



Midlands State University
Established 2000

Our Hands, Our Minds, Our Destiny

FACULTY OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

***THE 19TH CENTURY NDEBELE STATE IN THE EYES OF
CONTEMPORARY OBSERVERS FROM 1829 TO 1893***

By

ALLINGTON NDLOVU

R146851W

SUPERVISOR: PROFESSOR G.C MAZARIRE

**Being a dissertation submitted in Partial fulfillment of the requirements of the
Bachelor of Arts Degree in History and International Studies at Midlands
State University.**

JUNE 2018

APPROVAL FORM

The undersigned certify that they have supervised the student **ALLINGTON NDLOVU** dissertation entitled: **The 19th century Ndebele State in the eyes of contemporary observers from 1829-1893**. Submitted in Partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Bachelor of Arts in History and International Studies Honors Degree at Midlands State University.

.....

.....

SUPERVISOR

DATE

.....

.....

CHAIRPERSON

DATE

.....

.....

EXTERNAL EXAMINER

DATE

DECLARATION FORM

I Allington Ndlovu, Registration Number R146851W do hereby declare that this entire research is a product of my own work. It is being submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for Honors Degree in History and International Studies, in the Faculty of Arts at Midlands State University.

.....

...../...../.....

Allington Ndlovu

Date

DEDICATIONS

This work is dedicated to my mother Viona Ndlovu and the entire family. I love you all.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly I would like to thank my supervisor Professor G. C Mazarire for his supervision and dedication throughout the whole project study. I am forever thankful to the Almighty God for granting me the gift of life and most importantly for giving me dedicated hardworking and ever supporting parents. To my family, that is my mother Viona Ndlovu, my father Shakespeare Ndlovu, Aunt Precious Ndlovu and SibhekileNcube, I say thank you for your support. I would also like to thank the department of History and International Studies at Midlands State University for equipping me with viable and requisite skills which I used in carrying out this study. I also extend my gratitude to PathisaNyathi, FilliNcube, MishakDube and TshepeNcube for helping me in carrying out my extensive research. I am forever indebted to my friends who assisted me morally, academically and financially. These are: Tumelo Nigel Moyo, SizoMandisiNcube, Quite Dube, Zanele Nkomo, Davis Sibanda, Tennyson Tshabangu, Welcome Ndebele and Ruth. I thank you my all my friends for your support. Ngiyabonga kakhulu.

Table of Contents

APPROVAL FORM	i
DECLARATION FORM.....	ii
DEDICATIONS.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iv
ACRONYMS	viii
GLOSSARY OF TERMS	ix
ABSTRACT.....	ix
INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.....	1
Introduction.....	1
Statement of the problem.....	2
Research objectives.....	3
Research questions.....	3
Historical background.....	3
Literature review.....	6
Methodology.....	9
Chapter breakdown.....	9
CHAPTER ONE	13
THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF CONTEMPORARY LITERATE OBSERVERS OF THE NDEBELE NATION IN THEIR CATEGORIES	13
1.0 Introduction.....	13
1.1 Historical background of the European travellers in Matabele.....	13
1.2 Missionaries	17
1.2.1 London Missionary Society missionaries	17
1.2.2 Catholic Jesuits	18
1.3 Hunters and Traders.....	19
1.4 Explorers.....	20
1.5 Concession seekers	21
1.6 Conclusion	21
CHAPTER TWO	24
THE PERCEPTIONS OF THE MISSIONARIES AND EXPLORERS ABOUT THE NDEBELE NATION	24
2.0 Introduction.....	24

2.1 Missionary accounts.....	24
2.1.1 Historical background of Thomas Morgan Thomas (1828-1884)	24
2.1.2 Politics of the Matabele.....	26
2.1.3 Succession laws	27
2.2 Historical background of Robert Moffatt (1795-1883).....	28
2.2.1 Matabele social life	30
2.3 Historical background of David Carnegie (1855-1910).....	31
2.3.1 Ndebele economic life	32
2.3.2 Religion of the Matabele.....	33
2.4 Jesuits accounts.....	33
2.4.1 Jesuit correspondence	34
2.5 Explorers accounts	35
2.5.1 Historical background of Thomas Baines (1820-1875).....	35
2.5.2 The Matabele Landscape	36
2.6 Conclusion	37
CHAPTER THREE	40
THE NDEBELE STATE IN THE EYES OF HUNTERS AND TRADERS	40
3.0 Introduction.....	40
3.1 Hunters’ accounts.....	40
3.1.1 Historical background of William Finaughty (1843-1917).....	40
3.1.2 Ndebele wildlife.....	42
3.1.3 Ndebele hunting habits	43
3.1.4 Astronomy and cosmology	43
3.2 Historical background of Captain Frederick Courteney Selous (1851-1917).....	44
3.2.1 Species (taxonomies) and ecology	45
3.2.2 Matabele Climatology.....	46
3.3 Historical background of William Cornwallis Harris (1807-1848)	46
3.3.1 Vegetation and small game animals.....	48
3.4 Conclusion	48
CHAPTER FOUR	51
OBSERVATIONS BY CONCESSION SEEKERS ABOUT THE NDEBELE	51
4.0 Introduction.....	51
4.1 Accounts by concession seekers	51

4.1.1 Historical background of John Smith Moffat (1835-1918).....	51
4.1.2 Politics and governance of the Ndebele.....	53
4.2 Historical background of Francis Robert ‘Matebili’ Thompson (1857-1927).....	54
4.2.1 The Ndebele beliefs	55
4.3 Historical background of Charles Dannel Rudd (1844-1916)	56
4.4 Conclusion	58
CONCLUSION	61
BIBLIOGRAPHY	62

ACRONYMS

AIHC.....	Amagugu International Heritage Centre
LMS.....	London Missionary Society
IKS.....	Indigenous Knowledge Systems
NAZ.....	National Archives of Zimbabwe
CM.....	Catholic Mission

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Amalobolo/lobola- Bride prize.

Embuyisweni- Atthe propitiation ceremony.

Ibhetshu- buttock cover made from animal skin and which is a form of traditional dressing in the Ndebele, Zulu and other African cultures.

Moselekatse- King MzilikaziKhumalo

Matabele- the name used interchangeable with “Ndebele people”

Inxwala- Yearly celebrated ceremony among the Ndebele people

EMthombothemba- Hope Fountain

Umnombathe- MncumbathaKhumalo who was regent from 1868-1870

Impis- Ndebele warriors

Amabele- Sorghum

Unyawuthi- Millet

Izinduna- Chiefs

Enyokeni- Old Bulawayo

Mhlanhlandlela- Name used to denote Mzilikaz’s resting place north of Limpopo and his first capital

Amabhidi- Special type of cattle which belonged to the Royal Clan

Intaba Zokhahlamba- Drakensberg Mountains

Ekuphumuleni- Transvaal

Egabheni- Mosega

Indunankulu- Chief of chiefs

Nkulunkulu- Almighty God

Izihonqo- Camps

Amajaha- Young Ndebele warriors

Imiziyamathanga- Secret Homesteads with the concubines of the Ndebele king

Amabutho- Ndebele regiments

Imbizo- Ndebele senior regiment

Mncengence- Lobengula’s sister

Umthakathi- witch/ wizard

Hambakahle- Go in peac

ABSTRACT

The 19th century Ndebele State received a number of foreign visitors. They included missionaries, explorers, hunters, traders and concession seekers. Many of them wrote as they travelled in different parts of the Ndebele State. They wrote extensively about the Ndebele State mainly from 1829 to 1893 paying particular attention to Ndebele politics, social life, modes of production, wildlife, ecology and their customs. This study analyses their various written narratives paying particular attention to contemporary observations, perceptions and impressions embedded in them. It argues that this primary documentation adds value to our understanding of the Ndebele society and economy. The study also helps us evaluate their contribution to Zimbabwean historiography in general and Ndebele history in particular.

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER

Introduction

This study discusses the perceptions of the Ndebele State by the contemporary literal observers. These are foreign observers who include travellers, missionaries, hunters, traders, explorers and concession seekers. It is a study in the contributions of contemporary primary documents to the history of pre-colonial Zimbabwe. The 19th century Ndebele State had many visitors from outside the continent in the form of travellers and these travellers as mentioned above differed fundamentally in terms of their professions which they had. It is of paramount importance to note that these notable travellers in their lifetime wrote journals, diaries, letters, sketches and books detailing their life experiences and observations. Of great importance in this study is that, their travelogues documented much about the Ndebele society, politics, economy and nature. They have contributed immensely to the history of the Ndebele.

The study also categorized the travellers into their respective categories over space and time. Among the missionaries the study looked at the London Missionary Society, Scottish missionaries and the Catholic Jesuits. Explores included Thomas Baines and George Westbeeck, hunters were Captain Frederick Courteney Selous, William Finaughty, William Cornwallis Harris and Henry Hartley. Concession seekers included John Smith Moffat, Charles Dannel Rudd, Rochford Maguire, Thompson, Sir Sidney Shippard and Eduard Lippert. These are the travellers who operated among the Matebele.

This study also looked at the historical background of each of these travellers. This is highly important in the sense that it helps to know why they wrote the way they did especially in describing the Ndebele nation. It is important to study the writer, that is who was he, where did he come from, who were his friends, what was his profession, was he really a writer, why did he use the language he used and most importantly, how did he end up in the Ndebele State. This will help in determining each of their positions and the contributions of their accounts in Ndebele history.

This is a historiographical study which focused solely on the contemporary literate observers of the Ndebele State. This means that, it is not the accounts alone that are looked at but the historical background of the missionaries, traders, hunters, explorers and concessions seekers.

The important factor of the study is the theoretical framework which seeks to ascertain the relationship between the background of the writer and his written accounts. Thus, in this study Diffusion theory was employed in order to assess the contribution of primary data in the history of the Ndebele. The theory practically shows how evidence and ideas from a wide range of disciplines are drawn together. Thus, in this case the underpinnings at stake are the perceptions by travellers motivated by different issues. One of the reasons why these contemporary literate observers are categorized is because of the different historical backgrounds in which they existed and their professions cannot be lumped together if their travelogues are to be evaluated and assessed properly.

The reason why this study was conducted is because of the misunderstanding and misinterpretation of the travellers' accounts about the Ndebele history. The study is also conducted to make readers understand better the contribution of the travelogues to the history of the Ndebele nation. Also, the study is an eye opener as to who the contemporary literal observers were because; it looked in detail the historical background of each traveller in Matabele and evaluated the surrounding circumstances which motivated them to write about the Ndebele political, socio-economic and ecological life. As indicated above, study is conducted in order to assess the relationship which existed between the Ndebele people and the travellers who operated within the territories of Matabele nation in the 19th century.

The problematic puzzle that this research unraveled is that of misunderstanding the greater contribution of the travellers' accounts in the history of the Ndebele. Therefore the main argument of this study was that the travellers in Matabele are of great importance in the historical reconstruction of the Ndebele and they are to be assessed or evaluated from a historiographical point of view. That is to say before venturing into what they wrote, it is important to know who were they and why did they write what they wrote.

Statement of the problem

This study covers a historical research gap about the Ndebele nation. It seeks to make readers understand better the impressions by the travellers who were in the Ndebele nation from a historiographical point of view. The relationship between the historical background and the writings by the literate contemporary observers of the Ndebele nation has received little attention and therefore this study serves to make readers understand better the conceptual circumstances

which motivated missionaries, traders, hunters, explorers and concessions seekers to write the way they did. Thus, in short the study addresses mainly the primary information about the nature of the Ndebele nation and seeks to bridge why it was projected the way it was paying particular attention to the professions of the travellers.

The justification of the study is hinged on the fact that, the immense contribution of the travelogues in the history of the Ndebele is highly ignored and usually misunderstood simple because historians tend to bypass the fact that travelogues were documents not meant for academic readership hence they should be treated differently from textbooks. By looking at the background of the author of these travelogues helps a reader understand better the motives and interests of the travellers hence their contribution to the history. Most importantly, travelogues were written during the events they describe.

Research objectives

1. To identify the 19th century Ndebele State contemporary literal observers in their categories and discovering the image of the Ndebele.
2. To account for the perceptions of the various observers.
3. To evaluate the contributions of these observations to Ndebele history.

Research questions

1. Who were the foreigners in the Ndebele State and what did they write about the nation in concern?
2. What were the perceptions of various observers in the Ndebele State?
3. How much did their work contribute to Ndebele history?

Historical background

It is submitted that, in the 16th century, the Portuguese were the first Europeans to attempt occupying and colonizing South and Central Africa, but the hinterland lay virtually untouched by Europeans until the arrival of explorers, missionaries, ivory hunters, and traders in the early 1800's. These were the pioneers exploring unknown territory with their own agendas.⁶ The major reason for this influx of travellers in the 19th century was because of the need to explore the

African continent by the whites. It of no doubt therefore that almost all professions came to Africa. Chennels noted that the LMS missionaries were the first to step into the Matabele land under the blessings of Mzilikazi who first met Robert Moffatt in the year 1829.⁷ Therefore, in this section the historical background serves to highlight in sequential order who came first followed by who in order to justify the categories in which they are classified. It is however important to note that the beginning year of this study is 1829 because it was the year in which king Mzilikazi first met a white man in the form of the Scottish LMS missionary Robert Moffatt who himself came to South Africa in 1817 and established his home in Kuruman a place which would serve as his home until he left Africa with his family. Following that year, it needs to be established that the next group of travellers to meet were the hunters and traders. However, Nyathi argued that when Moffatt made his first visit in 1829, he found two hunters Schoon and Mcluckie demonstrating how to use fire arms to Mzilikazi.⁸ Little is known about these two hunters and unfortunately they did not live accounts to tell their story. It is important also to note that having witnessed the King eager to possess the firearms, Moffatt commented greater about the military and character of Mzilikazi because he was motivated by the intense liking of weapons by Mzilikazi. Following Mzilikazi, William Cornwallis coming down from the Transvaal went Kapein and ended up in Kuruman. His agenda was to shoot big game animals which he did in abundance. He himself met the king Mzilikazi in 1836 where he presented special gifts to the king. He himself noted that he organized a gigantic hunting trip from the Cape to the Western Transvaal and Magaliesberg with William Richardson.⁹ It was this trip which enabled him to hunt near where Mzilikazi had camped with his migrating nation. Of great importance is that, he had met Robert Moffat who told him more about the king Mzilikazi. That had a bearing on his writings because he was motivated by both his hunting preoccupations and stories he was told by Moffat.

It has to be noted that, after Moffatt had met Mzilikazi in the year 1829, there were yet more visits which he made on the basis on the friendship they had established before. Another visit was made on the year 1835, 1854, 1857 and 1859 with the final establishment of Inyathi mission. At that time before coming to the Northern part of the Limpopo, many hunters, traders and explorers were stationed at Tati. Quick argued that before the railway arrived towards the end of the nineteenth century, Tati District was Africa at its wildest and most untamed a hunter's paradise.¹⁰ Hunters therefore, stayed there as long as they did not get permission to enter

Mzilikazi's territory by the king himself. Such circumstances also had a bearing towards their writings because at Tati there they did not stay idle but they hunted and the type of game animals they came across they still expected to see more in the interior. Not only that, they also witnessed the clashes between the Matabele and the BaMangwatho over the tati area. Thus, whenever, they were granted permission to hunt in Matabele they had in the back of their minds Matabele as a nation always in quarrel with its neighboring states and thus, their accounts were motivated by such.

