.

The fishing cooperative initiative does not just require the grouping of ten or more people then ends there; they are other very demanding and strict conditions for that same Tonga fishing cooperative to start operating. In clearly tracing these developments one may come to start having unclear picture of what are these post-colonial governments policies aimed at in context of the Tonga fishing activities. In a bid to control fishing activities, fishing license initiative managed by the National Parks, was put in place for both *kapenta* and gillnets fishermen. Kapenta and gillnet fishermen, both individuals and co-operatives, applied for licenses to both the National Parks and Rural District Councils. The National Parks serves as the licensing agency for permits for plying Lake Kariba water resources, and the Rural District Councils issue fishing permits for fishing zones located in their jurisdictions. Both gillnet and kapenta fishermen became concertized of the National Parks' requirements for them to be allowed to fish.⁵ These basically are the requirements which are needed for these cooperatives to start operating, and in actual sense they do apply to even the locals who are supposed to be empowered by their local resources, as a result of such laws are many authorities which are mandated to monitor the operations of the Zambezi Valley, high amounts of money are also required to pay for the above mentioned licenses which becomes a stumbling block in as far as exploiting these resources as a way of empowerment by the post-colonial government for the

Tonga people in Binga District is concerned. Similarly, to register for *kapenta* fishing, fishermen need to provide evidence of ownership of a fishing rig (boat), life jackets and operational area.

There were additional requirements for both gillnet and kapenta fishing cooperatives to be eligible to fish. A certificate of registration, constitution and membership list were needed by these licensing authorities. For gillnet fishermen, the National Parks issues the fishing licenses to the three Rural District Councils namely Binga, Nyaminyami and Hwange.⁶

The operations of the cooperatives albeit varying with the side of the lake is one operating remained affected by the controlling measures which are put in place under the banner of conserving the fish and *kapenta* as well as empowering the local people. To support the on-going discussion B. Manyena et' al notes that, a small difference exists between the Nyaminyami and Binga Rural District Councils' allocation of licenses due to the fact that they have a huge shoreline when contrasted to the one under Hwange Rural District Council having a fishing camp in Musuna. The RDC is responsible for the issuing of licences to cooperatives and individuals. Thus kapenta fishing applications are done at the National Parks District Office in Binga before being submitted for processing in Harare.⁷

This is basically how the empowerment policies of the post-colonial government seek to restrict the rightful people to trade in the Zambezi valley operates. Thus this has led to continuous clashes between the local people and the authority mandated to monitor the operations of the Zambezi river as well also many complains in relation to these laws characterise the Tonga people area of Binga District and their fishing activities so to say.

The post-colonial government policies aimed at empowering the Tonga people can be seen as controlling measures in actual fact, as these local people become more and more frustrated by the nature of what seems to be draconian pieces of legislation as clashes with the authority are the order of the day and do not seem to slow down or to end if these policies which are meant to empower and then end up controlling are not rectified. According to McGregor,

gillnet fishermen questioned the real motive or rationale behind the rules, which they interpreted as irregular spates of enforcement as motivated by ‘grudges’.⁸ The influence of party polarized party politics and accusing the fishermen as disloyal opposition supporters further perpetrated misunderstandings.⁹ These squabbles are a clear indication the unintended harm the post-colonial policies aimed at empowering especially these by the regulatory authorities in Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management and the Rural District Councils on Tonga fishing cooperatives in Binga District since 1980 are doing.

To add on, certain irregularities have marred the ZANU PF government policies in the context of fishing activities in the Zambezi Valley. According to Manyena et’ al the licensing system at the DNPWM was marred with lack of “transparency and accountability” which became a cause of concern for fishermen. Shortfalls in the licences was claimed to hinder the Tonga people’s application for these fishing licences. An outcry for being overcharged for licenses was noted again among fishermen.¹⁰

Despite the genuinely introducing of these policies by the government, they are ending up not even a single inch benefitting the local Tonga people but become a burden to them. The case of Malala were fishermen continuously complained on policy inconsistencies like unceremoniously changing of the licence renewal aspect first from being paid annually to six months then monthly.¹¹ With all these unfortunate events transpiring in the Zambezi Valley with particular focus on the Tonga fishing cooperatives and gillnet fishermen, the aspect of empowerment is actually lost or hidden in these activities leaving one clear and true conclusion that the post-colonial government police of empowerment have up the current period not achieved its desired goals for the forced relocated Tonga people of the Zambezi Valley.

