

THE REBIRTH OF BUKALANGA

A Manifesto for the Liberation of a
Great
People with a Proud History Part I



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with a Proud History Part I**

NDZIMU-UNAMI EMMANUEL

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People with a Proud History Part I

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About the author

Born on 29 March 1982 in Bulawayo and raised by his grandparents in the District of Bulilima-Mangwe, Ndzimu-unami Emmanuel Moyo completed his primary and secondary education at Tokwana Primary and Secondary Schools. He later completed a Diploma in Personnel Management graduating with Distinction with the Institute of People Management (IPMZ). Moyo later entered the Theological College of Zimbabwe (TCZ) in Bulawayo where he majored in reading Theology and Philosophy, dropping out of the College after one-and-a-half-years.

Between the time of his finishing of the GCE Ordinary Level in 1999 and publishing this book in 2012, Moyo worked for the Zimbabwe postal service, Zimbabwe Posts, and the National Oil Company of Zimbabwe (Noczim) in his home town of Plumtree. He also served as a Community Organizer during this same time, organizing for the Plumtree Business Association (PBA), meanwhile serving as a Shop Steward at his workstation at Noczim Plumtree and a Branch Committee Member of the Southern Region of the Zimbabwe Energy Workers' Union. A Justice Activist, Ndzimu-unami Emmanuel Moyo is studying toward a Bachelor of Arts Honors Degree in Development Studies.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE.....	13
The Earliest Settlements of Bukalanga South of the Zambezi and the Establishment of the Zimbabwe Civilization	13
CHAPTER TWO.....	27
Who and What Actually Constitutes Bukalanga: A Re- Definition of Bukalanga vis-à-vis the Ndebele	27
CHAPTER THREE	55
The Relationship Between Bukalanga and the Shona: Are We Really a Shona People?	55
CHAPTER FOUR	89
On the Question of BaLozwi or BaRozwi: Are they a Shona or Bukalanga People Group?.....	89
CHAPTER FIVE.....	100
The Monomotapa, Togwa and Lozwi Kingdoms: Inside the Great Kingdoms of Bukalanga	100
CHAPTER SIX.....	124
How Did We End Up With the Shonalized Version of History Part I	124
CHAPTER SEVEN.....	144
How Did We End Up With the Shonalized Version of History Continued Part II.....	144

CHAPTER EIGHT.....156

And Who Actually Built the Zimbabwe Ruins: Back Inside
the Zimbabwe Civilization156

CHAPTER NINE186

The Pre-Christian Worldview of Bukalanga: The Mwali
Religion.....186

CHAPTER TEN206

On the Origins of Bukalanga and the Question of ‘Semitic
Blood’206

CHAPTER ELEVEN.....225

But What Happened to the Great Nation of Bukalanga :
Inside the Great Dispersion and Diaspora225

PLEASE NOTE

As shall be seen later in the book, the name Bukalanga is used with reference to a congerie of at least Twelve Tribes who all trace their origins to Bukalanga, among which are:

- | | | |
|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| 1. Bakalanga | 5. BaLozwi/Loyi | 9. BaTwamambo |
| 2. BaNambya | 6. BaLemba | 10. BaTembe |
| 3. BaLobedu | 7. Vhavenda | 11. Babirwa |
| 4. BaLembethu | 8. BaTswapong | 12. BaShangwe |

This also includes the majority of those people currently identified as Ndebele in Zimbabwe who use such surnames as Ndlovu, Khupe, Sibanda, Tshuma, Mpala, Nyoni, Nyathi, Ndebele, Ngwenya, Shoko, Zhouwu, Shumba, Moyo, Nkomo, Nleya, Dumani, Mlalazi, and so forth. Also included are thousands of other Bakalanga in Botswana who are currently identified as Ngwato-Tswana.

Detailed evidence for the foregoing shall be provided in Chapter Three of the book. 'Bukalanga/Vhukalanga' and 'the Kalanga' shall be used interchangeably following the general Anglicization of Bantu names. For those readers who read the book when it was first published, they will notice that there have been some changes in this edition. The changes are not substantial but have been additions of evidence to back up the claims that are made in the book

PREFACE

This book has come about as a result of a desire to understand my own identity and origins as a Kalanga, as well as my deep concern for justice, freedom, self-determination and self-government for my own people and others in general in the context of having lived in two countries where everyone is bundled up together, willingly or unwillingly, into a Shona¹, Ndebele or Tswana identity. This led to three years of research into the history of Bukalanga, culminating in the writing of this book. Here is the story of what was once the greatest nation and civilization Africa south of the Sahara.

It has been stated concerning Bukalanga by Dr Gerald Mazarire that the common understanding of Kalanga identity in Zimbabwe is tainted by a general legacy of high school textbooks that has had a tremendous impact on our somewhat obviated knowledge of local ethnicities through a process known in history as 'feedback'. He states that *until fairly recently, we did not know as much about the Kalanga* who have constantly been treated as a sub-ethnicity of the major groups in southwestern Zimbabwe such as the Ndebele, Tswana and Shona (Mazarire 2003, Online). Dr Mazarire's view is echoed by Wim van Binsbergen who, in his contribution to R. Fardon and G. Furnis' work, *African Languages, Development and the State*, observed that:

*****2

Like the Nkoya language, this western Shona dialect cluster known as Kalanga and today extending from northwestern Zimbabwe all the

¹ Throughout this book, unless indicated otherwise, the term Shona shall be used with reference to the Zezuru and Manyika, and excludes the broader section of the Karanga, of which explanation shall be given in Chapters Two and Three. That is important to keep in mind when reading the book.

² These seven asterisks have been employed throughout the book where normally quotation marks or indents would have been used. This has been necessitated by the length of many of the verbatim quotes used in the book, also partly necessitated by the fact that much of the history of Bukalanga as presented in this book has not been told for a very long time and is unknown to many people. The use of long verbatim has been employed so as to present the information from the original sources *voetstoots*, that is, as is; and to serve as a guard against accusations that this is 'manufactured history' as one would often hear.

way into the North Central and North East districts of Botswana (where it mainly exists in the form of the Lilima dialect) boasts a considerable local presence. While much of *the history of this language and of the ethnic group which identifies by it remains to be written*, it is a well-established fact that Kalanga, already called by that name, was the state language of the Tjangamire state which in the late seventeenth century succeeded the Togwa state; the latter produced the archaeological complex known as the Khami culture, and was historically closely associated with the earlier extensive state system centring on the famous site of Great Zimbabwe (van Binsbergen 1994, Online. Italics mine).

I have emphasized the sentences in italics above to show just how little of Bukalanga history is known in this generation. What little history of the Kalanga we know is so distorted that one can hardly tell who the Kalanga people are. As a matter of fact, nothing is mentioned in Zimbabwean school history textbooks and the Constitutions of both Zimbabwe and Botswana about Bukalanga. It leaves one wondering, who and from where the Kalanga people came. How is it possible that so little is known of a people whose ancestors were the builders of three of the four man-made UNESCO World Heritage sites in Southern Africa?

The common and prevailing understanding of the Kalanga is that they are a hybrid of the Ndebele and the Shona, and therefore came into being as a result of intermarriage between the Shona and Ndebele in the 19th century. This has left many a Kalanga with an identity crisis, not knowing who they are and what their origins be. In Botswana, as in Zimbabwe, at least speaking from a constitutional viewpoint, the existence of the Kalanga is being denied, and as such it gives the impression that the Kalanga are a people of recent origin in these two countries. But it is interesting to note that a deeper research into Bukalanga history reveals that the Kalanga are actually a distinct people group, distinct from the Shona, the Ndebele and the Ngwato-Tswana. These identities have been politically and militarily imposed upon Bukalanga - many times against their will - and all they do is to conceal and destroy the understanding of Bukalanga history and

identity.

But whence is Bukalanga? The origins of these interesting people can be traced back to a people that originated in north-east Africa and settled in the Zimbabwean plateau about the turn of the Christian era, which explains their Semitic strain of blood, a claim which was scientifically proven in two genetic studies in 1996 and 2000. The Kalanga are also known to have been great miners and traders in gold since the earliest centuries of the Christian era. They were involved in extensive agriculture and manufactured iron and copper implements. They were the builders of the great city-states of Maphungubwe, Great Zimbabwe, Khami, and others. They indeed were the people responsible for the establishment of the Zimbabwe Civilization, one of the three greatest civilizations in Africa, the others being the Egyptian and Axumite (Ethiopian) Civilizations.

The Kalanga had distinct forms of government and religion amongst the peoples of Southern and Central Africa which were unknown anywhere else in the region. Their governments - the Monomotapa, Togwa and Lozwi Kingdoms - spanned a combined period of about 1000 years. Their religion - the Mwali Religion - unique and distinctive amongst the religions of all the peoples of sub-Saharan Africa, had its origins in the Semitic world, and is indeed a corrupted form of Yahwe'ism, the Mosaic religion of the Hebrews.

Despite their many years of existence as the greatest Civilization Africa south of the Sahara, the Kalanga have been subjected to merciless treatment and subjugation over the last 200 years by the Ndebele, the Shona and the Tswana, which explains their relative insignificance as a nation in recent years, at least identifiable by their name, languages and cultures. This has exposed them to an existential threat as an ethno-linguistic and cultural community which might see their languages, and as a result their cultures, disappearing from the face of the earth before the close of this century unless drastic and indeed radical measures are taken to arrest the decline. This book is part of such drastic and radical measures that need to be taken to arrest the decline of Bukalanga and the rush towards extinction.

By telling the 2000 year-old story of Bukalanga the book seeks to bring to the attention of Bukalanga peoples a knowledge and appreciation of what a great heritage and history this our nation has. Not only so, it is intended that the reader, if he or she is of Bukalanga

stock, will take great pride in their identity and actively participate in the Rebirth and Renaissance of Bukalanga.

The book begins by tracing the earliest settlements of Bukalanga in the Zimbabwean Tableland and the establishment of the Zimbabwe Civilization starting about the first century of the Christian era. That is followed by a redefinition of who and what actually constitutes the nation called Bukalanga, no doubt the most important question in the book. This is dealt with in light of the argument that all who live in the so-called Matebeleland are Ndebele, and those who live in the remaining half of the country are Shona; and all who leave in Botswana are Batswana.

Having settled the Kalanga-Ndebele identity question, we answer the next important question, that is, is it true that the Kalanga are a Shona people as is commonly claimed by Shona scholars and political elites? Having settled the questions of identity we turn our attention to the precolonial kingdoms of Bukalanga - the Monomotapa, Togwa and Lozwi Kingdoms - followed by an answer to another extremely important question: how did we end up with the *shonalized* version of history that is being taught in Zimbabwean schools? We then turn our attention to the Mwali Religion - the precolonial religion of Bukalanga which has its origins in the Semitic world and shares startling similarities with Yahwe'sim, the Hebrew religion. This question has become very important too in light of the recent Shona invasions of the Njelele shrines of Mwali in Matopo. We will seek to understand if the Shona have any historical claim to that shrine in the first place. We follow that with an answer to the very important question of the origins of Bukalanga and that concerning the claimed Semitic-Judaic and/or Afro-Asiatic blood running in their veins, where we establish that indeed, Bukalanga are not a purely Bantu race, but an Afro-Asiatic race. The book closes with a look at what happened to this once Great Nation for it to be where and what it is today.

It would be amiss not to pass a word of thanks to those who helped in the preparation of this work over the three years it was being developed. I would like to pass my thanks to the librarians at the National Free Library in Bulawayo who helped me during my research to access some of the rarest collections in our libraries. Thanks are also due to Tshidzanani Malaba, Secretary of KLCDA (the

Kalanga Language and Cultural Development Association) who constantly encouraged me to finish the work and also advised me on works of Kalanga history that he had found before me. I shall not forget his father too, Thompson Tsambani, who encouraged me to refuse *pfuwiwa*, i.e., being held in captivity by always having to be subsumed to the identities of other peoples as if I don't have my own. To those Plumtree elders who constantly encouraged me through the work - Alick Masisa Ndlovu, the late Albert Sigwaza Ndlovu, and Zitshi 'Drapers' Moyo, thank you very much. To all those who I have extensively interacted with on the social networking site Facebook, some of who encouraged me and some who challenged my ideas and helped me to anticipate the questions in advance, thank you so very much. To my terrific language and grammar editors, Bheki J. Ncube, '*Isiqholo saseZhowane*', and Bulawayo historian Pathisa Nyathi, thank you so much.

Lastly, my thanks and gratitude goes to my grandmother, Elizabeth 'bakaGi' maDumani who bore the brunt of raising me on practically nothing and had to bear the humiliation of always asking for food from other villagers to raise us. Thank you very *nkuku*. *Ndoboka. Hakula minda dzebamwe nendotihuhhila zwodliwa kwakatibhatsha nkuku. Ndatjikula nasi habe n'huhha mihingo yenyu. Ndoboka eDumani.* And to all the teachers at Tokwana Primary and Secondary Schools and specifically the former headmistress, Ms. Faith Sebatha, all who believed in me against many odds, thank you very much. *Ndoliwhurwa ngamaanda. Ndoboka.*

Ndzimu-unami Emmanuel Moyo
Plumtree, Bulilima-Mangwe 2012.

CHAPTER ONE

The Earliest Settlements of Bukalanga South of the Zambezi and the Establishment of the Zimbabwe Civilization

One of the most interesting conclusions to emerge from the identification of the Leopard's Kopje tradition and the discovery of its relationship to the subsequent states of Togwa, the Tjangamire Lozwi, the Ndebele in Rhodesia, is that the language spoken by the peasantry in the south-west of the country, namely Kalanga, must also date from the tenth century - Professor Gerald Fortune 1973. "Who is Mwari?" In Roberts, R. S. and Warhurst, P.R. Rhodesian History. The Journal of the Central Africa Historical Association

It has been determined by means of archaeology that the peoples of Bukalanga - or the Kalanga - were already settled Africa South of the Zambezi by the year 900 A.D. The actual date of this settlement may indeed have been earlier for, according to a sixth century document by Cosmas Indicopleustes of Alexandria, there was gold trade that was taking place with south-east Africa at that time, and it has been determined that the same people of the 900 AD settlements had been involved in gold mining and trade for a very long time. Cosmas' statement is attested to by El Mas'udi and Ibn Al Wardy who in the tenth century also wrote of the gold trade which was taking place from the trading post of Sofala which, centuries later, we find located within the borders of the Monomotapa Kingdom (McNaughton 1987, Online).

Whilst the archeologically established date that we know anything of with certainty is 900 A.D., we will argue that this date was earlier than 500 A.D., perhaps actually earlier than 100 AD. We certainly will never know when the Kalanga first crossed the Zambezi and settled in the Zimbabwean Plateau. The reason we are pushing back this date is that, first, the Carbon 14 date of 900 A.D. has a margin of error of +/-110 years. It is very unlikely that the date of settlement could have been later than 900 A.D., for that would be too late for the gold trade that is mentioned by Cosmas Indicopleustes, El Mas'udi and Ibn al Wardy which they say was taking place by 500 A.D. There has to have been a people long settled in the land that the

Abyssinian and Phoenician gold traders mentioned by Cosmas were trading with. These early settlers, who archaeologists have termed the Leopard's Kopje Culture people, were the Kalanga, or Bukalanga, as shall be seen later.

It is not likely that the gold miners and traders mentioned by Cosmas could have been the Khoisan communities who are known to have been the earliest inhabitants of Southern Africa to cross the Zambezi. Had it been them, it would be perfectly logical to expect them to have been found working in gold by the Europeans in the sixteenth century who first started making written records of life in Southern Africa in 1506. It also could not have been the Lekgoya, who some archaeologists think preceded the Kalanga in crossing the Zambezi, for like in the case of the Khoisan, they are not known to have been involved in gold mining and trade. No mediaeval sites of gold workings were found in the areas where they were settled (that is, the modern-day Gauteng), despite there being an abundance of gold in that area, as opposed to Bukalanga occupied areas where thousands of such gold workings have been found.

The second reason we are pushing back the date of Bukalanga settlements to 100 A.D. or earlier has to do with the fact that we know that south-east Africa had already been touched by peoples from the north by 100 AD. For example, there is record of the sea-faring Phoenicians circumnavigating Africa in about 600 BC.³ Arab traders are also known to have been visiting east Africa before the beginning of the Christian era, and around 60 AD, the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* was compiled in Greek as a guide to East African, Arab and Indian sailors. Again, there should there have been a people with which these traders were trading, and Bukalanga are the ones known to have been involved in such trade. Gayre of Gayre suggests that much of the gold that found its way into northern Africa in Phoenician ships as recorded in the Bible originated in Zimbabwe (Gayre 1972, 24-29).

³ The expedition was sponsored by the Egyptian Pharaoh Neku II, and is mentioned by Herodotus of Halicarnassus in his *Historia*, book 4, section 42. The voyagers reported that the midday sun was on their *right* while they were sailing westwards (which Herodotus refused to believe) - but that would of course be a feature of the southern hemisphere. An indication that Phoenician ships were indeed capable of that feat, is provided by Hanno's exploration round the bulge of West Africa. There is also some evidence that they traded as faraway as Cornwall in England (McNaughton 1987, Online).

With the above said, let us now turn to the known settlements of Bukalanga as determined by archaeology and ethnography. In the following we will look at the most well-known, that is, the Leopard's Kopje Culture, Maphungubgwe, Great Zimbabwe and Khami. We limit ourselves to these because archaeologists have established that the cultures of Leopard's Kopje, Maphungubgwe, Great Zimbabwe, and Khami are closely related to those of Zhilo, Gokomere, Mabveni, Mambo, Luswingo, Dzata, Domboshaba and many others which were some of the earliest to be established.

All these cultures have been conclusively proven by archaeology that they are the work of the same people group that settled and spread across the Zimbabwean Tableland by 900 AD. Let us now turn our attention to the cultures, starting with Leopard's Kopje.

1. The Leopard's Kopje Culture

Our number one source of information for this culture is Professor Thomas Huffman of the University of the Witwatersrand in his book, *The Leopard's Kopje Tradition*. Further sources of information are the works of archaeologists Roger Summers and Keith R. Robinson. According to Huffman, Leopard's Kopje is an archaeological culture in the Iron Age sequence of Southern Africa, which first description appeared in a monograph on the Khami Ruins by Professor Keith Robinson in 1959. The culture included all Iron Age occupation prior to the Zimbabwe Ruins Period which is thought to have begun about 1000 A.D.

The people of the Leopard's Kopje Culture were the first in Southern Africa to mine and smelt gold, copper and iron, to make pottery and to practise mixed farming. This culture was concentrated in the region that is today roughly identified as Matebeleland, Midlands, and Masvingo Provinces of Zimbabwe (the south and southwest of the country); Venda country (both north and south of the Limpopo); and the North-east and North-Central Districts of Botswana as shown in the map on the cover page. It would seem that the north-east of the Zimbabwean Plateau was too humid for agriculture, and thus settlement, for a people who relied heavily on cattle-raising and crop agriculture for their livelihoods (Huffman 1974, 2; Summers 1971, 177, 180).

There is general agreement among leading archaeologists that the language of the Leopard's Kopje Culture was TjiKalanga or iKalanga. Professor Huffman notes that the majority of Africans living today in the Leopard's Kopje area speak either IsiNdebele, Kalanga or Venda, IsiNdebele being a dialect of the Zulu cluster of the Nguni Group, whilst Kalanga includes TjiKalanga, Lilima, Thwamamba, Nambya, Lozwi/Rozwi and Nyayi. Professor Huffman further notes that at least one dialect of Kalanga is spoken in both the Northern and Southern Areas of Leopard's Kopje. TshiVenda, one of the languages, presents classificatory problems since it has affinities with the Kalanga and the Sotho Groups. As a result, it is normally put into a group of its own. The language is spoken in the southern areas of the Leopard's Kopje culture. The Ndebele are known to be recent arrivals in the region, arriving around 1830, taking the land from the Kalanga. In the Southern Area of the Culture, particularly around Maphungubgwe, the Sotho there displaced the Kalanga/Venda of that area about three hundred years ago. The earliest people remembered in oral traditions as occupying the area are the Kalanga group peoples the Leya and Thwamamba (or Xwamamba/Hwamamba).

In conclusion as to the people group associated with the Leopard's Kopje Culture, Professor Huffman writes that only the Kalanga today have a great time depth in both the Northern and Southern Areas of Leopard's Kopje as to be the only people who would have been settled in the land before 900 AD. The correlation of the distribution of Leopard's Kopje and the 19th century Kalanga, the continuity from Bambadyanalo to the 19th century Kalanga ceramics and the time depth of Kalanga implied in oral traditions, he states, suggest that the Leopard's Kopje people were ancestral Kalanga. Of course the hypothesis does not mean that all ancestral Kalanga necessarily spoke TjiKalanga, but it does mean that some form of Kalanga was spoken by the majority of the Leopard's Kopje communities (Huffman 1974, 123).

Further testimony to the above is provided by Professor Gerald Fortune who, in studying the Mwali Religion, of which TjiKalanga is a liturgical language, noted that the Kalanga language must date back to at least 900 A.D. Professor Fortune observed that "one of the most interesting conclusions to emerge from the identification of the Leopard's Kopje tradition and the discovery of its relationship to the

subsequent states of Togwa, the Tjangamire Lozwi, the Ndebele in Rhodesia, is that the language spoken by the peasantry in the south-west of the country, namely Kalanga, must also date from the tenth century" (1973: 1-2).

There is general consensus in historical circles that Kalanga is the oldest Bantu language spoken in Southern Africa, and as we shall see later, the Kalanga Group is made up of many different but interrelated dialects. Commenting on the time depth of Leopard's Kopje Culture settlements south of the Zambezi, particularly in the so-called Matebeleland, archaeologist Professor Keith R. Robinson wrote:

With regard to the Leopard's Kopje Culture I think it may cover a long period, because it was associated with gold mining [which had been taking place since the earliest centuries of the Christian era], and the late occupation, as pointed out by Summers, began about A.D.900. I believe that this culture was practiced by the bulk of the people in Matebeleland and south of this area during the greatest expansion of the Empire of Monomotapa (Robinson 1958, 108-121).

Commenting on the pottery found in ruins around Matebeleland, Robinson observed in a later work in 1959: "In Matebeleland pottery of Leopard's Kopje type has been recovered from ancient workings. This is hardly surprising as the Leopard's Kopje Culture seems to have monopolized much of Matebeleland over a long period, and may have supplied the labor required by a succession of rulers" (Robinson 1959, 13).

What comes out clearly from the Leopard's Kopje Tradition is that indeed, the earliest Bantu inhabitants of the so-called Matebeleland, as well as the North-East and North-Central Districts of Botswana and Venda country of South Africa from the earliest centuries of the Christian era, were ancestral Kalanga, whose descendants are still

occupying the same region today - mainly identifiable in three tribes - Bakalanga, Banambya and Vhavenda. This obviously has serious ramifications for the Shona claims that they were once settled across Matebeleland, and that the Ndebele took the land from them. If the Kalanga have been settled for so long in Matebeleland, at what point in history has the region been 'Shona land' as generally believed and taught in schools?

2. The Kingdom of Maphungubgwe

Maphungubgwe was the first major phase of city-state development of the Kalanga peoples, and indeed of all African peoples south of the Sahara. Located on the banks of the Limpopo on the confluence of that river and the Shashe, the Kingdom of Maphungubgwe controlled a vast network of trade that extended some 30,000 km² either side of the Shashe and Limpopo Rivers and traded with people as far away as East Africa, Egypt, Persia, Arabia, East Asia, India and China. The Kingdom traded in gold, copper, iron, ostrich eggs and eggshell beads, bone, textiles, elephant ivory, hippo ivory, leopard skins, furs and exotic hides like crocodile. The famous golden rhino, which now forms part of the Order of Maphungubgwe, South Africa's highest honor, was found at this site.

In a 1937 report prepared for the Archaeological Committee of the University of Pretoria, Professor G. P. Lestrade, who conducted extensive ethnological investigations between 1933 and 1934 among groups that surrounded the Maphungubgwe area, concluded that the people connected with that city-state were the following:

1. The Bakalanga;
2. The Venda;
3. The BaLeya;
4. The Lemba;
5. The Twamambo (Lestrade 1937, 119-124, in Fouche 1937).

The conclusion of the Archaeological Committee, sitting under the chairmanship by Professor Leo Fouche, was that indeed the peoples listed above were indeed responsible for the establishment of the Kingdom of Maphungubgwe Culture, which was contemporaneous

with or immediately succeeded the Leopard's Kopje Culture. A detailed description of Maphungubgwe is given in a South African History and Heritage article titled *Mapungubwe: SA's Lost City of Gold*. The article states the following:

One thousand years ago, Maphungubgwe in Limpopo was the centre of the largest kingdom in the subcontinent, where a highly sophisticated people traded gold and ivory with China, India and Egypt. The Iron Age site, discovered in 1932 but hidden from the public attention until only recently, has been declared a World Heritage site by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Maphungubgwe is an area of open savannah at the confluence of the Limpopo and Shashe Rivers and abutting the northern border of South Africa and the borders of Zimbabwe and Botswana. It thrived as a sophisticated trading center from around 1200 to 1300. In its statement on the listing, UNESCO describes Maphungubgwe as the center of the largest kingdom in the sub-continent before it was abandoned in the 14th century.

Maphungubgwe was home to an advanced culture of people for the time - the ancestors of the Kalanga people of Zimbabwe⁴. They traded with China and India, had a flourishing agricultural industry, and grew to a population of around 5,000. Maphungubgwe is probably the earliest known site in Southern Africa where evidence of a class-based society existed.

The site was discovered in 1932 and has been excavated by the University of Pretoria ever since. The findings were kept quiet at the time since they provided contrary evidence to the racist ideology of black inferiority underpinning apartheid. Nevertheless, the university now has a rich collection of artifacts made of gold and other materials, as well as human remains, discovered there. According to the University of Pretoria's Maphungubgwe website, "Subsequent excavations revealed a court sheltered in a natural amphitheater at

⁴ The entry is 'Shona', but we know from the University of Pretoria Archaeological Committee that this is a reference to Bukalanga.

the bottom of the hill, and an elite graveyard at the top – with a spectacular view of the region.

“Twenty-three graves have been excavated from this hilltop site”, the website continues. “The bodies in three of these graves were buried in the upright seated position associated with royalty, with a variety of gold and copper items, exotic glass beads, and other prestigious objects. These findings provide evidence not only of the early smithing of gold in Southern Africa, but of the extensive wealth and social differentiation of the people of Maphungubgwe.”

The most spectacular of the gold discoveries is a little gold rhinoceros, made of gold foil and tacked with minute pins around the wooden core. The rhino, featured in one of South Africa’s new national orders – the Order of Maphungubgwe – has come to symbolize the high culture of Maphungubgwe. Other artifacts made in similar fashion include the Golden Scepter and the Golden Bowl, found in the same grave on Maphungubgwe Hill.

What is so fascinating about Maphungubgwe is that it is testimony to the existence of an African civilization that flourished before colonization. According to Professor Thomas Huffman of the archaeology department at the University of the Witwatersrand, Maphungubgwe represents “the most complex society in southern Africa and is the root of the origins of [the] Zimbabwean culture”.

Between 1200 and 1300 AD, the Maphungubgwe region was the centre of trade in Southern Africa. Wealth came to the region from ivory and later from gold deposits that were found in Zimbabwe. The area was also agriculturally rich because of large-scale flooding in the area. The wealth in the area led to differences between the rich and poor.

In the village neighboring Maphungubgwe, called K2, an ancient refuse site has provided archaeologists with plenty of information about the lifestyles of the people of Maphungubgwe. According to the University of Pretoria website: “People were prosperous, and kept domesticated cattle, sheep, goats and dogs. The charred remains of storage huts have also been found, showing that millet, sorghum and cotton were cultivated. “Findings in the area are typical of the Iron Age. Smiths created the objects of iron, copper and gold for practical and decorative purposes – both for local use and for trade. Pottery, wood, ivory, bone, ostrich eggshells, and the shells of snails and

freshwater mussels, indicated that many other materials were used and traded with cultures as far away as East Africa, Persia, Egypt, India and China.”

Maphungubgwe’s fortune only lasted until about 1300, after which time climate changes, resulting in the area becoming colder and drier, led to migrations further north to Great Zimbabwe (the preceding information obtained from <http://www.southafrica.info> and used with permission).

It is indeed of great interest to note that of the eight UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Southern Africa, that is, Maphungubgwe, Great Zimbabwe, Khami, Robben Island, the Vredefort Dome, the Cradle of Humankind, the uKhahlamba Drakensburg Park, the Great St Lucia Wetlands Park and the Cape Floral Region - only four are man-made. Three of those four world heritage sites are the historic work of Bukalanga peoples.

The next major phase of Bukalanga growth and development after Maphungubgwe was Great Zimbabwe, later followed by Khami. To those sites we now turn our attention.