The year 1854 saw witnessed Robert Moffat's third visit primarily for health reasons. Moffat had overworked himself in the preparing and printing the first volume of his Setswana translation of the bible and among other things suffered from violent head-pains.¹¹The fourth visit in 1857 therefore witnessed not only the coming of Robert Moffat but the whole team including the Sykes family, Thomas Morgan Thomas and John Smith Moffatt. All these arrangements were conducted under the auspices of the friendship already established by Robert Moffat and Mzilikazi. Tabler argued that, the establishment of the Inyathi mission in 1859 December opened floodgates to many travellers to come to the Ndebele nation for different reasons. Later hunters like Finaughty entered Matabele nation from Grahamston town in 1864. The above mentioned conditions influenced the writings of these travellers since they arrived differently in the Matabele nation and they also related to the king differently which however means that their differing observations about the nation have contributed largely to the history of the Ndebele. Gelfand added that, the missionaries acted as interpreters to the king for the traders to get the allowance to hunt in the Matabele nation.

Speaking of the concession seekers, it is important to note that, they came to the Matabele nation after the death of the first king Mzilikazi in search of concessions for hunting, exploring gold deposits and some were of international significance. Newton noted that Samkange argued that, Mzilikazi's inherent resistance to white encroachment was beginning to be weak and compromised.¹²It is important to understand the global picture of the matter because the unveiling of events was becoming untenable beyond his authority and his power. One of those events were the discovery in 1866 in the banks of the Orange River of the diamond which turned out to be a 21 carat. This even attracted many fortune hunters and adventure seekers from all over the world. The Matabele nation therefore fell prey to these concession seekers. As

mentioned above in the introduction of this study that they mainly focused on political issues of the Ndebele because of the close association with the king whom they desired to negotiate with. Thus, the global unveiling of events and their deep seated desire to explore the land of a king who resented them highly motivated them to write diaries, letters and books which are credited in this study as part of the major contributors to the history of the Ndebele.

In short, this section was committed in bring across the sequence of how these contemporary literal observers came to Matabele in their chronology so as to justify their typologies. It brought across the different periodization in which they travelled and the main argument is that the circumstances in which they travelled influenced their accounts immensely.

Literature review

This section made a critical survey of the literature that uses or used this primary documentation by contemporary literal observers of the Ndebele nation. Leading historians who used these travelogues in their literature are: Cobbing, Roberts, Nyathi, Quick, Tabler, Chennels, Dritzas, Sabelo Gatsheni, Hadebe, Samkange and many others. A closer evaluation of the literature by Gatsheni shows that in most of his books and online articles he used much of this primary documentation. It is stated that Professor Ndlovu-Gatsheni has published 8 books, 51 peer-reviewed journal articles; 38 book chapters, and presented over 70 academic papers in international conferences.¹³ His most revered books about the Ndebele nations are: *The Ndebele nation*, *Who ruled by the spear*, his Phd thesis and his online article titled *dangers of myths of tribal relations in Zimbabwe*. In these books Gatsheni used intensively the missionary documents and mostly by Robert Moffat and Thomas Morgan Thomas. It is of no doubt that he is a revisionist scholar and therefore his main argument is that, missionaries or to use his actual words, “colonial historiography cannot be accorded any historical legitimacy because it is associated with prejudice, biases, racist statements and distortions of the Ndebele nation.”¹⁴ It has to be noted that by and large Gatsheni used a selective approach by picking certain negative statements which were forwarded by missionaries. But the main argument of this study is that the contribution of the travelogues cannot be overlooked or bypassed without looking at them from a historiographical point of view. He largely focused on what the primary documentation projected and neglected what motivated those missionaries to write what they wrote. He also did not study

deeply the circumstances which surrounded those missionaries. Thus it is a historical gap that this dissertation covered.

As for Quick's literature particularly his famous article titled, *The Early European involvement at Tati*, he used much of the primary documentation by hunters, missionaries, explorers and hunters. His article is of paramount importance in that, it managed to capture almost all the travelogues and helped much in the categorizing of these contemporary literal observers. He managed to capture most of their observations especially about their organization, mode of operation and their relation to the king of the Setswana and Matabele. It of no doubt that he did a good job in collecting them together. However, his writings tended to just mix them together not systematically and chronologically. Again, like Gatsheni he did not spend time looking at the historical background of these observers which remains uncertain to determine the contribution of the travelogues in the Ndebele history. However, this study seeks to group them according to their typologies and highlight the reasons why they wrote what they did.

Also, Tabler and Chennels were not concerned about the history of the Ndebele per say but they used this primary documentation to analogize issues of religion. For example, Chennels was not even a historian but English major who was an expert in literature but however made comments about the primary documentation by missionaries. For example he focused much on those documents which were forwarded by missionaries which created an image that of a bloodthirsty nation which needs to be dealt with for the gospel to progress.¹⁵ It is important however to note in this section that Chennels had no intention of historicizing the missionary accounts so as to ascertain their historical background which in turn influenced their writing. Thus, looking at most of his statements, it is clear that he did not systematically consider what motivated the observers to write about the Ndebele. There are a few of his statements which can be credited in contributing to the Ndebele history as he drew the relationship which existed between the Ndebele monarchy and the missionaries. That means he also understood the attitudinal issues and circumstances which prompted the writing of the travelogues.

Cobbing is also another historian who wrote extensively about the history of the Ndebele. His famous unpublished thesis titled, *The Ndebele under the Khumalo*, is his masterpiece which probably is one of the best secondary sources on Ndebele history. In his thesis he touched almost a lot about the political, social and economic life of the Ndebele. A closer look at his thesis

shows that he used ethnographic skills in gathering information and he also used this primary documentation. By and large he acknowledged that he used these primary accounts to come up with a good narrative. The underlying fact is that he did not approach them the historiography method upon which this study is committed to. Just like other historians, Cobbing also focused much on what was written not why it was written and the circumstances surrounding the writing of the travelogues. Also he did not use accounts by traders, hunters and concessions seekers, thus it is a gap that this study covered. Another striking book by Cobbing which used missionary travelogues is an article titled, *The Evolution of the Ndebele Amabutho*. This article mainly focuses on the regiment system of the Matabele nation and the village layout, chieftainship and leadership hierarchies. He commented that, the parallels between the Ndebele ibutho and the English regiment are so tenuous that the translation is best dispensed with.¹⁶ From this observation, it is however important to note that, by and large Cobbing used more oral traditions and the position of the travelogues to him did not get much attention and they were to be dismissed because they were forwarded by people who did not understand the culture and local customs. Though that may be true, Cobbing did not acknowledge the fact that, travellers were not historians and what they wrote was not intended for academic reference. Those were personal diaries and letters written to the former colonial masters. Thus, this study will look at the historiography and assess these primary documents using independent historical materials. The study covered the gap left by secondary literature by exploring deep into the mind of the white man and gets to know why he wrote like that and who they tried to impress by their writings. Pathisa Nyathi is also another historian who has used these primary documents extensively in the re-construction of the Ndebele history. Most of Nyathi's books like *Igugu likaMthwakazi*, *Madoda lolani incukuthu*, *Zimawele* and his commentary that he wrote with Marieke faber Clarke about Bowen Rees' *Isitja Gasibulawa* used extensively these primary documents in shaping his arguments. In his narratives, it has to be understood he used ethnographic skills and sociological tools. It is no doubt that he used much of these documents and he does a good job in showing the contribution of travelogues in the Ndebele history. Little did he mention about the historiography of these travelogues.

Thus, by and large the majority of secondary sources immensely used these primary documents by the contemporary literal observers of the Ndebele State. Much from what they projected reveal that they did not ignore that fact that travelogues have contributed much in the Ndebele

history. However, historians have all used a similar method of quickly concluding that primary documents have a questionable authenticity. This study however is not committed to reproduce what missionaries, hunters, traders and concession seekers wrote but it critically analyses the historical background of each of them in their categories. It goes deep into the psyche of the white man so as to what motivated them to write.

Methodology

This study as mentioned above is a historiographical discussion which used primary documentation in order to understand why history is written the way it is written. Qualitative research was employed for textual analysis. Primary documentation was used as a tool for documentary analogy. These primary documents are travelogues written by European travelers who operated in the Matabele nation. Methodologically, the study also used representational analysis, this is because among the categories of the observers not all the travelogues will be used but a few selected will be used as representatives. The justification for that is because there too many and many of them share similar impressions hence to avoid monotony there will be representative in orientation.

Chapter breakdown

This study has four chapters which are arranged in chronology and given the nature of the topic; chapters are arranged according to the categories stated above. The first chapter is the introductory chapter which includes the introduction, statement of the problem, research objectives and questions, historical background, literature review, methodology and the chapter breakdown.

Chapter one: The historical background of the contemporary literate observers of the Ndebele nation in their categories.

This chapter traced the historical background of the travellers from where they came from up until they reached the Matabele territory. It also evaluated how they came in a sequential order so as to categorize them chronologically. The chapter was also committed in showing the different typologies of the contemporary literal observers. These were missionaries, explorers, hunters and traders and then lastly the concession seekers. The next chapter therefore, focused much on the impressions by missionaries and explorers about the Ndebele State.

Chapter two: The perceptions by missionaries and explorers about the Ndebele nation.

The chapter before this one established the historical background of the various observers and categorized them accordingly. Chapter therefore, covered most the works by missionaries and explorers about the Ndebele nation. Not all of them were evaluated but representational technique was used in order to arrive at constructive conclusions. Their historical backgrounds were discussed before assessing their works. Their contribution to the Ndebele history was also discussed. The following chapter therefore looked at the hunters and traders.

Chapter three: The Ndebele State in the eyes of hunters and traders.

The above chapter focused on impressions by missionaries and explorers. This chapter however, looked at the perceptions by hunters and traders. The few selected looked at certain subjects like the ecology, taxonomies, wildlife, astronomy, weather and game animals in Matabele. Just like in the previous chapter, each hunter was evaluated from a historiographical perspective. Their contribution to Ndebele history is also paramount. The next group which also came to Matabele was the concession seekers and they covered the next chapter of the study.

Chapter four: Observations by concession seekers about the Ndebele nation.

As indicated in the above chapter, this fourth chapter looked at the concession seekers in their names and looked at each of their background in order to assess their accounts having the knowledge about what motivated them to write. They captured most of political history of the Ndebele and the foreign policy. Having established that, their documents were critically evaluated and ascertained that they contributed much to the history of the Ndebele nation.

ENDNOTES

¹ A. J. Chennels, “The image of the Ndebele and the nineteenth-century Missionary Tradition”, in *Christianity South of The Zambezi*, Vol. 2, 1977, pg. 44.

² W. Finaughty, *The Recollections of William Finaughty Elephant Hunter, 1864-1875*, Books of Rhodesia, 1973, pg. 6.

³ M. Gelfand, *Gubulawayo and Beyond*, Geoffrey Chapman, London, 1968, pg. 54.

⁴ T. Baines, *The gold regions of South Eastern Africa*, Port Elizabeth, London, 1887, pg. 27.

⁵ G. Newton, *The Helms of Hope Fountain*, Paal, 1999, pg. 23.

⁶ Ibid. pg. 30.

⁷ A. J. Chennels, “The image of the Ndebele and the nineteenth-century Missionary Tradition”, pg. 45.

⁸ P. Nyathi, “A friendship of convenience: Rev Robert Moffatt and King Mzilikazi become friends for different reasons”, *Sunday News*, June 9, 2017, pg. 4.

⁹ W. C. Harris, *Narrative of an expedition into Southern Africa during the years 1836 and 1837 from the Cape of Good Hope through the territories of chief Moselakatse*, American Mission Press, Bombay, 1838, pg. 80.

¹⁰ G. S. Quick, “Early European involvement in the Tati District”, *Botswana Notes and Records*, Vol. 33, 2001, pg. 32.

¹¹ J.P.R Wallis, *The Northern Goldfields Diaries of Thomas Baines 1869-1872*, vol. 1, Chatto and Windus, London, 1976, pg. 33.

¹² G. Newton, *The Helms of Hope Fountain*, pg. 40.

¹³“Unisa, Google, Last modified 8 April, 2018
<file:///C:/Users/me/Documents/Allie%20Flash/Unisa%20Online%20-%20Prof%20Sabelo%20J.%20Ndlovu-Gatsheni.html>, accessed 21 April 2018

¹⁴ Ibid

¹⁵ A. J. Chennels, “The image of the Ndebele and the nineteenth-century Missionary Tradition”, pg. 50.

¹⁶ J. R. Cobbing, “The Evolution of Ndebele Amabutho”, *Journal of African History*, Vol.15, No. 4, 1974, pg. 608.

¹⁷ A. Keppel-Jones, *Rhodes and Rhodesia*, Kingston and Montreal, McGill Queen’s University Press, 1983, pg. 86.

CHAPTER ONE

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF CONTEMPORARY LITERATE OBSERVERS OF THE NDEBELE NATION IN THEIR CATEGORIES

1.0 Introduction

This chapter captured mainly the historical background of the contemporary literal observers of the Ndebele nation. It will historically trace the white travellers in a sequential order, so as to properly categorize them accordingly. Having established that sequential order, the chapter will then classify them namely: missionaries, explorers, hunters and traders and concession seekers. The chapter will not only classify them but will also name them. That helps the readers to familiarize with the literal observers discussed in this study. It is also important to note that, with the establishment of the historical background, the driving motivations which prompted them to write their accounts will be clearly evaluated. The chapter is not to be confused with the subsequent chapters because this one does not necessarily evaluate the primary documentation by the observers but it is committed in tracing their historical background so as to justify the categorization. Therefore, the aim of the chapter is to trace the observers historically and classify them.

1.1 Historical background of the European travellers in Matabele

It needs to be quickly noted that the historical background was briefly established in the previous chapter. Therefore, this section does not intend to venture into repetition; however, the categorization needs to be justified. This helps in understanding the prime reasons why they wrote diaries about the Matabele nation. It is important therefore to bring across the aspect of the Tati District because it being a strategic place played a leading role in accommodating large numbers of European travellers especially missionaries, hunter-traders, explorers and concession seekers. Quick pointed out that, the Tati District was the Africa's most wildest hunter's paradise.¹ This is to say all the hunters who came from Europe did not just enter into the territories of Matabele but they stayed at Tati for as long as it could and they could enter Matabele area only on the basis that the Matabele King granted that permission. Baines observed that, it was a semi-arid triangular shaped area between the Shashi and Ramogkwebane Rivers, with notable hills, kopjes and landscapes. He also said that the land bordered the district to the South in between the Shashi and Makloutse Rivers; it was an area contested by both the

Matabele and the Mangwatho.² It was a place, which had a long history of contention between these two warring tribes. Periodically, the Matabele people used to cross over for hunting sprees. It is of no doubt however, that these periodical clashes which existed between the Ndebele and the Mangwatho were witnessed by the white observers at Tati, thus, it also motivated them to write extensively about the Ndebele, a nation they so desired to enter.