In a bid to stamp authority and perform their duties, the Zambezi River regulating authorities apply what is referred to as criminalization and punishment of fishermen. According to one fisherman called Howard in an interview he had to say,

“before the coming of the NGOs like Basilwizi Trust which undertook programmes of emancipating fishermen to be know their rights and be able to negotiate with Parks or Council authorities in the case of a misunderstanding arising, the situation was bad as one would be criminalized even if it was a genuine breach of the law as a result of not fully being aware of their right as members of the fishing cooperatives”.¹²

According to McGregor the accounts by the fishermen about criminalization and punishment were not new; they were consistent with the literature.¹³ What was new was the degree of abuse of fishermen by the National Parks officials. One gillnetter had this to say, impounded nets were not returned even if these paid fines to the responsible authority. They claim that this is because some nets are sold to other fishermen and probably those fishing at the Zambian side, thus at the end of the day they remained with nothing.¹⁴

To support the issue of the authority being at loggerheads with the fishermen the case of one meeting which involved various Ministries governing the fishing activities like the DNPWM, Rural District Council (RDC), the ZRP as well as the Ministry of Youth and Empowerment Development, where acts of corruption and corrupt officials were brought to light¹⁵ can be used in this case.

The level of alertness for the need to conserve their natural resources really shows how harmoniously even in the event of removing these laws, Tonga fishermen would treat their fish. This has been the case with the fishermen and the government policies since their implementation. The major problem being the designing of these policies which are claimed to be of empowerment is doing without the input of the same Tonga people which means they will not cater for what the local feel is empowerment rather it will be control.

The vocabulary for describing working relations between fishermen has also been shaped by the lake's regime, particularly the practice of allocating permits preferentially to cooperatives and allowing two workers for each individual licensed fisherman. As a result the term 'cooperative' was said to be bureaucratic fiction in most Binga fishing camps, as cooperatives meant the legitimising of fishing and access to other assets (such as donor-funded boats) rather than describing cooperative action among members.¹⁶ At the end of the day such

policies gains misplaced definitions as well the exactly intended purposes, leading to not benefitting the Tonga fishermen in those cooperatives. In this regard the policies by the post-colonial government based on local resources have seemed to not benefit the Tonga at all as stats never lead to one Tonga fishermen who has been successful to the level of some non-Tonga players in the Zambezi valley fishing cooperatives and gillnet fishing.

4.1.2 Challenges encountered by the Tonga in the use of the fishing cooperatives system

Singling out the aspect of the cooperatives system and the challenges which the Zambezi valley Tonga faced in the use of this system is a fundamental part of this research paper in unearthing the real facts on whether this government initiative has been a success or not. The Binga fishing cooperatives were introduced as a way of organizing the fishermen as well reduce the level of over-fishing with the fear that if the Tonga people are not ‘controlled’ in their fishing activities in no time there will be no fish or *kapenta* to talk about in ‘their’ Zambezi valley. This was done with the deliberate ignoring of the fact that prior to the construction of the Kariba dam these same people were fishing and up the independence era still there was fish in the lake. In actually sense such a move was done to hinder Tonga poor people from eking a living from their river, as it is clear by the requirements introduced for those groupings to officially and legally start fishing.

Upon introducing the cooperatives, the following were requirements stipulated for them; one cannot fish without, four-inch (102 mm stretched) mesh size. Other fish driving methods which include use of chemicals and explosives was prohibited. Areas in the shoreline belonging to the DNPWM, for example the Chete Safari Area, most of the Matusadona National Park, and parts of the Charara Safari Area was strictly prohibited and once caught one can be arrested and fishing nets only to be sold to holders of valid fishing permits recognized by the responsible authorities above.¹⁷

As if these were not enough to burden the Tonga fishermen, the cooperatives were required to, for one or a cooperative to convince the authorities that they deserved a licence they need

to own a boat and a life jacket, as well as an approved fishing camp which they will be operating from.¹⁸ Manyena et' al futhers says that, a certificate of registration, constitution and membership list were needed by the licensing authorities. For gillnet fishermen, the National Parks issues the fishing licenses to three riparian Rural District Councils - Binga, Nyaminyami and Hwange.¹⁹ These above stipulation came with a very high cost, which many Tonga fishermen find it difficult to possess due to the effects of marginalization they have been facing since independence. Thus the challenge of lack of capital becomes the initial challenge which Tonga fishermen in Binga district face.

The cooperative system requires that grouping of people which are supposed to be ten or more to use nets, approved nets for that matter. Thus in this particular tool for fishing, untold challenges has also been experienced. According to J. McGregor she says, a further set of problems pointing to the tearing of nets by the wind and drifting weeds, getting caught on the many submerged trees, being ripped by crocodiles. Nets are said to also frequently stolen from the waters when laid out by notorious fishermen.²⁰ This can be a challenge indeed when one compare the present time to that time when the Tonga people were living on the river banks of the river. They only needed simple and non-approved tools to get fish for relish in the river such as buckets and simple manmade fishing rods.