3. Great Zimbabwe and Khami

The earliest written reference that we have concerning Great Zimbabwe is from a letter written on 20th November 1506 by the Portuguese officer Diogo de Alcacova writing to the King of Portugal. The sea-faring Portuguese were the first Europeans to touch Southern Africa and to make written records about the region. In that letter, describing conditions in the interior of Southern Africa, de Alcacova wrote:

The kingdom, Sir, in which there is the gold that comes to Sofala is called Ucalanga [Bukalanga], and the kingdom is very large, in which there are many large towns, besides many other villages, and Sofala itself is in this kingdom if not the whole land along the sea ... And,

Sir, a man might go from Sofala to a city which is called Zumubany [Zimbabwe] which is large, in which the king always resides, in ten or twelve days, if you travel as in Portugal; ... and in the whole kingdom of Ucalanga gold is extracted; and in this way: they dig out the earth and make a kind of tunnel, through which they go under the ground a long stone's throw, and keep on taking out from the veins with the ground mixed with the gold, and, when collected, they put it in a pot, and cook it much in fire; and after cooking they take it out, and put it to cool, and when cold, the earth remains, and the gold all fine gold ... (in Duffy 1964, 149).⁵

It is generally agreed among archaeologists that Great Zimbabwe was a place of a large and thriving gold-trade business just like Maphungubwe. Judging from the fact that de Alcacova reports this place as being a place of gold production and trade, where the King lives, to which ten or twelve days were required to get to from Sofala, there can be no doubt that the Portuguese were describing Great Zimbabwe.

The German explorer, Herr Karl Mauch, was the first European to see the ruins and bring them to the attention of the world. He reached Great Zimbabwe on 5th September 1871, and would be the first European to give a detailed eyewitness description of the edifice. It is possible that another European, who had lived in the area, Adam Renders, might possibly have seen the Ruins before Karl Mauch. Nonetheless, it was Mauch who first brought the attention of the world to the ruins.

From that time a flurry of theories was sparked about the possible origins of the ruins, with some thinking they might have been the palace of the biblical Queen of Sheba, to others saying they were a work of Arabs and so on. Archaeologist Roger Summers observed concerning the theories that arose out of the discovery of the Ruins of Great Zimbabwe that:

⁵ This earliest document on Bukalanga shall be quoted often throughout the book, for it is indeed very central to the history of Bukalanga.

In 1872 the civilized world was surprised to learn that there were ruins of stone buildings in the interior of Southern Africa and from then on the Zimbabwe Ruins became an objective for romantic travelers enthralled by Mauch's wild assertion that the Queen of Sheba was somehow connected to them. To be strictly accurate, Mauch did not make an explicit claim, but he implied it and others took it up as a fact (Summers 1971, xvi).

In short, the claims that followed were to the effect that at some unknown point in history, a people more civilized than the Bantu had settled in the Zimbabwean Tableland and built the *Zimbabwe*s, and for some reason or the other the civilization collapsed, and the people were overrun by the Bantu. Well, over the years archaeology has produced a lot of evidence to disprove these theories, and the common position agreed on now is that indeed, the Zimbabwe Ruins are the work of African peoples. And those African people are none other than the Kalanga – the Leopard's Kopje Culture people and the builders of Maphungubgwe. Contrary to what is generally taught in Zimbabwean schools, a number of leading archaeologists who worked on the subject of the Zimbabwe Ruins - Dr David Randall-MacIver, Dr Gertrude Caton-Thompson, Professor Keith R. Robinson, Professor Thomas Huffman, Roger Summers and Peter Garlake - have all linked the Zimbabwe Ruins to Bukalanga. We shall come to this in Chapter Eight.

The above flies in the face of what has been taught in Zimbabwe for the last thirty years that the Zimbabwe Civilization was a work of the Shona. To try and substantiate that belief, it has been stated that the word Zimbabwe comes from the Shona phrase *dzimba dza mabgwe*, meaning "houses of stone". But the truth is that these edifices were never houses, but royal enclosures, and the origin of the word Zimbabwe is the Kalanga word *nzimabgwe*, meaning royal court enclosed with stone. The people built their huts within the enclosures of stone, but never lived in the stone buildings themselves as houses. A visit to Khami or Great Zimbabwe should confirm this fact with

ease. Even Portuguese records attest to the fact that the Zimbabwe Ruins were royal courts instead of “houses of stone” or the so-called *dzimba dza mabwe*. In a description of Great Zimbabwe as part of its nomination of the edifice as a world heritage site, UNESCO wrote that the ruins of Great Zimbabwe are:

A unique artistic achievement, this great city has struck the imagination of African and European travelers since the Middle Ages, as evidenced by the persistent legends which attribute it to a biblical origin. The entire Zimbabwe nation has identified with this historically symbolic ensemble and has adopted as its emblem the steatite bird, which may have been a royal totem. In the 14th century, it was the principal city of a major state extending over the gold-rich plateaux; its population exceeded 10,000 inhabitants. In about 1450, the capital was abandoned, not as a result of war, but because the hinterland could no longer furnish food for the overpopulated city, and deforestation made necessary to go farther to find firewood. The resulting migration benefited Khami, which became the most influential city in the region, but signaled waning political power.

When in 1505 the Portuguese settled in Sofala, the region was divided between the rival powers of the kingdoms of Togwa and Monomotapa. From the 11th to the 15th centuries, the wealth of Great Zimbabwe was associated with gold trading, controlled by the Arabs, and extensive trade activities on the east coast of Africa where Kilwa was the main trading center. In addition to jewellery that had escaped greedy European gold hunters at the end of the 19th century, archaeological excavations in Great Zimbabwe unearthed glass beads and fragments of porcelain and pottery of Chinese and Persian origin which testify to the extent of trade within the continent. A 14th century Arab coin from Kilwa was also found; it was reissued in 1972 (UNESCO, Online).

Khami, the successor city-state to Great Zimbabwe, was the capital of the south-western Togwa and Lozwi kingdoms. The site is located

twenty-two kilometers west of the modern city of Bulawayo. Like Maphungubgwe and Great Zimbabwe, Khami is also a UNESCO world heritage site. In its description of the edifice UNESCO wrote:

Khami, which developed after the capital of Great Zimbabwe had been abandoned in the mid-16th century, is of great archaeological interest. The discovery of objects from Europe and China shows that Khami was a major center for trade over a long period of time. Khami, which still has considerable archaeological potential, is a site of great interest and provides a testimony to that of Great Zimbabwe, developing immediately afterward to the abandonment of this capital.

According to radiocarbon dating methods the city grew between around 1450 and 1650, which fully confirms the study carried out on built-up structures and small archaeological artifacts. As is the case in Great Zimbabwe, here several sectors can be clearly differentiated in terms of use. The chief's residence (mambo) was located towards the north, on the Hill Ruins site, which is a hill created largely of alluvial land used to level the terraces, contained by bearing walls. In this sector some highly significant imported goods were found: 16th century Rhineland stoneware, Ming porcelain pieces which date back to the reign of Wan-Li (1573-1691), Portuguese imitations of 17th century Chinese porcelain, 17th century Spanish silverware, etc. There is a possibility that Khami was visited by Portuguese merchants and even missionaries, because a monumental cross consisting of small blocks of granite can still be seen traced on the rocky ground of Cross Hill, a small hillock immediately north of the mambo residence.

The population of Khami was spread over several hectares and lived in huts made from cob surrounded by a series of granite walls. The typology of the fences and walls is similar to that of the latest constructions at Great Zimbabwe. Worthy of note are the many decorative friezes, having chevron and checkered patterns, and the great number of narrow passageways and deambulatory galleries, not all of which are covered (UNESCO, Online).

Such is the summary of the great civilization that Bukalanga was, and the edifices of Maphungubgwe, Great Zimbabwe and Khami stand as epitomes of that great civilization - the Zimbabwe Civilization. There are of course many other of these edifices, for wherever Bukalanga peoples were settled, such stone wallings as those of Maphungubgwe, Great Zimbabwe and Khami were found. The other examples being Domboshaba in Botswana, Dangaleng'ombe (Dlodlo) near Bulawayo, Nhalatale in the Midlands Province, Luswingo in Bulilima-Mangwe, Dzata in Venda in the Limpopo Province, Bumbusi in Hwange and many others scattered all the way from Hwange to the Makhado Mountains in Venda. Many of these ruins were concentrated in the south and southwestern end of the Zimbabwean plateau in the areas still occupied by Bukalanga Kingdom peoples - Bakalanga, Banambya and Vhavenda - to this day, though a few are also found in modern-day Mashonaland where the land was sparsely settled at that time due to the highly humid conditions which was not favorable for agriculture - mainly cattle raising - and mining.

CHAPTER TWO

Who and What Actually Constitutes Bukalanga: A Re-Definition of Bukalanga vis-à-vis the Ndebele

In all descriptions of the Makalanga it must be carefully borne in mind that there is no tribe, existing as one, which bears this name, but the people to whom it is applied consist of many tribes having their own peculiar traditions and customs more or less allied, but with considerable differences most confusing to the enquirer - Richard Nicklin Hall and W. G. Neal 1904. The Ancient Ruins of Rhodesia: Monomotapa Imperium.

In the preface we saw that for most of the last 150 years, the peoples of Bukalanga have been treated as a sub-ethnicity of the Ndebele, the Ngwato and the Shona. We also raised the point that the Great Nation of Bukalanga is made up of at least eighteen tribes speaking different but interrelated languages. In this chapter we shall go into detail answering the question: Who exactly and what actually constitutes the historic Bukalanga Nation? In an era when Bukalanga has gone through many convulsions, displacements and assimilations, it may be a bit difficult to identify the people who actually belong to this our great nation, but we shall try by all means to clearly define it and rescue its identity from those that have been imposed on us.

By Bukalanga or the Kalanga Nation, this book goes beyond the definitions that we have in school textbooks today which claim that all who live in the so-called Matebeleland are Ndebele, all who live in the Central District of Botswana are Ngwato-Tswana and that all who live in the Masvingo and Midlands Provinces are Shona. The book goes beyond that and looks into the identity of the historic nation of Bukalanga dating back almost 2000 years. This book seeks to totally redefine the Great Nation of Bukalanga and reclaim its identity and heritage and rescue it from the externally imposed Shona, Ndebele and Ngwato-Tswana identities. Where the identity of Bukalanga was totally redefined by sword in the 19th century as Ndebele and in the early 1980s as Shona, we shall in the 21st century redefine by the pen as Kalanga, Venda and Nambya. It is my firm belief that before the 1980s generation is out, that is, by 2050, assuming a lifespan of 70 years, the Great Nation of Bukalanga would have been re-established

as one of the great democratic states of the world, living side by side with the Shona and Tswana in peace and harmony. Such is my hope, and such is my dream.

As has already been pointed out in the preface, the Twelve Tribes of Bukalanga that I have managed to trace, at least by studying the history of their origins, are as follows:

- | | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| 1. Bakalanga ⁶ | 5. BaLozwi/Loyi | 9. BaTwamambo |
| 2. BaNambya | 6. BaLemba | 10. BaTembe |
| 3. BaLobedu | 7. Vhavenda | 11. Babirwa |
| 4. BaLembethu | 8. BaTswapong | 12. BaShangwe |

We have the authority of a number of writers who lived among these people in the 19th century that indeed these groups are of Bukalanga ancestry. Let us start off with the Kalanga-Venda-Lemba relationship. About this we have the testimony of Professor G. Fortune who stated:

The Venda had a special relationship with the endogamous caste of smiths and craftsmen called the Lemba who have Islamic [actually Judaic] traits in their culture. These people are also well known north of the Limpopo. In Vendaland this group still speaks a form of Kalanga and, in Rhodesia, the only specimen of Lemba that the writer has seen is certainly Kalanga (Fortune 1973, 3).

Fortune cites as sources of his information Professor G. P. Lestrade (The Copper Mines of Musina, pp. 6, 10; *"Some notes on the ethnic history of the VhaVenda and their Rhodesian affinities"*, in Contributions towards Venda History, Religion and Tribal Ritual, edited by N. J. van Warmelo, Pretoria, Government Printer, 1932, p. xxviii); and N.J. van Warmelo (*"Zur Sprache und Herkunft der Lemba"*, *Hamburger Beit*

⁶ These are further divided into a number of sub-groups speaking dialects of TjiKalanga - BaLilima, BaJawunda, BaPfumbi, and BaTalapunda. Some linguists argue that even BaNambya are a sub-clan of Bakalanga since TjiNambya can be rightly classified as a dialect of TjiKalanga.

rage zur Afrika-kunde, 1966). Professor Lestrade and van Warmelo had at the time done what was perhaps the most extensive study of the peoples living on the banks of the Limpopo. We also read the following concerning the Kalanga-Venda-Lemba relationship in a 1905 report prepared for the General Staff of the War Office in London titled the *Native Tribes of the Transvaal* by Major R. H. Massie, General Commanding-in-Chief, South Africa:

The BaVenda people, apart from the ruling families, are believed to have crossed to the south of the Limpopo about 1700 A.D, and to have originally come from the valley of the Congo.⁷ Before entering the Transvaal they probably made a long stay in Mashonaland, the country of the “Makalanga,” and while there, seem to have come in contact with people of Arab extraction or other Semitic stock, for many individuals of the tribe at the present day show a strain of Semitic blood in their features. The language of the BaVenda, which is called Sivenda, is not easily understood by other tribes, but appears to be a mixture of some form of Sesuto with Lukalanga, the speech of the Makalanga people. It is said that a tribe now living on the Congo speaks a very similar dialect. There are remnants of a tribe called BaLemba among the BaVenda. These people are chiefly found in the Shivhasa district; they have no chiefs of their own, but have distinct customs, which point to Semitic origin, e.g., they do not eat pork or the flesh of any animal killed by people of other tribes. They speak the Lukalanga language (Massie 1905, Online).

Regarding that the Lemba are of Bukalanga stock is also attested to by the Electronic Bibliography for African Languages and Linguistics (EBALL). EBALL is a bibliographical database aiming to collect, as exhaustively as possible, references to works dealing with African

⁷ The group from the Congo are probably the Ngoni and Mbedzi who, according to Professors Beach and Fortune, are the core-Venda, with the remainder being the ones of Bukalanga origin. These are Vhadau, Vhatavhatsindi, Vhanzhelele/Vhalembethu, Vhatwamamba, Vhanyai, Vhalaudzi, Vhalemba and Masingo.

languages and linguistics, with an intended coverage comprising any and all languages found on the African continent, such as Afro-asiatic, Khoesan, Niger-Congo and Nilo-saharan languages. In the 2010 version compiled by Jouni Filip Maho, who has compiled the list since 1991, EBALL lists the Bukalanga Group Languages as made up of the following: Pfumbi, Thwamamba/Xwamamba, Lemba/Remba, Lembethu/Rembethu, Talahundra, Lilima/Humbe, Nambya/Nanzwa, Nyayi/Rozwi, Peri, Romwe, and Jawunda (Maho 2010, Online). A draft document of the *Preliminary "Indigenous" Institutional Profile of the Limpopo River Basin* also lists Kalanga as comprising various sub-dialects such as Lozwi, Lemba, and Nanzwa (Nambya) among others (Earle n.d., Online).

Concerning the Kalanga-Venda and Twamambo relationship we have the evidence of Professor David Beach, formerly of the University of Zimbabwe, when he wrote:

[T]he Zoutpansberg mountains had long been inhabited by Venda groups known as Ngona and Mbedzi, while the Limpopo Valley and the courses of its tributaries such as the Shashe or the Mzingwane had been the equally long-occupied area of the ... Kalanga. These Kalanga, or more accurately, southern Kalanga – had been cut off from the northern Kalanga of the Togwa and Tjangamire states by the immigration of the Sotho-speaking Birwa⁸, such as Hwadalala. One of the groups of southern Kalanga south of the Limpopo was 'Twamamba', and whereas some in the Brak River-Saltpan area continued to speak Kalanga, those who lived in the Zoutpansberg range itself came to speak Venda (Beach 1994, 180).

Let us now proceed to a consideration of other Bukalanga groups. That the BaTswapong are a Kalanga group was first revealed to me by my 70-year grandmother, Elizabeth MaDumani, who belongs to that tribe, when I asked her to recite for me their praise poetry

⁸ According to Phathisa Nyathi, the Birwa, though now identified as Sotho, are of Bukalanga too (see below).

(*zwitetembelo*). I would later find recorded evidence in the works of Professor Werbner who, in his contributing chapter to Meyer Fortes and Sheila Patterson's *Studies in African Anthropology*, identified BaTswapong as a Kalanga people (Werbner, in Fortes and Patterson 1975). Lest it be surmised that Professor Werbner cannot be an authority on who is Kalanga or not, we will do well to know that his research work among the Kalanga was assisted by leading and elderly Kalanga men and women such as Mbiganyi Tibone, Onalenna Selolwane, Sam Mpuchane, Gobe Matenge and Richard Mannathoko, all who are proud and self-identifying Kalanga.

On BaLobedu (also called Bakhalaka or Bakgalaka) we have the evidence of Eileen Jensen Kridge, former Emeritus Professor of Social Anthropology in the University of Natal. She and Dr J. D. Kridge visited twenty-six tribes in the Northern Transvaal in 1937 to obtain information on the Lobedu and surrounding peoples, and they came up with the following:

The genealogy of the Lobedu dynasty of Modjadji chiefs shows that their earliest chief, Dzugudini, flew southwards from Vokhalaka [or Bukhalanga] c. 1600. She points out that "There can be no doubt that the underlying Lovhedu [Lobedu] divine kingship stems from Rhodesia." She states that according to oral tradition the Lobedu once lived at a place called Maulwe which formed part of the Monomotapa kingdom ruled by a Mambo. The daughter of the Mambo, it is said, bore a child by her brother. Forced to flee before the wrath of her father, she left with her infant son and a following, taking with her the rain charms and *ditugula* (sacred amulets). They went south and after many vicissitudes, eventually arrived in the area they occupy today (Kridge, in Meyer and Patterson 1975, 57).

The evidence of the Kridges is backed by that supplied by one of the most well known Lobedu and one of the most prominent leaders of South Africa, the ANC Chief Whip, Professor Mathole Motshekga. He declared before the Gauteng Legislature in September 2007 during Heritage Day celebrations that:

I am a Molozwi-Mokhalaka also known as Molobedu. The Balovedu

(also known as Balozwi) and Bavenda are an offshoot of Barozwi ... who founded the Maphungubwe and Great Zimbabwe Civilizations. The name Balobedu means: the Recipients of Tributes while Balozwi means: sacred scientists who can make rain and control the forces of nature. The BaRozwi ... are an offshoot of the Makalaka/Bakhalaka people of Naphta (now Kordofan in the Sudan, heartland of ancient Ethiopia) ... the BaRozwi migrated to the Limpopo Valley where they established the Bokhalaka Empire with its Capital City of Maphungubwe which became both a spiritual and international trading centre of Central Africa (Mathole 2007, Online).

On the Bukalanga-Babirwa relationship we have the evidence of the well-known Bulawayo historian, Pathisa Nyathi, himself a member of that community. Writing with a focus on one of the Birwa groups he stated:

The group in question is descended from one Tshamuyalila, said to be the son of Malahwana/Marahwana the son of Mafutana. It should be clear that Mafutana is probably Makhurane, a name that was later Ndebelised in line with the incorporated status of this group of Nyathis. This particular group of the Nyathis does remember that they are Mbikhwa, *Mbikhwa waMakhura, Nareng, Mageza ngochago, amanzi alezibhidi* (they bath with milk, because water is polluted) *Banongula nonkaka* is a common family praise among the BaKalanga. The words have merely been translated into SiNdebele. (Interview with Goodboy Nguye Nyathi, Inyathi Mission 11 April 2009). It is interesting too to observe that Tshamuyalila sounds more Kalanga than Sotho. This should not come as a surprise given that the Babirwa are part of the generic BaKalanga. It could also be an indicator that the Babirwa had retained their erstwhile Kalanga identity by moving north. By so doing they were moving into an area where TjiKalanga was still spoken (Nyathi 2012, Online).

In explaining how Babirwa came to speak a dialect of Sotho, namely Sepedi, Nyathi wrote that:

The move to the south by the Babirwa must have brought them into contact with the ethnic Sotho. The Babirwa must have adopted both the language and the cultural practices of the Sotho. The one cultural practice they adopted was the preferred first cousin marriages. The language too changed but there were elements of the Kalanga/Venda that were characteristic of Northern Sotho. The Sebirwa has a heavy accent, for example in comparison with Setswana” (Nyathi 2011, Online).

Such are the relationships of the above groups to Bukalanga, and for this reason I submit that they comprise Twelve Tribes of the historic Great Nation of Bukalanga. We shall come to the Tembe and BaLoyi or BaLozwi later in the Chapter as well as in a later chapter when we consider more extensively the identity of the people that have entered history as BaLozwi or BaLozwi.

A look at the Twelve Tribes of Bukalanga in Zimbabwe will reveal that they constitute the majority of the people of the so-called Matebeleland, of which the Ndebele, whose definition we shall come to later (we shall also come to the Karanga in the next chapter), comprise a very small population. How is it then that the majority, perhaps over 75% of the population of the so-called Matebeleland, can be identified by the ‘foreign identity’ of the few, perhaps less than 5%, the remainder being the Tonga and Khoisan? Wouldn’t it be just, fair and equal to have the name *Matebeleland* changed to Bukalanga (excluding the Binga District of the Tonga), perhaps Maphungubgwe or Matopo-Njelele, reflecting not only the identity and heritage of the majority of the inhabitants, but the time depth of their settlement, that is, about 2000 years?⁹

⁹ I recognize the fact that the name *Bukalanga* is now usually used with reference to Bakalanga only, hence my proposal of an alternative names *Maphungubgwe*, taken from our first city-state and great civilization, as a tribally neutral names. This name captures

In any case, is it not only right that the newcomers should adopt the name of their hosts? Can a man walk into another's home as a visitor, only to take advantage of his host's hospitality and demand that the host should change his family name? Would that not be the height of rudeness and irresponsibility? Why exactly should the Ndebele not be humble enough to adapt to and integrate into the communities they found living in the land erroneously called Matebeleland like the Maseko-Ngoni in Malawi, the Makololo in Zambia, the Gaza-Nguni in Mozambique and the Shangani among the Tsonga in Mpumalanga Province, South Africa, for they certainly are not autochthonous to the region? What exactly is it that is very special about the Ndebele that they cannot adapt to and integrate into their host community - Bukalanga? Why exactly should their tribal name be imposed upon our nation? Have we as Bukalanga no right to reverse their violent conquest which destroyed not only our nation but our onward march and civilization? Such are some of the questions we need to answer as we work towards the Rebirth of Bukalanga.

Now that we know the various tribes of Bukalanga, let us look at another important way of identifying people of Bukalanga stock - their surnames - the most notable feature being that the surnames are *animal names* and *body parts names*¹⁰. Due to the convulsions of the last

our great civilization of old and also carries meaning for possibly 75% of the population of the so-called Matebeleland, as opposed to the names *Matebeleland* and *Mthwakazi* which invariably represent the Ndebele, who do not even make 10% of the population. Bakalanga, BaNambya, Vhavenda, and Babirwa can all identify with these name. BUT, let me state that my number one preference for an alternative name to both Bukalanga, Mthwakazi, and Matebeleland is as follows: that the Khoisan community be the one that supplies a suitable name, in Khoisan language, as they were the earliest inhabitants of this region. I strongly believe that all our national emblems marked in IsiNdebele and Latin should be changed and marked in Khoisan at provincial level. By this we not only acknowledge the Khoisan community as the earliest inhabitants of the land, but we renew focus on helping them out of their plight which has hitherto been ignored by government.

¹⁰ The Shona, who some researchers such as Professor David Beach have referred to as the Central and Northern Shona to distinguish them from the Kalanga and Karanga groups in the south, for their surnames mainly use their *chidawo* (honorificus) or name of clan progenitor, as opposed to animal names like we find among the Kalanga and some Karanga in the south and southwest of the country. Whilst they might *yera* (hold it taboo) this and that other animal, they generally do not use animal names as their surnames. A look at Shona and Kalanga oral traditions shows that this has always been the case (see Bullock 1927:96-115). The same applies to the Sotho-Tswana.

170 years, it will be noticed that many of the Kalanga surnames have since been translated into several of the languages that they now speak. It is also important to note that this is not a new phenomenon. Bukalanga peoples have always used this system of surnames, and a look at their oldest oral traditions shows that the surnames did not originate with the coming of the Ndebele in the 19th century as is commonly portrayed in the education system of Zimbabwe. The list, which is most likely not exhaustive, of Bukalanga surnames, is as follows:

Moyo	Sibanda	Dumani
Bhebhe	Nyoni	Nkomo
Dube	Nungu	Mpala
Ncube	Mvundla	Nyoni
Hungwe	Mpofu	Malaba
Ndebele	Nkala	Mloyi
Nkiwane	Nleya	Tjuma
Ndlovu	Khupe	Zhowu
Shoko	Shumba	Gumbo
Maphosa	Mthunzi	Baloyi
Nyathi	Mlalazi	Ngwenya

Many of these Kalanga surnames can also be found in their various translated forms or alternative renderings. For example, mainly in South Africa, the surnames are rendered as follows in many cases: Mthembu and Tembo for Dube; Mdlovu, Tlou and Ndou for Ndlovu (Zhowu in TjiKalanga); Mncube, Phiri,¹¹ Msimang and Nsimango for Ncube (Shoko); Muleya for Nleya; Nhliziyo, Mthunzi and Nkiwane

The Nguni, like the Shona, also use the name of clan progenitor for their surnames. See *The Historiography of Southern Africa: Proceedings of the Experts Meeting held at Gaborone, Botswana from 7 to 11 March, 1977*, "On the other hand one is struck by the fact that all these other groups observe totems to mark descent, and the Nguni, as a rule, do not" (Unesco 1980: Online).

¹¹ This surname is now commonest among Nyanja or Chewa people, and whilst I have not yet been able to establish the source, the Wikipedia entry for Chewa language and Chewa people points to historical links between these people and the mediaval kingdoms of Bukalanga, namely the Momotapa Kingdom.

for Moyo, and Mokoena for Ngwenya (Ngwenya)¹². A look at these surnames reveals that millions of people who have them today are not generally identified as Kalanga. Many are identified as Ndebele, Zulu, Tswana, Shona, Lozi, Sotho, Chewa, and many other identities that do not originate in Bukalanga. Concerning Bukalanga surnames and their translation into various languages, especially isiNdebele, Bulawayo historian Pathisa Nyathi explains:

In dealing with ... Kalanga people, we need to look at the situation before the arrival of the Ndebele. The Kalanga had surnames that they were using whose language the Ndebele did not understand. It became necessary for the Kalanga to give equivalents for their surnames. For example the Hhowu or Zhouwu became Ndlovu, Whungwe became Nyoni. Long after colonialism there was a time when many Kalanga people sought to change their surnames into Ndebele. This was their way of fighting inferiority complex [imposed by the Ndebele] (Nyathi 2010, Online).¹³

It will therefore be noticed that most people who identify as Ndebele in Zimbabwe today are of Kalanga stock, and they are the majority of the people of the so-called Matebeleland Provinces. It is ironic that these are the people who in Zimbabwe are daily being accused by some amongst the Shona of being 'foreign intruding settlers from Zululand settled in Shona land' and yet they are the aboriginal Bantu

¹² There seems to be there a difference between the Sotho-Tswana *Bakwena* and the people who use the surnames Ngwenya/Mokoena, although some are now identified as Sotho as much as other Bakalanga. These are the ones who have historical affinity with the Kalanga. Whilst some Sotho-Tswana clans can be identified as Bakwena, Bataung, Batshweneng, Batlounge, etc, they too traditionally do not use these animal names for surnames.

¹³ I suspect that perhaps this change of surnames might have its origins even centuries before the coming of the Ndebele. This would have been somewhere about the turn of the 17th century when the Nguni AbaMbo from the north swept through Bukalanga incorporating large numbers of the Kalanga into their ranks. Since that move went with it untold destruction (see below and Chapter Twelve), it is likely that it would have had the same effect as the 19th century migrations from the south to the north.

inhabitants of the land who settled it over 1500 years before the Shona themselves arrived as we shall amply show in the next chapter, only preceded in the land by the Khoisan. In fact, the ancestors of the majority of people in the so-called Matebeleland have no link with Zululand whatsoever!

But, if the Surnames listed above are of Bukalanga Origin, how then do we explain similar Surnames in especially KwaZulu-Natal?

Before going to press this particular chapter of the book was 'leaked' through my personal blog at <http://www.ndzimuunami.blogspot.com> and through the online news site, *Bulawayo24*. A lot of disputations came my way to the effect that it cannot be true that all people who use *animal and body parts* names for their surnames have their origins in Bukalanga. The biggest charge was that if this be the case, how do we explain the existence of these surnames as listed above all the way from Mpumalanga to KwaZulu-Natal. Some participants in Facebook groups that I am involved with charge that since there are people with the surnames Ncube, Mncube, Ndlovu, Mdlovu, Mthembu,¹⁴ and so on, stretching from Mpumalanga to Zululand, these people cannot be of Bukalanga ancestry. A response article was even written on *Bulawayo24.com* by one Mloyiswayizizwe Sokhela disputing my assertions concerning Bukalanga identity and its reach into South Africa, and excerpts from it went thus:

I read with great fascination Ndzimu-unami Moyo's rendition of

¹⁴ Not to be confused with the Xhosa AbaThembu (or AbaThimbu) of Nelson Mandela's clan. These are Tembe people. "Historically they settled in the region that spans from Maputo Bay in Mozambique in the north of the Mkuze River in the south, and the Pongola River in the west in the middle of the 16th century (Kloppers 2001 - *The History and Representation of the History of the Mabudu-Tembe*). The Tembe people are named after Chief Mthembu, who arrived from Zimbabwe around 1554 and settled in the region around Maputo Bay" (www.upetd.up.ac.za/./02chapter2). Kloppers notes that the incorporation of the Tembe into the Zulu nation has been a result of the recent Zulu expansion in the 19th century, otherwise prior to that they had always been an independent kingdom separate from the Zulu. The Tembo north of the Zambezi, a similar people group with the Mthembu or Tembe crossed with Zwangendaba on his flight from what is now Zululand during the *mfecane* wars.