Wallis submitted that, before 1850, there is no historical evidence supporting that the Europeans were present at the Tati area. This was so until May 1854, when two Elephant hunters from the South James Chapman and Sam Edwards reached Kuruman in the Northern Cape on their way deep into the hinterland.³ These two hunters joined forces with Doctor Robert Moffatt a Scottish London Missionary who intended to visit Mzilikazi. These two had met before first in 1829 and 1835, now that was the third visit. As for the means of transport, they made use of horses and oxen. However, Tabler established that, in June the party separated after arriving in Shoshong. As for Chapman, his destination was Ngamiland, whereas Sam Edwards, himself being the son of a missionary, accompanied Moffatt to Mzilikazi's capital at Inyathi.⁴ He also added that, although there may have been other before them it is Moffatt and Edwards who took their wagons drawn by oxen. They are therefore, recorded to be the first Europeans to enter the Tati area. It is important to note that, with the coming of these aforementioned Europeans, more and more travellers including explorers, traders and ivory hunters flocked in to the Tati district. The Tati district was important for a number of reasons and most importantly conditions in that area also motivated traders and explorers to write about the game animals and geology of the areas in the western borders of Matabele nation. Thus, they were so keen to move into the interior where they deeply desired to go. Webner stated the reasons why Tati district was important, though chronologically problematic in this chapter. He noted that, in 1864 gold was discovered in the Tati River areas, which was then part of the Matabele kingdom.⁵ Therefore, under such circumstances, observers saw it fit to write especially the explorers who were in the mission to excavate and record the abundance of minerals in Southern Africa.

Climatic conditions and diseases in the Tati district also captured the attention of the observers and it is understood that they wrote their diaries as men who were desperately in need of medical assistance. Commenting about the coming of Europeans to Tati from across the South of Limpopo, Tabler argued that, they could have used a shorter route across the Limpopo River;

terrain and bad climatic conditions could not have been impediments. However, they would have encountered patches of the deadly tsetse fly. They had no cure for that insect-borne disease, animal trypanosomiasis, which would have affected their horses and oxen. Fly infestation along the Limpopo River and in parts of the Northern Transvaal made it imperative to use unaffected routes further to the west.⁶ With regards to the above, it is probable however to note that, observers were motivated by a number of factors to write their accounts and chief among those are the conditions, difficult journeys, sickness and unfavorable climatic changes. With this background therefore, it can be seen how important Tati was in influencing various observers to write about the Ndebele.

Baines argued that, in the late 1850s and late 1860s while European traders were still flocking inside the Tati district, another London Missionary came, Rev. Thomas Morgan Thomas who moved slowly with his wagons. It was a place as he describes it which was highly populated with big game animals like elephants, rhinos and many other dangerous ones.⁷ In brief, Thomas was a well read and influential reverend born on 13 March 1830 in South Wales and was also appointed to the Matabele mission with the LMS. He was ordained on 11 May 1858 and married Anne Morgan in the same year. They together sailed and arrived at Cape Town. From Kuruman, they left for Matabeleland in July 1859.⁸ This brief history however, demonstrates to us that he was a determined missionary who was motivated by both Robert Moffat and his ethnographic skills to write his famous book titled, *Eleven years in Central South Africa* published in 1873. As early as 1864 another big game elephant hunter William Finaughty had toured that region extensively and in his recollections mentioned the abundance of those big game animals which Thomas encountered. Finaughty came from Grahamston and hunted largely in Free State then in 1864, he moved into the interior, where he witnessed plenty of wild game across the Limpopo River. These game animals ultimately motivated him to write about the wildlife, taxonomies and climate of the Matabele nation.

Speaking of the coming of hunters and traders, it is important to note that, they came after the missionaries had established their first mission station at Inyathi in 1859. As indicated above, the hunters and mainly ivory hunters had access to the Ndebele nation through the influence of the missionaries and to be specific LMS missionaries. There was Henry Hartley, William Tainton most probably these were the hunters who operated almost very close to the King's court and

these ones through their hunting skills assisted the king in chasing and shooting down dangerous game animals. This is so because Finaught in his recollections argued that in the majority of cases he went with Edwards to shoot down elephants which were devouring crops in the king's fields.⁹ Thus, it needs to be understood that hunters and ivory traders were highly obsessed about the game animals in Matabele and the ivory they obtained. Thus, they wrote as people describing the nature of game animals to show their audience that they were hunting in profitable grounds. That by large motivated them to write diaries so as to keep record of their achievements and failures in their hunting ministry.

King argued that, in 1857, Thomas Baines was elected to the Royal Geographical Society with his exploration skills and in 1858, he joined David Livingstone's Zambezi Expedition as storekeeper and artist.¹⁰ The appearing of Thomas Baines in 1857 should not be taken as a chronological mistake given that above, the Inyathi mission was established in 1859. However, it has to be understood that Baines was a close friend of Livingstone who worked together not in the Matabele territory but they had other explorations outside like the Zambezi mission and the Victoria. To his reception in the Ndebele, Arnold argued that it was in 1870 that Baines was given a concession to make gold explorations in between the Gweru and Hunyai Rivers by Lobengula.¹¹ It is during this exploration that Baines used his art skills to draw considerable sketches and maps about the territorial arrangements of the Matabele nation. It is no doubt Baines was motivated by his prior expeditions that he embarked on, his art skills and closest friends to write his accounts. He was also mandated by his conscience to write given that he wanted to keep record of everything he did and that is his achievements in his explorations.

The late nineteenth-century had so many global events which were pressing towards not only Lobengula who had taken over from his father in 1870, but the whole African continent. Some of those events were discussed in the previous chapter. The European countries were pressing towards the Third World countries for both social and economic reasons. Consequently, Southern Africa appeared to be a major target because of the so-anticipated mineral richness described in accounts by explorers, abundance of game noted in the hunters' travelogues. Hence, concession seekers who came to Matabele spent so much of their time negotiating with the king Lobengula, thus, the difficulties they encountered in trying to persuade him and their deep-seated desire to please whom they were negotiating concessions for, motivated them greatly to write

texts with considerable comments about the Ndebele nation. Generally, it is accepted that, they focused mainly on the politics and foreign policy of the Ndebele given that those are the areas, which affected them and negatively affected their interests. John Smith Moffat is one typical example of a concession seeker who after 1887 worked for Rhodes and thus, he negotiated treaties namely the two Moffat treaties for British rights to explore the gold. His famous missionary memoir written by his son titled, *John Smith Moffatt CMG A missionary memoir* published in 1921 reveals that he wrote it under the motivation of the above conditions. These concession seekers include, John Smith Moffatt, Charles Dunell Rudd, James Rochford Maguire, Frank R. Thompson, Eduard Lippert, Sir Sidney Godolphus Alexander Shippered and Benjamin Wilson. Therefore, it is important to note that, concessions seekers were motivated by global unveiling events, the British and American influence, deep seated personal attitudinal tendencies and the conditions that they went through during the negotiation process for concessions. Frank Thompson was a poet and he had a passion to write.

1.2 Missionaries

1.2.1 London Missionary Society missionaries

This section looks at the coming of the LMS missionaries and it is important to noted that in their texts they were motivated by their religious position and most of what they wrote were letters of correspondence which they were writing to each other. However, it is not the mandate of this section to evaluate their texts but to trace them accordingly as a category. That historical background helps us to understand their observations as primary information which contributed extensively to the Ndebele history. The historical background of the missionaries in Matabele can best be traced back to the first visit made by the London Missionary Dr. Robert Moffatt in 1829 to Mzilikazi. Boggie acknowledged that, after the arrival of Dr. Robert Moffatt in 1817 at Kuruman he was joined by his wife to be in two years' time by the Emily Unwin. Moffatt had also created cordial relations with the Matabele King who had fled from Tshaka Zulu in 1822. The two met at Mhlanhlandlela in 1829.¹¹Most importantly, the historical background of the LMS is paramount because it helps us to understand better the writings by its missionaries and what motivated them. William argued that, the London Missionary Society was a missionary society formed in England in 1795 by evangelical Anglicans and various nonconformists. It was highly reformed in outlook, with Congregational missions in Oceania, Africa, and the

Americas.¹²The tradition of writing by missionaries was even done by the very first missionary of the LMS. Thus, it was a long established tradition.

Other missionaries included Robert Moffatt's son, John Smith Moffatt, William Sykes, Thomas Morgan Thomas, David Carnegie, Mackenzie, Elliot, Helm and Bowen Rees. As noted above not all these missionaries wrote texts. However, a few who wrote some accounts were motivated by the LMS tradition of writing, the need for progress reports and Kuruman, the need to keep record of one's life experiences and achievements and failures. Most importantly, they wrote from different settings given that some lived under the leadership of Mzilikazi and some under Lobengula.

1.2.2 Catholic Jesuits

It has been a tradition of the Catholic long established in the 16th century to expand their influence around the globe. Thus, when looking at the coming of the Catholic Jesuits in Matabele, they wanted to expand their spheres of influence abroad. It is noted that across the globe the catholic unleashed a lot of Jesuits to minister to the needs of the less-privileged societies and establish mission stations. However, the Catholic Jesuits had several destinations and they probably established many mission stations namely Empandeni and Embakwe later in 1895. Before, this year, Roberts made interesting comments about the challenges that were faced by the Catholics Jesuits which probably would have made it difficult to make meaningful comments about the Ndebele nation. Commenting about the missionary journeys beyond Gubulawayo, Roberts argued that, the early years of preaching the gospel in the region of the Zambezi River was punctuated by arduous toil, deprivations, diseases, loneliness, uncertainty and for ten Jesuits between years 1880 and 1883 death.¹³ Deeply affecting the Jesuits were long distances walking, death of other Jesuits, loneliness and the plans to make other missions at Gaza, Tonga and Lozi. Therefore, given these conditions it is imperative to note that, Jesuit missionaries contributed little to the Ndebele history. They were motivated by the above mentioned conditions to write diaries. Hence, in evaluating accounts by Jesuits, it has to be understood that, they were faced with many problems that they were trying deal with instead of analyzing properly the Matabele lifestyle. Jesuits were not settled in one place and they were always divided. However, with the later establishment of the Empandeni, Prestige wrote an interesting article that can be considered a Jesuit Journal. The journal is titled, *Some Traditions*

of the Matabeleland in the Zambezi Mission Record 1898-1901. In this interesting account there are so many religious practices of the Matabele recorded. It is important at this juncture to understand that, the above category of missionaries all came from Europe and the majority of them served in Southern African societies as pioneers with the gospel. Nevertheless, their significance is their written, pictorial, maps and painted accounts that are the focus of the study to understand their perception about the Matabele people.

1.3 Hunters and Traders

The history of traders and hunters among the Matabele territory is a little hazy and obscure, but in this study they will be traced using their own accounts in order to ascertain their position and determine who worked with who for what reason. If that is properly established it automatically qualify their writings and recollections as significant in stating the history of the Matabele. It is generally known that traders most probably ivory traders and hunters most probably elephant hunters were silent on the Ndebele cultural history and loud on the Ndebele ecological history. Such a conclusion can be very misleading given that the abundance of their accounts captures a lot about the Matabele way of life and most of them worked alongside the missionaries and explorers within the vicinity of the Matabele in the 19th century. Historically, it is established that, Mzilikazi before he met the LMS Scottish missionary Robert Moffat he had already started creating relations with the traders namely Schoon and McLuckie but they did not leave any accounts to tell their story, however, Robert Moffat in his other book *Missionary Labors and Scenes in southern Africa* mentioned that by the time he got to Mzilikazi he found two traders mentioned above demonstrating to him how to use fire arms.¹⁴

Right across the Limpopo he was then followed by Robert Moffat whose desire was to create strong relations with the king so that his gospel might even reach south of Limpopo River. One overriding question in this case is to determine who came first in the Matabele vicinity between the traders/hunters and missionaries. Though it is outside the scope of this study, Gelfand noted that, a close study of missionary-trader collaboration shows that the early traders depended upon the services of the LMS as interpreters to the Ndebele kings but Jesuits depended on the traders. For example the Catholic Jesuits namely Croonenberg and Depelchin were warmly welcomed by Bulawayo traders namely, James Fairbairn, William Jainton and George Martin whose influence was used on their behalf.¹⁵ To crown it all the LMS came first and utilized the experience of the

traders and hunters, then by the influence of the same missionaries traders and hunters got permission to hunt and trade ivory within the Matabele territory. In fact white traders notably McCabe, Chapman, Dyer and Hartley were allowed to enter Matabeleland in 1854 with the influence of Robert Moffatt.

Thus in this typology other traders of significance are: William Finaughty, William CornWallis Haris, David Hume, Frederick Couterney Selous, Robert Baden-Powell and Marry Lippert. These major traders only operated after the King gave them permission. Of paramount importance is not who they are and where they came from actually, but it is their impressions about the Matabele. There is more to learn about the ecology, wildlife, astronomy, climate, flora and fauna, game animals and hunting habits by the Matabele people from their accounts. Not all of them will be explored but historically; they shared a lot in common in their perspective. Therefore, specific major accounts will be selected in order to present a representational impression. Thus, as noted above, it is important to understand that, what motivated hunters and ivory traders to write were their preoccupations about the game. They were overwhelmed by the game animals and the wildlife in general hence; they made considerable comments about the ecology which even today is used in museums and geology documentaries about Zimbabwe. With that, therefore, it is important to note that, their accounts contributed immensely to the Ndebele history.

1.4 Explorers

This category did not have more explorers among the Matabele, however there were several hunters who were also explorers at the same time. These include, Henry Hartley, David Hume. These hunter-explorers in the majority of cases worked with the missionaries in executing their activities among the Matabele. As for Thomas Baines and David Livingstone the missionary explorer, Boggie noted that, in 1865 Thomas Baines published a volume of reproductions of his own work, and titled '*Explorations in South West Africa.*' He made valuable discoveries as a naturalist and produced some important early maps of the region.¹⁶In his collection even the *Goldfield Diaries*, Thomas observed a lot about the wildlife and the mineral discoveries in Matabele, he worked with Livingstone in several expeditions namely the Zambebian. He was talented in arts thus; his accounts contain so much pictorial data which is even used to appreciate the geology of the Matabele.

1.5 Concession seekers

As noted above, the concession seekers came to secure concessions because of the global events that were shaping the transformations in the African States. Such issues highly motivated concession seekers to write diaries of their time as living testimonies that acquiring the concessions was not easy as anticipated. Thus, they kept record of their negotiations and the nature of the king Lobengula. Their correspondence also contributed largely to the reconstruction of the political history of the Ndebele. Fripp and Hiller edited an article by Bishop Knight Bruce and Dunnell Rudd titled *Gold and Gospel in Mashonaland*. In that article there are several references that are made about how concession seekers were hell-bent in acquiring concessions for gold exploration.¹⁷ Most importantly, in that article it is highlighted that there was a close collaboration between missionaries and gold prospects. These seekers were: John Smith Moffatt, Charles Rudd, Rotchford Maguire, Frank Thompson, Sir Sidney Godolphus Alexander Shippered and Eduard Lippert. Benjamin 'Matabele' Wilson was another concession seeker who wrote many letters describing the character of Lobengula and the punishments he instigated to his subjects.

To crown it all, it is however important to note that the above typologies as detailed as they are they all produced some accounts of historical significance which will be clearly used in the following chapters in a bid to bring across the image of the Matabele people.