As the challenges in the use of this recommended fishing cooperatives by the government increases desperate means of meeting the demands which comes with the time of fishing adopted are evident. As the old *malende* shrines and 'places of power' in the river were redundant, fishermen depended on eclectic mix of trying to ensure benign intervention from immediate family ancestors, purchasing charms and consulting healers and diviners, praying and going to church and investing in social relations in and beyond the fishing camps.²¹ If one is quite cognisant of the pre-colonial Tonga fishing activities he/she will note the absence of these desperate measure to try and bring lucky in their fishing activities. These are only noted

with the coming of the government policies said to be of empowerment like these fishing cooperatives.

Many of these fishing cooperatives in Binga are not owned by local Tonga people, which goes back to the issue of maybe it is due to lack of capital to establish a viable fishing cooperative. Personal views of Joshua Chikozho also allude to the issue, he says

“Personally my wish is for the Tonga not to partner with anyone in doing fishing activities by to do it on their own. I am not saying all the fishing cooperatives be it gillnet fishing or kapenta fishing should be owned by the Tonga, but a good chunk of the Tonga must be the owners of those fishing cooperatives or companies. Yes they can get into partnership, but we a situation where the Tongas can be empowered that we do not ending up saying he/she is doing well because he/she is partnership with so and so who is non-Tonga. They have been in fishing since time immemorial using the traditional means, with the coming n of the lake navigation they should also be the ones operating the fishing cooperatives. They are very creative people, otherwise if they were not they were not going to adapt and say this is a new phenomenon so we are not going to be part of it”.²²

The main source or root cause of such challenges is the lack of resources and as a result of development which was slow to come to Binga District the Tonga people find themselves facing such nature of challenges. This is the reason for finding that not so many fishing cooperatives and companies belong to the Tonga people “If one takes a trip to the river, he/she will find many cooperatives which have been there for quite some time now, such that each member out of the twenty approximately which own them would be in a position to own his/her own cooperative”.²³

The issue of lack of capital also may be as a result of against the background that in post-colonial Zimbabwe, education is the only way for one to get employed and get income, to pursue or eventually venture into the fishing industry. In loose terms the issue of capital limits the Tonga people to freely practise their fishing activities in the Zambezi Valley.

According to McGregor the population of workers in the fishing camps became larger as the economy deteriorated: in March 2001, the number of ‘workers’ in one camp alone was said to

have more than increased.²⁴ Thus McGregor say that, the camp committee was sympathetic and could not evict them giving that these people were closely related.²⁵ If these Tonga people were well empowered and the cooperative system was a way of fishing which was most suitable for them, surely such kind of challenges will not have been experienced in reality, but since these policies were made by someone who was probably sitting outside Binga doing it for Binga people, it did not empower many local Tonga fishermen and in-fact it controlled or exploited them as if the forced uprooting²⁶ was not enough.

4.1.3 Beneficiaries of the post-government policies.

The issue on who is supposed to benefit and who is actually benefitting from the fishing activities in the Tonga Zambezi valley is quite a complex issue at the same time interesting to focus on. Rightfully the Tonga people who are victims of the forced relocation of the 1950s to pave way for the construction of the dam they still find themselves languishing in abject poverty and still being employed as workers in the fishing cooperatives operating in the Zambezi River in this era. These are supposed to be proud inheritors of the river which belongs to their forefathers and ancestors. In simpler terms the Tonga fishermen face problems which limit their access and control of fishing resources.

The issue of corrupt officials operating in cahoots with white people is one of the issues which answer the question of who are benefitting from the fishing in the Zambezi Valley. The following shows that fishermen were aware of the need to conserve fishing resources, and their participation would contribute to the management and sustainability of the resources. Also, the National Parks were allegedly working with white concessionaires to harass the fishermen.²⁷

To buttress the above point, National Parks officials are said to have worked together with white concessionaires to ill-treat fishermen. Fish nets were pulled out and those found fishing in those prohibited areas were thoroughly beaten.²⁸

These cases have been rampant in the Zambezi River, since the authorities who are supposed to be protecting legal fishermen promote corruption, leading the local only getting not profits in the commercial economy. Thus the government policies in this case serve as exploitative ones rather than empowering ones.