Kalanga history in his Chapter 1 installation in a Bulawayo24News edition. His consultation of sources was quite extensive (albeit not interpretively accurate) while his narration and arguments are fairly informative and intellectually provocative. Let me start by affirming his right to a cultural identity and express my solidarity with his desire to fight for the recognition, promotion and preservation of the Kalanga identity for it is the responsibility of every generation to ensure that it does not become the terminal point for the posterity of its species. The Kalanga have undoubtedly a rich heritage and legacy in Southern Africa as evidenced by the various '*luswingo*' sites scattered throughout the region. In South Africa, although associated with the Venda (a point which Moyo clarifies), the Mapungubwe '*luswingo*' is so highly esteemed that in terms of the country's national merit criteria, "The Order of Mapungubwe" is the utmost national honour that the country can ever bestow on an individual. I look forward to his further installations.

However, in spite of all the positive aspects that I have pointed out in Moyo's historical account, there is a worryingly great deal of tribal prejudice, anger and bitterness most of which are reserved for the Ndebele people whom he invariably describes in hostile terms. Moyo also generously distributes Kalanga identity to everybody: a section of Zulu people in South Africa are Kalanga and they are identifiable by their animal totems! A section of Tswana people including the aristocratic Ngwato clan as well as the Tswapong and Tauwana are Kalanga! A section of the Tsonga people (baka BaLoyi) are Kalanga, a section of Sothos (Pedis) including the aristocratic Bakwenas are Kalanga and some sections of Venda people are Kalanga including the Lemba and Lobedu clans. While I fully sympathise with Moyo for his nostalgia (for indeed the Kalanga have a legendary foot print in the sub-region) I find his claims quite ridiculous in their attempt to construct a ubiquitous image of Kalanga identity which is being injected into the veins of every Southern African Bantu!

... Turning to the allegation of some Zulus in South Africa being Kalanga on the basis of their animal totems, I think Moyo committed a serious act of amateurish propaganda. His speculation that the Kalangas who left the 'Mapungubwe city-state' migrated to Natal is a desperate attempt to 'deploy' Kalanga ethnicity to other people

without concrete historical facts. This is not only preposterous but also embarrassing (Sokhela, *Reconstruction of the Kalanga history welcome but beware of distortions!* Bulawayo24News, 9 May 2012).

The Bukalanga origins of and relationships with the Lemba, Lobedu, Tswapong, and Venda have already been dealt with above, we need not go back to that. What I want to concentrate on below is the issue of Bukalanga surnames that Sokhela calls Zulu. He is right that some of the people bearing these surnames are now identified as Zulu and Ndebele, something which we have already explained above, but he ignores the Bukalanga origins of these people, or simply would not bring himself to accept the evidence.

Could it be true that mine is mere “speculation that the Kalangas who left the ‘Mapungubwe city-state’ migrated to Natal [and that it] is a desperate attempt to ‘deploy’ Kalanga ethnicity to other people without concrete historical facts”? Well, let us see if we can have some concrete historical facts below. To do so we will look at a few sources that point to Kalanga migrations into and settlements in Natal, starting with Mr. J.T. Bent who in 1892 recorded that there was a major Kalanga migration down into Natal in the 1720s which was forced by the migrations of the Nguni tribes. He wrote in *The Ruined Cities of Mashonaland* that:

Several tribes of Makalanga came into Natal in 1720, forced down by the powerful Zulu hordes, with traditions of once having formed part of a powerful tribe further north. Three centuries and a half ago, when the Portuguese first visited the country, they were then all-powerful in this country, and were ruled over by a chief with the dynastic name of Monomotapa...” (Bent 1892, 32-33).

Secondly we have the record of the missionary Alfred T. Bryant who wrote in his work, *Synopsis of Zulu Grammar and a Concise History of the*

Zulu People from the Most Ancient Times, in 1905, that indeed, there are people of Bukalanga origin and ancestry in Natal, the amaLala. Of them he wrote:

The aboriginal inhabitants of Natal were not, unless remotely, of the same stock as the Zulus. They were amaLala - another people with another speech. Their so-called *tekeza* language was, previous to the time of Shaka, considerably different to that of the trans-Tukelian clans and was almost unintelligible to them; and it was only after the over-running of Natal and the universal leading into captivity of its peoples by the conquering Zulu host, that the ancient *tekeza* speech died out and all the youth of the land grew up knowing and speaking nothing but the language of their conquerors...There are...many words in use in Natal which are absolutely unknown in Zululand, some perhaps remnants of the original Lala speech - an incident we should most certainly expect - while others are probably importations from neighbouring tribes (Bryant 1905, Online).

Conjecturing that the amaLala were originally a people of Bukalanga stock and that they lost that identity as a result of the 19th century Shakan invasions, Bryant further wrote:

It has been stated by Bent - but with what authority we do not know - that certain wandering Kalanga peoples came down into Natal about this time, or as he says, in the year 1720. Now, in Natal at the present day we find no knowledge whatever of any such immigration. But we do find that territory occupied by numerous clans whose origin and speech seems to have been altogether different from that of the Zulu clans now north of the Tukela. These are the Lala people who, we have said, were, immediately prior to their entering Natal, in residence, or at least a part of them, in present-day Zululand, while others perhaps were more inland in territory adjoining Swaziland. At

any rate, they were the sole occupants of Natal at the time of Shaka's invasion at the beginning of last century, and were commonly known to the Zulus under the general name of amaLala - a name whose meaning often puzzled us, until we were given by old Lala the picturesque explanation that it was a term, unknown to themselves, but, contemptuously applied to them by Shaka's people, who used to say, *ngoba belala benomunwe egolo*.¹⁵ Somehow or other, perhaps owing to their forefathers having been all but exterminated by the Zulu conqueror Shaka, these clans, even though still abundantly in evidence in Natal (notwithstanding that they have now entirely lost their original language), no longer possess any tradition of their origin or their history prior to the time of the Shakan invasion. What we do know is that they were a people famous to the Zulu tribes as working in iron, and that their speech, unlike the softer Zulu, belonged to that harsh *tekeza* variety of the Bantu, common to the Swazi and some other peoples further north. But the Kalanga too were, and still are, celebrated precisely in the same manner as great iron-workers, and, moreover, many of the clans in the region of Mashonaland seem to us to speak a language which, along with that of the Lalas and Swazis, appears to have the *tekeza* characteristics. May, then, the Kalanga heard of by Bent (probably from some Suto or middle African source) as having emigrated into Natal, have been really these same amaLala tribes?

South of Mount Wedza, in Mashonaland, we find even today a tribe, industrious as iron-workers, and calling themselves pa-Marara (or pa-Malala, as some Natives pronounce it), and the particular country inhabited by them is known as mu-Tekedza. Is it, then, nothing more than a coincidence that there should somewhere be a tradition of Kalangas having come down towards Natal, and that we should actually find there tribes commonly known to the Zulus as amaLala, and their particular speech said to be to '*tekeza*'?

[Bryant continued]

The statement that Kalangas once came down into Natal would be

¹⁵ It has been pointed out by Dr Theal that "a few [tribes] were called after some peculiarity of the people, but in some cases the titles were originally nicknames given by strangers and afterwards adopted by the tribe itself" (Theal 1896:42-43).

still more intelligible and acceptable to us if it could be shown that there was some linguistic affinity between the Kalanga and Tonga [i.e. Tsonga] peoples. For there does seem to be, or originally to have been, some recent intimate connection between the Lalas of Natal and [many] of the widely-spread Tonga tribes. Owing to the scarcity of our information, we could not indicate at present any likely spot, though we may say we have observed a marked similarity between the Shitswa dialect, spoken by certain Tonga Natives in the neighbourhood of Inhambane, and that of the Natal Lalas - thus, Shitswa, *imbywa* (dog), Lala, *imbwa*; S. *tihomo* (cattle), L. *itiyomo*; S. *ihosi* (chief), L. *ihosi* and *iyosi*; S. *tinyane* (birds), L. *itinyoni*, and so on. The single Lala word *imbwa* for 'dog' is itself evidence of much. So far as we can trace, this root, though almost universal in the more northern Bantu languages from the Swahili to the Herero, nowhere else exists among the extreme south-eastern tribes save among these Lalas and Tongas. Manifestly, then, the former could not have adopted it from any of their present neighbours, but must have brought it with them from some more northern source and that, to wit, nowhere south of Inhambane (Bryant 1905, Online).

Bryant's position on the likely Bukalanga origins of the Lala and the disappearance of their speech, which if indeed they were originally Kalanga, would have been one of the Bukalanga Group Languages, is seconded by Clement M. Doke, one time Professor of Bantu Studies at Wits University. He wrote in *The Bantu Speaking Tribes of South Africa* in 1937 concerning the early history in Natal and of the Nguni and Lala that:

The Nguni are markedly a "cattle people"; and the presence of "click" sounds in their language seems to be due, almost undoubtedly, to contact with that purely pastoral people, the Hottentots. The problem is how, where, and when such contact was effected. The existence of this problem is by itself sufficient to cast serious doubt on the speculations of writers about early Nguni

history, for they do not account for what we actually find. The presence of the clicks in all the Nguni dialects - even those of the Transvaal Ndebele, who have been living in that province for at least three to four centuries, seems incomprehensible except on the assumption of a focus point of Nguni development far in the South, where contact with the Hottentots was possible. All this is not in accord with the theories hitherto put forward as to the way in which the Nguni came down from the North and occupied their present home. The accepted chronology tentative of course also does not appear to meet the case. There is a third grave difficulty: the Lala enclave which used to occupy approximately the present Southern Natal. The Lala were largely wiped out a hundred years ago, but enough remnants are left which may be studied. Not very much of true Lala custom and speech has survived to be recorded, but even this has not yet been done, and so we know almost nothing about them. It is claimed for them that they were of Shona origin, and some features of their language certainly are reminiscent of Shona or Tonga; but beyond that nothing definite can really be said [by *Shona* Doke is referring to the Kalanga as we shall see in Chapter Three]. In addition, an almost impenetrable veil was drawn over the past a century ago. In the Cape Colony destructive frontier wars were waged, while in Natal it seems that hardly a tribe was fortunate enough to be left undisturbed during Shaka's reign. Whole tribes vanished, and everywhere traditions, culture, and material possessions were lost (Doke 1937, Online).

There is also the evidence presented by Samuel Kadyakale, a Maseko-Ngoni from Malawi who describes himself as somebody passionate about all things Nguni. He sourced his information from W.H.J. Rengeley's 1978 book, *History of Angoni or Ngoni People*, who in turn sourced his information from Portuguese documents of the 16th and 17th centuries. In detailing Bukalanga migrations and settlements into Natal he writes thus:

The abaMbo ... crossed the Zambezi River in 1575 and on other occasions at about that time, together with a part of the amaZimba tribe. Most of these amaZimba stayed on the south bank of the Zambezi River until defeated by the Portuguese, when the survivors returned to the north bank of the river. The abaMbo, however, did not delay at the Zambezi River. Having crossed the river, accompanied by a portion of the amaZimba tribe, they moved up into the higher country to the south, and settled for a few years under an abaMbo chief named Sonza between the Sabi and Limpopo Rivers in order to grow crops. Finding themselves too near the powerful maKalanga kingdom of Munumutapa, and the soils of the area where they settled too poor and the rainfall too erratic, they moved on again and by 1620 had reached Natal.

Meanwhile, other groups of amaZimba and abaMbo had moved direct through the country occupied by the baTonga [i.e., Tsonga] and had probably already reached and settled along the seaboard of Natal which they found then occupied by the pygmy baTwa and the click-speaking Bushmen. While in the country of the maKalanga, the host of Sonza incorporated large numbers of amaKalanga into the abaMbo tribe, and also annexed maKalanga cattle...

In 1589, Manoel de Faria e Sousa described a tribe he called the Virangune as inhabiting the country inland from Delagoa Bay. These were part of the amaZimba host who did not tarry at the Zambezi River nor accompany Sonza, but had moved direct through the baTonga country to Natal, and were probably at that time still moving south, but they may equally well have been the amaZimba division of the abaMbo host of Sonza which had already separated under their chief Nguni, as the name Virangune or amaNguni would appear to make the more likely ... The amaKalanga incorporated into the abaMbo tribe of Sonza and his amaZimba satellites during their stay in the maKalanga country have given rise to the present-day amaLala, and many of the clan names of the amaLala are those of the amaKalanga (Rengeley, in Kadyakale, 2009 Online).¹⁶

¹⁶ It is true that Kadyakale does sometimes use the term Makaranga, but we already know from the original documents like Alcacova's letter that it is a reference to the Kalanga, of the which some of the Karanga are a 1700s offshoot.

Further evidence that indeed Bukalanga peoples did settled in what is now KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga Provinces of South Africa as well as Swaziland is to be had from the Swedish missionary, the Reverend Henry Junod. Junod was a member of the Swiss Romande Mission, living in Lourenco Marques [modern-day Maputo] during 1885-1895 and again from 1907-1921 among what was called by the generation of his writers the Thonga tribes. We know them today as the Tsonga. From his research work spanning about a quarter of a century, Junod wrote his two volumes, *The Life of a South African Tribe, Volumes I and II*. In the introduction to the first volume, Junod tells us that his informants were all over the age of eighty years at the turn of the 20th century, which means they would have been born about the turn of the 19th, somewhat close to the events that they were recounting in their discussions with the missionary. Describing the Thonga, (or Tsonga tribes as we know them today), Junod wrote:

The Thonga tribe is composed of a group of Bantu peoples settled on the eastern coast of South Africa, extending from the neighborhood of St. Lucia Bay (28° Lat. S.) on the Natal Coast up the Sabie River on the north. Thongas are to be found there in four of the present South African states: in Natal (Amatongaland), Transvaal (Leydenbourg, Zoutpansberg and Waterberg districts), in Rhodesia, and chiefly in Portuguese East Africa (Lourenco Marques [Maputo], Inhambane and Mozambique Company districts). The Thongas border on the Zulus and Swazis southwards; westwards on the Ba-Mbaya, Ba-Lauti and other Suto-Pedi clans in the Transvaal; northwards on the Vendas and Ba-Nyai in the Zoutpansberg and Rhodesia, and on the Ndjaos near the Sabie; and eastwards on the Thongas near Inhambane and on the Ba-Chopi, north of the mouth of the Limpopo... The name Thonga is a generic name for a number of tribes, addressed using various names such as: Ronga, Tsonga (also Hlengwe), Tjonga, and Shagaan or Tshangaan. They are divided into the following six groups: the Ronga, the Djonga, the Nwalungu, the Hlanganu, the Bila, and the Hlengwe (Junod 1927, 13, 16-18).

Recounting the legends of the Tembe and Ba-ka-Baloyi [or BaLozwi] who now live among the Tsonga and Zulu, Junod pointed out the following:

Almost every clan pretends to have come from afar, and strange to say, they came from all points of the compass. Two of their clans, without doubt, come from the north, the Ba-ka-Baloyi and the Tembe. The Ba-ka-Baloyi, they say, came down the valley of the Limpopo in very remote times... According to some of the Native historians, the Ba-Loyi came from the Ba-Nyai country along with the Ba-Nwanati (a Hlengwe group), who also belonged to the Nyai or Kalanga race. As regards the Tembe clan, it is said to have come down as far as Delagoa Bay from the Kalanga country by the Nkomati River on a floating island of payrus, and to have crossed the Tembe river and settled to the south of the Bay ... The Tembe people, when they greet each other, sometimes use the salutation Nkalanga, i.e. man of the north or of the Kalanga country, and there is little doubt that, notwithstanding the legendary traits of this tradition, the fact itself of the northern origin of these clans is true (Junod 1927, 21-23).¹⁷

Junod's report on the Bukalanga origins of the Tembe is also attested to by W.S. Felgate who, in *The Tembe Thonga of Natal and Mozambique: An Ecological Approach*, reports that the Tembe claim to have migrated from Kalanga country (Felgate, in Kloppers 1982, Online). The names of Mabudu/Mabhudu-Tembe chiefs given by the missionary A. T. Bryant in 1905 seem to confirm a Kalanga origin. We have such names as Sikuke (c.1692-1710), Ludahumba (1710-1728), Silamboya (1728-1746), Mangobe (1746-1764) Mabudu/Mabhudu (1764-1782), Mwayi (1782-1800) and Muhali (no reign).

¹⁷ The Delagoa (or Maputo) Bay is located just to the north of the St. Lucia Bay and the Mkhuze River which just to the south of Maputo and the Lebombo Mountains. It is east of the Swaziland, receiving its waters from the Mkhomazi/Mkhomati, Matola and Tembe Rivers. All this region is now generally Zulu and Swati-speaking. That the BaLoyi and the BaLozwi are one and the same people please see Posselt (1935, 143).

In an abridged version of a document published in submission to the Nhlapho Commission opposing the claim by Eric Nxumalo that he should be installed as King of the Tsonga (and Shangaan people) in 2007, Mandla Mathebula, Robert Nkuna, Hlengani Mabasa, and Mukhacani Maluleke wrote that over the centuries, the Tsonga have assimilated other cultural groups who came to live with them in South East Africa, and among those were:

Tembe-Karanga (Kalanga), who were in the Delagoa Bay region by 1554. The Baloyi–Rozvi (Lozwi), were already in the N’walungu region during the time of the Dutch occupation of the Delagoa Bay (1721-31). Some Hlengwe oral traditions claimed that the Hlengwe were actually the ones who converted the Valoyi from Rozvi (Lozwi) into Tsonga in Zimbabwe and Mozambique. This probably happened after the death of the powerful king of Rozvi, Changameri Dombo in 1696 (Mathebula, Nkuna, Mabasa, and Maluleke 2007, Online).

Surely, we can no longer claim that it is mere speculation that there are indeed people of Bukalanga ancestry settled in the modern KwaZulu-Natal. Neither can we still say it is a desperate attempt to deploy Kalanga ethnicity to other people without concrete historical facts! Whoever wants to dispute that will have to wrestle with the sources and tell us how and why they are wrong. We cannot help but admit that there is certainly a gem of truth in the assertion that there are people of Bukalanga stock settled in KwaZulu-Natal. They are to be identified by their *animal name surnames*, not totems, but *surnames*, for virtually all Bantu groups do have animal totems! It is true that much of past history will always remain shrouded in the mystery of the distant past. But we do not have much option than to work with the little available information that we can gather from the earliest sources to at least arrive at an understanding of what the past looked like. With what we have presented above, we cannot rule out the possibility of Kalanga migrations to and settlements in Natal in times past, before and/or cocurrently with the Nguni settlements.

I always find it a bit ironic that people who deny the possibility of Bukalanga settlements in Zululand don't find it questionable that the Zulu themselves are spread all the way from KwaZulu-Natal to Tanzania. Neither do they take into consideration the fact that the Khoisan communities, who are known to have settled Africa south of the Zambezi before the Kalanga, are found all the way from Angola down to the Western Cape Coast. Sometimes I think it is a result of ignorance of Bukalanga history combined with an underestimation of how big a nation this once was. When one considers the fact that the borders of the Bukalanga kingdoms swept from the Zambezi to the Makhado Mountains, and by some accounts even had influences extending to the Orange River in the modern Free State Province, it should not be difficult to imagine the Kalanga being spread across all of Southern Africa.

Identifying the Ndebele, the so-called *amaNdebele oqotho*

Now that we have settled the question of Bukalanga identity, let us now proceed to identify the Ndebele in Zimbabwe, as well as to answer the question: how do we differentiate the Ndebele from the Kalanga? To answer that question let us take a look at the clan-names of the Ndebele. I have already pointed out in a footnote above that the Ndebele, like all Nguni groups, traditionally do not use animal or body parts names for their surnames. Indeed, like all Bantu groups, they do have animals that they identify with, but they do not use the names of those animals as family names or surnames as we find in Bukalanga. What they use instead, is the name of the clan progenitor or ancestor. Unless otherwise clarified in this book, I am using the terms Matebele, AmaNdebele or the Ndebele with reference to those people who bear the surnames provided below, those who in the Ndebele state were referred to as *abezansi*. These are they that left Zululand under the leadership of uMzilikazi, and they are identifiable by their Nguni surnames. I am not using the names Matebele or AmaNdebele with reference to the so-called political classification which says that all who live in Matabeleland are Ndebele. Instead, I am using the terms with reference to those people who crossed the Limpopo already bearing the name Matebele, from which we get the name AmaNdebele, a name they got as far away as the Free State.

The list of these Ndebele surnames given below was provided by the Reverend Mtompe Khumalo and recorded by the Reverend Dr Neville Jones in his book, *My Friend Khumalo*. The list is as follows:

Khumalo	Danisa	Mbambo	Nxumalo
Xaba	Mahlobo	Siwela	Dlamini
Masina	Hlabangana	Mafu	Zitha
Ndiweni	Mtupa	Dlela	Thebe
Mahlobokazi	Gwebu	Dlodlo	Thwala
Mzizi	Mthethwa	Gumede	Dlomo
Magutjwa	Mphoko	Fuyane	Maduma
Mathema	Mkhwananzi	Masuku/Zikode	Sitsha
Dumane	Tjili	Mlotshwa	Zikhali
Mhlanga	Hadebe	Khanye	Tshabalala
Sigola	Sithole	Gunene	Gama
Tjabangu	Hlongwane	Mathe	Ngxongo
Dladla	Cala	Sigcaba	Makhwelo
Manyathelo	Gasela	Zimba/Mhlophe	Nzima
Matjazi	Hlatjwayo	Mlangeni	Maseko
Magagula	Mavundla	Ndimande	Thabethe

According to the Reverend Jones, who worked with the Reverend Mtompe Khumalo for many years, Khumalo was a member of the Matabele Royal House and distantly related to the Ndebele King Lobengula. He was a hereditary adviser to the King and would have held a position of considerable authority had King Lobengula been living during Kumalo's mature years. He [Khumalo] was born in the royal kraal at eNyathini in the area of present-day Burnside, Bulawayo. He was a cattle herdsman at the time of the battle of the Shangani Patrol, so would have been born between 1875 and 1880. He grew up near Hope Fountain where he later attended the mission school. After working for a transport-rider and as a miner, he entered the Tiger Kloof Institution near Vryburg [South Africa] in 1914 to study for the ministry. Three years later he was ordained as minister at Hope Fountain Mission where he remained until his death.

The Rev Jones tells us that Khumalo had a vast knowledge of the lore and history of the Matabele and was concerned that it might be

lost for all time. He then prevailed upon his friend and associate, Dr. Jones, to undertake the writing of a work in collaboration with him detailing the history, customs and culture of the amaNdebele. According to Jones, Khumalo was also a “good linguist” who spoke Sechuana (Setswana), Sekalanga (TjiKalanga), Shona and English as well as his native Sindebele (Jones 1944, 4). We therefore cannot help but accept the Reverend Khumalo as a reliable source in this regard especially bearing in mind that he was born within fifty years of the arrival of the Ndebele in Bukalanga.

Because of the way Ndebele identity is highly contested versus that of Bukalanga especially in the so-called Matabeleland, I would also like us to draw comparisons between Ndebele surnames as given above and those of other Nguni, in this case the AmaHlubi, which list is as follows:

Dakana	Masingila	Ndlela	Dinwa
Ndlovu-Malunga	Masoka	Dladla	Mayaba
Ndumo	Dontsa	Mazibuko	Nkala
Hlangebi	Mbambo	Hlatywayo	Nkomo
Nkwali-Maphela	Mbongwe	Mkhwane	Ntethe
Khambule	Mlandu	Ntlaphu	Khasibe
Mguni	Phakathi	Mpangela	Mtambo
Tadebe	Khumalo	Mpila	Sithole
Tshabalala	Langa	Khesa	Lubelo
Msi-Skhosana	Tshabangu	Vundle	Thuse
Mabaso	Mtungwa	Masiyi	Ndana
Nala-Nzima	Xaba	Ludwaba	Ndaba
Zengele-Thiyani	Maphetha	Makhunga	Maduna

The above list was provided by Henry Masila-Ndawo in 1938. Masila-Ndawo was born in Matatiele amongst the AmaHlubi, and became a leading *imbongi* (praise poet) among the AmaXhosa. (Matatiele is located in southern KwaZulu-Natal, and that name is doubtless familiar to Zimbabweans through the SABC1 soapie, *Generations*, as the rural home of the Memelas). We note that this list is very much similar to the one supplied by Khumalo of Ndebele surnames, the main difference being that this one contains a few *animal name*

surnames, explanation of which shall follow below in addition to what we have already given above. What I would like to establish by comparing these two lists is the fact that whilst we may have people now identified as Nguni or Ndebele who use animal names for their surnames, the frequency thereof is so rare as to show an external, non-Nguni origin, of the surnames. By extension this would mean that there is a very high probability that no person in Matabeleland who uses this type of surnames is originally Ndebele, but originally of Bukalanga ancestry. The dynamics of what has happened to see many of our people identified as Ndebele will be dealt with in Chapter Eleven when we deal with what has happened to Bukalanga.

From the list above, the occurrence of animal name surnames is about 7%. Interestingly, when Masila-Ndawo goes into the detailed histories and praise-poetry (*iziduko*) of these people, those with animal name surnames begin to be shown to be what we may call 'outsiders' to the amaHlubi nation. For example, the Msimanga, a Nguni variant of Nsimango (similar to Shoko/Ncube/Phiri), Masila-Ndawo writes (in isiXhosa) that "*aba bantu babonwa befika kwaMhlanga, bekunye nabaTwa. Bathi bangabaTwa nanamhla oku. Kodwa ke thina sibafumana bengamaHlubi ngqe*" (translation: "these people were seen arriving kwaMhlanga together with the Khoisan. Even today they identify themselves as Khoisan. Though we now find them today identified as amaHlubi"). The Mncube-Khambule [*im'Zilankatha*] are shown to have formerly been an independent kingdom from the AmaZulu, akin to the Mabudu-Tembe [the Dube-Mthembu] that we have referred to in a footnote above. They were originally two independent groups - Mncube and Khambule - though they have now come to be viewed as one. They do have a Mlotjwa affiliation only through having once lived under that chiefdom.

Also of interest are the Ndlovu some of who now view themselves as the true AmaNtungwa (or pure AmaNdebele), *ooNdlovu zidl' ekhaya ngokuswela umalusi*. A look at Masila-Ndawo's history seems to give the impression that they became AmaNtungwa by assimilation. They are the sons of Ndlovu, and Ndlovu is rarely if ever a first name among southern Bantu peoples. Even its rate of occurrence amongst Nguni surnames shows that it is not traditionally a first name, or name of a clan progenitor. Even more interesting is the fact that in his book, *Uphoko*, Dr Siphon R. Khumalo traces the

Ndlovus in Zululand up north among the Sotho, where we know that many Bakalanga in the Maphungubgwe region and most of Limpopo Province were absorbed by the Sotho as already stated above (Khumalo is quoted from the Ndebele website Inkundla at <http://www.inkundla.com>).

We also find clear pointers to Bukalanga origins in the Ndebele clan in Zululand (not to be confused with the AmaNdebele tribe of uMzilikazi or the Southern Ndebele). A look at the *iziduko* of this clan ends with the phrase *they who bath with milk saying water is polluted*. This is one of the most classic praises of virtually all the Kalanga irrespective of their surname. It is true that some of these people are now Zulu, and have through the centuries even adopted Zulu praise poetry, yet we cannot help but marvel at their origins in the Great Nation of Bukalanga!

Masila-Ndawo's statement that some of the groups forming the AmaHlubi nation came from outside is confirmed by the AmaHlubi King's Planing Committee, AmaHlubi Royal Committee and the AmaHlubi National Working Committee. In a document titled *Isizwe samaHlubi: Submission to the Commission on Traditional Leadership Disputes and Claims*, arguing that the AmaHlubi are a separate nation from AmaZulu, they state that certain groups such as the Nkomo, Msimang, Nkala, and others were incorporated into the Hlubi nation, but were not originally part of it. They also argue that they were the largest segment of the eMbo or AbaMbo who we learned that on their southward march they incorporated many Kalanga into their ranks. They state that they settled in the territory marked by the Pongola River to the north-east, east of which were settled the Mabudu-Tembe of Chief Mthembu, which clan we have already encountered above. They also state that their language belongs to the *tekeza* or *tekela* variety of the amaLala, a Kalanga group, though now identified as Nguni. All this shows that intermarriages and intermixtures between the AmaHlubi and Bakalanga cannot be ruled out, hence explaining what we believe to be typically Bukalanga surnames such as Nkomo, Ndlovu, Nkala, etc (the 2004 document referred to here is available online under the title *Isizwe samaHlubi*).