1.6 Conclusion

As promised in the introduction of the chapter, the entire section managed to trace the historical background of the contemporary literal observers of the Ndebele. The chapter traced various observers in a sequential order, which in turn helped in classifying them according to their professions. Firstly, there were missionaries, explorers, hunters and traders then lastly, concession seekers. These were the typologies. The chapter also managed to highly considerable texts by observers and noted what motivated travellers to write their correspondence. Most importantly, the chapter was able to state the fact that, this primary documentation has largely contributed to the Ndebele history and helps us to understand better the perceptions by contemporary literal observers of the Ndebele.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ G. S. Quick, "Early European involvement in the Tati District", *Botswana Notes and Records*, Vol. 33, 2001, pg. 4.
- ² T. Baines, *The Gold Regions of South Eastern Africa*, Edward Stanford, Charing Cross, London, 1877, pg. 90.
- ³ J. P. R. Wallis, *The Northern Goldfields Diaries of Thomas Baines 1869-1872*, Vol. 1, Chatto and Windus, London, 1946, pg. 124.
- ⁴ Ibid, pg. 133.
- ⁵ R. P. Webner, "Land and chiefship in the Tati Concession", *Botswana Notes and Records*, Vol. 2, 1970, pg. 10.
- ⁶ E. C Tabler, *The Far Interior : Chronicles of Pioneering in the Matabele and Mashonaland Countries 1847-1879*, Balkema, Cape Town, 1955, pg. 58.
- ⁷ T. Baines, *The Gold Regions of South Eastern Africa*, pg. 100.
- ⁸ J. M. Boggie, *First Steps in Civilizing Rhodesia*, Philpott and Collins, (Ltd), Bulawayo, Southern Rhodesia, 1940, pg. 71.
- ⁹ W. Finaughty, *The Recollections of William Finaughty Elephant Hunter, 1864-1875*, Books of Rhodesia, 1973, pg. 81.
- ¹⁰ M. Arnold, *The life and work of Thomas Baines*, Fernwood Press, South Africa, 1995, pg. 78.
- ¹¹ J. M. Boggie, *First Steps in Civilizing Rhodesia*, pg. 67.
- ¹² Ibid, pg. 78.
- ¹³ R. S. Roberts, *Journeys beyond Gubulawayo to the Gaza, Tonga and Lozi, letters of the Jesuit Zambezi Mission, 1880-1893*, Weaver Press, Zimbabwe, 2009, pg. 7.
- ¹⁴ R. Moffatt, *Missionary Labors and Scenes in Southern Africa*, T Fisher Unwin, London, 1885, pg. 342.

¹⁵ M. Gelfand, *Gubulawayo and Beyond*, Geoffrey Chapman, London, 1968, pg. 70.

¹⁶ J. M. Boggie, *First Steps in Civilizing Rhodesia*, pg. 95.

¹⁷ C. E. Fripp and V. W. Hiller, *Gold and Gospel in Mashonaland*, Chatto and Windus, London, 1959, pg. 19.

¹⁸ W.A Elliot, *Gold from the Quartz*, London Missionary Society, 1910, pg. 129.

CHAPTER TWO

THE PERCEPTIONS OF THE MISSIONARIES AND EXPLORERS ABOUT THE NDEBELE NATION

2.0 Introduction

As indicated above, this chapter is highly committed to evaluate closely the primary documentation by missionaries and explorers in order to showcase their contribution in the Ndebele history. It will also endeavor to look at the historical background of each missionary and explorer so as to properly understand what could have motivated them to write the way they did. The chapter will further break down the missionaries as done in the previous chapter accordingly: LMS missionaries and Catholics Jesuit missionaries. This however, helps in understanding the impressions of the contemporary literal observers from their own personal perspective. The advantage of such a historiographical approach is that it helps us to understand better the Ndebele history and justifies their contribution in Ndebele history as primary data. The chapter will also show the readers the value of the selected travelogues in the re-construction of Ndebele history. Since this is a historiographical study, not all the aspects of the Ndebele life will be evaluated using travelogues, but only selected subjects will be looked at. In this chapter the subjects that will be covered are: Ndebele language, religion, politics, military organization and social life. Missionaries to be looked at are: Thomas Morgan Thomas, Robert Moffatt, David Carnegie and Catholic Jesuits. Explorers were represented by Thomas Baines.

2.1 Missionary accounts

Methodologically, this study used representational technique whereby there are leading missionaries whose works will be critically evaluated. This is done to avoid the obvious monotony and unnecessary repetition. It also helps us understand better the writing skills which were used by missionaries.

2.1.1 Historical background of Thomas Morgan Thomas (1828-1884)

Thomas Morgan Thomas was born on the 13th of March 1828 at Bridgent, South Wales. It is also noted that he was appointed to the Matabele mission with the LMS. As for his ordination, the ceremony was held on the 11th of May 1858 and married an influential young lady Anne Morgan in the same year.¹They sailed on 5 June 1858 and arrived at Cape Town on 14 July. From

Kuruman, they left for Matabeleland in July 1859. When he left Kuruman he was with his family only, however, he passed through Sechele's headquarters a place called Liteyana.

Early connection with other LMS missionaries

From the extracts of his famous book *Eleven years in Central South Africa* published in 1873, he stated in the first pages of the book that, he was joined by John Smith Moffat and the Sykes family trekking to Matabele where they were mandated to establish a mission station of the LMS.² He stated that, they further proceeded together to Matabeleland and eventually arrived at Mzilikazi's Town on the 23rd of October. As per agreement with Robert Moffat, Mzilikazi then granted them a place to stay, at the valley of Inyathi. Considerably, the journey was so odious, energy consuming and characterized by transport struggles. It is of no doubt therefore, that he wrote much about the deadly tsetse flies and diseases like small pox which claimed lives after the final settlers at Inyathi. Consequently, his wife died at Inyathi in June 1862. Boggie noted that he remarried another woman by the name Caroline Hutchinson Elliot.³ These traumatic experiences however, helps us to understand why he wrote the way he did. At some point he was mourning and made his comments from such circumstances.

His family life

It is argued that, when Anne Morgan died in 1862 at the age of 22, she left two young children. Seeing that, he was overwhelmed by a lot of pressure at Nyathi, Thomas took the children to the Cape, which is where they were sent from Wales in the year 1871. They stayed away for a period of about 10 years. Upon his return to Inyathi, he then left the Society and worked independently at a place called Shiloh located half way between Bulawayo and Inyathi.⁴ These conditions gave him ample time to move around the villages of Matabele and ask around people about the nature of the Ndebele state. It is from these visitations that he gained unmatched knowledge about the culture and religion of the Ndebele. In most cases he would visit the king and spend some time with him. The second wife whom he got married to Mrs. Elliot was a woman with vast knowledge about the Ndebele language and culture. She even translated the New Testament bible to Sindebele.⁵ Such knowledge played a leading role in motivating Thomas to write.

Therefore, with regards to the above historical information, it probably to understand the driving circumstances which pushed Thomas to write his famous book which has even received

historical credibility in the contribution of Ndebele history. Most importantly, he had had a qualification in medical studies, thus, he spent so much time studying the herbs of the Ndebele nation. Thus, his works help us understand better the Ndebele nation from different angles of politics, social life and medicinal information.

2.1.2 Politics of the Matabele

As mentioned by Mziki, the political life of the Matabele people was very complex and it took one to be in the circles of leadership to understand the principles which punctuated Matabele leadership.⁶ This statement is an opener to the impressions by Thomas a concerned writer about the Matabele historical politics. Thomas likened the Matabele government as that of the Jews in Canaan. He mentioned that it was a mixture of the Patriarchal and Feudal. His observation is not very far from Mziki's observation of the complexity of the Matabele politics. This is mainly because they both used similar methods of acquiring information. Mziki being a Native Commissioner conducted a lot of interviews of the local people whilst, Thomas also visited villages and asked around. Kingship was hereditary and that is to say leadership was a family legacy and those are the Khumalo Clan who had that privilege of being the Royal house of Matabele. As if it was not enough Thomas commented much about the dictatorial tendencies of the Matabele kings as he observed that, "The chief being a priest, prophet, and father to his tribe, had also absolute power over it while all his subjects are his property".⁷ This is seen in how power was centralized to the king, he had power to declare war to the neighboring tribes and was not hesitant in crushing those who showed signs of rebellion against him. As for the decentralization of power, Thomas commented that the King divided his huge nation into provinces, districts, towns, and villages and normally he appointed very loyal people to be sovereign and rule over them. He mentions the method in which those people were selected to represent him in the particular provinces and town, their loyalty was tried and tested and not just anyone would just be elected but royal blood was of paramount consideration. These elected ministers were all given power to settle matters in their areas of jurisdiction but were all answerable to the kings and it has to be noted that there was military monitoring which took place in these places.⁸ This best explains why there were areas called *Esizindeni*, *Emakhandeni*, *Emahlokohlokweni*, *Embizo*, *Emagwegwe*, etc. These were named after military regiments and chiefs in areas. Above all, the king controlled everything in the state including his own wives who were very numerous were all distributed in each and every district on check.

It has to be noted also that these Indunas were answerable to the Indunankulu. Gwabalanda Mathe was an Indunankulu. This however suggests that, the decentralization of power was in practical terms democratic centralization where checks and balances are only for cosmetic purposes. Thomas then noted that there was no instance that escaped the king because he had ears and eyes everywhere that is to say right from the headman stretching all the way to the Indunankulu the king was well acquainted with the running of his nation. He controlled everything in the state. He commented that, “through all these agencies, this wonderfully great heathen king had gained such power over his subjects, that the very lifting up of his finger or the nodding of his head was enough to cause the death of any man, or even number of men.”⁹ Thus marks the magnitude of his influence; authority and power in his state. The above observations by Thomas have contributed immensely to the history of the Ndebele given that he used his vast knowledge about the area to produce his accounts.

2.1.3 Succession laws

Thomas noted that there was a well-established law of succession which was deeply rooted in the political culture of the Matabele. It has to be noted that most of the Zulu cultural norms were also used amongst the Matabele people as a nation save for a few alterations in implementation. Thomas said according to this law of succession, the heir to the throne was the eldest son of the king by the daughter of another king or chief.¹⁰ Thus succession was not supposed to be a very perplexing matter because it clear that two royal families produce off springs which automatically ascend to the throne. To the throne also there were complexities if the king married many wives especially some who were not of royal blood like the mother of Lobengula whom Thomas called Ulopengule or Ubuhlehlo was a Swazi woman called Fulatha Tshabalala and Nkulumane whom Thomas called Unkulumana was born of a mother of royal blood called Mwaka Nxumalo. All these developments culminated in the succession disputes when Mzilikazi dies in 1868 as to who was supposed to take over power; however Thomas argued that Unkulumana had been killed after the orders of Mzilikazi. This then culminated to the state of affairs where Umcumbata or Mcumbatha Khumalo the king’s favorite loyal and confidant acted as regent while the matter was yet to be decided as to who would take over. Ultimately, Lobengula through his mighty managed to oust all those who opposed him and silenced them forever. This then led to his inauguration where Thomas was present and observed everything.

Inauguration

Lobengula was initiated in his inauguration according the laws and customs of the tribe in preparation for his coronation.¹¹ This was the custom and as the day of coronation came, the whole nation was obliged to be present and witness the ceremony. Everyone came in numbers and they all encamped just around the town (*Izihonqo*) it was the custom that all the regiments and amajaha young warriors attend clad in their exquisite military regalia. Thomas agrees that, he had never seen such great multitudes attending a ceremony like that, he even produced some pictures to tell the story that words cannot express. The king was then taken to the center of Mhlanhlandlela the then capital to show case his military prowess to the great crowds and he took a spear and killed a beast. There are hundreds and hundreds of beasts which were slaughtered during the great day and people enjoyed then lastly there were very interesting gifts that were presented to the king. Thomas then closed the coronation by stating that, there was a purification process which lasted for six weeks and at the end of which period he put on a new suit of European suit and was now considered competent to receive the sovereignty, and to rule the land.¹² The succession laws and the inauguration is of paramount importance in the historiography of the Ndebele because, it has been largely analyzed from different perspectives by various authorities. Morgan's impression therefore is paramount given that he was present during the coronation and he witnessed the whole process as it unfolded. Hence, this influenced later writings of the Ndebele by other historians positively.

2.2 Historical background of Robert Moffatt (1795-1883)

Robert Moffat grew up in Central Scotland and later on in 1813 moved to England where he began to work for a Scottish merchant by the name James Smith. He did not write anything before he was accepted by the LMS for missionary service. He was therefore sent to South Africa in 1817.

His achievements while in South Africa

Wallis argued that, while in South Africa working on the Northern frontier, he became largely popular because he converted a well-known bandit by the name Jager Afrikaner and his followers.¹³ Two years later Moffat married Marry Smith and they worked together as partners of the LMS.

They then migrated to the Tswana where they stayed for quite some time. Most importantly, Moffatt was a man who desired touring the places and he continuously made long treks, while away, Marry did not only run the home but she also administered the mission to ensure that it served its purpose which it was ordained for. It was behind these travels that prompted Moffat to consider writings journals because his wife needed some updates. Moffatt was also motivated by his long journeys that he undertook to write journals. Interesting to note is that he even earned a title to be called the great pioneer missionary and a linguist in Southern Africa. This title he earned because of his translation achievements that he made.

Robert Moffatt's publications

According to Elbourne, Moffatt had nine published works then the other two were his journals both volumes compiled by Wallis.¹⁴The first one was titled, *A Bechuana Catechism, with Translations of the Third Chapter of the Gospel by John, The Lord's Prayer and other Passages of scripture* published in 1826, *Evangelia kotsa mahuku a molema a kuariloeng ki Luka* (Tswana) published in 1830, *Lihela tsa tuto le puluko tsa yesu Keretse* published in 1831, *Lihelatsa tihelo ea' Morimo* published in 1843, *Scenes and Adventures in Africa* published in 1844, *The gospel among the Bechunas and other tribes of Southern Africa* published in 1846 and *The white Foreigners from over the water* published in 1869. From the above publications it can be seen that Moffatt was strongly influenced by the Tswana languages even when he wrote about the Ndebele history.

Early encounter with Mzilikazi

His son Smith Moffatt argued that, Robert and Marry soon moved to Kuruman a place which served as their home until they left Africa. It was however, from Kuruman that he made his first visit to Mzilikazi. In 1829, Mzilikazi chief of the Ndebele invited Moffatt, who then visited the chief and they began a most intriguing friendship. Of great importance is the fact that Moffatt frequently visited Mzilikazi and it was during those visits that he kept writing some letters to his other colleagues in Kuruman, to his wife and most importantly to his brother. Thus when looking even at his style of writing, it was a way of keeping update of the challenges he faced in trying to convince the King to accept the gospel and allow the establishment of the mission station. Ross noted that, after the year 1860 Moffatt ceased from his long treks and worked on solidifying the

work at Kuruman and that was the final place where he ministered the gospel until March 1870.¹⁶ During the same year he sailed back to Britain with his wife upon which his wife died in 1871. However, it is noted that he did not possess a deeper understanding of the African culture. His association with king Milikazi was of paramount importance in motivating him to write much about the Matabele way of life. His journals compiled by Wallis titled, *The Matabele journals of Robert Moffatt 1829-1860* volume one and two managed to capture some of his struggles in the journey to Matabele, his illnesses, his struggles to cope with the Ndebele customs, the armies of Matabele. It is of no doubt however, that he was deeply motivated by strong desire to convince Mzilikazi to allow him to establish a mission station which he ultimately did in 1859. His writings however, captured a lot of Ndebele issues and his correspondence largely contributed to the Ndebele history given that even later historians like Gatsheni, Cobbing and Nyathi have managed to reconstruct the history of the Ndebele using his journals. His above mentioned journals are today available at the National Archives of Zimbabwe. The following are his areas which he also captured in his correspondence.