The fact that many Tonga in the current fishing cooperatives in Binga, like the Kariva Fishing Cooperative, Katuya or even Intale Fishing Cooperative located at the Rest Camp part of Binga Centre are a great reflection that the local Tonga people are mere workers since these are owned by Shona people who are not even near being Tonga and were not affected by the induced displacements. In this current period there is no Tonga person or a very successive Tonga who owns fishing cooperative which can serve as an example that it benefitted and still benefitting immensely in its operations in the river. The profits realised by Tonga fishermen are only used for sustenance sake not expanding their businesses or buying valuable assets. Thus according to Adam Mudenda, the unavailability of such a person really shows that out the once lucrative business in Binga the local fishermen are not benefitting.²⁸ This is also as a result of the local people mainly being used as workers by outsiders, thus profits are remitted to those outsiders' original places which are as far as Harare, Masvingo and Bulawayo.

With the situation being already not conducive, cases of local Tonga fishermen who are willing and able to be fishing especially in Lokola and Simatelele villages, prefer to use fishing rods and hooks to catch fish to sell as they cannot afford the requirements of being a cooperative and start fishing. Such fishermen are made to pay a dollar per day for their activities to be declared as legal by the Parks authorities. They are also supposed to catch not

more than five kilograms when undertaking such kind of fishing. In analysing such a situation one will realise the benefits after quite some time and even not benefitting since the amount of catches is not befitting for business but relish at home as Tonga families are normally large. Given such situation, one can find buses which operate from Binga to Bulawayo or Harare ferrying many bags of *kapenta*, which normally belong to non-Tonga fishing cooperatives' owners. In this case surely the Tonga are getting a little share and non-Tonga getting the lion's share in a situation where they are supposed to be benefitting more. Most of the Tonga fishermen hope that the situation will change as time goes on as they have now established Unions which lobby their grievances to the Rural District Council as well as other regulatory authorities. However, by creating the Kujatana Kwesu Fisheries Cooperative Union, the fishermen invented an additional space to be heard by government authorities. Fishermen had become more organized by presenting and representing themselves in the management of fishing resources. They were able to organize their own meetings where they invited government authorities such as the National Parks and Rural District Councils. Also, government authorities had recognized fishermen as a body. In the Binga Rural District Council, fishermen became a recognized body in council meetings, particularly meetings where fishing licenses and permit fees were discussed. Fishermen had also become more organized in resource mobilization. For example, they had managed to construct a fish warehouse that was funded by the British Embassy in Zimbabwe. The warehouse was commissioned by the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources on 7 March 2013.²⁹ In 2009, fishermen successfully negotiated with the National Parks to have the *kapenta* permit fees reduced from US \$500 to US \$250 per rig per quarter. Similarly, the Binga RDC reduced the quarterly permit fees for gillnets from US \$50 to US \$30. Likewise, the quarterly permit fees for gillnets in the Nyaminyami District were reduced from US \$50 to US \$40. The reduction in permit fees meant that the fisherman's income increased, which would

enable them to improve the welfare of their families. Thirdly, the criminalization and punishment of fishermen remain top on the fishermen's agenda. They have engaged with government officials from local to national levels.³⁰ Such steps which are being done by empowered fishermen as well as fishing cooperatives in conjunction with some Non-Governmental Organizations gives hopes of turning around the current status-quo in the Zambezi fishing industry in favour of the Tonga benefitting from their river.

In summation of the above section, the colonial government activities shows out that they did not care about what would happen to the Tonga fishing rights after displacement. What was important was simply pursuing their self-interests under the banner of bringing developmental projects. The Tonga people did not benefit from the colonial government's activities let alone did they need the electricity which was going to be generated by the Kariba Dam. As if this was not enough the Tonga fishing activities were completely taken away from them it is evidenced in the places they taken too which were very far from the Zambezi River, thus one may note how the colonial government increased the gap between the Tonga and their Zambezi River.

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CHAPTER 4

FISHING COOPERATIVES BEYOND SOCIALIST DISPENSATION

Introduction

This chapter will mainly focus on the influence which the Zimbabwean government's socialist politics after the attainment of independence in 1980 had on the Tonga fishermen who were already in the fishing industry as well as those who later joined after these policies had been put in place. The section will also seek to identify, highlight and explain the challenges which firstly were brought by the Communal Areas Management Plan for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE) and secondly the Economic Structural Adjustment Program (ESAP) programmes on the Tonga fishing cooperatives in Binga District. This will

be done in two sub-sections of the chapter so as to vividly bring out these issues clearly on the effect they had on the Tonga fishermen and fishing cooperatives.

5.1.1 The government's socialist politics of the 1980s and its influence on Tonga fishermen

The early phases of the Zimbabwean independence can be seen being characterised by the adoption and implementation of socialist politics. This simply meant this wave was to be felt in many sectors of production and business cutting across the whole country and Binga fishing cooperatives in this light could not have been an exception. To buttress the above statement D. Auret noted that: Zimbabwe is as a result of what he refers to as a “miracle of growth”. The black people belonging to the country are no longer several separated parts, as they are now accorded with their land and all its resources. Also he says, they are no longer considered as second class citizen in as far as utilizing their resources is concerned as per the white men's wish.¹

Basically the government's social politics spoke a simple language which was that of emphasizing the doing away of gaps which the colonial regime had created and in this essence almost every individual under the sun was now considered the same and had the same right to the country's resources.