A complete list of Nguni clan names or surnames is provided in my blog at <http://www.ndzimuunami.blogspot.com> for those readers familiar with Nguni languages. What will be noticed from that list is

that the rate of occurrence of animal name surnames is just about 3% out of about 1400, showing that these are traditionally not Nguni surnames. A list is also provided of Xhosa clan names. The occurrence of animal name surnames is only about 2.1% of the total of about 95 clan names, excluding the hundreds of sub-clan names. On the contrary, among peoples of Bukalanga stock - Bakalanga, BaNambya, some Venda¹⁸ - and the majority of those now called Ndebele - the occurrence of these type of surnames is about 100%, proving our position correct that Bukalanga is the source and origin of these surnames.¹⁹ Also, a look at the Maseko-Ngoni in Malawi will reveal the same trend reported above. Samuel Kadyakale provides a fine list in his blog posting titled *The Clans of the Ngoni According to G.T. Nurse*, posted in October 2010. His material is sourced from G. T. Nurse's 1978 book, *Clanship in Central Malawi*, pages 50-62. Similarly there, the surnames we have identified as of people with origins in Bukalanga are identified too as Kalanga, with just a few slight variations.

Indeed, we can safely conclude that the people who use animal name surnames in Matabeleland, KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga and Swaziland are people of Bukalanga origin, whose migrations we have already dealt with above. Coming back home this leads to the conclusion that all people in the so-called Matabeleland using animal names for surnames as we listed in the Bukalanga surnames list are not Ndebele, but make up the Great Nation of Bukalanga. In fact, the list of *zansi* surnames provided by the Rev Khumalo contains no animal name surnames, again proving our position correct that no-one in the land presently called Matabeleland who uses such a surname is Ndebele. Yes, some of them may now speak IsiNdebele, but their ancestry is Kalanga. This should effectively serve to clear the identity crisis that seems to be prevailing so much in the so-called

¹⁸ The Venda, we are told (Stayt, 1931) are 'a composite people...the tribe is composed of sibs and groups of unrelated people, who have, in varying circumstances and localities, come into contact with a small homogenous nucleus and have become identified with it'. (Robinson 1958: 108-120). The Ngoni and Mbedzi are not of Kalanga origin, but are the group that came straight from the Congo (Beach 1994: 180) and 'before entering the Transvaal...probably made a long stay in Mashonaland, the country of the "Makalanga"' (Massie 1905: Online).

¹⁹ As a result of discriminatory tendencies in Botswana by the Tswana, Bakalanga in that country have now by and large moved to the use of ancestral names like the Tswana (refer to Werbner's works employed in this book).

Matabeleland.

The reason I had to go into so much detail on what surnames are Ndebele and which ones are of Bukalanga is because there is a lot of confusion in Zimbabwe, especially in Matabeleland, regarding who is Ndebele and who is not. The peoples of Bukalanga - Bakalanga, BaNambya, Babirwa, and Vhavenda - as well as the Khoisan and Tonga, are bandied up together and identified as AmaNdebele, many times against their own will. Too many a time, it is the Nguni who are pushing the idea that Bakalanga, Vhavenda, Banambya, Babirwa, etc, are Ndebele with the obvious intention of boosting their numbers. The question is who gave them that prerogative to decide for us what identity we want to take on. And why precisely must we accept one tribe, which settled in our land whilst fleeing from the Tshakan wars, to impose its identity upon us after finding us already a nation with a very long history over 1800 years in this land? It is not beyond any dispute that the Ndebele identity is an imposed one, for the Ndebele crossed the Limpopo already called by the name Matebele, precursor to the name AmaNdebele. That name was not invented in Zimbabwe as some today would have us believe. In fact, they were identified by that name as far away as what is now the Free State Province of South Africa.

I contend therefore that many a so-called Ndebele in Zimbabwe is actually of Bukalanga stock. Many Bakalanga especially, out of lack of knowledge, understanding and appreciation of their own history, heritage and identity, identify themselves as AmaNdebele who came down from Zululand, whereas their identity is nothing of that sort. This is especially the case amongst the younger generation. What they do not understand is that they became AmaNdebele by militarily forced subjugation at the expense of their own identity. The choice was between submission to uMzilikazi and his Ndebele and death at the hands of his assegai-wielding impis. Finding nothing taught in school about Bukalanga, many Bakalanga shun their identity and hide themselves in Ndebelehood, in the process forfeiting the great heritage of their Fathers, many times thinking that the Kalanga are a Shona group; and some Ndebele, especially as represented by the Mthwakazi movement, are on the frontlines of using this strategy of trying to 'scare' Bakalanga into Ndebelehood.

CHAPTER THREE

The Relationship Between Bukalanga and the Shona: Are We Really a Shona People?

*[The]Makalanga in the region of Southern Rhodesia... seem to be of different stock from other Mashona tribes and apparently are of alien origin. [They]... have preserved their distinct physical features, so many of the royal families of Rhodesia seem to have retained "Hamitic" characteristics for some time. The early Portuguese noticed the difference in appearance between the Batonga, Barwe, and Monga on the one hand, and the Makalanga on the other, the latter appearing to have been "not of a very black color" and "men of great stature". Many other physical attributes have been ascribed to the Makalanga in order to distinguish them from the other natives; "They are a noble race, and respected among the Negros"; "they are very strong, light and agile" and "are very proud" and "each one seems to be a king of the woods" – H. A. Wieschhoff 1941 *The Zimbabwe-Monomotapa Culture in Southeast Africa*.*

When reading Zimbabwean school history textbooks, one finds everywhere plastered the word Shona in connection with vast swathes of the country's precolonial and postcolonial history. One is told that the people with whom the Portuguese interacted beginning in the 16th century were the Shona. From school history books to Wikipedia entries, one finds the record that it was the Shona who were responsible for the Zimbabwe Civilization, claiming that the Shona built the archaeological sites of Maphungubgwe, Khami, Great Zimbabwe and others. One is informed that the Monomotapa, Togwa and Lozwi polities were Shona institutions. In fact, one would say that all of the pre-colonial history of Zimbabwe is attributed to the ancestors of the people called Shona today.

One finds nothing about the Kalanga recorded, and yet, going back to the earliest recorded sources available, one finds countless sources mentioning the Kalanga. One finds the Kalanga mentioned in association with Portuguese trade in the region, and as the race that was responsible for the Zimbabwe Civilization. Yet, reading school history, one hears absolutely nothing about them, or they appear just in footnote form. The only exception among the Wikipedia entries is

the one on the precolonial history of Zimbabwe. It is perhaps one of the only Wikipedia entry that tells a precolonial history of Zimbabwe that is in line with the primary sources. The entry states:

It is believed that Kalanga speaking societies first emerged in the middle Limpopo valley in the 9th century before moving on to the Zimbabwean highlands. The Zimbabwean plateau eventually became the centre of subsequent Kalanga states. The Kingdom of Mapungubwe was the first in a series of sophisticated trade states developed in Zimbabwe by the time of the first European explorers from Portugal. They traded in gold, ivory and copper for cloth and glass.

From about 1250 until 1450, Mapungubwe was eclipsed by the Kingdom of Zimbabwe. This Kalanga state further refined and expanded upon Mapungubwe's stone architecture, which survives to this day at the ruins of the kingdom's capital of Great Zimbabwe. From circa 1450–1760, Zimbabwe gave way to the Kingdom of Mutapa [the Monomotapa Kingdom]. This Kalanga state ruled much of the area that is known as Zimbabwe today, and parts of central Mozambique. It is known by many names including the Mutapa Empire, also known as Mwene Mutapa or Monomotapa and was renowned for its gold trade routes with Arabs and the Portuguese. However, Portuguese settlers destroyed the trade and began a series of wars which left the empire in near collapse in the early 17th century. As a direct response to Portuguese aggression in the interior, a new Kalanga state emerged called the Rozwi [or Lozwi] Empire.

Relying on centuries of military, political and religious development, the Rozwi removed the Portuguese from the Zimbabwe plateau by force of arms. The Rozwi continued the stone building traditions of the Zimbabwe and Mapungubwe kingdoms while adding guns to its arsenal and developing a professional army to protect its trade routes and conquests. In 1839, the Ndebele people arrived while fleeing from the Zulu leader Shaka, making the area their new empire, Matabeleland. In 1837–38, the Rozwi Empire along with other Shona states were conquered by the Ndebele, who arrived from south of the Limpopo and forced them to pay tribute and

concentrate in northern Zimbabwe (Wikipedia, Online).

The question at hand for now is: what is it that Portuguese documents contemporary to the times under discussion tell us? We know that obviously there is no mention of the Shona because the word Shona was not in existence then. But, do we find anything at least in those documents that identifies the people that are called Shona today? Perhaps in the 18th and 19th century documents. Here and there we find references to some of the Shona dynasties that we know to exist today. But it seems that prior to 1700, there is hardly anything that can be pointed out as referring to the Shona. We do not hear much about them. And this is as it should be, for as we shall see later, the Shona only arrived in the Zimbabwean plateau at the opening of the eighteenth century.

But who are the Shona people? According to Professor George Kahari, former Professor of African Languages and Literature at the University of Zimbabwe and a Zimbabwean diplomat:

Shona is an artificial term used by linguists to refer to an agglomeration of mostly, but not completely, mutually intelligible dialects found within and outside Zimbabwe. Within the borders of Zimbabwe, the language consists of six clusters: Korekore in the north, with ten dialects; Zezuru in central areas; Karanga in the south; Manyika in the northeast; Ndau in the southeast; and Kalanga in the west. Outside Zimbabwe the language is spoken in Botswana, Zambia and Mozambique ... Today the total number of Shona speakers exceed 9 million within Zimbabwe (Kahari 1990, 5).²⁰

²⁰ It is on the basis of this definition that it is usually claimed that the Shona are the majority in Zimbabwe constituting over 70% of the population at about nine million people. But as we shall see later in the chapter, the Kalanga are not a Shona people group, and even those who came up with the idea of 'creating' the Shona language concluded that Kalanga Group Languages do not fit into the Shona Group.

On googling the word Shona and checking the Wikipedia entry, one finds the following information given:

Shona is the name collectively given to two groups of people in the east and southwest of Zimbabwe, north eastern Botswana and southern Mozambique ... The Shona people are classified as Western Shona (Bakalanga) and the eastern Shona. The western Shona are called the *Bakalanga* and is agreed that it is the oldest Shona cluster ... It should be known that Western Shona and eastern Shona languages are distinct *ethnic groups* who happen to have been one ethnic group hundreds of years ago. The use of the term usually neglects the western Shona which might confuse a lot of people even in historical documents. For example, it is said that Venda is a conglomeration of Shona and Sotho; it is meant western Shona (Wikipedia, *emphasis mine*).

As the Wikipedia entry above indicates, Kalanga is deemed the oldest of the “Shona languages.” The writer further states that:

The Shona-speaking people are categorized into seven main linguistic groups: Zezuru, Manyika, Karanga, Korekore, Ndau, Kalanga, Nambya. These groups are all mixed up and there is hardly anything to distinguish them except the dialects. Many people who are Karanga, Zezuru, Ndau, are from the Western Shona (Kalanga) who migrated east after the destruction of the Rozvi state by the Ndebele. Shona speaking people were also taken to Matabeleland as captives and regard themselves as either Kalanga or Ndebele. Previously, these differences did not exist as all these groups referred to themselves as Karanga. The Mutapa State which was in the area that is now Zezuru/Korekore was referred to as Mukalanga just as much as the western state was Vhukalanga. The term Shona is as recent as the 1920s. The Kalanga and/or Karanga had, from the 11th century,

created the empires and states on the Zimbabwe plateau. These states include the Great Zimbabwe state (12th-16th century), the Torwa [Togwa] State, and the Munhumutapa states, which succeeded the Great Zimbabwe State as well as the Rozvi State, which succeeded the Torwa State, and which with the Mutapa State existed into the 19th century ... The major dynasties were the Rozvi of the Moyo (Heart) totem, the Elephant (of the Mutapa State), and the Hungwe (Fish Eagle) dynasties that ruled from Great Zimbabwe. The Kalanga who speak TjiKalanga are related to the Karanga possibly through common ancestry. Some Shona groups are not very familiar with the existence of the Kalanga hence they are frequently not recognized as Shona today (Wikipedia, Online).

There can be no doubt that there are elements of truth in the Wikipedia entry above, though, when we compare its claims with the body of evidence available on the history of the Zimbabwean plateau, we find that it is fraught with two major inaccuracies: that the whole group of people referred to as Shona was once called the “Karanga”, and that the “Zezuru, Korekore, and Ndau” are offshoots of the Kalanga. There is of course truth in the statement that these groups have been heavily intermixed as a result of the convulsions that swept Southern Africa in the 19th Century.

But now, a number of questions arise, if the Zezuru and Ndau (and presumably Manyika) are offshoots of the Kalanga, in what way then are the Kalanga considered a “Shona” group? Should we not actually say that the Shona are a Kalanga group? The usual argument is that the term ‘Shona’ is a ‘universal’ one just like Nguni, referring to a people group with mutually intelligible languages. But, are Kalanga Group Languages really mutually intelligible with the Shona Group Languages? In any case, is it true that these people share a common ancestral origin, or if they do, did they settle in the Zimbabwean Tableland at the same time? And even if it were so, in comparison, is it possible to create a ‘standard Nguni language’ out of Xhosa, Zulu, Swati and Ndebele? To answer these questions, let us begin with a consideration of the idea that TjiKalanga is a Shona dialect.

The Southern Rhodesia Missionary Conference (SRMC) held its first meeting in 1903 with a view of developing a Shona orthography, and in doing so, it advocated the unification of a number of dialects that were considered to be mutually intelligible for the purposes of publishing one version of the Bible which could be understood by the speakers of all the supposed main dialects of Shona: Zezuru, Karanga, Manyika, Korekore and Ndaau.

In 1913, one of the missionaries, the previously mentioned Rev Neville Jones, proposed a motion to the conference on the need for the compilation of vernacular readers for use in both Mashonaland and Matabeleland. By 1927, the missionaries had managed to get the cooperation of government in the teaching of indigenous languages. Pursuant to that, the Native Commissioners Conference was held in the then Salisbury which endorsed the missionary idea of creating one language out of a diverse number of supposedly mutually intelligible dialects. The Colonial Secretary and the Director of Education at the time are reported to have been interested in the value of vernacular education and also in the unification of Shona dialects into a common language (Kahari 1990, 11-12).

In 1928, the Conference passed a resolution which advocated the standardization of Shona orthography, but could not come up with conclusive action on the way forward as there was no agreement that indeed all the considered languages could fit into the 'Shona' corpus, for there wasn't total mutual intelligibility amongst the considered languages. It was then resolved that expert advice be sought to help on the matter, and the International Institute for African Languages and Cultures (IIALC) was approached to conduct research and advise the conference on the matter. Professor Clement Doke, then Professor of Bantu Studies at Wits University, was tasked with this job. He conducted a year-long intensive and extensive study of the language groups across the country that were considered to be of the Shona cluster.

Professor Doke's research findings revealed that there were 'five' main 'Shona language' divisions, namely, Korekore, Zezuru, Ndaau, Karanga, and Kalanga. However, his research into the structure of TjiKalanga showed that it is phonetically different from the other dialects and was of such a divergent vocabulary that it was seen not fit that it be included in the Shona language group with the other

dialects which all showed an underlying common vocabulary, as well as phonetic and grammatical features (ibid.,12). In his own words after research, Professor Doke stated that Kalanga, comprising the so-called Kalanga proper, Talawunda, Lozwi/Rozwi, Nyayi, Lilima, and Peri, was sufficiently different from the other clusters to preclude its participation in the Shona unification.²¹ Let us quote his own words to capture this point well. He wrote:

In 1929 a survey of the linguistic position of Southern Rhodesia was undertaken, resulting in the acceptance of a new unified orthography and proposals for unification over most of the area. Western Shona was excluded from this unification owing to too great a divergence from the other clusters ... It was further decided that the unified grammar be standardized on the basis of Karanga and Zezuru, while for vocabulary purposes words from Zezuru, Karanga, Manyika, and Ndaou be drawn upon, the introduction of words from other dialects being discouraged ... This western type of Shona (Kalanga) was sufficiently different from the other clusters to preclude its participation in the Shona unification (Doke 1954, 23, 205., 252).

Since the time that Professor Doke concluded that TjiKalanga could not be regarded as a Shona dialect, an almost 100 year-battle has been raging on about the same question. In the modern era on the frontlines of that battle as far as arguing that TjiKalanga is a Shona dialect is a group of scholars at CASAS - the Center for Advanced Study of African Society - among whom are Professor Herbert Chimhundu, one of the architects of Zimbabwe's assimilationist

²¹ The term 'Kalanga proper' is here used with reference to the dialect spoken mainly in Bulilima-Mangwe to distinguish it from other dialects - TjiLilima (the western variant), TjiJawunda (the southern variant) and TjiTalawunda (the south-central variant). I would like to propose herein that we rename the so-called 'Kalanga proper' TjiLozwi, for calling it 'Kalanga proper' or 'TjiKalanga' gives the impression that the other dialects, namely Lilima, Talawunda and Jawunda, are somehow less Kalanga. TjiLozwi is taken from the fact that this dialect is the eastern variant, and close to the center of the Lozwi Kingdom at Khami and Dangaleng'ombe.

language policies. The other leading figure there is Professor Kwesi Prah, a believer in the creation of a few African ‘super-languages’ through the assimilation of the so-called minority languages. On the opposite side has been man and women working with the Kalanga Language and Cultural Development Association (KLCDA) and the Nambya Language and Cultural Organization (NALACO) who, happily, have scored a number of successes with the Ministry of Education in opposing the idea of CASAS that a ‘super-Shona language’ be created by assimilating Bukalanga Group Languages (TjiKalanga, TjiNambya, TshiVenda) into Shona, and creating one standard Shona which would then be taught across the country.

Of course for those of us who have been involved in this kind of work for some time now are aware that this is part of a broader plan to turn Zimbabwe into Shona country. For what this amounts to is that once CASAS’ goal is realized, from Plumtree to Mutare, from Venda to Victoria Falls, and from Gwanda to Chirundu, the so-called ‘standard Shona’ will be taught, and a few years down the line, government might turn around and say after all there is no more need for IsiNdebele in this country since the majority of people currently learning the language in the schools are Bakalanga, BaNambya, and Vhavenda. After all, propositions are even being made by certain Shona elites and scholars that TjiKalanga is a “corrupted version of Shona”, supposedly corrupted through the influence of IsiNdebele, despite the fact that TjiKalanga hardly contains any Ndebele words. But as we shall see throughout this chapter, this is part of the Big Lie that ‘Shona history’ generally is.

Having said that, we now need to be asking: if indeed Zezuru and Manyika are offshoots of the Kalanga as stated in the Wikipedia entry above, how is it then that Kalanga, which is not a Shona (Zezuru and Manyika) dialect, be regarded as a variant of Shona? And since TjiKalanga was the state language of the Monomotapa, Togwa and Lozwi Kingdoms, how then is it that a language that has been in existence for no less than 1000 years, be regarded as a dialect of an artificial language created less than 100 years ago out of the amalgamation of dialects with which it is not mutually intelligible? That Kalanga is a very old language as currently spoken in Zimbabwe and Botswana is beyond doubt. We saw the Wikipedia entry above stating that Kalanga is the oldest of the ‘Shona’ dialects. But how old

is it? The answer was provided in Chapter One when we considered the earliest settlements of Bukalanga in the Zimbabwean Tableland, namely the Leopard's Kopje Culture. But that is as far as archaeology goes. What do contemporary Portuguese documents say about the ethnolinguistic history of this country and the sub-region in the 1500s when written records started being made?

Obviously, we don't expect to find any mention of the Shona, for as we have already seen, Shona is a word of recent origin. But do we find mention of any people group that perhaps was the ancestors of the present Shona tribes? Or, are the Makalanga the ancestors of the modern Shona? To answer these questions let us begin with the works of Dr Theal with a focus on answering the question of the date of arrival of the Shona in the Zimbabwean Tableland, still keeping in mind that by Shona we mean specifically the Zezuru and their close counterparts the Manyika. The Ndau, whilst also identified as Shona, are mostly descendants of Nguni migrants who left Zululand under Soshangane. They can easily be identified by their Nguni surnames.

When did the Shona arrive in Zimbabwe?

Let us start off this section by telling a little bit of who Dr Theal was so that we can decide on the reliability of his information. Dr George McCall Theal was Professor of History at Queen's University in Kingston, Canada, and Foreign Member of the Academy of Arts and Sciences, Utrecht, Holland. He was also Corresponding Member of the Royal Historical Society in London; Honorary Member of the Literary Association; the Leiden Commission for preparing a History of the Walloon Churches, and the Historical Society of Utrecht. In addition to the preceding, Dr. Theal was formerly Keeper of the Archives of the Cape Colony and Historiographer of the Government there. His translation work of Portuguese documents resulted in his vast volume, *The Records of South-Eastern Africa* first published in 1898. According to him, he had done what was at that time arguably the most extensive study of Bantu peoples of Southern Africa. His works are highly commended to those who would like to know more about the history of Zimbabwe and Southern Africa. British archaeologist Dr David Randal-McIver, in highly recommending Dr Theal's work, wrote in 1906:

My report [on the Zimbabwe Ruins], being wholly independent and original, may be judged upon its own merits, and it will be sufficiently clear why little or no reference has been made to various books which it was impossible to praise and would have been invidious to criticize. A single honorable exception must be made. There is one work of sterling scholarship which ought to be known to all who profess an interest in these subjects, namely, Dr. G. M. Theal's *Records of South-Eastern Africa...*" (David Randall-McIver, *Mediaeval Rhodesia*, 1906).

Concerning the time of the arrival of the Portuguese on the east coast of Africa and the ethnolinguistic situation in the region in the early 1500s, Dr. Theal wrote in 1896:

About the close of the fifteenth century, white man encountered a number of groups in southern Africa, and there were three major groups of these people. There were the Bushmen, the Hottentots and what became known as the Bantu. The Bantu occupied a greater part of southern Africa south of the Zambesi for many generations, and not having intercourse with each other, naturally developed differences. The Bantu tribes could be classified into three groups, though it should be remembered that there are many trifling differences between the various branches of each of these.

In the first group can be placed tribes along the eastern coast south of the Sabi River, and those which in recent times have made their way from that part of the country into the highlands of the interior. The best known of these are the Amaxosa, the Abathembu, the Amampondo, the Amabaca, the Abambo, the Amazulu, the Amaswazi, the Amatonga, the Magwamba, the Matshangana, and the Matebele. This group can be termed the coast tribes, although some members of it are now far from the sea. The second group can include the tribes that a century ago occupied the great interior plane and

came down to the ocean between the Zambesi and the Sabi rivers. It will include the Batlapin, the Batlaro, the Barolong, the Bahurutsi, the Bangwaketsi, the Bakwena, the Bamangwato, all the sections of the Makalanga, and the whole of the Basuto, north and south. This group can be termed the interior tribes.

The third group will comprise all the Bantu living between the Kalahari and the Atlantic Ocean, such as the Ovaherero, the Ovampo, and others. These have no mixture of Asiatic blood. They are blacker in color, coarser in appearance ... The individuals who composed the first and second groups varied in color from deep bronze to black. Some had features of the lowest negro type: thick projecting lips, broad flat noses, and narrow foreheads; while others had prominent and in rare instances even aquiline noses, well developed foreheads, and lips but little thicker than those of Europeans. Among the eastern tribes these extremes could sometimes be noticed in the same family, but the great majority of the people were of a type higher than a mean between the two. They were of mixed blood, and the branches of the ancestral stock differed considerably, as one was African and the other Asiatic (Theal 1896, 39-40).

[In a later work Dr Theal wrote]

In 1505, when the Portuguese formed their first settlement on the southeastern coast, the Makalanga tribe occupied the territory now termed Rhodesia and the seaboard between the Zambesi and the Sabi rivers. *Before the commencement of the eighteenth century that tribe was broken up by wars ... and about that time a considerable immigration began to set in from the north ... These immigrants, who were the ancestors of the people now called by Europeans Mashona, came down from some locality west of Lake Tanganyika in little parties, not in one great horde. The first to arrive was a clan under a chief named Sakavunza, who settled at a place near the town of Salisbury.* The details of this immigration were not placed on record by any of the Portuguese in the country, who merely noticed that there was a constant swirl of barbarians, plundering and destroying, and replacing one another; and when recent investigators, like Mr. R. N. Hall, of Zimbabwe, and Mr. W. S. Taberer, the government commissioner, endeavored to gather the particulars from the descendants of the immigrants, it was found impossible to obtain

more accurate information from them concerning the events of distant times than the general fact that their ancestors came down from the north about two centuries ago (Theal 1907, 63. *Italics mine*).

The outstanding statement as far as the topic of when the Shona arrived in Zimbabwe is concerned is the one that has been italicized in the paragraph above. It clearly sets the date of the arrival of people now called Shona in Zimbabwe in the 1700s, the 18th century. The record of Sakavunza is also attested to by F. W. Posselt. Posselt served as Native Administrator in Matabeleland from 1908, and was transferred to the then Marandellas [in Mashonaland] in 1922, where he served for ten years before being again transferred to Plumtree in 1933. He also stated that several Shona tribes have traditions of their ancestors arriving in Zimbabwe under one Sakavunza, corroborating the Portuguese record of Dr. Theal.

That the Portuguese record is indeed true cannot be doubted, for it is supported by the oral traditions of the Shona themselves, though this is the kind of tradition that today one will not find referred to in Zimbabwean school history books. One such tradition was recorded by Professor Stanlake Samkange concerning the Zwimba people who are considered the real MaZezuru, or Central Shona. Of the Zwimba people Professor Samkange wrote:

In the land of Makonde, in the Chinhoyi district, near the Chitombo-rwizi Purchase Area, towards the Karoyi River, are people known as The People of Zvimba who live in their land called Chipata. These people are real MaZezuru. Their cognomen or Mutupo is Ngonya pa Nyora. Their honorificus - Chidawo is Gushungo; or Owner of the fruit forest, Pachiworera, Tsiwo, Terror of the Waters! ... Now where did these people come from? Listen! Hear! These people of Zvimba came from Guruwuskwa. No one can tell you the exact location of this place called Guruwuskwa. All our elders only point to the North saying: "This way, that is where Guruwuskwa is, this way" (Samkange 1986, 1).

Samkange states that when the then District Commissioner inquired as to the history and origins of the Zezuru people in 1955, he was told by one Mr. Chakabva, who was the elder brother of one Headman Dununu, that “Neyiteve, the son of Chihobvu, the Progenitor, left the area where Chihobvu lived in Guruwuskwa and came west in search of new land. At that time, the Rozvi’s ruled this country. A Mu Rozvi named Tumbare [Tumbale], gave land to Neyiteve when Neyiteve said: “My feet are swollen.” He became the first Zvimba” (Samkange 1986, 5). The District Commissioner also wrote in 1965 of the Zwimba people that “These people formed part of the general migration from the north. They say they came from a place named Guru Uskwa (probably in Tanganyika). They were led by one Nemaunga and his son or younger brother Neyiteve. The country they occupied was originally occupied by Chief Svinura’s people (Chiwundura?) but they were driven out by the VaRozvi” (Samkange 1986, 5).

There are two points of interest here. If the ‘Chief Svinura’ is indeed Chiwundura as Samkange thinks, then the proposition raises very interesting questions about the date of the settlement of the Shona in the Zimbabwean Tableland. Chiwundura is the Shona rendering for the Kalanga King Tjibundule, [called Netshiendeulu by the Venda]. Tjibundule is known to have been conquered by Mambo Dombolakona-Tjing’wango Dlembewu Moyo in the late 1600s (Rennie, in Schoffeleers 1978, 260). We of course know that half of Zimbabwe was at that time under the leadership of King Tjibundule, with the other half having been under the leadership of the Monomotapa. Whilst Tjibundule was a dynastic title dating back to the 1500s or so, here the tradition collected by Professor Samkange clearly states that when the Zezuru arrived it was around the time at which the reigning Tjibundule was overthrown by the Lozwi, and the country under Lozwi rule, with Tumbale allocating them land. That would have been in the late 1600s, for that is the time the Lozwi Mambos took over power from the Tjibundules, and the mention of Tumbale confirms this date, for he is was the leading medicine-man and army general at this time.

The other point is that of the place named Guruwuswa. Where was the land of Guruwuskwa? In Lozwi-Kalanga traditions we are told that it is a place where the people, in their migrations, could not find firewood, and had to use grass for wood. They then exclaimed,

"guni buhwa!", meaning we can also use grass in the place of firewood as fuel, in TjiKalanga, Guruwuskwa being the Shona rendering.²² We know that this is a place in southern Zimbabwe because we are told that it was near the Crocodile River, that is, the Limpopo (Posselt 1935, 143-144). In Kalanga oral traditions collected by Mr. Kumile Masola, the region is also identified as southern Zimbabwe, for we are told that the Lozwi/Nyayi crossed the Tuli River before they conquered the Togwa Kingdom of the Tjibundules.

But was the land of 'Guruwuskwa' of the Zezuru the '*guni buhwa*' of the Kalanga? That seems very unlikely and confusing. For if the Shona Guruwuskwa was in the north as pointed by their elders, how could it be in the south at the same time? That is, south of Makonde where the traditions by Professor Samkange were collected. Is it not possible that some Shona oral informant had heard about the *guni buhwa* tradition from the exiled Lozwi-Kalanga, and assumed that it was the place of Shona origin? That seems very likely since "it was found impossible to obtain more accurate information from them concerning the events of distant times than the general fact that their ancestors came down from the north about two centuries ago" when enquiry was made into their particulars.