2.2.1 Matabele social life

Moffatt in his journals mentioned certain social aspects which he observed during his short stay at Matabele. This section therefore used comparative analysis to assess and critically evaluate his correspondence with those by Thomas Morgan Thomas. It is of no doubt however that Thomas was well versed with the Matabele customs unlike Moffatt who was not in a good space and preoccupied with the Kuruman. Moffatt never stayed a long time in Matabele. In the Matabele social life certain aspects were covered. These include: religion, law and punishment, Ndebele language, the king's wives and the position of women. Rituals and ceremonies were also captured in this section. The reason being that missionaries were observant about the social life because it was where they desired to be changed for the gospel message to be effected. Venturing into the realm of spirituality, the Matabele were a people who had a strong belief in the departed spirits. Moffatt outlined the interconnectedness between the witch-doctors who in the majority of cases captured the attention of the king. Izanuse were very clever and tactful bone throwers who were able to foretell the future and identify problems which affected the nation at large. Of great importance is the fact that, whenever people were going for enquiry, they did not go empty handed but tried by all means to carry some tokens of appreciation. As quires arrived at his kraal normally, they used to address him by name and title, "Hail!"¹⁷ After such gratifications

then they would enquire what they came from and probably the *sanuse* would take them inside his quarters and converse with them deeply after consulting his long departed relatives who are ancestral spirits. It has to be noted that, for Thomas, the *sanuse* did not perform any medicinal practices but that was normally a preserve for *inyanga*. These were very common among the Matabele because of the unmatched knowledge about herbal treatment, medicinal expertise. He was a priest doctor who performed almost everything ranging from medicinal treatment, mediating on behalf of the people with *amadlozi* departed spirits who possessed power to change or control the state of affairs of the living. Thomas commented that, the occasions on which they officiate are the time of sickness, death or when any calamity befalls a village or an individual.¹⁸ Moffatt also argued that the Matabele king was very brutal in his law and punishment dispensation. Again Thomas in his stay witnessed much of the terrible incidents where people were being punished. On festivals and ritual ceremonies, it has to be noted that Moffatt only witnessed a few of them as compared to his other colleagues Carnegie, Thomas and Sykes. Of all the great gatherings among the Matabele, the *inxwala* ceremony took precedence over many. Thomas provided an analytical analogue with the first fruits. The above matter was about the priest-doctors of the Matabele, in this case, the king was the head of all the priest-doctors who directed them and occasionally officiated himself, especially at the great annual feast like the one in concern called the *inxwala* ceremony Thomas mentioned that, the ceremony had both a political and religious meaning, and it served as a means of maintaining power of the king over his subjects.¹⁹ Thus, in another way according to the missionary accounts the Matabele kings renewed their vows and reasserted their stamping authority through certain rituals which were of religio-political significance. Their contribution in the Ndebele history is stemmed in the fact that they have been used greatly by later historians who were determined to reconstruct the history of the Ndebele. In this study therefore, the authors are looked at from a historiographical point of view in order to capture the prime reasons which motivated the missionaries to write.

2.3 Historical background of David Carnegie (1855-1910)

Generally, much is known about Carnegie's famous diary titled *Among the Matabele* which was published in 1894. However, historical background and what motivated him to write that book is normally ignored. This section briefly covered his historical background so as to help us properly assess his correspondence in the contribution to the Ndebele history. He was well known as an interpreter, author and missionary. He left South Africa as a missionary for the LMS. Later he

worked at Hope Fountain with C. D Helm and he also served as Chaplain. Most importantly, he was an interpreter during the Matabele Umvukela of 1896.²⁰

His most revered correspondence

His most revered book is titled *Among the Matabele* which was published in 1894. From the editor's preface there is a striking historical background which helps in determining the surrounding circumstances which motivated him to write the book. Carnegie went out to Hope Fountain, Matabeleland, in 1882, and spent ten years at that station of the LMS. Hope Fountain is only a few miles from Bulawayo, the great kraal of Lobengula. Mr. Carnegie knew the native language perfectly, and had been in cordial relations with Lobengula, who had no desire for Christianity.²¹ Probably with the exception of his workmates, C. D. Helm and W. A. Elliott, no other European understood so comprehensively as Carnegie the Ndebele customs, worldview, and way of life. The chapters in his little book are all the result of first-hand and thoroughly competent knowledge.

Having said that, it is important to note that his works solely captured most of what his colleagues wrote in their correspondence. Methodologically, the study extensively used the representational method hence Carnegie is used as leading missionary whose works contributed much in the academia. Ross argued that, the larger part of the book featured in the pages of *The Leisure Hour and The Sunday at Home*. Chapter IX, *The Ma-Shuna*, was authored by the Rev. W. A. Elliott, of Inyati, who for very many years lived in their midst, and the tenth chapter, sketching the life and work of Khama, which added for the sake of completeness, is from G. Cousins.²² This therefore shows how his work contributed to the academic readership. Like Thomas he was influenced by his deeper understanding of the Ndebele customs which propelled him to write.

2.3.1 Ndebele economic life

This section is not committed to fully exhaust the whole entire economic life of the Ndebele; however, it shows the readers the perspective unto which Carnegie perceived the economic life of the Matabele. This is done so as to balance up the history and the historiography of the Ndebele by contemporary literal observers. He noted that the Ndebele people largely relied on agriculture most probably crop production and as for cattle production he also stated that they

had some deep spiritual connotations.²³ Not only that, Carnegie also made striking impressions about the religion of the Matabele.

2.3.2 Religion of the Matabele

Unlike Thomas who mainly wrote his accounts about Mzilikazi, Carnegie's 10 years in Hope Fountain enabled him to observe much about how the Ndebele people under Lobengula related to their religion. He mentioned that, the Matabele people were believed in the supreme Almighty God whom they called uNkulunkulu. Lobengula had several witch-doctors who operated differently in villages and these were categorized according to the needs of the nation.²⁴ It is important to note that, Carnegie spent much time touring around the place and he was able to conduct some interviews with chiefs, people accused of witchcraft, young warriors and even the king himself. Thus, his perception about the Matabele religion at large was influenced by his ethnographic findings. Of great importance is that the Ndebele contemporary literal observers were anthropologists in the sense that they lived in the societies they described in their correspondence. Hence, their contribution helps us to understand better the then ways of living by critically evaluating the circumstances which propelled them to write. Also, in the eyes of Carnegie, Ndebele people respected the living dead. Any calamity was strongly associated with the anger from the ancestors. By virtue of the fact that Carnegie attended ritual ceremonies of the Ndebele, it gives reliability to his impressions.

2.4 Jesuits accounts.

As indicated above in the introduction of the current chapter and stated in the first introductory chapter, the Jesuits accounts were faced with so many challenges and they were not all settled in one mission. Much of their correspondences were Jesuit diaries and letters which they were writing to each other about the difficulties they faced beyond Gubulawayo. Roberts in one of the collections titled *Journeys beyond Gubulawayo to the Gaza, Tonga and Lozi, letters of the Jesuit Zambezi Mission, 1880-1893* which was published in 2009, stated that there were 9 Jesuits all in all and they were facing challenges of diseases and walking of long distances and they most probably wanted to establish many missions at once, which in turn gave them a difficult time organizing themselves.²⁵ Thus, under such conditions it was difficult for them to make meaning or reliable accounts about the Ndebele life. Later on they managed to establish a mission at Empandeni and Embakwe after a long struggle with other missions in Zambia, Gaza, Tonga and

Lozi. However, the little contribution that they made in the historiography of the Ndebele is not ignored.

2.4.1 Jesuit correspondence

There are two interesting collections which captured all the Jesuits diaries. These are: *Journeys beyond Gubulawayo to the Gaza, Tonga and Lozi, letters of the Jesuit Zambezi Mission, 1880-1893* which was published in 2009, *Diaries of the Jesuit Missionaries at Bulawayo 1879-1881*, published by the Rhodesianna Society in 1959. These collections are of paramount importance in the historiography of the Ndebele history. Jesuits were not in the mission to study the lives of the Ndebele people neither of the Lozi, Gaza and Tonga, but they were a group of missionaries committed to establish mission stations in different areas and thus, prompted them to comment a little about the Ndebele ways of life. After the establishment of Empandeni Father Prestage authored an article titled *Some Traditions of the Matabeleland in the Zambezi Mission Record 1898-1901*. Some of these Catholic Jesuits included Fathers Depelchin, Croonenberg, Law and Prestage. Most of the areas they covered in their correspondence were also covered by the LMS missionaries and these include the political life, social life and the economy of the Ndebele. Since the Catholic Jesuits came in 1879, definitely their comments cover the Ndebele under Lobengula.

Father Depelchin's account on the organisation of the government

It is important to note that the Jesuits closely observed the leadership patterns of Lobengula and in their accounts bring across some leadership principles and powers vested in the king himself. Depelchin noted that the king was the absolute owner of the territory and of its riches.²⁶ He went further to classify cattle ownership that, there is personal cattle, government and privately owned cattle. These are the properties which granted the king great wealth and enabled him to marry as many wives as he wanted. It should be highlighted that, the above Jesuits missionaries were well aware of the abundance of the king's cattle, in fact Depelchin at some point highlighted that, he used to visit the king's kraal and it is striking how he describes the multitude of the of herds.

Father Croonenberg's account

Though might sound repetitive, the sole reason for that is to trace him as done in chapter one from where he came from until he is fully located where he lived and started to create relations

with the king, conversing with him and writing almost everything about the way of life of the Matabele people. Some of the customs and local norms were soon to be commented by the fathers as they were trying to state a reason why converts were not easily achieved at Matabele. He wrote that, polygamy was the general rule among the Matabele tribe and for a very long time that custom was to be a great stumbling block to their conversion especially those who were rich and those in the royal family.²⁷ Thus in the eyes of the catholic Jesuits, the customs or rather the Matabele religion with a belief on uNkulunkulu was bound to be an obstacle which hindered them from accepting Christianity. Not only that, Croonenbergs also highlights, the position of women in the nation that they assumed the slave position and their lives depended on how men treated them. To crown it all, the challenges faced by Jesuits in the missions prompted them to write and of great importance is the fact that, their challenges helps us to give them less credit in the contribution of the Ndebele history. However, later historians have also failed to acknowledge that, the Jesuits were disorganized and were preoccupied by health issues which made fail to make commendable comments about the Ndebele.

2.5 Explorers accounts

In this section, explorers were not more pronounced in the Ndebele nation; hence one individual who made commendable accounts is Thomas Baines. . Minor explores like Leask and others contributed little and it is imperative that most of their accounts have a lot in common with the rest of the major explorers. For Baines, some of his explorations he carried out with Hartley a more pronounced hunter-explorers. Of great importance is that these men under the blessings or auspices of the LMS missionaries got to opportunity to befriend the Matabele kings and probably operated within the territories of Matabele legally.

2.5.1 Historical background of Thomas Baines (1820-1875)

John Thomas Baines was an English artist and explorer of Australia and British colonial Africa. According to Barry, he was born in King's Lynn, Norfolk, on the 27th November 1820. Baines was taken as a trainee to a coach painter at an early age. At the age of 22, he left England for South Africa and worked for a while in Cape Town as a scenic and portrait artist, also as official war artist during the Eighth Frontier War for the British Army.²⁸

His early missions and close associates

Barry also noted that, in 1858 Baines accompanied David Livingstone to the Zambezi mission. In 1869 he also led one of the well documented first gold prospecting expeditions to Mashonaland. From 1861 to 1862 Baines and James Chapman undertook an expedition to South West Africa. Chapman's, *Travels in the Interior of South Africa* published in 1868 and Baines' *Explorations in South-West Africa* (1864), provided a rare narrative of different perspectives on the same trip.²⁹ This was the first expedition during which much use was made of both photography and painting. In addition both men kept journals in which, amongst other things, they commented on their own and each other's practice. His great talent in art, influence of friends and the need to keep record of his achievements motivated him to write his correspondence which is important in the understanding of the geological landscape of the Matabele.

Thomas Baines' works

He authored ten striking works which have been used not only by the later historians but even the geologists in understanding the geology of the Ndebele's territory. Some of his works include *Explorations in South-West Africa: being an account of a journey in the years 1861 and 1862 from Walvisch Bay, on the Western Coast to Lake Ngami and the Victoria Falls*, *The gold regions of south eastern Africa*, *The northern goldfields diaries of Thomas Baines*, *They came to South Africa*, *Thomas Baines, his life and explorations in South Africa*, These were some of his works of which much of his correspondence is filled with pictorial data.

2.5.2 The Matabele Landscape

From the introductory chapter of his book titled, *The gold regions of South Eastern Africa*, it is noted that from England Baines returned to South Africa in December 1867 and in 1869 he was then chosen on behalf of the South African Goldfields Exploration Company, to lead an adventurous expedition to the Matabele king Mzilikazi, but Mzilikazi had however died in the previous year before Baines arrived, to his advantage, he was then given a concession in 1871 by Lobengula the next Matabele king, to explore for gold between Gweru and Hunyani rivers.³⁰ It is however in this book that he mentions much of the geological landscape of the Matabele nation. He also added that, the geological landscape and the goldfields of Matabele were very much abundant but very complex such that there was need for a very serious experienced scientific exploration and mining if the precious stones are to be excavated.³¹ The gist of what he wrote

about the nature of the landscape is so striking and shows that it was produced by an experienced artist. Therefore, the value of his accounts in the Ndebele history is stemmed from the fact that it helps unraveling the natural landscape and therefore makes it easier to know how the nation related to their geographical territory. With sketches and maps much is understood about how the nation strongly safeguarded their borders with neighboring states.

2.6 Conclusion

As indicated in the introduction of the chapter, it can be concluded that it managed to trace the historical background of each missionary selected. Not all missionaries were looked at or captured in this chapter simple because the study is using a representational method. However, the selected ones like Robert Moffatt, Thomas Morgan Thomas, David Carnegie and Jesuits missionaries were captured and their works were looked at from a historiographical point of view. That means their backgrounds were critically analyzed and the chapter discovered what motivated them to write their accounts. That also applied to the section which looked at explorers. Not only that, but as per objective of the study, the chapter also critically analyzed the major contributions of the missionary and explorer correspondence in the Ndebele history and also highlighted how this primary documentation has helped the later historians in the reconstruction of the Ndebele history. However, the following chapter, will look at the impressions by hunters and ivory traders in the Ndebele state as contemporary literal observers.

ENDNOTES

¹ J. M. Boggie, *First Steps in Civilizing Rhodesia*, Philpott and Collins, Ltd, Bulawayo, Southern Rhodesia, 1940, pg. 95.

² T. M. Thomas, *Eleven years in Central South Africa*, John Snow, London, 1873, pg. 10.

³ J. M. Boggie, *First Steps in Civilizing Rhodesia*, pg. 98.

⁴ Ibid

⁵ T. M. Thomas, *Eleven years in Central South Africa*, pg. 61.

⁶ C.A.A. Mziki, *Mimo: The Rise and Fall of the Matabele*, Books of Rhodesia, Bulawayo, 1972, pg. 14.

⁷ T. M. Thomas, *Eleven years in Central South Africa*, pg. 63.

⁸ Ibid, pg. 84.

⁹ Ibid, pg. 95.

¹⁰ Ibid, pg. 100.