The Binga District area at this particular juncture had been left behind or necessarily omitted in terms of the celebrated socio-economic development at this point of time. To support the above T.M. Mashingaidze noted that, carefully placed in the Zambezi Valley, they had missed a lot in massive developmental projects which were in many cases implemented by the government and NGOs. Most parts of the district's remote areas basic and essential services like health and education were not simply there as a result of being ignored by the Zimbabwean government.²

This was a phase where the Tonga and their God given natural resource in the form of the Zambezi river being just a stone throw away from their fishing camps and cooperatives were being negatively influenced by the politics of the time.

The politics of the post-independence period stipulated that the black people, Tonga fishermen included were not limited, and actually it was a chance for the rightful owners of the resource to fully utilise and exploit them in a correct way to benefit themselves. The influence with this kind of politics had on Tonga fishermen could only work to one's advantage provided he/she possessed education." In the situation of the Binga fishermen most of them had suffered a long period of marginalization, development was slow to come to them especially schools and empowerment programmes".³ This had a very negative impact for the Tonga fishermen in fully understanding and realising the advantages which had come with the socialist politics of the independence period, before even exploring on the activities and how those who had understood it took advantage of the same Tonga fishermen's ignorance.

The fishing cooperative system's introduction served as a vivid evidence of the socialist politics which was at play. Socialism being best described as the state of beliefs which states that all people are equal and should share equally in a country's money or the political systems based on these beliefs, can make the fishing cooperative aspect system fit well in this case. The policies which were as a result of this type of politics according to H.M

Sinampande's personal views

Socialism did not put the Tonga fishermen at the same social level. It's a fact on ground that people were brought together in fishing camps and cooperative, but the crucial aspect was on gillnet fishermen were there was no compulsory yardstick to determine if all those fishermen would have caught the same amount of fish.⁴

It was a case where those who would have caught fish would have been lucky and those with no lucky were supposed to try the next day.⁵ This is how the government's socialist policies

further divided instead of unifying people. It actually promoted the one man for himself and God for us all mantra among the gillnet fishermen.

During the period from the early 1980s-1990s the near banks of the Zambezi River was identifying by many fishing camps belonging to different fishermen and fishing cooperatives. This set-up on its own depicted how the socialist politics have affected the united Tonga fishermen by grouping them into different fishing cooperatives. In this case these cooperatives were supposed to have obtained all the pre-requisites to start fishing, had to go on and ply the Zambezi River waters as a grouping and this was and is still commonly familiar among the *kapenta* fishermen like the Twazubuka Fishing Cooperative, Chuunga Fishing Cooperatives and Nkasalozyesu Fishing cooperatives just but to mention some of the still visible fishing cooperatives up to the 2015 period. The government did not put in place empowerment programmes of educating fishermen above the initiative or simply anything to boast the catches of those authorized fishermen; it is only there to collect revenue from people whom there are not even helping in their fishing endeavours in the Zambezi River. In a close analysis the government's socialist policies were adopted to exploit the Tonga fishermen, by its operations rather than playing as a unifying and empowering factor. If one pays a visit to the fishing cooperatives in down the lake were they have established their buildings and enquire on what is the government doing to boast them or help them (fishermen) one would find actually nothing, the case of Sengwe fishing cooperatives along Sengwe River part of the Zambezi, the Tonga population occupying that area had to be removed as they said they were very far from the schools, In an interview Adam Mudenda has to say

“and fine the idea was good as they is need for them to get education, but the biggest worry is what about their livelihoods since they lived on fishing to get money for paying their school levies, and with such a move where would one expect the money to come from since they were removed from their source of income”.⁶

The idea was good of trying to make them access education for all, but the bigger picture in this regard was ignored.