Zimbabwe's former Education and Culture Minister, Mr. Aenias Chigwedere, in one of his works (*From Mutapa to Rhodes*) identified Matabeleland as the land of Guruwuswa of Shona oral tradition (Chigwedere 1980, 2). Of course Mr. Chigwedere got this information from the highly unreliable works of Mr. Donald P. Abraham who first came up with the idea that Guruwuskwa was a province in the south-west of Zimbabwe,²³ yet according to the traditions collected by Professor Samkange, the Zwimba elders pointed to the north as the location of their Guruwuskwa (Samkange 1986, 1). How could they

²² Many Kalanga words have been recorded in history in Shona due to the fact that many researchers began their researches in Mashonaland where Shona history was already intermixed with that of the Kalanga who had fled the Ndebele from their homeland in the modern Matabeleland. The language had also already been affected, such that we find many Kalanga names given in Shona, for example, Dlembewu is given as Dyembeu, Tjilisamhulu as Chirisamhuru, Mwali as Mwari, Tjibundule as Chiwunduro. A look at works that were researched among Bakalanga, Vhavenda and Banambya keep the Kalanga renderings which are consistent with Portuguese documents and archeology.

²³ That the works of Abraham cannot be trusted at all shall be seen later in Chapter Six.

have come from the north and south at the same time? This also in a sense proves as false the proposition that one sometimes hears made that the people now called Shona (specifically in northern Zimbabwe) were once all “Karanga” who migrated to the north from the south of Zimbabwe. It is clear their elders pointed to the north as their original homeland, and they certainly could not have migrated from the north and south at the same time. This of course has a huge bearing on the common proposition that the so-called Matabeleland was once Shona land, a proposition we have already dismissed as false.

In *The Karanga Empire*, Chigwedere identifies Guruwuswa as a region “to the west of Lake Malawi” with “tall grass and rather few trees”. Chigwedere identifies this region as the place where the Mbire, the ancestors of the Shona according to him, temporarily settled in after they “started to trek out of Tanganyika towards the Zambezi River” in 900 A.D. (Chigwedere n.d.,32).²⁴ Interestingly, Chigwedere comes up with this new position in 1982, two years after he had identified Guruwuswa as Matabeleland in *From Mutapa to Rhodes* in 1980, but he does not attempt to make any explanation for his new position!

Commenting on the term *guruwuswa*, Professor Beach pointed out that “Guruwuswa was first noted as a land of [Shona] origin in 1904, and further references appeared in the 1920s, 1940s and 1950s. The publications of Donald Abraham in 1959-63 converted Guruwuswa into the province or empire of Guruwuswa [modern Matabeleland], writ large on the political map of the Zimbabwean plateau, and school books have now made this place of origin very well known indeed” (Beach 1994, 259-269).

It is partly on this basis that the Shona claim that Matabeleland was once their land that was stolen by the Ndebele. But it is interesting to know that the Shona have never at any point in history settled in Matabeleland, a region which has always been Bukalanga as we have already seen in previous chapters. The histories of Abraham, later popularized by other writers, and more specifically Chigwedere, have come to thoroughly influence the Zimbabwean school history syllabus, and indeed to impact on the political economy of the country, distorted as they are!

²⁴ We will remember from Chapter One that the Kalanga by this time, 900 AD, had already been in Zimbabwe for close to 1000 years.

We also have more evidence that the Shona indeed arrived in what is now Zimbabwe about 300 years ago in the works of Professor Beach. After conducting extensive research among the various Shona dynastic chieftaincies in the 1980s and 1990s, Professor Beach wrote: "For all I knew, it might not have been possible to get any sort of coherent pattern any earlier than about 1750 ... " (Beach 1994, 8). Beach's research findings revealed that virtually all Shona dynasties that have no Kalanga or Tonga²⁵ connections could not provide any coherent oral tradition that dates back to anything before 1700, and this is the case amongst dynasties in Mashonaland and Manicaland today. With reference to the Central and Northern Shona (the Zezuru and Manyika) and the dating of their dynasties, Professor Beach wrote:

According to the traditions, we have a series of migrations, nearly all moving from the north-east to the south-west, which overcomes very nearly all of the aboriginal inhabitants [Bukalanga] of the area in the period 1700-1850. This, one could say, is practically the stereotype of Shona traditions. Yet there are some odd features about the southern plateau history. Although it is most unusual for Shona genealogies to go much further back than 1700, even without the help of Portuguese documents it is possible to see that some dynasties in the center, north and east, have genealogies starting at about 1700... (Beach 1994, 133).

The obvious question that arises from the above is: if the Shona have been in this land for as long as they claim today, why is it that none of their dynasties has a history going back beyond 1700? Or are we to assume that *all* their informants *forgot* their pre-1700 history in the land that is now Zimbabwe? Is that just not testimony enough that there is actually no such history in the first place? The challenge is for Shona scholars and students to tell us what happened to lead all their

²⁵ For example, the Ngezi and Rimuka Dynasties are now regarded as Shona but were originally Tonga (Beach 1994: 53).

informants to forget the pre-1700s history if that is what we are to assume.

Professor Beach has also raised a very interesting point in this regard. He informs us that in his extensive researches amongst the Shona groups, except in a very few instances, he did not find any oral traditions whatsoever that linked their dynasties to the Zimbabwe Ruins. No traditions existed amongst the Shona about the origins of the Zimbabwe Ruins, even though in some places Professor Beach found that the communities were living close to the edifices. He noted that “Apart from the case of the *zimbabwe* on Gombe mountain in Buhera, there is no connection between the dynasties of the *shava* belt and any *zimbabwe*-type buildings, and their history cannot be projected back to the Great Zimbabwe period” (Beach 1994, 29).²⁶

The *shava* belt that Professor Beach is referring to is made up of the following Shona groups that are found mainly in Mashonaland and Manicaland:

[I]n Bocha, in the angle of the Odzi and Save, Marange; in Buhera, on the south bank of the upper Save, the Nyashanu and Mutekedza dynasties, once part of the Mbiru dynasty; south of Buhera, the Munyaradze dynasty; west of the watershed...the Mushava, Nherera and Rwizi dynasties; ... on the middle Mupfure, the Chivero dynasty; far to the west of Chivero, in the angle of Munyati and Mupfure, the Neuso dynasty; and west of the Munyati, on the Mafungabusi plateau, the Chireya, Njerere, Nemangwe, Nenyunga and Negonde dynasties, ... the NeHarava and Seke dynasties of the upper Mhanyame, the Nyavira dynasty of the Gwizi flats and the Hwata and Chiweshe ... dynasties of the upper Mazowe (Beach 1994, 28).

²⁶ Interestingly, the only area in which Professor Beach found any traditions about the Zimbabwe Ruins among the Shona dynasties, Buhera, is an area into which settled the Lozwi-Kalanga who fled their homeland in the modern Matebeleland during the Nguni invasions. The very name Buhera itself is a corruption of the Kalanga name *Dombo lo Buyela* (see Masola, *Nau Dza Bakalanga*).

The same trend reported above is similar for most of the Shona dynasties that Professor Beach studied. For all we know, most of the Zimbabwe Ruins were already constructed by 1700, except for a few that were constructed in the 18th century. This explains a lot about the date the Shona groups should have arrived in the country, for it would be impossible for them to have been in the land before 1000 A.D. and yet have no traditions about such major historical edifices as the Zimbabwe Ruins. Interestingly, traditions connecting Bukalanga to the Ruins in the south and south-west of Zimbabwe, where most of the ruins are located, are in abundance [please see Chapter Eight]. Towards the conclusion of his book, Professor Beach wrote:

I began this chapter [Chapter 7] on an optimistic note, and it is on the same optimistic note that I wish to end it, and to bring this book to a close. Leaving aside details to an appendix, I can sum up by claiming that Shona oral traditions give us a reasonable basis for a history of the Zimbabwe plateau, but one going only back to about 1700 and often not as far (Beach 1994, 273).

One thing is very clear from the evidence presented above - from Portuguese documentary records, Shona oral traditions, the research of Professor Beach and archeology - that the ancestors of the people called Shona today arrived in the Zimbabwean Tableland around the 1700s, at least 1500 years later than the Kalanga peoples. Is it possible then to reasonably identify a people whose migration was separated by such a long period of time as one and the same people, or to classify the earlier immigrants as a subgroup of the latter? Can a son be older than his father? And in any case, assuming that the Shona were descendants of the Kalanga, why then is nothing mentioned in school history books about Bukalanga, and why has none of the Shona scholars made any reference to that Kalanga ancestry? Why is the record in school books talking of the Shona and not Bukalanga? Shouldn't we actually be saying that Shona is a dialect of Kalanga instead of the other way round, if indeed the Shona are descendants

of the Kalanga? Do we say this father looks like his son or this son looks like his father when we are making comparisons in a father-son relationship? This last statement applies especially to the proposition that TjiKalanga sounds like ChiShona. Is it not Shona that sounds like TjiKalanga? And does not the fact that Shona is intelligible to the Kalanga whereas TjiKalanga is not intelligible to the Shona not speak volumes about the origins and age of and influence on the languages?

With which People Group did the Europeans First Interact in the 1500s; and were Bukalanga and the Shona the Same People Group?

When we go back into the earliest records on the history of southern Africa, we find it recorded that the Kalanga were the people inhabiting the land now called Zimbabwe as early as 1506, and archaeology pushes that date back to at least 900 A.D. We have also argued in Chapter One that that date can be pushed back to earlier than 100 A.D. How then could it be that the history concerning all of that era is taught as Shona history today, when it is apparent that the Shona have no history in Zimbabwe dating back any earlier than 1700?

Could it be that the names of the Shona groups, for example Zezuru, are also so new that they were unknown at the time of the Portuguese entrance in Southeast Africa so much that there is no record of them?²⁷ Or could it be that the Portuguese were actually referring to the Shona too as Makalanga? But then why would the Shona have to be grouped together under an artificial name, Shona, centuries later? And if by Makalanga the Portuguese referred to the Shona, why up to date has not someone amongst the Shona protested the *Shona* name and said we are not Shona but Makalanga, since all that portion of history is recorded as Makalanga or Bukalanga history in Portuguese documents? And in any case, why was it so difficult for the Shona to recall events of distant times if they had lived in the land for as long as current history books claim? These are just some of the questions that come to one's mind when trying to reconcile the record of Portuguese documents with Shona history claims as taught in

²⁷ Manyika is taken from the region they settled in which was already called the District of Manika. They take their name from the region, not the region taking its name from them as claimed today. Before their settlement the region was part of Bukalanga.

Zimbabwean schools.

In the following section we will try by all means to unravel and bring out in the open this portion of Bukalanga history recorded by the Portuguese. As a starting point, we turn to the earliest known record on Bukalanga: the letter of Diogo de Alcacova, to the King of Portugal. We have already seen that he says the kingdom they interacted with was the Kingdom of Bukalanga. Later writers such as Father Joao dos Santos, writing in the old Portuguese fashion, referred to Bukalanga as the kingdom the 'Kingdom of Mocaranga'. In many of his works, Dr. Theal states that the English reading for Mocaranga is Makalanga. Shona scholars have seized on the Portuguese rendering Mocaranga to conclude that the people that the Portuguese dealt with were the *Karanga*, and therefore supposedly Shona. But, as we shall see later, we will learn that up until the early 1700s, there was not a single people group called the Karanga. Instead there were the Kalanga, or Makalanga, from whom are descended a great portion of Vakaranga.

Another major writer on Southern African history, Dr Sidney Welch, agrees with Dr Theal's translation and translates the word Mocaranga as Makalanga. Just so we are sure that Welch is a reliable source, we will quote below what he had to say about his researches in the foreword to his book, *South Africa Under King Manuel: 1495 - 1521*. He wrote:

The researches on which this and my other volumes are based began in the year 1894, when as a youth I went to Lisbon to study the Portuguese language and literature, learning also to know the people and to value their glorious history ... On my return to South Africa I had the good fortune to know Dr Theal, who encouraged me to continue these studies, lending me some of his rare editions of the Portuguese sources of history ... Since then I have been in constant touch with the fine work of Portuguese, too little known outside Portugal ... This has been supplemented by three long visits of research to Europe in 1907, 1926 and 1937. On the occasion of the last visit I had the honor of being admitted a member of the Portuguese Academy of History (Welch 1946, v-vi).

With reference to the early Portuguese documents, Dr Welch wrote:

Among the surviving documents the first hint of European pioneers in the interior of Mashonaland comes from Diogo de Alcacova in 1506. Writing to the King from Cochin on the 20th of November he relates what he had done whilst working with Pedro da Naia, and how his information was gathered on the spot, when he was the factor of Sofala. After telling the King that malaria had compelled him to leave Sofala, and that he had deposited with the King's agent in Cochin a present of gold from the Sheikh of Sofala, he gives an account of the gold fields of the land, which he calls Vealanga ... The country of Vealanga as he pictures it, [is] "a very large kingdom with many large towns besides a great number of other villages", [and] indicates that all the territory between the Limpopo River and the Zambesi, where the greater chiefs and indunas gathered large kraals about them, whilst the smaller kraals were scattered far and wide. Within this rough circle we discern what we now know as Matebeleland, Mashonaland, and that part of the present Portuguese territory which is south of the Zambesi (Welch 1946, 180-181).

In no uncertain terms, Dr. Welch translates Mocaranga as Makalanga. For he writes: "Alcacova calls the kingdom or state subject to these rulers Vealanga [V being interchangeable with U in some European languages]. These natives, whom the Portuguese first met, were Makalanga, whom the Portuguese generally spoke of as Mocaranga" (Welch 1946, 236). In a later work Dr Welch stated:

Was Mocaranga, our modern Makalanga, the generic name of all the tribes along these great rivers from the Zambesi to Delagoa Bay? It seems likely, because even today the name is applied to a large number of tribes in that part of Rhodesia which adjoins Portuguese territory. Theodore Bent found that all the tribes in the Zimbabwe

area and down the Sabi River to the sea, when questioned as to their nationality, called themselves Makalangas. In the days of King John III their paramount chief seems to have been at the head of a loose confederation of tribes, which was commonly called the empire of Monomotapa. This obvious inference from the facts recorded is confirmed by the Father John dos Santos, who wrote some thirty years after Perestrelo, "The Monomotapa and all his vassals are Mocarangas, a name which they have because they live in the land of Mocaranga, and speak the language of Mocaranga, the most polished of all the Negro languages that I have seen in this Ethiopia" (Welch 1948, 278).

Reporting on his travels in the modern-day Masvingo region in the early 1890s, excavator JT Bent recorded that the vast population of that area identified itself as Makalanga when questioned as to their nationality. He wrote:

We left Fort Tuli on May 9 1891, and for the ensuing six months we sojourned in what is now called Mashonaland [Zimbabwe was then divided into Matebeleland and Mashonaland] ... [where] we had ample time for studying the race which now inhabits the country, in as much as we employed over fifty of them during our excavations at Zimbabwe, and during our subsequent wanderings we had them as bearers, and we were brought into intimate relationship with most of their chiefs. The Chartered Company throughout the whole period kept us supplied with interpreters of more or less intelligence, who greatly facilitated our intercourse with the natives, and as time went by certain portions of the language found its way into our own brains, which was an assistance to us in guiding conversations and checking romance.

...All the people and tribes around [Great] Zimbabwe, down to the Sabi River and North to Fort Charter - and this is the most populous part of the whole country - call themselves by one name, though they are divided into many tribes, and that name is

Makalanga. In answer to questions as to their nationality they invariably call themselves Makalangas, in contradistinction to the Shangans, who inhabit the east side of the Sabi River. 'You will find many Makalangas there, 'A Makalanga is buried there,' and so on. The race is exceedingly numerous, and certain British and Dutch pioneers have given them various names, such as Banyai and Makalaka, which latter they imagine to be a Zulu term for reproach for a limited number of people who act as slaves and herdsmen for the Matabele down by the Shashi and Lundi Rivers. I contend that all these people call themselves Makalangas, and that their land should by right be called Makalangaland (Bent 1892, 31-32).

Arguing that indeed the name Makalanga is the same as Mocaranga as found in some Portuguese documents, Mr. Bent wrote:

In this theory, formed on the spot from intercourse with the natives, I was glad to find afterwards that I am ably supported by the Portuguese writer Father dos Santos ... He says, 'The Monomotapa and all his vassals are Mocarangas, a name which they have because they live in the land of Mocaranga, and talk the language called Mocaranga, which is the best and most polished of all Negro languages which I have seen in this Ethiopia.' Cauto, another Portuguese writer, bears testimony to the same point, and everyone knows the tendency of the Portuguese to substitute *r* for *l*. Umtali is called by the Portuguese Umtare; 'blanco' is 'branco' in Portuguese, and numerous similar instances could be adduced; hence with this small Portuguese variant the names are identical (Bent 1892, 32-33).

That the Portuguese had a tendency of replacing *l* with *r* is well attested. We find the word 'Mocaranga' first used by Father Joao Dos Santos in his *Ethiopia Oriental* following the old Portuguese rendering. Diogo Alcacova, eighty years earlier, had referred to the Zimbabwean

Tableland as the 'Kingdom of Ucalanga' [or Bukalanga]. Having been a learned Roman Catholic clergyman well versed in Latin, we would expect Father dos Santos to have followed the rule that was common to Latin languages at that time of replacing *l* with *r*.

This particular form of old Portuguese writing has been captured by Dr Devon L. Strolovitch who in August of 2005 presented his Dissertation for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy to the Faculty of the Graduate School of Cornell University in the United States titled '*Old Portuguese in Hebrew Script: Convention, Contact, and Convinvecia*'. Arguing that the Portuguese indeed replaced *r* for *l*, Dr Strolovitch stated:

Many modern Portuguese words contain consonant clusters whose second element /*r*/ derives from the etymological /*l*/. These sound changes are attested by many items in the Judeo-Portuguese corpus that also preserve the change in Modern Portuguese ... Yet the texts contain several instances of vernacular spellings whose etymological /*l*/ has been restored in the modern language (Strolovitch 2005, Online).

Dr Strolovitch then gives examples of words in which the Portuguese substituted the letter *r* for *l* as follows: *resprandecente* = resplendente = resplendent; *praneta* = planeta = planet; *pranta* = planta = plant; *koprinda mente* = completamente = completely; *prazer* = placere; *branko* = blanku; *pobramentos* = populamentu = populacao = populations; *pubriko* = publicu = publico = public.

That indeed Theal, Welch and Bent were correct in identifying the people associated with much of our precolonial history as Makalanga is well attested. We have the testimony of the German explorer Herr Karl Mauch. In his 1871 to 1872 journals, Karl Mauch reported that the people he found inhabiting the region surrounding Great Zimbabwe were Balosse or Makalaka by name, Makalaka being the

Sotho rendering for Makalanga (Bernhard and Bernhard 1969, 173ff).²⁸ A number of other writers are also agreed that indeed, the people that were associated with the Portuguese were Kalanga. Before going to their work, a few points are worth mentioning here concerning the concentration of Bukalanga settlements in the south. As a result of the Arab and Portuguese slave trade, the Kalanga later concentrated themselves in the south far away from the coast, and this became the center of their power with the rise of the Lozwi in the late 1600s. This concentration in the south and south-west also coincided with the arrival of the ancestral Shona, who later would migrate further south, overrunning the aboriginal Kalanga groups in southern Zimbabwe as we have seen in Professor Beach's writings (Beach 1994, 133), hence the formation of the Karanga language, which would later be further Shonalized through the colonialists' standardization of what would become Shona.

Let us now turn to the testimony of Messrs Richard Nicklin Hall and W.G. Neal. Writing about the precolonial ethnolinguistic position in Zimbabwe in 1904 they stated with reference to Bukalanga:

Several writers, including Sir John Willoughby, Dr. Schlichter, and Messrs. Selous and Baines, call the Makalangas by the name Makalakas, and many recent writers on Rhodesia, who do not pretend to be authorities on this particular matter, follow their examples in writing of these people. It would seem Amakalanga is the correct name, though the people themselves are in many districts

²⁸ Karl Mauch was born near Stuttgart in Wurttemberg (Germany), on 7th May, 1837. In a lifetime of a little short of 38 years he spent nearly eight, from January, 1865, to October, 1872, in continuous travelling in Southern Africa. In the course of his journeys he made notable and far reaching contributions to geological and geographical knowledge - the existence of gold-fields at Tati [North-east District, Botswana] and in Rhodesia, and the location of the Great Zimbabwe. On the 24th of October, 1864, he left London (where he had been studying at the British Museum and learning English) as a crew member on a small German vessel bound for Natal. He landed in Durban on the 18th of January, 1865, from which he moved to Petermaritzburg, Rustenburg and finally to Potchefstroom. He left Potchefstroom in May 1866 headed for the territory that is now Zimbabwe, returning to Potchefstroom in 1869. He was back in Zimbabwe in 1870, seeing the ruins of Great Zimbabwe for the first time on 5th September, 1871.

thoroughly conversant with the name Makalaka. Mr. Herbert J. Taylor, the Chief Native Commissioner of Matabeleland, states that Makalaka is merely the Sechuana name for these people, as the natives of Bechuanaland still speak of the Makalangas as Makalakas ... the greatest number of admitted authorities agree in stating that the correct name of these people is Amakalanga...De Barros (1552), Dos Santos (1570), Livio Sanuto (1581), give the name in Portuguese fashion as “Mocarangas.” Dr. Theal states that evidently “the early Portuguese in rendering native names were unaware of the construction of the Abantu language” (Hall and Neal 1904, xxxiv).²⁹

Mr. Hall had spent six months travelling throughout Masvingo. His testimony, and that of the other aforementioned writes, is supported by that of Major Sir John Willoughby, who himself also conducted excavations at Great Zimbabwe. In his own account of Bukalanga he wrote:

²⁹ Mr. Hall came to Rhodesia in 1897 when he was appointed Secretary to the Rhodesia Landowners’ and Farmers’ Association and the first Secretary of the Bulawayo Chamber of Commerce. He became editor of the *Matabele Times and Mining Journal* and later of the *Rhodesia Journal*. He also represented the leading London newspapers in Rhodesia. He did much to bring Southern Africa before the public by means of exhibitions. In 1902 Hall was engaged at Rhodes’ request to explore the Zimbabwe Ruins, the question of the preservation of the country’s historic monuments having become a serious political issue. Together with Neal he collated a wealth of original work at Great Zimbabwe. In 1909 he traveled for five months alone down the Sabi and the Lundi Rivers collecting ethnological information. He was a fellow of several European and South African scientific societies and was appointed first Curator of the Ancient Monuments of Rhodesia at Great Zimbabwe.

W. G. Neal came to Salisbury in 1891 and discovered the Yellow Jacket property, and had previously been a prospecting partner and miner with one George Johnson in the Barberton district, South Africa, where they were the first to erect a crushing mill on the Pioneer Reef. He discovered coal on the Lebombo Flats, south-east coast of Africa, and moved to the Rand in 1887. In 1891 he met excavator Mr. J. T. Bent on the Mazowe, the next year he found gold on the Fort Victoria (Masvingo) district. In 1893 he served under Captain [Jameson] Lendy during the Matabele troubles there (i.e., the so-called *uMvukela wamaNdebele*). With Johnson, Neal was a prime mover in the formation of the Rhodesia Ancient Ruins Company which was granted a concession over all ancient ruins by Jameson in 1895.

There are one or two points concerning the present inhabitants of Mashonaland, upon which I may touch without presumption before concluding this narrative, although many of my opinions must differ from those already expressed by Mr. Bent, and particularly as to the question of the generic or national name of the natives. He states that their real name is 'Makalanga' and that 'Makalaka' is a corruption for which certain Europeans are responsible. Now, such a word as 'Makalanga' is absolutely never used by the natives of the country. Throughout the low country, from Tuli to Victoria and even much further north, on the high veldt the natives invariably term themselves 'Makalaka' (Willoughby 1893, 31).³⁰

Of course to an African history student the argument presented by Sir Willoughby is immaterial, for it is more like arguing on whether the the Hebrews or the Habiru. He probably was confused by the pronunciation as one might be confused today with the way the Venda pronounce the letter /l/. They pronounce it as if it were an /r/. But Sir Willoughby also notes that in northern Zimbabwe [that is, Mashonaland], the name Makalaka was rare, and that the natives of the regions as one travelled further north into Zimbabwe did not use the name Makalanga or Makalaka, but only gave the name of their chief when questioned as to their nationality. He wrote:

³⁰ It has been whispered to me in Facebook debates that it cannot be true and possible that about 100 years ago some people in the Masvingo and Midlands Provinces of Zimbabwe could have identified themselves as Makalanga or Bakalanga and some are now identifying as Vakaranga and AmaNdebele. What that particular posture ignores is the fact that even across the so-called Matebeleland, 100 years ago people were identifying themselves as Bakalanga, yet today they identify as AmaNdebele. This has been due to a number of factors like Ndebele conquest, British colonialism and the assimilationist language policies of post-independence Zimbabwe. Even place names in the three provinces speak for themselves as they are still in TjiKalanga or in some corrupted Ndebele and Shona version from the original TjiKalanga name.

Further north still, the use of the term 'Makalaka' is very rare, and the natives, when asked their name, never get beyond that of their tribal chief, which, as one approaches the Zambesi, ceases to be dynastic, each succeeding chief retaining his own name, and consequently causing great discrepancy and confusion in the names of the places on the various maps in existence...Almost each tribe has its own peculiar dialect, and that of the neighborhood of [Great] Zimbabwe is hardly intelligible in Northern Mashonaland (Willoughby 1893, 34).

It is worth noting the last statement from the quote above: Almost each tribe has its own peculiar dialect, and that of the neighborhood of Zimbabwe is hardly intelligible in Northern Mashonaland. If indeed the people who lived in the Great Zimbabwe area were Karanga, speaking their dialect as they do today, a dialect which is doubtless a mixture of Kalanga and Zezuru, their dialect should not have been *hardly intelligible* to people in Northern Mashonaland where we heard from Theal and Samkange that the real Shona people settled about the 1700s.

Another statement worth noting is: Further north still, the use of the term 'Makalaka' is very rare, and the natives, when asked their name, never get beyond that of their tribal chief, which, as one approaches the Zambesi, ceases to be dynastic, each succeeding chief retaining his own name. This settles for us the lingering question: could it not be possible that the name Makalanga also referred to the Shona, as some authors seem to imply? Well, Willoughby gives us the answer. And not only him. Bent tells us that in his travels up north towards Salisbury in Makoni's country, "The best interpreter to be had was kindly placed at our disposal by the Chartered Company, as the language in those parts differs essentially from that spoken at Zimbabwe and the Sabi, a certain portion of which by this time had penetrated into our brains" (Bent 1892, 284). Twenty years earlier, Karl Mauch had reported the same thing about the people he found in those parts of the country. He had written on his way passing via Mashonaland in an attempt to get to Sena on the Zambezi that "the dialect [spoken here] differs considerably from Sikalaka" (Bernhard and Bernhard 1969, 234). It is important to note that Mauch says the

language spoken in the modern province of Masvingo at that time was Sikalaka, which is the same as TjiKalanga, and Karanga remains the closest “Shona dialect” to TjiKalanga even today!

We would surely be right to think that there would have been no need for any new interpreters if the people who occupied southern Zimbabwe had been Shona as is currently taught in Zimbabwe. But because the Masvingo region language was TjiKalanga/iKalanga, there absolutely would have been a need for an interpreter. And again, if Kalanga were a Shona dialect, it should have been intelligible to the people of Mashonaland, but it was not, and still is not. This certainly points to a tribal variation, and it flies in the face of those who say that TjiKalanga and Shona are mutually intelligible. In fact, one needs not pour over volumes of history to understand that, they just need to stand amongst the Shona and speak TjiKalanga and hear if it is as intelligible to them as some Shona elites and scholars love to claim. I have been amazed at how many of them will go blank when one is speaking TjiKalanga! Speaking of the people he found in northern Zimbabwe, Mr Bent wrote in 1892:

[W]e came upon a nest of native kraals, and alighted to inspect them. There are those who say that these people are the real Mashonas, who have given their name to the whole country. This much I doubt; at any rate they are different from the Makalangas, with whom we had hitherto been entirely associated, and have been here only for a few years. When Mr. Selous first visited this valley on one of his hunting expeditions in 1883, he found it quite uninhabited, whereas now there are many villages, an apt illustration of the migratory tendencies of these tribes. They are quite different in type to the Makalangas, and, as I should say, distinctly inferior in physique. They build their huts differently, with long eaves coming right down to the ground. Their granaries are fatter and lower, and made of branches instead of mud, these two facts pointing distinctly to a tribal variation (Bent 1892, 286-287).

Surely, the names Makalanga or Bukalanga could not have been used by the Portuguese to refer to the Mashona, for if it did, why would there have been a need to give them an artificial name, Shona, when there was already a name that dated back almost four hundred years in record, and over 1000 years by the findings of archaeology, a name which the Kalanga have retained to this day? Again, Shona scholars have a lot of explaining to do in this regard.