¹¹ Ibid

¹² Ibid

¹³ J. P. R Wallis, *The Matabele journals of Robert Moffatt 1829-1860*, Vol 2, Chatto and Windus, London, 1945, pg. 128.

¹⁴ A. Keppel-Jones, *Rhodes and Rhodesia, Kingston and Montreal*, McGill Queen's University Press, 1983, pg. 86.

¹⁵ J. S. Moffat, *The Lives of Robert and Marry Moffat*, T. Fisher, Unwin, 1885, pg. 32.

¹⁶ C. Northcott, *Robert Moffatt: Pioneer in Africa*, Lutterworth, London, 1961, pg. 80.

¹⁷ J.P.R Wallis, *The Matabele Journals of Robert Moffatt 1829-1860*, Vol 2, Chatto and Windus, London 1945, pg. 128.

¹⁸ T. M. Thomas, *Eleven years in Central South Africa*, pg. 56.

¹⁹ Ibid

²⁰ Ibid, pg. 7.

²¹ D. Carnegie, *Among the Matabele*, R.T.S, London, pg. 5.

²² C. Northcott, *Robert Moffatt: Pioneer in Africa*, pg. 73.

²³ D. Carnegie, *Among the Matabele*, pg. 6.

²⁴ Ibid

²⁵ R. S. Roberts, *Journeys beyond Gubulawayo to the Gaza, Tonga and Lozi, letters of the Jesuit Zambezi Mission, 1880-1893*, Weaver Press, Zimbabwe, 2009, pg. 6.

²⁶ *Diaries of the Jesuit Missionaries at Bulawayo 1879-1881*, Rhodesiana Society publications, No.4, pg. 75.

²⁷ Ibid, pg. 83.

²⁸ J. Barry, *To Grahamstown and back Towards a Socio-cultural history of Southern Africa*, Inaugural lecture, Leiden University, 2014, pg. 52.

²⁹ Ibid

³⁰ T. Baines, *The gold regions of South Eastern Africa*, Port Elizabeth, London, 1887, pg. 27.

CHAPTER THREE

THE NDEBELE STATE IN THE EYES OF HUNTERS AND TRADERS

3.0 Introduction

The previous chapter covered much ground about the Ndebele nation from the perspective of the missionaries and explorers. However, this chapter endeavored in looking at the Ndebele nation from the historical lenses of the hunters and ivory traders. As per mandate of the study, it also critically evaluated the historical background of the few selected hunters and discovered what motivated them to write their diaries. It is important to note that, hunters were preoccupied with the wildlife, ecology, climate and the taxonomies of the areas where they operated hence, in this chapter it is noted that their professions also played a significant role in shaping their perceptions about the Ndebele nation. Also, the chapter firmly determined the contribution of this primary correspondence in the Ndebele history. It also managed to show how the traders' account influenced the interpretations of the later historians who reconstructed the history of the Ndebele.

3.1 Hunters' accounts

In looking at the accounts by the hunters, it needs to be noted that, not all of them were evaluated. The reason being that, the study used a representational method because most of the accounts by hunters share the similar perceptions depending on the subject matter that they covered and because not all of them left accounts to be used in the historiography of the Ndebele nation. In this case, there are three leading hunters who were used in this study namely, William Finaughty, Captain Frederick Courteney Selous and William Cornwallis Harris.

3.1.1 Historical background of William Finaughty (1843-1917)

According to Cooke, William Finaughty, knew Mzilikazi very well. He was born in Grahamstown in 1843. He left home in 1864 to hunt in the hinterland and accompanied the traders Edward Chapman and William Francis to Matabeleland. He then returned to Kuruman and worked in Chapman's store in early 1865 before accompanying Chapman back to Matabeleland and staying there to trade ivory.¹ He Was back in Kuruman in March 1866, but returned to hunt in Mashonaland with the "Phillips-Gifford" and "Hartley" parties. Already at the age of 21 he had associates who were ivory traders. That also influenced his later writings because he had toured the bushes of Mzilikazi's nation at a tender age so it is probable that his

audience were a people of his age and he desired to tell the about the abundance of game animals and wildlife.

His early life and aspirations

Finaughty himself stated in his famous book titled, *The Recollections of William Finaughty the Elephant hunter 1864-1875*, that being irresponsible from youth, a skilled horseman, and a very fair shot; he determined to get into the interior of Africa for the purpose, of shooting big game.² Such aspirations are vital in the understanding of his account on the wildlife of the Ndebele nation and they played a pivotal role in motivating his to record his journeys, achievements and challenges he faced when engaged in the game hunting.

William Finaughty's correspondence

As noted above, Finaughty also known as “Old Bill”, wrote an interesting text which was later organized and edited by his son William Finaughty.³ *The Recollections of William Finaughty the Elephant hunter 1864-1875*, is the title of the text. It is however important to realize how it came to be a Recollection. According to an online article of the books of Rhodesia Zimbabwe, His *Recollections* were recorded by R.N. Hall who initially published them as a number of long-past experiences in the *The Rhodesia Journal, A Weekly Newspaper of Rhodesian Information*, in 1911. Harrison, a visiting American hunter heard of his exploits and achievements then visited him in 1913 returned home with almost complete set of the journals. (one chapter was missing) He published in a limited edition of 250 copies by the J.B. Lippincott Company in 1916. A second edition including the missing chapter was printed in 1957 by A. A. Balkema of Cape Town. The book was reset, with additional sketch map, illustrations and notes were published by Books of Rhodesia, Bulawayo, in 1973.⁴ Therefore, with above information, it is imperative to note that his collections contributed in the historiography of the Ndebele.

Cooke added that he was skilled in bush-craft, fit and courageous. He hunted on horseback, using an old muzzle loader. His book is full of incident and encounter with contemporary hunters, missionaries, traders and explorers, among them Jan Viljoen, Henry Hartley, Thomas Baines, Chapman, Francis, Sam Edwards, Leask, Mauch, Mohr and many others.⁵ Thus, he was motivated by his skills and early aspirations to write about the wildlife of the Ndebele. Therefore, with this historical background it is however, important to look at some of the

subjects that he covered. These included wildlife; Matabele hunting, ecology and his comments about the social life of the Ndebele are paramount.

3.1.2 Ndebele wildlife

From the very introduction of his collections, he mentioned that, he left Grahamston early in 1864 when he was 21 years of age and came up through the Free State. The game he saw there astonished him greatly.⁶ It is interesting to note that, the nature of wildlife that he observed across while he was trekking and hunting in the Cape and Free State had a bearing on how he described the wildlife of Matabele, by large he drew so many similarities between the wildlife in the Free State and in Matabele across the Limpopo River. Moving into the interior he could not believe that such quantity of wild animals would congregate together. He explained the magnificence of the wildebeests, blesboks, springboks, ostrich, quaggas and blue wildebeests.⁷ Finaughty's accounts are pregnant with pictorial information of the wildlife before and across Limpopo. He managed to even highlight that when the Matabele impis were going on hunting sprees or amajaha initiation they were always very cautious given that most of the Matabele bushes were largely punctuated with big game most probably dangerous animals like lion, elephants and hyenas. He stated that the Matabele as a nation was blessed to be so imbued with so great a large number of amazing animals and species. He mentions that he soon got tired of that sport and eventually, trekked down the Vaal River where he found James Chapman, a local ivory trader who was on his way with his wagons to Matabele. However, this section evaluates hunters' accounts so it is imperative to state what other hunters said about the wildlife of the Ndebele.

Similarly, like Finaughty, Selous also shared the same observations in as far as the wildlife was concerned. In the fourth chapter of *Travel and Adventure in Africa*, he outlined his journeys with his folks within the nation in their wagons. One of the most interesting statements is how he described the big game. He said that, "I rode on horseback just in front of the wagons, thinking I might get a shot of something; but I saw nothing, except that I noticed the fresh of a large lion in the soft sand of the river's bed"⁸ Probably by this meant River Zwesi where they crossed with their wagons pulled by oxen. Is interesting even from his pictures Selous was a man who never separated himself from his gun. From his above statement, it can noted that almost all hunters and traders, Matabele was a nation highly populated by dangerous big game animals like lions,

elephants and rhinoceroses. In the same chapter, he argued that, just as they were across the river they took a rest and decided to camp, as they were camping they were they heard the roaring a big lion which they did not hesitate, hunting fully armed with their guns. As he explained he also observed the nature of the vegetation of the Matabele nation where they were following this lion which was a threat to their security. He stated that, the ground was not in a favourable state for the hunters who desired to track soft-footed animals, the ground cover was so eye catching that it was ever green.⁹Therefore it is critical to note that, the professions, aspirations, enthusiasm and obsession about the African wildlife prompted hunters to write. They wanted to reveal to their peers that they were great hunters who had vast knowledge about Southern Africa.

3.1.3 Ndebele hunting habits

Impressions made by hunters about how the Ndebele men were fond of hunting were influenced by their how the Ndebele men were so keen when it comes to issues of war and hunting. In hunting small game, Finaughty stated that, in most instances he got tired of shooting big game and engaged himself in shooting small game just for consumption and normally with a commando of young Matabele.¹⁰ He probably meant ‘amajaha’ those in training and in transition to manhood. This analogy was latter used by Cobbing in his article titled *The Evolution of the Ndebele Amabutho* in explaining the duties of the young warriors and how they were socialized to be better warriors of the nation in the future.¹¹Thus, it shows that the hunters’ accounts contributed immensely to the Ndebele historiography in the sense that later historians largely used this primary documentation in the reconstruction of the Ndebele history.

3.1.4 Astronomy and cosmology

In the eyes of the contemporary observers, the Matabele people possessed shocking knowledge about the sky and the stars, the sun, the moon, bright southern stars, the magellanic clouds, the milky way, the stars around Orion, bright northern stars, venus: evening and morning stars. This was a striking dispensation given that the above had an intricate influence in the affairs of man under. Thomas Morgan the LMS missionary noted that, the Matabele people had a deep knowledge about the celestial bodies such that they even gave those names and some of the names particularly the names of the stars sometimes had animal names and names of some species. Hunters also shared the same perceptions on Ndebele astronomy.

3.2 Historical background of Captain Frederick Courteney Selous (1851-1917)

Millais argued that, Frederick Courteney Selous was a British explorer, officer, hunter, famous for his exploits in Southeast Africa. His real-life adventures inspired Sir H. Rider Haggard to create the fictional Allan Quatermain character. Selous was also a friend of President Theodore Roosevelt, Cecil Rhodes and Frederick Russell Burnham. He was one astonishingly great within a select group of big game hunters that included Abel Chapman and Arthur Henry Neumann. He was the older brother of ornithologist and writer Edmund Selous.¹² From the very onset, it is clear that Selous had an audience which expected much from him thus, it goes without saying that he used a sophisticated language in his different works in order to please his family, friends and colleagues.

His early life and exploration

Millais added that Selous was born at Regent's Part in London as one of the five children and from an aristocratic family highly respected and people of high profile. Ward stated that, his father, Frederick Lokes Selous, was Chairman of the London Stock Exchange and his mother, Ann Holgate Sherborn, was a well-known poet. One of his uncles was a painter Henry Courtney Selous. He had three sisters Florence born 1850, Annie Berryman born 1853, and Sybil Jane born 1862, and a brother Edmund Selous (1857–1934) who became a popular ornithologist. Frederick's love for the outdoors and wildlife was shared only by his brother; however, all of the family members were artistically inclined, as well as being successful in business.¹³ Inevitably, such a family expected him to be a successful person and given that writing was also one of the family's traditions he was therefore motivated to record all his explorations and such background helps understand his audience and appreciate that he wanted to appease people who expected much from him.

African exploration

At the age of 19 he went to South Africa, he travelled from the Cape of Good Hope to Matabeleland, which he reached in 1872, and where according to his own account he was granted permission by Lobengula, King of the Ndebele, to shoot game anywhere in his dominions. These are the conditions which prompted him to write texts using comparative analysis where he was comparing the wildlife of East Africa and Southern Africa.

His correspondence

According to Ward Selous wrote nine extra-ordinary books which earned him so many titles and fame.¹⁴ His works include, *A Hunter's Wanderings in Africa*, published in 1881 *Travel and Adventure in South-East Africa: Being the Narrative of the Last Eleven Years Spent in the interior* published in 1893, *Sunshine & Storm in Rhodesia: Being a Narrative of Events in Matabeleland Both Before and During the Recent Native Insurrection up to the Date of the Disbandment of the Bulawayo Field Force* published in 1896, *Sport & Travel East and West* (1900), *Living Animals of the World; A Popular Natural History With One Thousand Illustrations* published in 1902, *Newfoundland Guide Book*, published in 1905, *Recent Hunting Trips in British North America* published in 1907, *African Nature Notes and Reminiscences* with Foreword by Theodore Roosevelt published in 1908 *Africa's Greatest Hunter: the Lost Writings of Selous*, edited by Dr. Jame A. Casada published in 1998. The abundance of his works bears record that he spent so much time recording his achievements and that has contributed much to the Ndebele historiography because even some of his works are in the National Archives of Zimbabwe as living documents later historians refer to when looking for the information about wildlife, ecology, game, species, and taxonomies of Southern Africa

3.2.1 Species (taxonomies) and ecology

Hunters commented much about the species in the Ndebele nation. They forwarded their various observations basing on their deeper knowledge about the areas across the region. Selous observed in his Hunter's Wanderings in Africa that, He stated that, "when we crossed the Umbila River in our last and final trip I noticed that the areas was highly populated with both small and big game animals...it is interesting how the area in which we travelled provided us with so much small game animals to feed ourselves in such most importune times..."¹⁵ By small game he also included some species in their categorization and how they related to their environment. These small animals included the daises, duikers, squills, and a whole list of birds like the hornbill. He noted that, the area across was imbued with lots of anthills, holes, tree caves, big and long trees to accommodate eagles and other big birds which others reside in the mountain. From his accounts in the Hunter's Wanderings in Africa, Selous argued that, Matabele ants were likewise rather formidable, they would go to war with termites and their reproduction is usually carried out by the most respected lone queen, wherefore mated workers are in absentia and during the

mating season the queens and drones are inevitable formed.¹⁶ This was his understanding of the Matabele species. Interestingly, Harris and Finaughty had little to say about the species but had much to comment about wildlife. This was because they were much into shooting game than studying the land. Therefore, when looking at the hunters' accounts in understanding the history of the Ndebele, such circumstances and differences are significant.

3.2.2 Matabele Climatology

All the hunters commented about the climate dispensation of the Matabele but in relation to their hunting sprees which they carried out. It is however important to understand that, in their accounts hunters mentioned both the advantages and disadvantages of the weather they encountered as they trekked in the hoods. Thus, it helps us evaluate properly their various observations about Ndebele climate. Harris argued that during the end of the year it was difficult to go for hunting because of the heavy rains which probably made the game shooting impossible.¹⁷ Selous however, submitted that, "...deep in the nation, the Ndebele people enjoyed good and favourable rainfall distribution¹⁸ The above statements by Selous the hunter reveals a lot about his perception or opinion about the Matabele climatology. At first he mentioned that during summer there are heavy rains. That becomes true in relation to most of the missionary accounts who also stated their challenges they faced on their way from Kuruman to Matabele in 1853, 1857 and 1859 respectively.