The socialist politics of the post 1980 period saw the emerging of young Tonga activist who were in the quest of addressing the inequalities and marginalization of Tonga people with fishermen included. According to T.M. Mashingaidze, Tonga nationalist leaders that had participated in the country's liberation struggle such as Andrew Sikajaya Muntanga and Francis Munkombwe spearheaded these self-empowerment efforts.⁷ These engaged and negotiated with the new post-colonial state for local social and economic empowerment.⁸

Both Muntanga and Munkombwe became chairs of the Binga Rural District Council (BRDC) and Members of Parliament for the area at some point.⁹ These events were a clear influence by the socialist politics and the activists to put Binga and its activities on the country's benefitting map. The Lusumpuko Plan which was a holistic approach to Binga's development needs. It then "advocated major developments in education, health, agriculture, transport and industries around the lake, fish canning and freezing plants, boat and net manufacture, fresh water prawns and aquaculture" were not going to be an exception.¹⁰ It sought to empower the Tonga by revising the activities of "previous regimes who have given financial concessions to a limited few with not considering the majority of the Tonga people who by tradition rightfully have a claim to the riches of the Zambezi Valley".¹¹

Such developments are seen attracting other non-Tonga tribes to also try their like in exploiting these fishing resources. Outside Ndebele, Shona and white people continued to dominate the extraction of natural resources in the Zambezi Valley in the 1980s. The outsiders which now had dominated the Zambezi fishing industry now controlled and rather what Mashingaidze referred to as "monopolising" the activities of the Kariba part of the Zambezi.¹² They also controlled the uplands' safari hunting business. This marginalisation

forced the Tonga people to perceive the valley as a site of their dispossession and the Kariba Dam as a symbol of colonial and post-colonial disregard for their welfare.¹³

It is said that during this period the Zimbabwean government had set plans to empower its black people in motion in all sectors that were still white dominated. According to Mashingaidze these developments or national level articulations as he puts it had cascaded into the Zambezi valley and quickly assumed a locally specific hue.¹⁴ Tonga continued their demands to the government to monitor closely the access to resources within the Kariba Dam's vicinity as they enjoyed little to gains. This led to the Tonga encouraging the government to reserve fishing permits for those who were affected or who were victims of the Kariba Dam forced displacements. These activists also wanted the government to embark on a local employment project which was only possible through facilitating the setting up of waterscape related industries in fish processing and net making.¹⁵ These pushing by the activists was directly going to give the Tonga fishermen a great deal of advantages since what was being lobbied for was biased towards fishing activities as it the major source of development which the Tonga people and fishermen look up to.

All in all the government's socialist politics of the period after independence awakened the sleeping part of the Tonga fishermen. This made them realise the need to stand up and defend their resources and be involved in programmes which seek to promote their fishing activities in the Zambezi Valley. This fact is cemented by the continuous acknowledgement of the role the Non-Governmental Organisations like Basilwizi Trust and Zubo Trust have played in influencing their fishing activities in the Zambezi river. This is also have seen improving relations of the fishermen, fishing cooperatives and these empowerment partners improved the situation a lot as one fishermen by the name Paul Muleya could not stop talking about the cordial relations which now exists between the fishermen and the regulating authorities due to Basilwizi interference in Binga District.¹⁶

5.1.2 Impacts of CAMPFIRE and ESAP programmes on cooperatives

The first phase of the CAMPFIRE project, focused on what D. Conyers refers to as “*deconcentration*”; in other words, the decentralization of powers to local representatives of central government agencies. This was consistent with the Government’s self-image of the time, which was that of a one-party “socialist” state. The focus of attention was a hierarchy of development committees at provincial, district, ward and village levels.¹⁷ Although CAMPFIRE involves decentralization, and was in-fact one of the first decentralization strategies to be implemented in Zimbabwe, it has developed more or less independently of the wider debate on decentralization; summarized above. According to D. Conyers she posits that, perhaps a picture of how developmental projects have been, what he refers to as being “compartmentalized”, in the “bureaucratic structures of governments and the disciplinary structures of “policy discourse”. CAMPFIRE been a product of such policies and under indigenous resources monitoring in specific.¹⁸

Although the name CAMPFIRE implies that the program is concerned with a wide range of natural resources, it has in fact focused almost exclusively on the management of wildlife resources. According to Conyers, the concept of CAMPFIRE was conceived by the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management (DNPWM) in the mid-1980s, as a means of addressing the increasing conflicts between people and wildlife in the many communal areas which border national parks and other protected wildlife areas.¹⁹ This is how the CAMPFIRE project came into existence, and being also responsible for natural resources monitoring, the Zambezi River activities also fall under its purview. It should be noted that the activities of the CAMPFIRE project have brought about challenges on fishing cooperatives in Binga District.