In fact, one of theirs, the “chief Shona historian” so to speak, has already given us some explanation. That is, Aenias Chigwedere, a man well known in Zimbabwe. In most of his works (*From Mutapa to Rhodes*, 1980; *Birth of Bantu Africa*, 1982; and *The Karanga Empire*, n.d.), Chigwedere seeks to promote a Shona agenda that sees every people group sweeping from the Limpopo to Nigeria as ‘Shona’. His works have been very influential in shaping the Zimbabwean school history syllabus whilst he was serving as Education Minister. Be that as it may, Chigwedere makes a stunning admission on the question of the Kalanga-Karanga-Shona relationship and as to which people group the Portuguese dealt with. He wrote in *The Karanga Empire*:

We have important names bandied about in this country. One of them is certainly KARANGA. The Portuguese make constant references to it in their documents after 1500; one of the names debated by the settler regime for possible assignment to the whole of Mashonaland just before 1930, was KARANGA: we have a whole region today that claims to speak a dialect called CHI-KARANGA; we have yet another region or district that indeed speaks KALANGA today...May I point out that...I make no distinction between KARANGA and KALANGA for indeed, there is no difference between them. The original name was KALANGA. But the Shona language, like every other language, has been evolving and continues to do so. One result of this has been that the letter “L” has been dropped and substituted for “R”. The original name KALANGA inevitably changed to KARANGA. The letter “L” has however been retained in the Plumtree area where the language spoken there is still very close to the original KALANGA language...large numbers of descendants of the original KALANGA people are still in that area to this day (Chigwedere n.d., 6-7).

What further evidence could one require? With all this evidence, it is patently clear that the people associated with that portion of history up to at least the 1700s were the Kalanga. The Shona, or at least the ancestors of the people called Shona today, especially the Zezuru, only arrived in this country by the late 1600s to 1700s as recorded in Portuguese documents. There can be no question about that, and the natural implication is that the Zimbabwean history school syllabus has to change to reflect the truth about the history of Bukalanga and Zimbabwe. How is it that we can continuously misappropriate the history of another community this way since it is so clear that the people who the Portuguese wrote about are the Kalanga? Why do we teach school children that it was the Shona, or even the Karanga associated with that portion of history? OK, in the case of Karanga we might say that we are making allowance for language change which saw the Shona rendering of Kalanga change to Karanga, but why then do we have to deny Bukalanga children the right to know that it was actually the Kalanga that are being referred to, for they ought not to be affected by the Shona'ization of the name of their ancestors. That surely is a serious travesty of justice, if not a human right violation. The linguistic and cultural rights of Bukalanga are being trampled upon, and worse still, the distortion and misappropriation of their history used to marginalize them as they are branded Ndebele, and by extension, unwanted foreign settlers!

Going back to the Bukalanga-Shona relationship, we can, with certainty, conclude that Bukalanga and the Shona are two different groups, contrary to the claims of some Shona political elites and scholars. Even if the two groups had migrated from the same place or shared an agnatic relationship somewhere in the interior of Africa, it is unjustifiable that a people whose migration is separated by over 1500 years could still be said to be the same ethnic group. Neither is it justifiable to claim that the language of the earlier immigrants is a dialect of that of the later ones. Perhaps we could argue that ChiKaranga, though a *shonalized* version of Kalanga, is more a dialect of Kalanga than it is of Shona. In any case, as we saw in the previous chapter, millions of the people identified as Karanga today have Bukalanga ancestry, inasmuch as millions of those identified as Ndebele are of Bukalanga stock. This particular piece of information actually leads to an interesting conclusion, that is, Bukalanga is

perhaps the second largest nation in Southern Africa after the Zulu, the only difference being the diversity of our languages from Venda to Victoria Falls from Tshivenda to TjiKalanga to TjiNambya.

Whilst such a distinguished historian like Dr Theal could have made a statement like "The people we call Mashona are indeed descended from the Makalanga of the early Portuguese days, and they preserve their old name and part of their old country" (1896: 122), it is apparent that this was just in keeping with the view of certain other writers (before the research findings of Professor Doke as shown above) that Bukalanga Group Languages are of the same group with the Shona ones. Judging by Dr Theal's other statements as presented in this book, such as those concerning the date of the arrival of the Shona in the Zimbabwean Tableland, it shows he was here referring to Bukalanga, not necessarily to the whole lot of the Shona. If he were referring to the Shona we do not expect to find him saying that "they preserve their old name and part of their old country", for we certainly know that the Shona do not call themselves Makalanga and have never at any point in history occupied all of Zimbabwe such that it can now be said they occupy "part of their old country". Instead, we still do have the Makalanga, who once occupied all of Zimbabwe - in their various tribes - still existent to this day, and occupying a great portion of the country that is now called Zimbabwe, and still referred to by their southern neighbors the Sotho-Tswana as Makalaka as in the past, and this Sotho-Tswana name for the Kalanga in itself speaks a lot.

Even if we were to allow for some latitude and say the European writers incorrectly recorded the national or generic name of the builders of the Zimbabwe Civilization - Bukalanga or Makalanga - then how would we explain the name by which the Sotho-Tswana refer to us, that is, Makalaka? The letter /r/ is so prominent in the Sotho-Tswana languages that it would be very far fetched to suggest that they were somehow referring to the supposedly 'Shona' Karanga by Makalaka and were failing to pronounce Kalanga as I have heard some suggest in private conversations. And it is not only the Sotho-Tswana who referred to us as Makalaka, but we find the Tembe in the Delagoa Bay region speaking of their origins in the "Kalanga country" and greeting each other as "n'Kalanga", as the Reverend Junod found out. Professor G. P. Lestrade and N. J. van Warmelo found the Venda

claiming origins in Vhukalanga too, and the Lobedu also told Dr J. D. Krige and his wife Eileen Jensen Kridge that their origins are to be traced in Vhokalaka, and so on, which claim has been lately made by Professor Mathole Motshekga. I think it would be a very audacious claim to make to suggest that all the European recorders from the Portuguese days in the early 1500s to the British in the 1900s all got it wrong!

This also again raises the question that we previously asked: does it mean that the names of the Shona groups - the Zezuru - are so new that they were never heard of to these neighboring peoples? Does this not just prove that they were not yet in the land, which the Venda still refer to as Vhukalanga up to this day? It remains with the reader to make their own judgment, but what we can satisfy ourselves with now is that Bukalanga and the Shona are two different people groups, and Bukalanga are certainly not a Shona group!

But how to we Explain the Relative Language Similarities?

Now, having said that, let us go straight into explaining the relative similarities between the languages of Bukalanga and Shona, for the next big question is: if Bukalanga and the Shona are not the same peoples, how then do we explain the relative similarity of their languages? This is a question that is asked by many people whenever the subject of the relationship between the Kalanga and Shona is brought up. We have seen above that the settlement of the ancestors of the Shona and those of the Kalanga in the Zimbabwean plateau is separated by at least 1500 years. But how can their languages be so relatively similar?

It has been rightly stated by that student of Shona history, Charles Bullock, that Shona is a conglomeration of various languages comprised of the languages of East Africa (notably Kinyarwanda, Kirundi and Western Swahili), Portuguese, TjiKalanga and even IsiNdebele. There is certainly an element of truth in that statement. But our major concern in the present context is TjiKalanga and its relationship to Shona. There are basically three ways the language of the Shona peoples has come to be so similar to Kalanga, which as we have already seen above is perhaps the oldest Bantu language spoken in Zimbabwe for an extended period of time.

First, once the ancestors of the Shona had settled in Zimbabwe, they obviously intermixed and intermarried with the Kalanga who were then inhabiting the whole of the Zimbabwean plateau, though concentrated mostly in the south and south-west of the country where the land was less humid and suitable as grazing land, mining and other activities. In this way the Karanga language came into being, and for those who know the various Shona dialects and Kalanga, they know that Karanga is more a variant of TjiKalanga than it is of say Zezuru or Manyika. Some have argued that Kalanga is a variant of Karanga that came about as a result of an intermix between Karanga and Ndebele in the 19th Century, but what they overlook is the fact that TjiKalanga was the state language of the Maphungubgwe, Monomotapa, Togwa and Lozwi Kingdoms, as well as the liturgical language of the state religion - the Mwali Religion - dating back to at least the 10th century, and still is today!

Secondly, as we saw above how the so-called Standard Shona was created, Karanga - being a mixture of Kalanga and the Shona dialects - was incorporated into the new language. As a result, naturally thousands of Kalanga words, which were now forming the Karanga language, entered into the new language. I have often been amazed by those who say that Kalanga is a Shona dialect, and wondered if they have tried to compare Kalanga with Zezuru. Whilst Zezuru, and many of the Shona dialects are intelligible to the Kalanga, TjiKalanga is in many cases unintelligible to the Shona.

Thirdly, TjiKalanga language would have heavily infiltrated the Shona dialects during the one hundred and fifty years that the Lozwi, of whose TjiKalanga was a state language, were the rulers of all tribes then inhabiting the Zimbabwean Tableland. It is very common for the language of the rulers to infiltrate the languages of those upon whom they are ruling. This was an easy process since then no chief could rule without the previous sanction of the Kalanga-Lozwi rulers, and in many cases the chiefs were of Bukalanga stock, which is even why many Shona chiefs are originally Kalanga-Lozwi. A similar scenario can be pointed out to in our era. Under the overlordship of Ndebele and Tswana chiefs, we have seen TjiKalanga driven to the verge of extinction as these chiefs insist on the use of IsiNdebele and Setswana in their courts, or their languages infiltrates the languages of those upon whom they are ruling.

CHAPTER FOUR

On the Question of BaLozwi or BaRozwi: Are they a Shona or Bukalanga People Group?

Having answered the question of the Kalanga-Shona relationship, it is now time to tackle one of the critically important questions of our time. That is, the question of the people called BaLozwi or BaRozwi. There is no doubt that this is perhaps one of the most contentious questions in as far as Zimbabwean precolonial history is concerned. We are told in Zimbabwean school history books that the BaLozwi or Rozwi are the ancestors of the modern Shona, and on that basis, in addition to the idea that Matebeleland, Midlands and Masvingo where once the Province of Guruwusa, the Shona lay their claim to Matabeleland, *oops*, Bukalanga, as their land since the center of Lozwi power was at Khami near Bulawayo. Are they right in so saying? Let us find out below.

A great deal of speculation and confusion has followed, so much that today many are still not sure if the BaLozwi are a people of Shona or Bukalanga stock as they are found in large numbers on both sides. This confusion has been compounded by the fact that during the invasion of the Ngoni of Zwangendaba and the Matabele of Mzilikazi, the Lozwi were scattered all over Zimbabwe and other Southern African countries, so much that many a Lozwi today is identified as Ndebele, Zezuru, Manyika, Lozi, etc. But, who were and are the Lozwi or Rozwi?

To us Bukalanga, the identity of the Lozwi is not something that we can spend time fussing over because we have always known that the Lozwi are just one of the clans of Bukalanga. They are just another Kalanga clan like the Whumbe of the Tjibelu (or Ndebele) surname, the Badeti of the Tshuma surname, the Tswapone of the Dumani surname, the Lubimbi of the Shoko/Ncube surname, the Nhaba of the Ndlovu, and many other such. The only difference is that for the last one hundred and fifty years before the Nguni invasions, they had been the ruling clan, just as the Lubimbi were the priestly family, the Leya were the spies or ambassadors (*bo-Mndambeli*), the Tjibelu royal counsels (*Nsungwa-wa-Hee* = *Sungwaha*), the Dube and others the royal historians (*bo-Kumbudzi*), the Nkomo and Ndlovu and other Dube

artisans and smiths (*bo-Mihha, from behha*) and so forth. Out of a lack of understanding of these societal arrangements of Bukalanga, European writers ‘invented’ a new ‘nation’ called the Lozwi people. As a result, confusion has prevailed in academic circles and in school history books as to whether the Lozwi were a new group of migrants into the Zimbabwean Tableland at the time of their rise to power in the 1690s, or they were just part of Bukalanga.

Concerning the rise of the BaLozwi to power in the 1690s, we are informed by J.K. Renne that:

In the 1680s, the Togwa dynasty, which had been one of the successor states to Great Zimbabwe, was conquered by the Lozwi of Tjangamire Dombo (Moyo – Nitombo [=Dombolakona-Tjing’wango]) who is attested in Portuguese accounts and who is apparently to be identified with the orally remembered figure of Mambo Dlembewu. This is consistent with the archeological record, which sees the abandonment of Khami after the seventeenth century, to be succeeded by the less magnificent constructions of Manyangwa and Danangombe. Prior to the seventeenth century conquest, ‘Togwa’ power evidently spread south of the Limpopo into what is now Venda country. There it was similarly overlain by a conquering group related to the Moyo-Lozwi.

The Venda record that the earlier layer of Tavhatsinde chiefs had come from the north, where they spoke with ‘Mwali’. Their leader was Netshiendeulu (=Tjibundule). They were conquered by VeleLambelo (=Dlembewu) whose followers formed the ruling Khwinde layer, which had clear links with the Moyo-Lozwi of Tjangamire Dombo. The power of the ‘Togwa’ rulers, or at least their influence, also spread east to their (presumed) ancestral home at [Great] Zimbabwe, until their heartland was conquered by Dombo (Renne 1979, 25).³¹

³¹ The Lozwi indeed ruled over many tribes including the Venda, the Shona, the Tsonga and the Sotho. We are told by Robert F. Gray and P. H. Gulliver in their book, *The Family in Eastern Africa: studies in the role of property in family structure and lineage continuity* that: “The Lobedu are a South Bantu people characterized by the institution of ‘divine kingship.’ They live in a mountainous area of the north eastern Transvaal

The certainty and truth of the above statement is established when the history of the Venda is read. It is related in Venda history that during the 18th century [1700s], a group of people belonging to the Kalanga-Lozwi tribe in present-day Zimbabwe migrated south, crossing the Limpopo River. As they wandered up the valley of the Nzhelele River, they had the good fortune to stumble upon a beautiful new homeland at the foot of the mysterious Zoutpansberg Mountain Range in the Northern (now Limpopo) Province. They promptly named the mountain range, Venda (i.e., pleasant place), and settled there (information from <http://www.africanexplore.com>).

Perhaps to better understand the Kalanga-Venda relationships briefly here, let us turn to Kalanga oral traditions collected in the 1920s by Kumile Masola in his *Nau dza Bakalanga*. In these traditions we are told that the people that have entered history as the Lozwi actually migrated from Venda and overthrew the Togwa Kingdom under King Tjibundule. This is supposed to have happened in the following way:

Tjibundule had been chief of the Kalanga when, unawares, the Nyayi [we learned that they are one of the Venda groups from Bukalanga] from Venda crossed the Limpopo and camped at the Ntugwi (Tuli) River, at a place that later became known as *Lutombo gwabaNyayi* (Hill of the BaNyayi). The origin of the name BaNyayi was that the Lozwi had ambassadors (or spies) who spied on the country of Tjibundule. They had a chief by the name of Netjasike (with the childhood name Tjilisamhulu), who too became very powerful in the land and was also referred to as *Nhu Unotapa*, a title that for centuries had signified the lord of the land, the Monomotapa of the Portuguese documents. Netjasike had in his council of advisers Nhale and Ninhembgwe, who was the father of the famous general and medicine-man, Tumbale

lowveld. Originally from *Bokhalaga* [Bukalanga] (S. Rhodesia), they migrated south when the empire of Monomotapa broke up and established themselves as rulers over the sparse Sotho population they found in occupation" (1964, np). For rule over the Tsonga please see Father Joao dos Santos' letter below where he mentions the rule of Sedanda over 'Botonga' south of the Sabi, Botonga meaning the Tsonga.

Bhepe-la-Mambo, of the Bhebhe/Bhebe clan. Tjibundule and Nitjasike are said to have established good relations as neighbors, and constantly visited each other. But in due course, Nitjasike started developing an interest in Tjubundule's country for its peace, glory and splendor, and set out plans on how to overthrow Tjibundule and take over the kingship. Nitjasike, after a number of failed attempts to overthrow Tjibundule, finally succeeded in doing so by using the instrument of his daughter, Bagedze Moyo, who he gave for a wife to Tjibundule. After overthrowing Tjibundule, he took over as Mambo (King) of Tjibundule's territory, and united the Kalanga of Tjibundule with his own Kalanga (BaNyayi = BaLozwi as we shall see later) into one people.³²

Such is the Kalanga oral tradition in this regard. But we further ask, were the BaNyayi of Kalanga oral tradition the same people as the BaLozwi of Portuguese records? That seems to be certainly the case. Let us turn to an analysis of Portuguese documents related to this question and references to the 'Land of Urobze' done by W.G.L. Randles. He wrote:

Ignacio Caetano Xavier wrote in 1758 that Tjangamire's lands were populated by the Barobzes, who are in all probability to be identified with the BaLozwi³³, the dominant ethnic group on the plateau until

³² Elsewhere we are told: "According to some of the native historians the Baloyi [=BaLozwi] came from the BaNyai country along the Nwanati (a Hlengwe group), who also belonged to the Nyai or Kalanga race ... A man named Mashakatsi, a great elephant hunter, went to the north along the Limpopo River in search of the much prized game, armed with bow and arrows. At the junction of the Limpopo and Lebvubye he found them in great numbers. The country was inhabited by the BaNyai tribe, the BaLambutsu clan [BaLembethu?] ... He noticed that the BaNyai were a peaceable people, and concluded that they would easily be defeated. Their country, too, was a desirable land" (Junod 1927: 21-22 and Posselt 1935: 143-4).

³³ Randles uses "Rozwi" and "Karanga" as was the general tendency by some writers of his time to use these terms interchangeably with Lozwi and Kalanga. For this reason I use "Lozwi" and "Kalanga" since we have already established that the Kalanga are the people the Portuguese interacted with and wrote about and their names were spelled in

the Zulu revolution precipitated the Nguni hordes northward. Antonio da Conceicao (1696) confirms the manner of Tjangamire's going but does not state exactly where he had gone with the royal livestock [which had been entrusted to his care by the Monomotapa]. He simply remarks that Tjangamire went into 'an area of Mocaranga adjoining Abutua.' An anonymous manuscript written towards the end of the eighteenth century, in which moreover Urobze and Butua appear as one and the same, speaks of Urobze as a very extensive territory belonging to Tjangamire:

... Urobze lies a long way from Manica, it would take a month to reach it, it is said to be nearer to the Cape of Correntes. The Africans call it Goromucuro; it lies to the west of Manica. The Kingdom abounds in rolling veld plains. There are huge herds ... There are many birds called 'emas' [ostriches]. There are also very few trees, if at all, and firewood is replaced by cow-dung dried in the sun ... The men and women are mis-shapen, they run very swiftly, are robust and fearless ..., their language rough and each word is produced with such a vehement click of the tongue that one would say they are tearing the sounds violently from the very depths of their beings.

It seems probable that the name Urobze may first have been applied to a territory lying in the middle of the plateau, between Monomotapa and Butua, and then to the territory which extended right over the south-west sector, to the south of the river Umfulu, which was the southern border of Monomotapa. Nevertheless, it is not clear what Goromucuro corresponds to. The image "abounds in rolling veld plains" evokes the Butua of the sixteenth century texts; the abundance of livestock, the existence of ostriches, the sparseness of trees and a population speaking in a language of clicks [the San], clearly indicates the region stretching between the Shangani and the Shashi in the south-west of the plateau bordering on the Kalahari, that is, Butua where the large settlements of Khami, Nalatale and Dhlodhlo were to be found (Randles 1979, 16-17).

Shona because a number of writers were based in Mashonaland and researched much of their history amongst the exiled BaLozwi.

We can see from the above statements that the land of Urobze of the Portuguese documents, doubtless the land of BuLozwi, is the region south and south west of Zimbabwe, what we identified as the Leopard's Kopje Culture region in Chapter One. This is the same land identified by Kalanga oral tradition as the homeland of the Lozwi. But still, the question has not been answered of whether the Nyayi of Kalanga oral tradition and the Lozwi of Portuguese documents were indeed the same people as pointed out in Kalanga oral tradition. We go back to Randles. He wrote:

This, of course, raises the question of whether the Lozwi were of Kalanga origin, and the answer is not clear. The Kalanga are, as we have seen, mentioned in Portuguese sources from 1506 and then seem to be occupying the whole of the plateau.³⁴ The Lozwi, under the name of Barobzes, make an appearance only around the middle of the eighteenth century and occupied only the south-west sector. According to Pacheco, the conquerors from the north of the plateau were known as Banyai. But Livingstone at the time of his travels near Tjikoba (north-east Zimbabwe) wrote: "Here they call themselves the Bambiri, though the general name of the whole nation is Banyai."

Now, Carl Mauch, one of the first explorers to penetrate north of the Limpopo coming from the Transvaal, came across the Banyai at the other end of the plateau, around 20° 30 S and 30° 50 E, a little to the south of the Zimbabwe ruins. From the middle of the eighteenth century we find the usage of the word "munhai" (munyai), that is the singular; Antonio Pinto de Miranda (c. 1766) did not hesitate to make a Portuguese plural of this Bantu singular and so wrote the "munhaes" are "the officers charged with the duty of proclaiming decrees and orders of the emperors [of Monomotapa]".

According to Ignacio Caetano Xavier (1758), they were "a sort of janissary" army of the Monomotapa. For Lacerda e Almeida (1797) the "munhaes" are quite simply the vassals of the Monomotapa. Finally, Posselt (1935) likens the Banyai to the Lozwi.

³⁴ References to the 1506 letter of Diogo Alcacova confirm our position that Randles is actually referring to Bakalanga by using the term Karanga as we have stated in footnote 34 in the previous page.

In a subject where many questions are easier to ask than to answer, let us formulate an hypothesis which seems attractive: the Banyai could have been a dominant group within the Kalanga people who left the south to conquer the north of the plateau, while the Lozwi could have constituted the nucleus of the dissidents who rallied to Tjangamire, took root in the south-west and then, in 1693, launched into the conquest of the north-east under Tjangamire II³⁵.

Thus, perhaps, when the Kalanga in the fifteenth century began their expansion toward the north and the Indian Ocean, they also advanced into the south-west at the same time as part of a single concerted movement. This indeed seems to be the interpretation expressed in the accounts of Alcacova and Barros, at least for the period up to the time of the revolt of Tjangamire I, when two factions developed separately, one in the south-west, the other in the north-east and on the coast (Randles 1979, 19-21).

Going by the hypothesis of Randles, we cannot help but accept that the BaNyayi of Kalanga oral tradition and the BaLozwi of Portuguese records are one and the same people. But we still further ask: were the BaNyayi or BaLozwi a Kalanga people? This question becomes very important to ask in light of the claims by some that the BaNyayi are the ancestors of the modern Shona.

That the BaNyayi are the same race as Bukalanga is attested to by a number of writers. Let us first hear from E. P. Mathers, a British Newspaper journalist. Mathers travelled with the Pioneer Column from South Africa in its entrance into Zimbabwe, and had his newspaper reports compiled into a book titled *Zambesia: England's El Dorado in Africa - being a description of Matebeleland and Mashonaland, and less known adjacent territories, and an account of the gold fields of British South Africa*. He wrote in 1891:

³⁵ Randles uses here Tjangamire II (that is Dombolakona-Tjing'wango Dlembewu) to differentiate him from the 1490 Tjangamire (Tjangamire I)

To the country between the Tuli and Lunde [Lundi] Rivers the name of Banyailand may be very properly given, as it is inhabited by a number of petty so called Banyai chiefs, who, by some account are tributary to Lo Bengula, but who by others refuse to recognize the Matabele monarch as their King ... At the time of the entrance of the British Pioneer column, the Makalaka would be described as "chickenhearted" people living in constant dread of Matabele raids. The Makalaka, or Banyai people, a mild and inoffensive race lived in daily and hourly terror of the Matabele (Mathers 1891, 350, 355, 360).

Mathers, like other writers of the 19th and early 20th century, uses the names Makalaka and BaNyayi interchangeably, Makalaka being the Sotho-Tswana rendering for Makalanga as already pointed out in previous chapters. One other such writer is Mr. Bent who we have already encountered in preceeding chapters and shall briefly repeat here. He too clearly stated that the names Makalanga, Makalaka, and Banyayi were interchangeable and referring to the same people group. We will be doing well to remember that Bent tells us that the information he presents to us in his book he got it on the spot in contact with the Kalanga themselves, and that it is themselves who gave him their national or generic name. He wrote in 1892:

All the people and tribes around [Great] Zimbabwe, down to the Sabi River and North to Fort Charter - and this is the most populous part of the whole country - call themselves by one name, though they are divided into many tribes, and that name is Makalanga. In answer to questions as to their nationality they invariably call themselves Makalangas, in contradistinction to the Shangans, who inhabit the east side of the Sabi River. 'You will find many Makalangas there,' 'A Makalanga is buried there,' and so on. The race is exceedingly numerous, and certain British and Dutch pioneers have given them various names, such as Banyai and Makalaka (Bent 1892, 32).

The explorer and hunter James Chapman, in 1863, was told the same thing about the Banyayi as he made an inquiry into the identity of the people he had encountered on the Zambezi Valley, who he discovered to be BaNambya and Bakalanga. As to their origins, he wrote:

All the tribes here are descendants of the Banyai, a nation further to the east. The Makalakas were a distinct and independent people beyond the memory of man ... The great-grandfather of the present Wankie, also called Whange, fled from his father Gole, chief of the Banyai, and set up for himself ... The Banabea claim descent from a great Banyai chief called Mambo, one of whose titles was Dalamo (Tabler 1968, 73, 146).³⁶

Mr. Posselt, writing in 1935, also informs us that the Banyayi are a Kalanga race. About them he wrote, quoting the Reverend Junod already referred to in a footnote above: "According to some of the native historians the Baloyi [=BaLozwi] came from the BaNyai country along the Nwanati, who also belonged to the Nyai or Kalanga race..." (Posselt 1935, 143). The German explorer, Karl Mauch, had already pointed out back in 1871 that the BaNyai are a Kalanga race. He wrote concerning Great Zimbabwe, "The name of the hill with the ruins is Zimbabye or, possibly Zimbaoe. The former name is the name given to it by the local Makalakas or Banyais (Bernhard and Bernhard 1969, 148). Elsewhere Mauch uses the names BaNyayi, Makalaka and Balosse interchangeably, Balosse being the German rendering for BaLozwi (ibid., 203, 204 and 215).³⁷

With the above evidence, it is beyond any reasonable doubt that the

³⁶ The above is source from James Chapman's *Travels in the Interior of South Africa 1849-1863: Hunting and Trading Journeys from Natal to Walvis Bay & Visits to Lake Ngami & Victoria Falls. Part II*, edited from the original manuscripts by Edward C. Tabler. The book, containing Chapman's diaries, deals with an account of his journey to the Zambesi by way of Hereroland and Lake Ngami which lasted from 9 December 1860, when Chapman sailed from Cape Town, until early August 1863, when his trek reached Otjimbingwe on the Zambezi in retreat.

³⁷ It is interesting to note that Banyayi in Zambia, Botswana and South Africa today still identify as Bakalanga, and some use the surname Moyo, the biggest among the Lozwi.

BaNyayi people are the same as the BaLozwi, and these are Kalanga peoples. However, some argue that the Lozwi became Kalanga by acculturation. For example, Dr G. C. Mazarire suggests the following concerning the Kalanga-Lozwi relationship:

A Rozvi invasion of the 1690s successfully took over the area and set up the Changamire state which mainly functioned as a confederacy of tributary agnates. The Rozvi dynasty intermarried with the 'Kalanga' and adopted their dialect thus preserving the cultural continuity of the Kalanga. This way a sense of cultural fluidity came into place characterized by exchange and inculturation between the two groups (Mazarire 2003, Online).

Professor G. P. Lestrade has also argued that "the BaLozwi are not a Kalanga people" (in Robinson 1963, 2). But the evidence to the contrary seems to be overwhelming. The archaeologist Professor Keith R. Robinson, after a wide ranging study of Lozwi archaeology and ethnography, could not reach a precise conclusion on the Lozwi-Kalanga relationship, and only wrote: "On the other hand, they are undoubtedly associated with the Kalanga, no doubt at first as rulers, but as time went on inter-marriage may have brought about a more intimate relationship" (Robinson 1963, 3).

Even with these expressed doubts, there seems to be available adequate evidence upon which we can safely conclude that the BaNyayi are one and the same people with the BaLozwi, and that these are people of Bukalanga stock.

One other simple way of telling that indeed the Lozwi were and are a Kalanga people group is that TjiKalanga was the *lingua franca* or state language of the Lozwi Kingdom. It is unthinkable that in a period of about 150 years the Lozwi, if they were not a Kalanga group, and hence having a language of their own, would have totally lost their language as to use TjiKalanga as their official language, which would be incredible considering that they were the rulers, for it

is very uncommon for those who are rulers to completely lose their language and identity to those upon whom they are ruling. Surely, if they were Zezuru, or Shona, we have every right to expect them to have been using ChiZezuru as their state language, but alas, that was not the case!

Another way of establishing that the Lozwi are a Kalanga people group is observation of their population distribution today, mostly identified by the Moyo surname. The Moyo-Lozwi are mainly concentrated in the so-called Matebeleland (as well as the Midlands and Masvingo Provinces) and are actually the majority there, whereas there are very few of them in Mashonaland. How can they be ancestors of the Shona and be so few in that region? Even if we were to make allowance for change of surnames to clan progenitor's name as is the practice in Mashonaland, that still does not account for the small Lozwi population in that part of the country. Even the Lozwi concentrated in Bikita and surrounding districts we know that they moved from what we may call western Bukalanga, the so-called Matebeleland, during the Nguni invasions in the 19th century.