3.3 Historical background of William Cornwallis Harris (1807-1848)

Briefly, the historical background was mentioned in the previous chapter therefore, this section covered the whole background and critically evaluated how it influenced his works. Major Sir William Cornwallis Harris was an English military engineer, artist and hunter. These professions gave him ample time to record much of his achievements and illustrate them to show that he was skilled in art. Manners argued that, Harris married Margaret Sligo, the daughter of George Sligo of Auldham in Scotland. Their marriage was childless.¹⁹ Having no child probably was one of his most nightmares which affected him and enabled him seek refuge in game shooting and recording his experiences

His early life and career

Manners added that, he entered Addiscombe Military Seminary at the age of 14. Two years later, in 1823, he joined the army of the East India Company as second lieutenant among other Engineers. Thirteen years down the line, he was posted to several places in India and was able to pursue his taste for field sports and that of wildlife. He was then promoted to first lieutenant in 1824 and to Captain ten years later.²⁰ As shown above, Harris was a man with few responsibilities but in his mind he felt very lonely having no child, thus, he spent most of his time joking around in the army and in the field of wildlife he enjoyed much the association with game animals. Manners also added that, In June 1836, Harris arrived at Cape Town on the 1467-ton Buckinghamshire and stayed for a couple of years in order to recover from high fever. To his fortune he met Dr. Andrew Smith freshly coming from a journey north on which he had visited Mzilikazi at Mosega. From the Cape, he arranged a hunting trip, which was to last from 1836 to 1837, to the Western Transvaal and Magaliesberg with William Richardson of the Bombay Civil Service, who had been a fellow passenger on the voyage.²¹ The above circumstances motivated him to write much about the game animals which lay in the vicinity of the Ndebele people. Also, Robert Moffat met Harris before he saw Mzilikazi and told him many stories about Mzilikazi, armies and their raiding expeditions. Harris also made other successful explorations to India and Ethiopia.

His correspondence

Manners also added that, Harris wrote six strikingly detailed and illustrated texts which are available at the South African museums and that of Ethiopia.²² His correspondence included *Narrative of an Expedition into Southern Africa during the years 1836 and 1837* published in 1838, *The Wild sports of Southern Africa* published in 1839, *Portraits of the Game and Wild Animals of Southern Africa* published in 1840, *The Highlands of Aethiopia* which was published in 1844 in 3 volumes and lastly, *Illustrations of the Highlands of Aethiopia* published in 1845. It is interesting to note that his first published text had tremendous comments about the Ndebele vegetation and game animals. Unlike Finaughty who was a great elephant hunter, Harris pursued all the game animals which he stated that they were in abundance in Southern Africa. His background however, imparted to his psyche a longing to occupy himself with hunting and sporting. These are the forces which in turn prompted him to keep record of his endeavors. His works also featured in the Standard Encyclopaedia of Southern Africa. Speaking of his audience,

he even stated in the first preliminary pages of his narrative that it was directed to Dr. James Burns F. R. S who was the Knight of the Guelph order.²³ These were his associates whom he worked with in the army. Thus, it helps us to understand better the style of writing and the context unto which his narrative was produced.

3.3.1 Vegetation and small game animals

It is equally important also that in his accounts he glorified the amphibious creatures and small game animals. He was with Richard when he observed most of the small game animals that they desired to draw and sketch. The following day they crossed and when they were on the other side he recorded that they had an ostensive visit from the Hippopotami and some of the amphibian creatures which made some irritating sounds in the water. He noted that, crocodiles, small reptiles, and frogs were all over the wet areas in the river banks. Harris also noted that, the following days were spent hunting the Eland and Gemsbok.²⁴ Harris' accounts also explained the formation of mountains as also a part of the geological landscape which they came across as they executed their hunting expeditions. In a way the vegetation in the mountains also determined which animals were found there and most probably which was the best way to trap, shoot and snare certain game animals that they hunted.

3.4 Conclusion

To sum up, the chapter managed to trace the historical background of the selected hunters to represent and discovered the conditions under which they lived in. It also covered much ground about what motivated them to write their accounts. Of great importance is the fact that, hunters were preoccupied with hunting and they largely desired to explore not only the Ndebele territory but the abundance of their correspondence show that they were adventures men eager to shoot game animals and record their experiences. The chapter also indicated their works have largely contributed to the ecological and wildlife history of the Ndebele. Therefore, their primary documentation credits them as contemporary literal observers of the Ndebele nation. However, the following chapter will look at the various observations and impressions by the concession seekers about the Ndebele.

ENDNOTES

¹ C.K. Cooke, *Finaughty's Cannon*, Rhodesiana, No. 33 September 1975, pg. 17.

² W. Finaughty, *The Recollections of William Finaughty the Elephant hunter 1864-1875*, J. B Lippincot Company press, Philadelphia, pg. 32.

³ Ibid, pg. 34.

⁴“William Finaughty (1843 – 1917) one of the great elephant hunters who knew both Mzilikazi and Lobengula and brought the two ship's cannon now at the Natural History Museum in Bulawayo”, Google. Last modified February 3, 2018, <file:///C:/Users/me/Documents/Books%20of%20Rhodesia%20Zimbabwe%20-%20The%20Recollections%20of%20an%20Elephant%20Hunter%20%201864-1875%20-%20William%20Finaughty.htm>, accessed 22 April 2018

⁵ C.K. Cooke, *Finaughty's Cannon*, pg. 18.

⁶ W. Finaughty, *The Recollections of William Finaughty the Elephant hunter 1864-1875*, pg. 10.

⁷ Ibid, pg. 8.

⁸ F. C. Selous, *Travel and Adventure in South East Africa*, Books of Rhodesia, Bulawayo, 1972, pg. 128.

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ W. Finaughty, *The Recollections of William Finaughty the Elephant hunter 1864-1875*, pg. 13.

¹¹ J. Cobbing, “The Evolution of Ndebele Amabutho”, *Journal of African History*, Vol. 15, No4, 1974, pg. 631.

¹² J. G. Millais, *The Life of Frederick Selous*, D. S. O, London, 1919, pg. 71.

¹³ R. Ward, *Records of Big Game, 5th edition*, F. C. Z, London, 1907, pg. 46.

¹⁴ Ibid

¹⁶ F. C. Selous, *A Hunter's Wandering*, Macmillan and Co., Limited, London, 1907, pg. 43.

¹⁷ W. C. Harris, *Narrative of an expedition into Southern Africa during the years 1836 and 1837 from the Cape of Good Hope through the territories of chief Moselakatse*, American Mission Press, Bombay, 1838, pg. 80.

¹⁸ F. C. Selous, *A Hunter's Wandering*, pg. 44.

¹⁹ C. H. Manners, "Harris William Cornwallis" In S. L. L. Sidney, *Dictionary of National Biography*, Smith, Elder and Co, London, 1891, pg. 28-29.

²⁰ Ibid

²¹ Ibid, pg. 30.

²² Ibid

²³ W. C. Harris, *Narrative of an expedition into Southern Africa during the years 1836 and 1837*, pg. 87.

CHAPTER FOUR

OBSERVATIONS BY CONCESSION SEEKERS ABOUT THE NDEBELENATION

4.0 Introduction

As indicated in the introductory chapter, the fourth chapter focused mainly on the various observations forwarded by the concession seekers about the Ndebele nation. The chapter endeavored to name the concession seekers and state the prime reasons why they came to the Ndebele nation in the late 19th century. Each and every one that was selected was historically analyzed in order to understand their background which played a vital role in influencing their writings. Not only that, the chapter also stated the conditions under which they lived in which in turn motivated them to record them in relation to the Ndebele king. However, this is a historical study meaning that, it also looked at how this primary documentation contributed to the Ndebele history and how later historians evaluated their texts. As noted earlier on, the study also used the representative method thus not all the concessions seekers will be evaluated.

4.1 Accounts by concession seekers

Accounts by concession seekers were largely drawn from the correspondence by John Smith Moffat, Francis Robert 'Matebili Thompson, Benjamin 'Matabele' Wilson and Charles Dannel Rudd. Their background information influenced their perceptions about the political life of the Ndebele and their perceptions have been used by later historians like Cobbing, Nyathi, Rasmussen and Gatsheni to understand the leadership style of Lobengula. Hence their works have contributed in the Ndebele history.

4.1.1 Historical background of John Smith Moffat (1835-1918)

John Smith Moffat was born at Kuruman which is South Africa in 1835. Parsons argued that, Smith Moffat was educated in England and joined the LMS in 1858. He also noted that he was a British missionary and later on became an imperial agent in Southern Africa.¹ He was the son of the pioneer missionary Robert Moffat and also a brother in law to David Livingstone a missionary-explorer.

His early life and career

Moffat grew up in an environment filled with missionaries or rather preachers of the LMS. From a tender age, his father desired to groom him to be an influential missionary who would also

continue with his legacy. Parsons also noted that, in many instances Robert Moffat would spend quality time telling his son John about a credible king called Mzilikazi who migrated from the lands of KwaZulu Natal and settled across the Limpopo River.² Such socialization by his father made Moffat to be more anxious and curious to about Mzilikazi. In his memoir titled *John Smith Moffat: A missionary memoir* written by his son R. U. Moffat, there are certain family and environmental conditions upon which Moffatt grew up in which influenced him later on to record his experiences and observations. He stated that Moffat had no commendable reputation like his father and brother in law. He did not care much about what people thought of him and during his time there was an emptiness of romance and mystery.³ His long-life experiences that he left are of paramount importance and they cover half of his life and they were written on the request of his family. Parson also noted that, Moffat had an intense dislike of exaggeration and sensationalism in any form.⁴

His missionary contribution included helping to set up the first mission station at Inyathi in 1859, then in 1862 he took over the running of Kuruman for his father. Most importantly, in 1879 he ceased to work for the LMS and joined the British Bechuanaland colonial service. Later on in 1888 he was then working under the payroll of Cecil Rhodes and was sent to use his father's reputation in order to convince Lobengula to sign concessions which would serve the British interests.

John Smith Moffat's correspondence

Blake stated that Moffat authored two very detailed and long texts.⁵ These texts included *The Lives of Robert and Marry Moffat* published in 1888 and his famous 458 page memoir titled *John Smith Moffatt: A missionary memoir* published in 1921. It has to be noted that his memoir was compiled by his own son R. U. Moffat, who captured a lot of Moffatt's aspirations, early life, career, character, his missionary work and his six years stay in Matabeleland before working for the British Bechuanaland colonial service and mostly he made some comments about the political dispensation of the Ndebele because he negotiated for treaties. He was however motivated by his own personal issues like his radical mind towards what other people did and said to write his texts. Such background helps us to understand his correspondence better and evaluate his works from an objective point of view. Thus, his works can be credited for largely contributing to the Ndebele history though they have to be evaluated properly given that he was a

man obsessed about impressing his employers and most importantly in his whole missionary work he did make any convert. Therefore, he was a disillusioned individual who was caught up in the middle of the African struggle and resistance against the European encroachment.

4.1.2 Politics and governance of the Ndebele

Moffatt in his short stay at Inyathi, gave him limited time as compared to his other missionary counterparts. It has to be noted that the subject of the Ndebele politics and governance was largely covered and hence to avoid repetition and chronological problems, this section looked at the various perceptions of the concession seekers and critically evaluates how they help us understand Ndebele history. Smith Moffat, Francis Thompson and Benjamin commented greatly about the succession issue of the Ndebele where they head stories about how Lobengula got into power and how he managed to quell the rebelling faction led by Mbiko. Moffat's memoir is his resounding achievements in terms of the details about his life experiences. It is highly detailed about his travels at Barotseland, Matabeleland, Kuruman and England among other areas.⁶ However; from his text it is highly probably that he recorded almost every detail about the Ndebele political governance. There is even a subtopic which is titled, *The political work in Matabeleland*. In that section he stated much that upon his arrival to meet Lobengula for the treaty negotiations he witnessed so much that he could not ignore to record in his text. It is noted that Moffat arrived at Bulawayo on the 27th of November and had his first conversation with Lobengula on the 1st of December 1887. It is further noted that, Lobengula also made frequent visits with his Indunas who usually assisted him in the running of the nation at large. Moffat commented that even though he had Indunas, but was not different from his despotic father who also ruled dictatorially. He noted that during his visits he noticed that if he did not follow the king wherever he went it was going to be difficult for him to make a reasonable negotiation.⁷ Therefore, Moffatt would stay in the king's kraal when Lobengula had gone out on certain errands. It is therefore during this time that he would write some letters and snippets which formed a part of this memoir. However, this information helps us to understand the history of the Ndebele in the eyes of the contemporary literal observers as expressions with anthropological connotations and later historians later knew that Moffatt was a man who had his preoccupations and had negative motives towards the Ndebele nation, thus, they dismissed Moffatt's narratives as baseless. However, a closer look at the circumstances which surrounded him it remains that he used harsh tone and considerable exaggerations, but how Lobengula treated him also had a

bearing in his writings. Francis Matabele Thompson a concession seeker wrote an autobiography edited by his daughter Nancy Rouillard. In that diary he noted that, the king was in control of everything which included cattle, land, ivory, gold-dust, sheep, goats and game. In his observations, Thompson also noted that, the resounding statement which had become a theme song is that 'I am the King's'.⁸ As noted above by other European travellers, the Matabele were a savagery and barbaric people whose leaders exercised absolute power over their subjects and the day to day running of the nation was determined by what the king wished at a particular time. Lobengula at this time had cultivated considerable resentment towards the whites or the pressing concessions seekers therefore; he ended up being harsh and unsympathetic to their concerns. Consequently, concession seekers painted a very savagery, barbaric and despotic picture about Lobengula's leadership. That goes without saying because they found him in an unwelcoming spirit and they were under pressure by the British Bechuanaland colonial service.

4.2 Historical background of Francis Robert 'Matebili' Thompson (1857-1927)

Thompson's historical background is detailed in the first two chapters of his autobiography edited by his daughter. It needs to be noted that, Thompson was born from a family which had some close relations with the LMS missionary Robert Moffatt and his wife Marry. That also influenced Thompson to produce some records about his experiences and observations about the Ndebele nation as a way of appreciating the fact that, his family also had a connection with people who stayed in the Ndebele nation. Nancy therefore, gave a long detailed background history of his father. She stated that, Thompson's father pursued many careers so as to make ends meet. She noted that, his father hunter, shot game animals and ventured into barter trading as he believed that, it could generate enough income for them buy land and stay in South Africa.⁹

Early life and career

Given the professions of his father, Thompson's life was also predestined to exploration and definitely writing because it was a tradition for the early European travellers to record their experiences so as to keep their records for future reference. Keppel-Jones argued that, Thompson was born at sea near Port Elizabeth in 1857 to the parents who were British colonial. His early life was characterized by excitements and a lot of varieties.¹¹ It is also noted that at the age of 13 he engaged himself in the digging of diamond near Barkly West and four years down the line he started farming activities at a place called Cornforth Hill in Griqualand West. Such a varied life

at a tender age gave him the necessary exposure which influenced his later experiences and writings since he was well versed with the mineral landscape of the Southern Africa. Therefore, his comments about the Ndebele are of paramount importance and should be evaluated carefully given his family background and his early life sustaining projects. Jones also added that, the year 1884 witnessed Thompson holding an important commission in the Warren expedition and the secretary and adviser to a British colonialist Cecil Rhodes in Bechuanaland.¹² Just like Moffat in the later 1887, Thompson was also working under the payroll of the British ambitious imperialist Rhodes. That however, prompted them to write diaries which reveal their commitment in negotiating concessions with Lobengula. Thus, they qualify to be contemporary literate observers of the Ndebele nation.