This project is built on the facts dating back from relocation in context of the Tonga fishing cooperatives'. Conyers also notes that, "each of the fifteen chiefdoms who were resettled was allocated a fishing 'camp' on the lakeshore; however, permanent residence in these camps was prohibited until recently and fishing was strictly controlled".²⁰ Challenges heralded by the CAMPFIRE program dates back from the time of its starting of operations in Binga District during the year 1991. Fishing cooperatives operating in Binga district are expected to pay a fee of start operating as well as annual fees to the CAMPFIRE as it is also done to the DNPWM. This became a lot of burden for these cooperatives since the list of authorities to pay to fish in the Zambezi River had been increased by the coming of CAMPFIRE. This organ of natural resources conservation against people have been heavily criticised for putting the life of wildlife ahead of human life. According to McGregor, risks from wildlife were more acute on patrols because fishermen laid their nets in crocodile breeding grounds, notably in the river estuaries, these worked and slept with inadequate shelter within National Parks and safari areas or on islands.²¹ These safari areas are the ones under the direct monitoring of the CAMPFIRE program in this case. The unsurprisingly being hostile of fishermen to the lake's wildlife, which reflected an attitude that was reinforced by the community based programmes like CAMPFIRE, which they saw as giving human life less value and serving others' interests.²² To the fishing cooperative the activities of the this programme have become a pain on certain parts of the body, hence the conflicts between the programme and the fishermen as well as fishing cooperatives are a clear evidence of what kind of challenges has it brought to Binga District.

To buttress the above, McGregor noted that also in Mujere, for example fishermen complained of the place 'being controlled by the safaris, together with CAMPFIRE.²³' She goes on to say, crocodiles are the major players in the tearing of fishing nets in the river. In cases like these one would expect CAMPFIRE which also charge for using nets and fishing in

the Zambezi River to control troublesome reptiles since these fishermen brings in revenue to the programme. The aspect of bringing in revenue by fishermen is overlooked as they say that animals are more important than human being since they are sold and human beings are not.²⁴

The situation of the Campfire programme and the fishermen and fishing cooperatives given above really shows how the program had brought unheralded challenges to the fishing cooperatives in Binga District.

On paper ESAP was a very good programme for the government, but to the general public it was terrible period were people lost their jobs. In an interview with Joshua Chikozho he had to say

“If someone was employed it meant loss of jobs and no capital to exploit the fishing resources for some cooperatives’ members since for one to practise fishing the government authorities in this needed one to pay for authority. Given the situation that fish was in water and to fully exploit or extract such a resource by the cooperatives machines such as rig boats, speed boats as well as nets were needed to carry out these fishing practises, so this ESAP period was a period were challenges hit the cooperatives in Binga”.²⁵

It’s a fact that it is better for the Tonga to own fishing cooperatives, but in this case it was better if at least they were employed as workers in fishing cooperatives. Thus with ESAP many of them lost their jobs which automatically translated to be removed from the fishing industry, there depriving them of the means to earn a living from their Zambezi river.²⁶ This cannot be misinterpreted in any case it was a serious challenges for the cooperatives as the workforce to fully produce at maximum was reduced.

In summation such policies as CAMPFIRE and ESAP have brought untold suffering for the Tonga fishing community in Binga District. It might by design but the truth of the matter is fishing cooperatives have suffered as a result of ill-timed policies on the already marginalized Tonga people. This is a result of the increase of the licencing fees as well marking many areas which are rich in free as not allowed to fish as a control measure.

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CONCLUSION

The aspect of the forced displacement without compensation of the Tonga people who occupied the Zambezi River banks before the construction of a World Bank funded Kariba Dam project for hydro-electricity really reflects how governments have treated some parts of its people in Zimbabwe. The Tonga people who currently occupy the Binga District's livelihoods mainly depended on the Zambezi river activities which included farming and 'fishing' at a large scale albeit initially for domestic consumption. With the coming of an economic world, the Tonga had to also try and earn revenue through fishing which happens to be the major natural resource derived activity at their disposal. In tracing the developments since the 1950s induced displacement one may note that instead the Tonga have never fully benefitted from their river due to continuous outside interference as well as facing stringent government policies which further relegate them to being spectators in their own Zambezi river.

In the first chapter, this research focused on the genesis of the current Tonga problems which was the construction of the Kariba Dam and the tremendous effects this initiative

had on Tonga fishing practices. The effects of the initiative were also visited since when such large projects are undertaken, many people are affected in form of being displaced, family disintegration, leaving of the places of their ancestors as well destruction of livelihood's economic activities. The Tonga were forcibly removed from the Zambezi river banks, truck-loaded upland to more far places away from the river and their forefathers' graves. This affected their fishing practices since the colonial governments made sure that their fishing practices were never to be carried out as before again. This same colonial government did not make any fishing rights to the Tonga people who were negatively affected by the Kariba Dam construction further throwing them into the dungeon of confusion and languishing in abject poverty as they found the going tougher away from the river.

The second chapter of the research further went deeper in trying to unearth the aspect and relations of the colonial government and the Tonga fishermen in the context of the fishing rights. The colonial administration policies in this case were no near favourable to the Tonga fishing rights. These fishing which are referred to in this chapter are those which existed prior the Kariba Dam construction as it will be misleading to talk about the colonial administration making rights for a black man who did not even exist or if he/she did, it was for exploitation reasons. This government prioritised their own commercial fishing practises as well as tourism thus ignoring the Tonga fishing rights in this instance. The devastating effect of the Zimbabwean war of independence on the Tonga fishing practices is also looked at in this particular chapter.