Now that we have finally settled the questions of identity and clearly redefined Bukalanga national identity and rescued it from imposed Ndebele, Shona and Ngwato-Tswana identities, let us go on and look at the Great Kingdoms of Bukalanga, no wonder one of the most exciting chapters in the book. Not a single people group in the sub-continent ever established so great a kingdoms as those of Bukalanga - the Monomotapa, Togwa and Lozwi Kingdoms.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Monomotapa, Togwa and Lozwi Kingdoms: Inside the Great Kingdoms of Bukalanga

It is held by several authorities that the Makalangas were the dominant race in South Central Africa, with vassal kingdoms extending beyond Monomotapa itself from Congo, and Zambesia to the Orange River if not the Cape of Good Hope. Duarte Barbosa (1516) states that "the Moors of Benemotapa say there is much gold in a country very far situated in the direction of the Cape of Good Hope, in another kingdom which is subject to this King of Benemotapa – a very great lord having many kings under his vassalage. His country runs through the desert as far as Mozambique to the Cape of Good Hope." Johnstone (1603) states that the king of Monomotapa was superior lord to all the kings of the countries extending to the Cape of Good Hope - Richard Nicklin Hall and W. G. Neal 1904. The Ancient Ruins of Rhodesia: Monomotapae Imperium.

The next phase of Bukalanga expansion and civilization after, and perhaps contemporaneous with the decline of Great Zimbabwe was the rise of the political kingdoms of Togwa, which established itself at and built Khami], and the Monomotapa Kingdom which established itself in the north east of the Zimbabwean plateau. Again, like the civilizations of Maphungubgwe, Great Zimbabwe and Khami, the official line of teaching in Zimbabwe is that the Shona people were responsible for these kingdoms, despite the fact that the kingdoms flourished way before the Shona people had arrived in the Zimbabwe. But contrary to that, we find Portuguese documents clearly stating that these were Kalanga polities. The first to mention this is the letter of Diogo de Alcacova that we referred to in the preceeding chapters. Let us turn to a look at each one of these kingdoms, starting off with the Monomotapa Empire.

1. The Great Monomotapa Empire

Much of the information about the Monomotapa Empire that we have is obtained from a number of Portuguese sources from the 16th to the 18th centuries. Some of the sources are listed below. Many of these

documents are available at the National Free Library in Bulawayo compiled in 12 volumes.

1. Joao de Barros: *da Asia, dos feitos que os Portuguezes fizeram no descobrimento e conquista dos mares e terras do Oriente* (written in four parts in 1552, 1553, 1563, and 1613, and published in Lisbon in 1778).

2. Duarte Barbosa: *Esmeraldo de situ Orbis*. This is a geographical narrative of Portuguese discoveries in Africa, with a geographical description of them, written during the reign of King Manuel, and was first printed by the government in 1892. There are two manuscripts in existence, one in the public library at Lisbon and the other at Evora, Portugal. There are also a series of documents in the archives at Lisbon relating to Eastern Africa, which commence on the 30th of September 1508 and end on the 9th of May 1752.

3. Gaspar Correa: *Lendas da India*. Published in 1869 as *The Three Voyages of Vasco da Gama and his Viceroyalty*, from the *Lendas da India* of Gaspar Correa, translated from the Portuguese, with notes and introduction, by the Hon. Henry E. J. Stanley.

4. Diogo de Cauto: *da Asia, dos feitos que os Portuguezes fizeram na conquista e descobrimento das terras e mares do Oriente*. Born in Lisbon in 1542, he went to India as a soldier. He wrote extensively and ably on the early history of the Portuguese explorations and was appointed by King Filipe I of Portugal to be the Chronicler of the State of India and Principal Custodian of the Archives there. The edition used widely by Dr. Theal was published in Lisbon in fifteen volumes in 1778-1788.

5. Father Joao dos Santos: *Ethiopia Oriental, e varia historia de causas notaveis do Oriente*. A quarto volume in two parts, together with five hundred and forty-six pages in double columns, printed in the Dominican convent at Evora in 1609. This book is one of the chief sources of information upon the Portuguese and the Bantu tribes in Eastern Africa during the last years of the sixteenth century. Its author was one of a large party of Dominican friars who went from Portugal to India at the same time. He left Lisbon on the 13th of April

1586 in the St. Thome, one of the fleet of five ships, and reached Mozambique on the 13th of August. Here some of the friars received instructions from the vicar general to proceed to different stations in Eastern Africa. Father Joao dos Santos went to Sofala where he arrived on the 5th of December 1586. He remained there until June 1590, leaving for India in 1597. In him we have an eyewitness account of the conditions of the affairs of the Portuguese stations south of the Zambesi at their very best period (Theal 1896:305-315).

In a description of the Monomotapa Empire, Dr Theal, who translated most of the above sources into English, wrote:

The Kalanga tribe was larger and occupied a much greater extent of territory than any now existing in South Africa. It was held together by the same means as the others, that is, principally by the religious awe with which the paramount chief was regarded, as representing in his person the mighty spirits that were feared and worshiped ... How long the tribe had existed before the Portuguese became acquainted with it, and whether it had attained its greatness by growth or by conquest, cannot be ascertained, but very slowly afterwards it was broken into several independent communities.

The tribe belonged to that section of the Bantu family which in general occupies the interior of the country. It was divided into a great number of clans, each under its own chief, and all of these acknowledged the Monomotapa as their superior in rank, the distant clans, even with the religious bond of union in full force, were very loosely connected with the central government. There was one peculiar custom however, that prevented them from forgetting it: a custom that most likely had a foreign origin. Every year at a certain stage of the crops a command was sent throughout the country that when the next new moon appeared all the fires were to be put out, and could only be lit again from the spreading one kindled by the Monomotapa himself.

When the Portuguese in 1505 first came in close contact with the Makalanga, the tribe had been engaged in civil war for twelve or thirteen years, and was in a very unsettled condition. A Monomotapa,

Mokomba by name, had made a favorite of the chief Tjikanga, one of his distant relatives, who was hereditary head of the powerful clan which occupied the district of Manika. Some of the chiefs became jealous of the privileges conferred upon this man, and took advantage of his absence on one occasion to instill in Monomotapa's mind that he was a sorcerer and was compassing the death of his benefactor. Thereupon the Monomotapa sent him some poison to drink, but instead of obeying, he made an offer of a large number of cattle for his life. The offer was declined, and then in despair he collected his followers, and made a quick march to the great place, surprised Mokomba, and killed him. Tjikanga then assumed the government of the tribe. He endeavored to exterminate the family of his predecessor, and actually put twenty one of Mokomba's children to death. Only one young man escaped. After four years' exile, this one, whose name is variously given as Kesarinuto or Kesarimyo,³⁸ returned and collected a force which defeated the usurping Monomotapa's army. Tjikanga then took field himself, adherents gathered on both sides, and a battle was fought which continued for three days and a half. On the fourth day Tjikanga was killed, when his army dispersed, and Kesarimyo became Monomotapa. But Togwa, Tjikanga's son, would not submit, and with his ancestral clan kept possession of the Manika district, and carried on the war. To this circumstance the Portuguese attributed a small quantity of gold that was brought to Sofala for sale. In course of time the war was reduced to a permanent feud, Togwa's clan became an independent tribe, and Manika was lost to the Monomotapa forever. This would have been about 1506.

Throughout the greater part of the territory occupied by the Makalanga gold was found, and particularly in the district of Manika. No other mode of obtaining it was known – at least as far as the Portuguese and the Arabs could ascertain – than by washing ground either in the rivers or in certain localities after heavy rains. The gold, unless it was in nuggets of some size, was not wrought by the finders, as they were without sufficient skill to make any except the roughest ornaments of it. For a very long time, however, its value in trade had been known. It was kept in quills, and served as a convenient medium of exchange until the Arabs got possession of it.

³⁸ The Portuguese generally referred to the leaders of the Monomotapa Empire using names in the Portuguese language, instead of using their Kalanga names.

Copper and iron were also to be had from the Makalanga. This iron was regarded as of superior quality, so much so that a quantity was once sent to India to make firelocks of it. Though the smelting furnaces were of the crudest description, this metal was obtainable in greatest abundance, just as it is today among the Bapedi far south.

About the middle of the sixteenth century the Kalanga tribe had split into four sections, independent of each other. The way in which the Tjikanga section, occupying the district of Manika, broke asunder from the main body has been related [above]. A further separation took place in the following manner: Two sons of the paramount chief during their father's lifetime were entrusted with the government of clans, and upon his death refused to acknowledge as their superior their half brother who claimed to be the great heir, but about whose legitimate right there must have been some uncertainty, or otherwise he must have been a weakling. One of the seceders, Sedanda by name, governed the clan living on the coast between the Sabi and Sofala, and the other, named Ketive, was head of the clan living along the Sofala and occupying territory as far north as the Tendankulu River.³⁹ The great heir retained the title of Monomotapa and the government of the remainder of the Kalanga people, but the sections here named were forever lost to him and his successors. Thereafter war was frequent between the newly formed tribes.

...On the 18th of September 1560, the Jesuit missionary, Father Goncalo da Silveira left Mozambique for the Kalanga country, and upon arrival there he was well received. Relations between Monomotapa and Father Silveira later deteriorated, and ended in the missionary and his entourage strangled to death on 16th of March 1561. The missionary's body was cast into a river.

Tete, in Mozambique, was the station from which the inland trade was carried on. From it goods were conveyed by native carriers to three places in Kalanga territory, namely Masapa, Luanze, and Bukoto, at each of which a Portuguese resided, who had charge of the local barter. Masapa was on the river Mansovo – now – Mazoe, about one hundred and fifty miles by road from Tete. Luanze was one hundred and five miles almost due south of Tete, between two little

³⁹ That is, the modern Phungwe River. It runs from the north-east of the Nyanga Mountains in a south-easterly direction cutting through the center of Mozambique and entering the Indian Ocean at Port Beira.

rivers which united below it and then flowed into the Mansovo. Bukoto was thirty miles from Masapa, thirty-nine miles from Luanze, and one hundred and twenty miles from Tete. It was also situated between two forks of rivers. Masapa was close to the mountain called Fura [now Mt Darwin], from the top of which there was believed to be a very extensive view over the Kalanga country, but no Portuguese was allowed to go to the top of it, because as they understood it, the Monomotapa did not wish his territory to be narrowly inspected.⁴⁰

All the clans surrounding Masapa, Bukoto and Luanze were Makalanga, and the Portuguese had no control over them whatsoever. The Monomotapa at this time, who bore also the title Mambo, was well disposed toward the Portuguese. He gave the Dominicans leave to establish missions in his country, and they had already up three little buildings for places of prayer, at Masapa, Luanze and Bukoto. They had not as yet, however, men to occupy these places permanently, but the friar who resided at Tete occasionally visited them. The white people never made a request from Mambo without accompanying it with a present – usually a piece of coarse dyed calico – for himself and for his principal wife, whose name was Mazarira. This was the custom of the country, for no native could obtain an audience unless he presented an ox or a goat. The form of oath used by the Makalanga was Ke [He?] Mambo, just as all Bantu tribes still swear by their chief. This Monomotapa had a great number of wives, and his children were distinguished from other natives by the term Manambo [*Mwana-wa-mambo?*].

West of the country occupied by the Makalanga Bushmen were numerous, consequently the territory there was vaguely termed Batua or Butua, the Bantu name of those wild people. Little or nothing was known of that part of Africa, however, for neither white man or Arab

⁴⁰ There was a general belief in Portugal that the mines of southern Africa were as rich as those of America, and that if possession of them was taken, boundless wealth would be obtained. "Was not these the mines from which the queen of Sheba got the gold which she presented to King Solomon?" said the Portuguese enthusiasts. Was not Masapa the ancient Ophir? Why even then the Kalanga Negros called the mountain close to the residence of their great chief Fura, and the Arabs called it Aufur, what was that but a corruption of Ophir? There, at Abasia, close to Masapa and to the mountain Fura, was a mine so rich there were seldom years in which nuggets worth thousands of pounds sterling were taken from it. Then there were the mines of Manika and far distant Butua.

had ever penetrated it...By the early seventeenth century, the Kalanga tribe was engaged in civil war, and one of the two individuals who claimed to be legitimate Monomotapa, having been defeated, fled to the neighborhood of Tete and offered the Portuguese the mines in the Tjikoba territory along the northern banks of the Zambesi if they would assist him against his rival, a chief whom the Europeans called the usurper Natuziane. Under any circumstances, nothing in the territory north of the Zambesi was a Kalanga ruler's to dispose, but this was not taken into consideration, except that as a reasonable consequence it was believed the one assisted would be willing to cede the gold mines in his own country also.

A defeat of the Portuguese on the mainland near Mozambique in 1753, in which about half of the whole military force they could master at the time perished, prevented them from taking part in the civil wars among the Makalanga which disturbed the whole country almost immediately afterwards, and which resulted in 1759 in the tribe being broken into fragments. One of the chiefs retained the title Monomotapa and old Zimbabwe, but he and his successors were men of very little importance, and the reputation of the Makalanga was gone forever. Henceforth each of the clans regarded itself as an independent tribe, and took a name different from the others [hence the different tribal names we saw in Chapter Two]. Jealousies and feuds prevailed among them, and left them at length helpless before ferocious invaders.⁴¹

War ensued between Manuza and Kaprazine, with the former supported by the Portuguese and the latter up in arms against them. Kaprazine was finally beaten and Manuza proclaimed Monomotapa by 1629. He gave further permission to the frairs to go wherever they wanted in his country and build churches at any place that suited them. He undertook to receive white men without obliging them to go through the ordinary ceremonies, declared that commerce was free, and that traders should be protected, renounced all claim to the yearly presents made to his predecessors, engaged to drive the Mohammedans out of his country, and threw open his mines to every

⁴¹ As we have already seen in Chapter Three, this is the century when the Shona had just arrived in the Zimbabwean Tableland. Wars were bound to follow with new waves of migrations as the Portuguese recorded widespread pillage and destruction starting in the 1700s with the arrival of the Shona groups.

kind of exploitation by the Portuguese.

In 1774 the Kative country was overrun by a horde from the interior, and the only Portuguese trading station in it except Sofala was destroyed. Little wars succeeded each other until 1831, when the tribes in the lower Zambesi valley were in general commotion. Later came the most terrible of all the invasions the country had ever witnessed. Two tribes that had fled from Zululand settled near each other on the Sabi River, where they quarreled, and fought until one – the Angoni – pushed its way northward to the shore of Lake Nyasa, to become a scourge to the tribes residing there. The other – the Abagaza [the Gaza Nguni] – under the far famed chief Manikusa, remained behind to devastate the land from Delagoa Bay to the Zambesi river, and to subject all who were spared to continual plunder.

From 1834 until quite recently the havoc created among the Bantu between the Zambesi and the Limpopo by the Abagaza on the south, the Makololo on the northwest, and the Matabele on the west, was very great. Many of the ancient clans were quite exterminated, and of those that remain in existence few occupy the same ground that their ancestors did. In the years 1852 and 1853 especially they were scattered and destroyed with no compunction than if they had been vermin. (Theal 1896, 125-126, 128-130, 150, 160-163, 179-183, 233-234, 237-239, 257-259).

Just to make sure that Dr Theal told it as it was, let us go into actual records of the Portuguese, beginning with the earliest of the letters of the Portuguese. This one, already referred to several times in the book, was written by Diogo de Alcacova. He was the first to describe the lands of the interior, or at least to relate reports that he had heard of them, in a letter titled 'Kings and Barons' addressed to the King of Portugal dated Cochin (India), 20th November, 1506. For the sake of a clearer understanding of what the Portuguese said about the Bukalanga Empire of the Monomotapas as they saw and understood it, we will now quote the letter at length here. So important is this letter to the history of Bukalanga that I have seen it fit that I repeat it or portions thereof a few times throughout the book. The letter reads:

The kingdom, Sir, in which there is the gold that comes to Sofala is called Ucalanga [Bukalanga], and the kingdom is very large, in which there are many large towns, besides many other villages, and Sofala itself is in this kingdom if not the whole land along the sea. The kings of the interior pay little or no regard to it if the Moors [Arab traders] are in possession [of Sofala]; and going along the coast and towards the interior four leagues, because they [the Moors] do not attempt to go further inland, as the Negros rob and kill them, for they do not believe in anything.

And, Sir, a man might go from Sofala to a city which is called Zumubany [Zimbabwe] which is large, in which the king always resides, in ten or twelve days, if you travel as in Portugal; but because they do not travel except from morning until midday, and eat and sleep until the next morning when they go on again, they cannot go to this city in less than twenty or twenty four days; and in the whole kingdom of Ucalanga gold is extracted; and in this way: they dig out the earth and make a kind of tunnel, through which they go under the ground a long stone's throw, and keep on taking out from the veins with the ground mixed with the gold, and, when collected, they put it in a pot, and cook it much in fire; and after cooking they take it out, and put it to cool, and when cold, the earth remains, and the gold all fine gold... and no man can take it [the gold] out without leave from the king, under the penalty of death.

And this king who now reigns, Sir, in Ucalanga, is the son of Mokomba, late king of the said kingdom, and he has the name Kewsarimgo Menomotapa, which is like saying king so and so, because the title of the king is Menomotapam, and the kingdom Ucalanga. Your highness is already aware that for twelve or thirteen years there has been war in the kingdom from which the gold came to Sofala ... and when the ameer⁴² [Tjangamire] saw that the king [wished to kill him], he made up his mind to kill [the king] in the city

⁴² *Ameer* or *amir* (Arabic for Justice) was a title given to Tjanga or Tjikanga, meaning the Chief Justice. He combined his name with amir/ameer to come up with the name Tjangamire, which would later become a title. Two hundred years later the title was taken up by Dombolakona-Tjing'wango Dlembewu Moyo. This way we had two Tjangamires, one of 1490 and another of 1690.

where he was, which is called Zimhauhy: and he took with him many people; and when he arrived near the city, the grandees who were with the king knew that he was coming, they went to receive him, and, when they saw him coming in that way [i.e., with many followers], they would not remain in the city and went out of it [i.e., deserted the Monomotapa]; and the ameer went to the house of the king, which were of stone and clay very large and of one story, and he entered where the king was with his slaves and some other men; and while speaking to the king the ameer cut his head off; and as he killed him, he made himself king; and all obeyed him; and he reigned peacefully four years; and the king Mokomba [i.e., the Monomotapa] left twenty-two children; and the ameer killed them all, except one, the eldest, who was still young, whose name was Kwekarynugo, who is now the king; and this one fled to another kingdom of his uncle; and when he was twenty years old, he took possession of the kingdom with many people of his father, who came to join him; and he marched against the ameer who had killed his father, in a field close to the town.

And, when the ameer saw that he was coming upon him, he sent many people to fight with him; and the son of the king killed many people of the ameer; and when the ameer saw that they killed so many people, he came out to fight with him; and the son of the king killed the ameer in the field; and the battle lasted three days and a half, in which many people were killed on both sides; and, as the ameer was dead ... [the Monomotapa] had the kingdom to himself, except that the territories of the ameer would not submit to him; and the ameer left a relative who is named Toloa [Togwa], who now with a son of the ameer wages war with the king ... And in this way, Sir, the war was originated, and is still today. And for this reason, Sir, the gold does not come to Sofala as it used to... (in Duffy 1964, 149-150).

Following the descriptions of the Monomotapa Empire by Diogo de Alcacova were those of the missionary Father Joao dos Santos who wrote eighty years later in 1586. His description of the Empire follows below:

This Kingdom of Manamotapa, is situate in Mocaranga, which in times past was wholly of the Manamotapa Empire, but now is divided into four Kingdoms, to wit, this of Manamotapa, that of Quiteve, the third of Sedanda and the fourth of Tjikanga. This division was made by a Manamotapa Emperor, who not willing or not able to govern so remote Countries, sent his Son Quiteve to govern that part which runs along the River of Sofala, and Sedanda another Son, to that which Sabia washes, a river which visits the Sea before the Bosicas: and Tjicanga a third Son to the Lands of Manica. These three after their Father's death would never acknowledge their Brother his Successor: and the same without yearly warring with each other, continues to do their Posterity. Yet is the Kingdom of the Manamotapa, bigger than the other three together. The Negros call them Mocarangas, because they speak the Mocaranga Tongue. This Kingdom of Manamotapa is above two hundred leagues long, and as much broad.

On the Northwest he confines with the Kingdom of Abutua (the King and the Kingdom have the same name) which they say, stretches through the Continent to the borders of Angola. I have seen in Sofala a Commodity bought by a Portuguese in Manica, brought thither by the Negros of Abutua, which had come from Portugal by the way of Angola. In this Kingdom of Abutua is much fine Gold, but the Naturals being far from the Portuguese, do not seek much after it, but rather to multiply their cattle of which they have abundance. On the East Manamotapa confines with the River Zambezi, which the Manamotapas call Empando (from *panduka*), which signifies Rebelling against his King: for say they, were it not for the River, the Manamotapa would be Lord of the Country on the other side, to which he cannot pass his army for want of Boats.

On the Southwest this Kingdom extends to the Ocean, into which it enters with a point of Land of ten or twelve leagues large, from the River Luabo, to that of Tendanculo. The rest of the Lands Southwards to which the River Inhanabane, and divided between the three Kings, which rebelled as is said: from Tendanculo to Sofala, the Quiteve reigns: thence to the South is the Kingdom of Sabia, under the

Sedanda, who is Lord also in Botonga⁴³ to the Region of Inhambane: within Land at the head of both these Kingdoms is Manica under the Tjicanga, who is on the Northwest, some hundreds of leagues remote from the Sea. On the Northside of Manica, is Abutua, and on the Northeast is the Manamotapa, and to the South is a King called Biri. Those three Kings which rebelled are great, but the Quiteve is the greatest, and richest by trade with the Portuguese for Stuffs and Beads (which is the Negros wealth) and his people are the strongest of the Mocarangas, and the best Archers, and most expert at the Azagay.

Near Massapa is a great Hill, called Fura [Mt Darwin], whence may be discerned a great part of the Kingdom of Manamotapa: for which cause he will not suffer the Portuguese to go hither, that they should not covet his great Country and hidden Mines. On the top of that Hill are yet standing pieces of old walls, and ancient ruins of lime and stone, which testify that there have been strong buildings ... In all the Regions of Manamotapa are many mines of Gold; and particularly in Tjiroro, where is the most and most fine. They gather it, as is said before, of Quiteve. It is pain of death for any Moor which discovers a Mine to take away any, besides his goods be forfeited to the King. And if by chance any find a Mine, he is bound to cry out aloud, that some other Negro may come to testify that he takes none: and both are to cover the Place with Earth, and set a great bough thereon, to give warning to other Negros to avoid the place. For if they should come there, it would cost them their lives, although there be no proof that they took anything. This severity is used to keep the Mines from the knowledge of the Portuguese, lest covetous desire thereof might cause them to take away their Country. It is found in powder like sand; in grains like beads; in pieces some smooth as if they were melted, others branched with snags, others mixed so with Earth, that the Earth being well washed from them, they remain like Honeycombs; those holes before full of red Earth, seeming as though they were also to be turned into Gold. As for that in stone, we have already spoken.

⁴³ The Thonga or Tsonga are referred to here, not to be confused with the Tonga of the Zambezi Valley. A number of writers referred to the Tsonga as the Thonga or Tonga as the references in the Reverend Henry Junod in Chapter Two have shown. The region also being referred to, the south of the Sabi, is a region occupied by the Tsonga.

...Although the Manamotapa be greater than those three mentioned, yet he has not other Vassal Kings or Tributaries to him: only some of his subjects called Encosses or Fumos, are great Lords, and have Tenants subject to them ... (The Manamotapa) has many women, and the principal, which is most respected, called Mazarira, is his entire sister a great friend of the Portuguese, to whom they give the King his Curua, they give a present of clothes. No man speaks with the King or with his Wife, unless he brings a Present; the Portuguese give Beads, the Negros Kine, or Goats, or Clothes: and when they are able to give nothing else, they bring a sack of Earth to acknowledge subjection, or a bundle of straw to thatch the King's Houses; for all the houses in Cafraria are thatched. The Manamotapa which now reigns, is called Mambo, and his subjects used to swear by his life, saying *Xe Mambo* [*He/She Mambo*]; and when they speak with him, they say *Xe dico* [*He/She Ndiko*], as we say, Please your Majesty. The King's Children are called Manamambo [*Mwana-wa-Mambo*]. He has given leave to our Religious men in his Kingdoms, to convert and to build Churches; of which they have built three, to wit, Massapa, Luanze, Bukutu, where live many Portuguese... (in Davidson 1964, 161-163).

Such was the greatness, glory and splendor of the Kalanga Kingdom of Monomotapas. In a 1603 description of the Monomotapa Empire by Johnstone describing the most wonderful countries of the world by his time, we are told that:

In the residue of Ethiopie [East Africa] raigne divers powerful princes as the Kings of Adell, Monomugi, Monomotapa, Angola, and Congo. Monomotapa is mightier and more famous than the rest. This kingdom containeth all that island which lieth between the river of Cuama [i.e., Zambezi] and Spirito Santo (one of the rivers in the Lebombo Mountans region and generally called the English River), and from Spirito Santo it stretches to the Cape of Good Hope, and for the viceroys of that huge tract do knowledge of him for their sovereign and superior governor. The soil aboundeth with corn and

cattle. By the store of teeth not less than 5,000 elephants must die yearly. Zimba and Benemaraxa are cities. There is no climate like it for plenty of gold, for by the report there is 3,000 miles whereout gold is digged; gold is likewise found in the earth, in rocks, and in rivers. The mines of Manica, Boro, Quiticui, and Totoe (which some men call Batua) are the richest. The people are mean of stature, black, and well set. They converse with the king kneeling. The offenses most punished are witchcraft, theft, and adultery. The king beareth on his coat of arms a certain little spade with an ivory handle, and two small darts. He keepeth for his faithfulest guard two hundred dogs. He keepeth the heirs of the vassal princes to be secured of their father's loyalty (Johnstone, in Wilmot 1896, 138-139).

As to how long the Monomotapa Kingdom had been in existence prior to the arrival of the Portuguese on the African east coast it is difficult to tell. But we can reach some conclusion by conjecture based on the available evidence. If construction of Maphungubgwe started in the eleventh century, it would mean that this Kingdom had been in existence for almost five hundred years. It is impossible to imagine the establishment of centers such as Maphungubgwe and Great Zimbabwe without a strong government to coordinate such massive building activity. There most likely would have been in existence a powerful line of Kings both a Maphungubgwe and Great Zimbabwe, and these may just have been the Monomotapas as indeed a number of archeologists agree (see Chapter Eight).

As we have seen above, a few years after the Portuguese arrived, the Monomotapa Kingdom was broken up into about four divisions. A southwestern Kingdom would be established, centring at Khami and ruling the whole of the southwest and south of the country all the way to the Sabi River. The Portuguese referred to this kingdom as the Butua-Togwa Kingdom. It remained in charge of Great Zimbabwe, with power sweeping all the way to the Makhado Mountains in the south, the Zambezi in the north and the Makgadikgadi Salt Pans in the west. This, again, was the original center of Bukalanga as we saw in the identification of the Leopard's Kopje culture area in Chapter One. To that kingdom we now turn our attention.

2. The Togwa Kingdom of Buthwa

The kingdom that succeeded Great Zimbabwe in the south and southwest of the country is recorded in Portuguese documents as the Kingdom of Butua-Togwa. It is unclear what the origin of the word Togwa, variously rendered Toloa and Toroa in Portuguese documents is. In Kalanga oral tradition, the name of the first Togwa king is given as Madabhale, who later changed his name to Tjibundule Shoko/Ncube. Tjibundule is said to have meant “the one that roars” as a result of his power in the region. It does seem that the name Tjibundule later became a dynastic title, for, at the time of the rise of Dombolakona-Tjing’wango in the 1690s, the ruler he overthrew is still named Tjibundule. It is obviously not possible that one man would have ruled for 200 years from since the time of the fall of Great Zimbabwe to 1690!

It is possible that the name “Butua/Togwa” of the Portuguese originated from the geographical name of the region, Buthwa (land of the San), and perhaps when the Monomotapa people in the north-eastern portion of the kingdom told the Portuguese that “*togwa*” (we are fighting) with the people of Buthwa, the Portuguese understood that as if it were a name. It does seem possible, for the same thing happened with the Monomotapa title, which originated, from the Kalanga phrase *nhu unotapa* (he who takes into captivity).⁴⁴

According to Mr. Masola, the reach of the Tjibundule dynasty’s power swept all of the south and south-west of the country, right through to Palapye and the Makgadikgadi Salt Pans in the west, the

⁴⁴ Several propositions have been made concerning names of Kalanga origin that have been presented for years as Shona, for example, Zimbabwe is originally from *nzi mabgwe* (royal court), but the Shona claim it is from *dzimba dza mabgwe*, meaning houses of stone, whereas Portuguese documents clearly state that the name Zimbabwe meant ‘royal court’. The other word is Maphungubgwe, which it is claimed originated from *pungudza mabgwe* (working with stone), whereas the name originates with the Kalanga-Venda *mhungubgwel/phungubgwe* (jackal).

Such is also attempted on the word Shona itself which it is claimed originates from a Pali (Indian language) word *sona*, meaning gold, and is supposed to originate with Indian gold traders in the first millennium (Kahari: 1990 70). But the obvious question is if the word Shona is so old, why was it unknown for the four hundred years that the Portuguese documents were being written, so much that the name only gets imposed on the Shona by the British, and no one is certain where or what the origin of the word is!

Zambezi in the north and the country of Venda both north and south of the Limpopo River in the south. By Portuguese accounts of the 17th century the kingdom also included the modern Manicaland, formerly the District of Manika. Again we see that the region occupied by the Togwa Kingdom, roughly covering Matabeleland, Masvingo, part of Limpopo, and the central and north eastern section of Botswana, is the same that was occupied by the Leopard's Kopje culture people, the Kalanga.