His colleague associates and achievements

Keppel-Jones argued that, in the year 1886, Thompson joined the De Beers Company in Kimberly so as to reorganize the compounds. Rhodes however, ordered him to accompany Rudd and Maguire to negotiate a mineral concession with the Ndebele king Lobengula which is famously known as the Rudd Concession.¹³ Later on he went to Oxford University to study for three year and came back to join politics in the Cape. Having said the above, it can however be seen that Thompson was motivated by several factors to write his diary. Those included his family background of hunting, exploring, settlers in South Africa, he was also motivated by his early life experiences which were exciting and variant, his working for Rhodes in the Bechuana colonial service and his colleagues namely: Rudd and Maguire and most importantly his political life after returning from his studies at the Cape. Normally, politicians take record of their experiences. This is why his style of writing was poetic, fictional and blunt about the politics, way of life and the military life of the Ndebele under Lobengula. Therefore, this study critically evaluates his background in influencing his writing style and surely he made great contribution to the Ndebele history as he managed to capture a lot about the Ndebele.

4.2.1 The Ndebele beliefs

Missionaries covered much ground on the Ndebele religion and that inevitably included the beliefs. However, missionaries did not talk about the nature of the Ndebele under Lobengula, which actually qualifies the various observations by concession seekers as vital in the contribution to the historiography of the Ndebele. Once one was caught or suspected of

witchcraft then his fate was forever sealed and that included his family and property at large. Thompson then noted that he saw the man by the name Kumalo running in front of about forty boys aged thirteen to eighteen who drove him to the woods where they were then out of sight stoning him. Such was a fate of a man who had been accused of bewitching people in the villages. Thompson went on to highlight that there was a mountain nearby where all these atrocities were executed and where many people faced a similar death, that was one occasion otherwise there many instances where hundreds of people were killed on the basis of witchcraft. Suffering from seasonal gout, Lobengula was then advised by his doctors that the only way he could console himself was to identify people and exterminate them. Such an advice saw many villages being burnt down and destroyed in the name doing away with what kept the king sick but unfortunately such a move did not improve the condition of the king.¹⁴ His arguments were also reinforced by Carnegie, Thomas Morgan, Smith Moffat and Benjamin Matabele who all in their correspondence stated that, witchcraft was perceived as a danger and a threat to the nation therefore, whoever was suspected of it was to be killed.¹⁵ Thus, they contributed much to the Ndebele historiography given that even later Ndebele writers like Mziki noted that the Ndebele had a strong belief in the dead and they interpreted the misfortunes as a failure of the nation to be at peace with the ancestors.¹⁶ Also, Cobbing in his unpublished thesis titled *The Ndebele under the Khumalo* used much of the various observations by Ndebele contemporary literal observers about the beliefs of the Ndebele. Thus, the concession seekers in their writings given their background help us understand better the Ndebele history.

4.3 Historical background of Charles Dannel Rudd (1844-1916)

Charles Dannel Rudd was the main business associate of Cecil John Rhodes.

Early Life

It is argued that, Rudd initially studied at Harrow School, then entered Trinity College. In 1863 he was in Cambridge where he excelled in playing rackets. Before he completed his degree, he went to Cape Colony in 1865. There he hunted with the likes of John Dunn and ventured into various business enterprises.¹⁷ Already he was an educated individual who desired outdoor activities like cricket, hunting, business enterprises. Inevitably, this background motivated him to work with Cecil Rhodes who gave him the opportunity to explore the Ndebele area and negotiate a concession with Lobengula.

His association with Rhodes enabled him to acquire more skills and deepened his strong obsession for minerals. In 1872 Rudd and Rhodes became close friends and partners, working diamond claims in the Kimberley mine. They dealt with diamonds and operated the pumping and ice-making machinery. Between the years 1873 and 1881, while Rhodes attended college in England, Charles managed their interests. By 1880 they both had become rich and, with others, they formed the De Beers Mining Company.¹⁸ Rudd was one of the leading directors and he held larger interests in the main machinery supplier for the mining fields. Not only that, Mlambo noted that, in 1887 Rudd's interests had diverted to gold, discovered at the Witwatersrand in 1886. With Rhodes and him as directors, and his brother Thomas as chairman, they registered Gold Fields of South Africa Ltd in early 1887.¹⁹ The company was strategically structured to favor Rudd and Rhodes. This however, culminated in the negotiation of the Rudd concession. All this background and his close association with Rhodes enabled him to write a journal which was filled with comments about the Ndebele king and his attitude towards the whites and even the way he relied much on the utmost good faith of his indunas probably he meant the whole who influenced Lobengula to sign the concession.

His correspondence and contribution to the Ndebele history

Charles Rudd's Correspondence is stemmed in his association with Bishop Knight-Bruce unto which they wrote an article titled, Gold and the Gospel in Mashonaland 1888, which was edited by Constance E. Fripp and V. W. Hillier and it was published in 1946. In this journal Rudd made notably comments about the Ndebele king and one of the striking statements says, The Ndebele king was in possession of fire arms and that was terrifying in the sense that he was able to kill innocent beings with his spear then what more with guns.²⁰

From the above however, it is important to note that the Ndebele history can best be understood when the concession seekers' accounts are critically and thoroughly evaluated using the prior knowledge about their background. In this case, they contributed to the Ndebele history though to a lesser extend because mainly their accounts were focused on how they came to the Ndebele and their plans and organisation and most importantly they recorded more of their aspirations and ambitions. However, it needs to be noted that, Concession seekers were obsessed about the mineral rights and they wrote to show their masters how difficult it was to negotiate with Lobengula

4.4 Conclusion

The chapter captured mostly the historical background of each concession seeker who produced primary documentation which commented about the life of the Ndebele people. By and large, the chapter critically evaluated the contribution of each text in the historiography of the Ndebele. Most importantly, the concession seekers were motivated by the Bechuanaland colonial services by Rhodes to comment about the Ndebele. Thus, their works are accorded historical credibility though the deep seated prejudice, biasness and resentment is noticed in their style of writing.

ENDNOTES

¹ N. Parsons, *A New History of Southern Africa*, 2nd edition, Macmillan Press, London, 1993, pg. 181.

² Ibid

³ R. U. Moffat, *John Smith Moffatt C.M.G Missionary: A memoir*, John Murray, London, 1921, pg. 110.

⁴ N. Parsons, *A New History of Southern Africa*, pg. 183.

⁵ R. A. Blake, *A history of Rhodesia*, Eyre Methuen, London, 1977, pg. 54.

⁶ R. U. Moffat, *John Smith Moffatt C.M.G Missionary: A memoir*, pg. 12.

⁷ Ibid, pg. 20.

⁸ N. Rouillard, *Matabele Thompson: An Autobiography*, Books of Rhodesia, Bulawayo, 1977, pg. 34.

⁹ Ibid, pg. 15.

¹⁰ A. Keppel-Jones, *Rhodes and Rhodesia*, McGill Queen's University Press Kingston, 1983, pg. 86.

¹¹ Ibid

¹² Ibid, pg. 87.

¹³ N. Jones, *Rhodesin Genesis*, Books of Rhodesia, Bulawayo, pg. 22.

¹⁴ N. Rouillard, *Matabele Thompson: An Autobiography*, pg. 14.

¹⁵ D. Carnegie, *Among the Matabele*, , R.T.S, London, 1894, pg. 41.

¹⁶ C. A. A. Mziki, *Mlimo: the rise and fall of the Matabele*, Publisher books of Rhodesia, Rhodesia, 1972, pg. 33.

¹⁷"Rudd, Charles Dunell (1844–1916)". *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*", Google. Last modified November 13, 2017, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-65577>, accessed 21 April 2018

¹⁸ Ibid

¹⁹ A. S. Mlambo, *A History of Zimbabwe*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2014, pg. 34.

²⁰ C. E. Fripp and V. W. Hiller, *Gold and Gospel in Mashonaland*, Chatto and Windus, London, 1959, pg. 13.

CONCLUSION

To crown it all, the summation of the above study can best be concluded that, it was impossible for the European travellers who operated within the Matabele nation not to write substantively about the nature of the 19th century Ndebele State because of the fact that the circumstances which surrounded them motivated them to write travelogues. As noted above, from the year 1829 the Matabele nation first got into contact with a white man and right through the state formation, expansion, flourishing and its subsequent demise the nation had in its disposal contemporary observers in the form of missionaries, explorers, hunters, traders and concession seekers. These are the people who did not hesitate to write diaries, journals, letters and travelogues which described and explained in depth the 19th century Ndebele State under the Kumalo kings Mzilikazi and Lobengula respectively. These travelogues were largely used in this dissertation to provide the impressions of those men who had different agendas, interests in the Matabele. Missionaries wanted to further the gospel and ripe converts, explorers wanted to prospect and explore the area and ascertain minerals chief of them being Thomas Baines. As for hunters and traders, they were obsessed about the wildlife, ecology, vegetation and game within the Matabele territories. Their accounts provided viable information about the ecological history of the Matabele people.

Concession seekers wanted rights to prospect gold, hunt animals and seek treaties of international significance. Most importantly, this study was a serious historiographical discussion which traced the historical background of each traveller in the Ndebele nation. This helped in discovering what motivated them and who was their audience unto which they were writing their diaries to? It needs to be stated in the final analysis that, this primary documentation contributed immensely to the Ndebele history. Also, the various perceptions by these travellers were used differently by later historians like Cobbing, Nyathi, Rasmussen, Gatsheni, Hadebe, Roberts, Chennels, Quick and many others in the reconstruction of the Ndebele history. Their background helps us to understand better the Ndebele nation from their own different point of views which were influenced by different preoccupations and influences. Thus, most of their works are found in the Museums, National Archives and libraries.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

Published primary sources

Baines. T, *The gold regions of South Eastern Africa*, Port Elizabeth, London, 1877.

Carnegie. D, *Among the Matabele*, R.T.S, London, 1894.

Diaries of the Jesuit Missionaries at Bulawayo 1879-1881, Rhodesian Society publications, No4.

Elliot. W. A, *Gold from the Quartz*, London Missionary Society, 2010.

Finaughty. W, *The Recollections of William Finaughty the Elephant hunter 1864-1875*, J. B Lippincot Company press, Philadelphia, 1959

Harris.W. C, *Narrative of an expedition into Southern Africa during the years 1836 and 1837 from the Cape of Good Hope through the territories of chief Moselakatse*, American Mission Press, Bombay, 1838.

Mackenzie. J, *Ten years north of the Orange River*, Frank Cass, London, 1871.

Moffat. R. U, *John Smith Moffatt C.M.G Missionary: A memoir*, John Murray, London, 1921.

Moffatt. R, *Missionary Labours and Scenes in Southern Africa*, John Snow, London, 1842.

Rouillard. N, *Matabele Thompson: An Autobiography*, Books of Rhodesia, Bulawayo, 1977.

Selous. F. C, *A Hunter's Wandering*, Macmillan and Co., Limited, London, 1907.

Selous. F. C, *Travel and Adventure in South East Africa*, Books of Rhodesia, Bulawayo, 1972.

Thomas. T. M, *Eleven years in Central South Africa*, John Snow, London, 1873.

Wallis. J. P. R, *The Matabele Journals of Robert Moffat 1829-1860*, Vol 1, Chatto and Windus, London, 1945.

Wallis. J. P. R, *The Matabele Journals of Robert Moffat 1829-1860*, Vol 2, Chatto and Windus, London, 1945.

Wallis. J. P. R, *The Northern Goldfields Diaries of Thomas Baines 1869-1872*, Vol.1, Chatto and Windus, London, 1945.

Newspapers

Nyathi. P, “A friendship of convenience: Rev Robert Moffatt and King Mzilikazi become friends for different reasons”, *Sunday News*, June 9, 2017.

Nyathi. P, “Gleaming history and culture from documented past: Perusal of the Matabele journal of Robert Moffat”, *Sunday News*, Sept 10, 2017.

Unpublished Secondary Sources

Unpublished Theses/dissertations and Seminar Presentations

Cobbing. J. R. D, “Ndebele Religion in the 19th Century”, Unpublished Henderson Paper, University of Rhodesia, 1974.

Cobbing. J. R. D, “The Ndebele Under the Khumalos”, Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Lancaster, 1976.

Hadebe. S, “Word division and spelling in Ndebele: approaches and implications” Unpublished MA Dissertation, University of Zimbabwe Harare, 1994.

Published Secondary Sources

Books

Boggie. J. M, *First Steps in Civilizing Rhodesia*, Philpott and Collins, Ltd, Bulawayo, Southern Rhodesia, 1940.

Fripp. C. E and Hiller. V. E, *Gold and Gospel in Mashonaland*, Chatto and Windus, London, 1959.

Jones. N, *Rhodesian Genesis*, Books of Rhodesia, Bulawayo, 1956

Jones. N Mhlanganzhansi, *My Friend Kumalo*, Books of Rhodesia, Bulawayo, 1972.

- Keppel-Jones. A, *Rhodes and Rhodesia*, McGill Queen's University Press, Kingston, 1983.
- King. S. P, *Missions in Southern Rhodesia: The Inyathi Centenary Trust*, Citadel Press, Cape Town, 1959.
- Mlambo. A. S, *A History of Zimbabwe*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2014.
- Mziki. C. A. A, *Mlimo: The rise and fall of the Matabele*, Publisher books of Rhodesia, Rhodesia, 1972.
- Parsons. N, *A New History of Southern Africa, 2nd edition*, Macmillan Press, London, 1993.
- Roberts. R. S, *Journeys beyond Gubulawayo to the Gaza, Tonga and Lozi, letters of the Jesuit Zambezi Mission, 1880-1893*, Weaver Press, Zimbabwe, 2009.
- Ward. R, *Records of Big Game, 5th edition*, F. C. Z, London, 1907.

Journals

- Chennels. A. J, "The image of the Ndebele and the nineteenth-century Missionary Tradition", *Christianity South of The Zambezi*, Vol. 2, (1977).
- Cobbing. J. R, "The Evolution of Ndebele Amabutho", *Journal of African History*, Vol.15, No. 4, (1974).
- Ndlovu-Gatsheni. S. J, "Rethinking Religious Encounters in Matabeleland Region of Zimbabwe, 1860-1893", *African Journal of History and Culture (AJHC)* Vol. 1 (2), (2009).
- Quick. G. S, "Early European involvement in the Tati District", *Botswana Notes and Records*, Vol. 33, (2001).

Online Sources

- "Unisa online", Google. Last modified April 8, 2018, <file:///C:/Users/me/Documents/Allie%20Flash/Unisa%20Online%20-%20Prof%20Sabelo%20J.%20Ndlovu-Gatsheni.html>, accessed 21 April 2018

“William Finaughty (1843 – 1917) one of the great elephant hunters who knew both Mzilikazi and Lobengula and brought the two ship’s cannon now at the Natural History Museum in Bulawayo”, Google. Last modified February 3, 2018, <file:///C:/Users/me/Documents/Books%20of%20Rhodesia%20Zimbabwe%20-%20The%20Recollections%20of%20an%20Elephant%20Hunter%20%201864-1875%20-%20William%20Finaughty.htm>, accessed 22 April 2018

"Rudd, Charles Dunell (1844–1916)". *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*", Google. Last modified November 13, 2017, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-65577>, accessed 21 April 2018