Chapter three is another interesting part of the research as it unpacks the situation of the Tonga and fishing practises in the post-impoundment period which is basically from the year 1980. This period albeit being a period of much hope and anticipation from the

Tonga since a black government was now in place is marred with draconian pieces of laws governing the Zambezi river. Specifically the aspect of whether Tonga benefitted from this government's policies, brings out how the black government made the Tonga fishing woes continue by laws which if closely looked at in comparison with the Tonga backgrounds it totally restricted them from fishing from their river, through the aspect of fishing cooperatives. The challenges of the Tonga fishing cooperatives highlighted in this chapter are a true reflection or simply paint a vivid picture of how the post-colonial government have been unfairly treating the people of the great river up to the late 2000s.

The last part of the research simply looks at these Tonga fishing cooperatives beyond the socialist dispensation. This period is the one which also helps to explain how the Tonga fishing cooperatives have been operating and performing in the post-colonial period which is the one characterised by socialist politics. This political set-up have seen other tribes with better background and capital flooding the Zambezi fishing industry further marginalizing the Tonga people who due to long time effects of marginalization by successive governments has found themselves not having enough capital to compare with other tribes who have decided to invade their Zambezi river. Challenges brought by ESAP and CAMPFIRE programs also completes the chapter to further show how the post-government inventions have brought untold suffering and marginalization to the helpless Tonga community which has not yet recovered from the relocation effects up to the period 2015.

In summation the aspect of pushing for government to recognize and protect victims of forced displacements should be taken seriously by the governments in power in the twenty first century. The moves are not activism against the government of the day, but

genuine struggles to be treated fair as well as of making sure locals do benefit from the local resources at their disposal. The Tonga having claimed that they did not migrate from anywhere but are the original and rightful owners of the country Zimbabwe unlike other tribes who migrated from different direction should not be marginalized continuously instead they should be accorded respect and be granted affordable access to their Zambezi river. This may include being given first preference in fishing rights, permits and Zambezi river projects. This can be at least a better way of compensating them for their forced relocation from the land of their ancestors. The aspect of fishing cooperatives must also be revised so that the Tonga people can be owners of those fishing cooperatives and Zambezi river resources than to be treated as mere workers in the fishing cooperatives by virtue of being the rightful owners of the river.

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APPENDIX

Appendix A

Interviews with Tonga leaders and companies in Binga District

My name is Honour M.M Sinampande. I am an undergraduate student at Midlands State University reading for a Bachelor of Arts in History Honours Degree. I am currently undertaking a research focusing on *The History of the Tonga and fishing cooperatives in Binga District, Zimbabwe 1950s_2015*. I humbly request for your honesty in responding to the questions that I will pose to you. The information obtained will be strictly used for academic purposes and treated with confidentiality as promised.

1. Do the Tonga fishermen understand the history of how they became second class citizens in their own river? If yes, then who do they point at as the author and engineer of that specific problem?
2. What are the notable problems associated with the fishing activities of the Tonga in the 21st century?
3. Do the Tonga people (fishermen included) clearly fathom their relationship with the Zambezi river?
4. Which are the traditional fishing practises which were lost during the struggle for fishing rights up from the impoundment period to 2015?
5. Is the socialist politics in Binga contributing to their being marginalized in the Zambezi Valley?
6. Which are the strategies being employed by Tonga fishermen to make government relax the current strict fishing laws?
7. What is the existing relationship between Tonga fishermen and outsiders in the Zambezi river?
8. What is the Tonga perception on non-Tonga fishermen in Binga?
9. Do the Tonga fishermen fully know their deep relationship with the Zambezi River?

10. Are the Tonga people scoring any successes in their negotiations with the government for better fishing conditions in the river?

Appendix B

Interview guide with Tonga fishermen

1. Who are the Tonga fishermen?
2. What is the general attitude or take on being a Tonga fisherman?
3. Do fishermen in the District know the help being offered by NGOs and other supporting partners to improve the standard of fishermen in Binga?
4. Are you fully benefitting from the Zambezi River as the rightful owners of the river?
5. Why are there continuous clashes between the Tonga fishermen and the ZANU PF government authorities?
6. What are the attitudes of Tonga fishermen on non-Tonga who owns cooperatives and fishing boats (rigs)?
7. What do the fishing community understand by the word fishing cooperative?
8. What are the measures being done to keep Tonga traditional fishing practises alive?