The Togwa kingdom of the Tjibundules was headquartered at Khami, and remained in control of the Great Zimbabwe area as the other portion of the kingdom concentrated in the north-east end of the country. But, according to Portuguese documents, this Kingdom remained vassal to the northern-eastern Kingdom which was under the paramount kings of Bukalanga, the Monomotapas. The Togwa Kingdom would later be overthrown by another Kalanga people, the Banyayi or, as they are famously known, the BaLozwi as we saw in Chapter Four. This happened in the second half of the 17th century. At the end of that same century, Mambo Dlembewu Moyo marched north, overthrew the ruling Monomotapa and ejected the Portuguese who were now leaning towards colonialism out of the Zimbabwean Tableland.

3. The Lozwi Kingdom

The year 1693 marked the end of the Monomotapa Empire proper, and it was succeeded by the Lozwi Kingdom as the main polity in the Zimbabwean Tableland. The following information concerning the Lozwi Kingdom is provided to us by Mr. F.W. Posselt. He wrote in 1935 in his work on the indigenous tribes of Rhodesia, *Fact and Fiction: A Short Account of the Natives of Southern Rhodesia* that:

Towards the end of the seventeenth century one Tjangamire had consolidated his power to such an extent that he successfully attacked the Portuguese, drove them away and destroyed some of their settlements; at the same time he conquered a number of tribes and became the paramount ruler of that area.

The person of Tjangamire is of great interest as he is the first leader definitely associated with the BaLozwi, both according to Native tradition and written records. Whether he was an independent ruler or a subordinate of some other, we cannot say with certainty. It may here be remarked that some Native historians dispute that the name "Tjangamire" was a personal one, contending that it was only a form of royal address which has survived to the present time. In support of this view may be quoted the fact that the early Portuguese chroniclers frequently referred to Tjikanga as king of the Manica, whereas to Natives this name did not connote any person but was solely used as the address of the Manica chiefs, and is still used as such. The records of Senhor Ferao, Captain of Sena, written at the beginning of the 19th century, contain the following reference:

With respect to the territories southward of Sofala, by accounts which have been ascertained from Tradition among Natives, it appears that of the numerous progeny of Monomotapa (This Monomotapa cannot be the same as the one referred to by earlier chroniclers, for his kingdom was in the valley of the Zambesi) Xangamere [Tjangamire], being born of a slave, was looked on with contempt, in consequence of which he left his father's kingdom with some followers and founded the kingdom of Tjingamira, which is supposed to be forty days' journey from the town of Sofala.

According to some Native evidence it was Tjangamire who settled in northeastern Mashonaland. He was recognized as paramount ruler of an extensive kingdom. In time he and his successors extended their sway until most tribes in what is now Southern Rhodesia became tributary. It is meet to quote here from recently discovered Portuguese documents in the archives of Lisbon, as they throw an interesting light on the history of the early Lozwi, and connect Tjangamire with the leadership of these people:

The real deathblow was given it (the Monomotapa Empire) by the Barotse, who invaded the kingdom in the year 1693 under Tjangamire, and not only destroyed it but also drove the Portuguese out of the country. In the manuscript which has preserved this important event for us the attackers are called Barobze, "inhabitants of the territory of Tjangamire." But Tjangamire came from Abutua, as

we are informed by contemporaneous sources". The just mentioned document depicts the Barobze as the most fearful and terrible enemies, armed with arrow and bow, assegais and axes, daggers and bludgeons"... Each succeeding Monomotapa was by the grace of Tjangamire, for out of his hand he received the empire. A messenger of Tjangamire installed him on the throne and gave him the necessary directions, 'so that the former appeared to be more a subordinate of Tjangamire than an absolute ruler" (Ms. B. N. Lisboa, Caixa 16.N.22 & Ms. B. N. Lisboa, Codex A.4.44.)⁴⁵.

Posselt also informs us of the BaNyayi/BaLozwi and their overthrow of Tjibundule in the following terms:

[A]bout that time there lived one Chibunduro or Chihunduro or Sibuture [that is Tjibundule], said to have been the chief of the Bachangwe [BaShangwe], then the paramount people. The BaLozwi attacked him but were repeatedly defeated, and in the end had to submit and pay tribute, thanks to the fierce bees he kept in a calabash. It was natural that the secret should be soon discovered through the guile of the royal bride supplied by the BaLozwi [Bagedze Moyo according to Masola], who was to be a seductive spy. During her husband's absence she returned to her own people and revealed that Tjibundule's strength lay in the bees in his house. They came and burnt the insects, then ran to the unsuspecting chief and slew him, seized the country and became rulers. Another tradition credits Tjibundule's power to the war medicine and magic tail he possessed. Whenever he proposed setting out on an expedition he consulted the

⁴⁵ "In 1693 the Portuguese were attacked by Tjangamira, a vassal of the Emperor of Monomotapa, were easily surprised, and a number of inhabitants of Sena and Tete slain. The Portuguese force had to retire from Zimbao; a great war ensued, and help from Goa invoked. Dom Estevao Da Gama penetrated into the Zambesi country, but died at Sena, and Tjengamira, profiting from this circumstance, entered Manica and completely destroyed the fair of Massaueca" "Monomotapa", by the Hon. A. Wilmot, pp.209-210, London, 1896.

tail, which stood erect if success was in store. But like the magic bees, the secret was discovered by a false wife, stolen by her and betrayed to his enemies.

Other Native evidence, perhaps better attested, shows that a body of BaLozwi, the nucleus of those subsequently ruled by the Mambo of the Moyo dynasty, came from the south, from a place called Gunibukhwa near the Crocodile River ("According to some of the native historians the Baloyi [=BaLozwi] came from the BaNyai country along the Nwanati, who also belonged to the Nyai or Kalanga race...A man named Mashakatsi, a great elephant hunter, went to the north along the Limpopo River in search of the much prized game, armed with bow and arrows. At the junction of the Limpopo and Lebvubye he found them in great numbers. The country was inhabited by the BaNyai tribe, the BaLambutsu clan [BaLembethu?] ... He noticed that the BaNyai were a peaceable people, and concluded that they would easily be defeated. Their country, too, was a desirable land).

It is said the name (i.e., Gunibukhwa) means "grass fuel", and arose from the fact that the people wandering about at night in some plain could not procure wood to kindle fires and were obliged to use grass for this purpose. They travelled through the southwestern portion of Matabeleland; thence through the country of the Bashankwe (BaShangwe) and thence south and for a time settled at the Zimbabwe Ruins, from whence they were driven by a severe three years drought and resulting famine, still known as the "*Shangwa*". They then moved to the Insiza District and finally to Manyanga on the Shangani river. It may be stated that even at the present time the BaLozwi face to the south when they offer sacrifice.

If the claim of kinship with the Bavenda stock is real – and there is no serious reason to disbelieve it – it adds weight to the tradition of BaLozwi migration from the south or southwest [we have already established this in Chapter 3 and 4]. According to Native accounts this invasion described a circle through the center of Rhodesia, sweeping south and ultimately ended in central Matabeleland. It is very probable that the BaLozwi impressed the subjugated tribes in their migratory course, and by such means recruited and augmented their military strength, on the parallel of the later Anguni invasions of the early 19th century.

We may also conclude that the invasion caused the disruption and displacement of a number of tribes, and that it split the Kalanga communities who lived in the southern portion of the Monomotapa from the main empire, pressing them to the south and southwest into the areas they now occupy. After the occupation the BaLozwi settled the subjugated tribes and allied people – as is abundantly attested to by tradition and historic evidence – on vacant land.

The writer must be content – indeed he has no alternative – to give the but fragmentary history of the BaLozwi after their settlement at Zimbabwe and in the Insiza District, which may approximately be dated about the year 1750. They are now split up into a number of communities, occupying different districts; in some cases the original stock has intermarried or amalgamated with other tribal elements.

It is asserted by some that the first Mambo was Dombo [Dombolakona-Tjing'wango]. He is said to have been a great hunter and successful warrior; he carried on wars with the Bavenda of the North Transvaal and the Mangwato of Bechuanaland, and considerably extended the sway of the BaLozwi. Though an able ruler he was vain and cruel. He gave himself the surname of “rock that defeated a hoe,” [from which the name Dombolakona-Tjing'wango came] owing to an unsuccessful attempt made on his life.

Of Netjadzike it is related that the attempt to tame elephants was made during his reign.⁴⁶ A raiding party was sent to Pandamatenka ([Pandamatenga] in the Wankie District) for the purpose of chastising the Bakwa (Bushmen), who had killed some collectors of tribute sent there by the BaLozwi. Another party was sent against Nyabano, of the Mangwato, for raiding purposes, but the BaLozwi were defeated and the expedition proved unsuccessful.

Baswi or Rapandamananga ... was the most unpopular ruler. His ascension to the throne was marked with a three years' drought, resulting in unprecedented famine, still known as “Shangwa,” when pumpkins are said to have been given as dowry for wives. The famine caused a general exodus, hence the consequent mixing of tribes and resulting tribal confusion. The king showed but little compassion for his people in their dire straits.

⁴⁶ It seems that Posselt mixed up two names of two different individuals here: Netjasike and Tjigadzike. Tjigadzike was installed in the place of Lukwangwaliba (cf. Masola). The description here fits that of Tjigadzike as given by Masola.

Baswi was succeeded to the throne by Ntinhima or Gumbolemvula as the new Mambo ... It is said that he remarked "it will rain when I stretch my leg", hence his name of "Rain Leg." ... Gumbolemvula resided at the royal residence of "Tshimbabgwe" at Manyanga or NtabazaMambo, in the present Bubi District. It is not clear why the BaLozwi moved from their previous site, but no doubt the reason for the removal was the invasion of enemies, in all probability the Swazi. Lembewu [Dlembewu] was elected successor to Gumbolemvula. Whether his reign was short or whether he refused the office is not certain. He was succeeded by Tjilisamhulu, the last of the Mambo kings⁴⁷.

The Swazi under Zwangendaba now invaded the country; they had previously entered under a leader named Mtshetshenyana. Zwangendaba attacked the BaLozwi at Manyanga. The king was killed in the fight; he made no attempt to flee, it being against tribal tradition to do so, for it was said "Kingship is as a stone and cannot be moved." According to some Tjilisamhulu was skinned by the Swazi, and others say his enemies removed his heart. The Swazi settled in the Inyoka district for a time, but subsequently Zwangendaba led them through Mashonaland, raiding and plundering the tribes on the way ..., ultimately reaching Central Africa and settled there. Many of the present Bangoni are their descendants.

A section of the Swazi, under a woman leader, Nyamazana, having reached the Zambezi after the main body had crossed, being unable to ford the river, returned, and those were subsequently incorporated with the Amandebele by Mzilikazi, who married Nyamanzana and bestowed on her the rank of royal wife. The Amandebele arrived about the year 1840 some years after the overthrow of the BaLozwi and the death of Tjilisamhulu. About that time a large number of BaLozwi resided in the Somabhula District under Swabhasi, a grandson of Dombo. Another section occupied the land of the Kwekwe River, at a place now called

⁴⁷ The Dlembewu mentioned here would have been different from Dombolakona-Tjing'wango who was the first Mambo. Also, the Tjilisamhulu would have been a different individual from Dombolakona-Tjing'wango (whose childhood name was Tjilisamhulu, adult name Nitjasike Dlembewu Moyo). It seems to have been a common practice for leaders to take on the names of previous rulers.

“Ntabakwezinungu”, under Ntinhima or Mtebele, as he had been called as a boy, the son of Gumbolemvula. Collisions with the Amandebele soon occurred, but the power of the BaLozwi had been broken by the Swazi.

[Concerning the system of government among the BaLozwi and those upon who they ruled, Mr. Posselt stated]:

From all accounts, the government of the BaLozwi was a comparatively mild and peaceful one. How they extended their power so far and over so many different tribes cannot be ascertained. No doubt the arts of diplomacy won over some; others were subjected by military force. It may be doubted, however, whether they were a martial people, in view of the fact that the Swazi, who could not have been numerous, succeeded in overthrowing the Mambo power, apparently without any great difficulty. The government of the Mambo did not interfere with the internal affairs of the subject tribes, who were allowed their autonomy. But no chief could hold office without the previous sanction of the BaLozwi sovereign.

At the zenith of their power the BaLozwi were recognized as the ruling race by almost all the tribes then comprising Matabeleland and Mashonaland ... No standing military force was stationed among the tributary people; expeditions were sent out only when a tribe refused to pay tribute due. The BaLozwi did not make prisoners of war and retain them as serfs or servants, in this way building up a socially or legally inferior community similar to that of the “hole” created by the Amandebele. The BaLozwi had dealings with the Portuguese at an early period; they carried on barter with the settlements on the Zambezi and East Coast ... But the Portuguese do not appear to have visited personally the BaLozwi country, sending instead their “batonga” (that is, servants or slaves), who exchanged cloth and beads for ivory and other commodities.⁴⁸

⁴⁸ I sometimes muse that if indeed the Shona’s claims were true that they were the

It is generally supposed that Native chiefs and rulers live on their people and have no duties or obligations. This is an erroneous view. The chief is regarded as the father and protector of his people, the very fountain of life; his person and office are treated with veneration and awe. The Mambo, as supreme chief or king, was the fountain of life and justice, and could do no wrong. Human life is not highly valued in a barbaric community, but the death penalty appears to have been generally restricted to two offenses – adultery with a royal wife and witchcraft. A great deal depended on the personal feeling or caprice of the king. The criminal law of the BaLozwi, like that of many other people, was really one of civil rights, and any infringement gave to the wronged party the right to compensation. Murder and theft, like other crimes, could be expiated by the payment of compensation. In some instances, such as that of the habitual thief, the offender was liable to be mutilated by having his hands cut off or by being blinded – thus preventing him from offending again. The Mambo was assisted in his administration of justice and public duties by a number of privy councilors, known as “magota”, who constituted a body of assessors in the trial of cases, or who acted as high dignitaries of the court. The district or sectional administration was entrusted to headmen who had cognizance of minor offenses, grave crimes being reserved for the ruler, who was also the final court of appeal. To cement the allegiance of the district officers and “magota”, the king gave his sisters or daughters in marriage to them (Posselt 1935, 137-159).

Such was the greatness, glory and power of the Monomotapa, Togwa and Lozwi Kingdoms of Bukalanga. All of the kingdoms continued the material culture of stone walling, gold mining and trade, agriculture and so on. The Monomotapa section later turned its sights more to the east coast trade and less to stone walling, which explains

Monomotapa Empire, Togwa and Lozwi Kingdoms people, then they shouldn't be having any problems with calls for Devolution of Power or Federalism, for these kingdoms were always Confederate States allowing for much linguistic and cultural diversity. Bukalanga still retains that character today, yet what we see amongst the Shona is totally foreign to these kingdoms, the emphasis seems to be on a unitary approach to government which sees any form of diversity as a threat to unity.

the few ruined buildings in the northern and north eastern part of the Zimbabwean plateau which was sparsely settled before the arrival of the Shona groups in the 1700s.

No matter how exaggerated some of the old writers' accounts might possibly have been, one thing remains: the Kalanga have been a great people with a long history unlike that of any other people in sub-Saharan Africa. Perhaps the only kingdom Africa south of the Sahara that could possibly be compared to those of the Kalanga is the Aksumite Empire of Abyssinia in modern day Ethiopia which existed from around 100 - 940 A.D. Indeed, the Zimbabwe Civilization could comfortably be compared to other world civilizations such as the Egyptian, Sumerian, Babylonian, and Graeco-Roman Civilizations. Perhaps the major weakness of the Zimbabwe Civilization was the fact that it did not have writing as part of its culture. That will forever leave a gap of knowledge that only written records could have filled and would have cleared all the distortions that we have to deal with today. But how did we end up with what I call the '*shonalized*' version of history as is taught in schools and held to by many? Let us answer that question in the next chapter.

CHAPTER SIX

How Did We End Up With the Shonalized Version of History Part I

*In the big lie there is always a certain force of credibility, because the broad masses of a nation are always more easily corrupted in the deeper strata of their emotional nature than consciously or voluntarily; and thus in the primitive simplicity of their minds they more readily fall victims of the big lie than the small lie, since they themselves often tell small lies in little matters but would be ashamed to resort to large-scale falsehoods. It would never come into their heads to fabricate colossal untruths, and they would not believe that others could have the impudence to distort the truth so infamously. Even though the facts which prove this to be so may be brought clearly to their minds, they will still doubt and waver and will continue to think that there may be some other explanation. For the glossy impudent lie always leaves traces behind it, even after it has been nailed down, a fact which is known to all expert liars in this world and to all who conspire together in the art of lying - Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, vol. I, X.*

*If you tell a lie big enough and keep repeating it, people will eventually come to believe it. The lie can only be maintained for such a time as the State can shield the people from the political, economic and/or military consequences of that lie. It thus becomes vitally important for the State to use all of its powers to repress dissent, for the truth is the mortal enemy of the lie, the truth is the greatest enemy of the State - Joseph Goebbels, *Nazi Propaganda Chief*.⁴⁹*

To find an answer to this very interesting of questions above I have borrowed heavily from Professor Beach's study of the history of the Monomotapa Empire, a Kalanga polity as we have already proved above. We have already seen that according to Portuguese records, the Monomotapa Empire was a Kalanga Kingdom. But in Zimbabwe the official line is that it was a Shona institution, and it would seem the only basis of so saying is the argument that the Kalanga are a

⁴⁹ The Big Lie is a propaganda technique. The expression was coined by Adolf Hitler, when he dictated in his 1925 book *Mein Kampf*, about the use of a lie so "colossal" that no one would believe that someone "could have the impudence to distort the truth so infamously."

Shona people, something which we of course have established to be false. I have noticed in several Facebook debates that when one points out the evidence from Portuguese records regarding the precolonial history of Bukalanga versus that of the Shona, the Shona always rush to ask how one justifies the language similarities. That is a question to which we have already addressed ourselves , and will further tackle a little more here.

Just like with the school history books of Zimbabwe, when one googles ‘Monomotapa Empire’ on the internet, they come up with the following kind of information:

The Kingdom of Mutapa, sometimes referred to as the Mutapa Empire (Shona: Wene we Mutapa; Portuguese: Monomotapa) was a Shona kingdom which stretched between the Zambezi and Limpopo rivers of Southern Africa in the modern states of Zimbabwe and Mozambique. Its founders are probably culturally related to the builders who constructed Great Zimbabwe (Wikipedia, Online).

Still with the Wikipedia entries, we are told that the Monomotapa Empire had the leaders bearing the names that I have listed below, which list is also to be found in the official version of school history books in Zimbabwe. It would be very interesting to note how the names came to enter the common understanding currently held, and also to know that none of the names appear in Portuguese documents prior to 1700, except perhaps a few, which are themselves suspect. I say that some of the names are suspect because they were derived by converting Portuguese names, or names written in Portuguese, into Shona names. Whilst some of the names, for example, ‘Inhampando or Inyampando’ can be converted with relative ease to ‘Nyamhandu’, not many of them can be similarly converted. There is also confusion with names such as Mucombue as recorded by the Portuguese, which some writers have variously rendered as Mokomba, Makombe and Mukombwe, and in the process confusing the names as referring to the same person when in actual fact they referred to individuals who

lived in totally different centuries. This way we find that names from the 19th century are pushed back by 400 years to the 15th century, thus solidifying the Shona claims as far as precolonial history is concerned. But what does the evidence say? To that we now turn. But first the list:

1. Nyatshimba Mutota	c.1430 - c.1450
2. Matope Nyanhewhe	c.1450 - c.1480
3. Mavura Maobwe	c.1480 - c.1480
4. Nyahuma Mukombero	c.1480 - c.1490
5. Changamire	c.1490 - c.1494
6. Chikuyo Chisamarengu	c.1494 - c.1530
7. Neshangwe Munembire	c.1530 - c.1550
8. Chivere Nyasoro	c.1550 - c.1560
9. Negomo Chisamharu	c.1560 - c.1589
10. Gatsi Rusere	1589 - 1623
11. Nyambu Kapararidze	1623 - 1629
12. Mavura Mhande Felipe	1629 - 1652
13. Siti Kazurukamusapa	1652 - 1663
14. Kamharapasu	1663 - 1692
15. Nyakumbira	1692 - 1694
16. Nyamayende Mhande	1694 - 1707
17. Nyenyedzi Zenda	1707 - 1711
18. Boroma Dangwarangwa	1711 - 1712
19. Samatambira	1712 - 1723
20. Samatambira	1723 - 1735
21. Nyatsutsu	1735 - 1740
22. Dehwe Mapunzagutu	1740 - 1759

The list above is not only extremely inaccurate as far as contemporary Portuguese documents are concerned, but is based on no evidence whatsoever other than the claims of Shona spirit mediums of the twentieth century as we shall see throughout this chapter. The list is in flagrant contradiction of the Portuguese documents that we have which are contemporary records of events in the Bukalanga Empire of the Monomotapa Kings, starting in 1506 with the letter of Diogo de Alcacova that we have repeatedly referred to above.

Professor David Beach has made a thorough analysis of how we have ended up with this list of names and the type of history associated with them in Chapter Six of his extensive history volume, *A Zimbabwe Past: Shona Dynastic Histories and Oral Traditions*. He makes an interesting and thorough investigation into the given Shona oral traditions and the subsequent research in the 20th century that has shaped the 'official version' of Zimbabwean history as we know it today. Let us start with the Shona oral traditions of 1763.⁵⁰

The Traditions of 1763

These are Shona oral traditions that were collected by the Portuguese officer Dionizio de Mello e Castro, who was the Captain-major of the Portuguese garrison at the Monomotapa capital in the 1760s. Concerning these traditions, Professor Beach notes: "it seems that the northern Shona thought that the Mutapa dynasty began after 1600, two centuries too late, and that even the 1700s were not clearly recalled" (Beach 1994, 213). Giving an example of the above, he wrote:

Mello e Castro's history starts with 'Nemapangere', who ruled as far as the sea as the 'first emperor of the Monomotapa', with five kings and over thirty chiefs under him. He was succeeded by his equally successful son 'Nemangoro' and the latter 'by his brothers, or relatives' 'Nebeza, Mocumbe and Pande'. The phrase 'brothers or relatives' opens up one of the major problems of Shona genealogies, for Shona kinship terms do not correspond exactly to Portuguese and English terms, and confusion is easy. Nevertheless, with 'Pande', described as a monogamous Christian, we appear to have a direct reference to the Pedro 'Pande' of 1694-8. Assuming that Mello e Castro and his informants were seriously trying to distinguish between a father-son succession, in the relationships given above, then apparently they thought that the Mutapa dynasty was founded only one generation before that living in the late seventeenth century!

⁵⁰ This information from David Beach's book, *A Zimbabwe Past: Shona Dynastic Histories and Oral Traditions*, © 1994 has been reprinted with permission of Mambo Press, Gweru, the book publisher and copyright holder to the work.

This, of course, was nonsense, but the discrepancy seems to have worried nobody (Beach 1994, 214).

The Traditions of 1862

Here we look at the actual evidence from the documents for Mutapa rulers between 1763 and 1862. We then examine the traditions collected in 1862 and find that the northern Shona still thought that the Monomotapa dynasty began not long before 1700, and that they were now giving a very inaccurate and biased version of events before the 1760s. Mistakes made by the collector of these traditions made matters worse.

...Mello e Castro had a reasonable amount of time in which to collect traditions about the Mutapa state. Albino Manoel Pacheco had nine days in camp and fifty days on the march in which to collect his data, but only two days in which to commit his impressions to paper in 1862. He was trying to give a complete picture of Chidima, not just a history of the Mutapas. His sources 'were people who knew them and as I saw them and selecting the most credible I shall not omit any detail'⁵¹. In short, Pacheco's history had various sources, and it is not surprising that it falls into four sections.

The first section deals with the foundation of the dynasty, and had some features in common with Mello e Castro's version of a century earlier, but many additions. 'Nemapangere' has been replaced by 'Mutota' '(of the family of Changamira)' but the 'Nemangoro' and 'Nebesa' brothers of the Mello e Castro version are still there. However, another brother, 'Samarengo', and two sisters, 'Inhamita Nehanda' and 'Murexe', have joined them, and 'Nebeza' now has the additional names of 'Matope' and 'Nhantengue'. In a saga well-known to Zimbabwean history, 'Mutota' leads his family of hunters in search of salt, 'Matope' gains power by committing incest with 'Nehanda' (but their son 'Inhacuma', born of incest, does not succeed to the title) and then conquers the lands as far as the Ruenya,

⁵¹ Albino Manoel Pacheco, *Uma viagem de Tete ao Zumbo*, (Nacional, Mocambique, 1883), 22-28. The manuscript of this journal was kept from 12 December 1861 to 4 March 1862.

and the family in due course become *mhondoro* spirits. However, it is stressed that all this took place after the Portuguese were established at Tete, and that it was trade with them that provided another motive for the migration into the region in the first place.

The second section also confirms the impression given in the Mello e Castro version that the Mutapa dynasty thought it began in the seventeenth century: in an account that seeks to explain why the Mutapa dynasty was sacked by civil war, it starts with 'Mucombue', a 'nephew' of 'Matope', and his two sons 'Inhampando' and 'Boroma'. Previous rulers with names like these were the 'Mocomba' of 1490, the 'Macombe' of c.1704-5, the 'Mucombe' mentioned by Mello e Castro in whose reign the Changamire founded the Rozvi; the historical 'Inhapando' of c. 1710-35 and Mello e Castro's account'; and the 'Boroma' who preceded 'Inhapando' in Mello e Castro.

...This section is in fact covering the period from the 1700s to the 1760s ... To cut the long story short, it looks very much as though Pacheco got two accounts of the 1760s-1860s period and strung them together as though they were one ... Obviously the Pacheco collection of traditions has its uses, but in many ways it tells us more about the way the Mutapas saw the past rather than what really happened.

It is not surprising that it was less accurate on the pre-1763 period than Mello e Castro's version, but it is not very trustworthy on the 1763-1862 period either, and whereas some of the Mutapas named seem to have been real, others seem to have represented factions that never actually came to power. It is a pity, as Mudenge points out, that the first decades of the eighteenth century are not well covered by documents, and a reliable tradition would be valuable.

Developments in Research, 1862 - 1958

Between 1862 and 1958 a number of researchers worked on the documents and the 1862 oral tradition. The result was to get rulers mixed up, with names being shifted from one century to another. Once more, it was about a century before any more oral traditions on Mutapa history were collected. This was mainly due to the fact that the Mutapa state of the nineteenth century was partitioned between Britain and Portugal in the 1890s. Most of it went to Mocambique, where the local Portuguese – unlike those of the Mocambique

Company's area – showed little interest in collecting genealogies and oral traditions ... Whereas Rhodesian writers like F.W.T. Posselt and Charles Bullock were aware that the Mutapa State had extended well into the colony, it never seems to have occurred to them that there were descendants of the Mutapas in the country who could be interviewed in the way that the Changamire Rozvi were. Donald Abraham's work of July and August 1958 was revolutionary in that it showed that there were in fact Mutapa oral traditions to be recorded.

In the meantime, however, the historical Mutapa State did attract attention from researchers using documents. G.M. Theal's enormous work of translation and publication of the Portuguese documents in English did a lot to keep interest alive, although its faults lay in a bias towards the pre-1700 period and in the fact that it was incomplete, with many important documents left out. Among the amateur historians of the pre-1960 era there was a strong tendency to prefer published documents to manuscripts, and English to French translations to the Portuguese itself. Nevertheless, there was an early exception to this: the missionary Paul Schebesta did consult manuscripts in Lisbon in addition to those that had been published, and thus his article of 1926 mentioned the 'Motata' title in use in the mid-seventeenth century and the Mutapas 'Dangurango' and 'Samutambo' of the early 1700s.

It was in this context that the early work of Sicard had some effect on the Mutapa historiography. His 'Tentative chronological tables' of 1946 probably did more harm than good, for they gave dates and 'events' without a shred of evidence, and it is only from reading the footnotes to the following fifty-odd articles that Sicard wrote, that one can guess where he found his 'evidence'. In most cases he was using the Theal collection, but he also had copies of Schebesta's work. One can quibble about some of his dates and interpretations, but most of Sicard's 'Mutapa' characters are in approximately the right period. However, he made one very bad structural error which has affected Mutapa historiography to this day.

Sicard had a copy of a French version of Pacheco, and as we have seen Pacheco had the Mutapa State founded by 'Mutota' and his son 'Matope', whose nephew 'Mucombue' had two sons, 'Inhampando' and 'Boroma', with 'Boroma' having a son, 'Chisamparo' who was blind. Unlike Pacheco, Sicard knew from the Theal collection of

documents (especially that of Alcacova of 1506) that the Mutapa dynasty pre-dated 1490, so he put his 'Mutota' back to c. 1445-60 and converted Pacheco's 'Matope' into a 'Mutapi Makati', thus merging Mutapa and Budya traditions.

Naturally, he then found it easy to equate Pacheco's 'Mucombue' with Alcacova's 'Mocomba' and date him to c.1485-94. He then added Alcacova's 'Changamire' and 'Quecarymgo', dating them to c. 1494-1512. However, he was now faced with Pacheco's 'Inhampando' and 'Boroma'; clearly there was no room for them between 'Mocomba' and 'Quecarymgo', so they had to come afterwards, and he dated them to c.1530-57. Then obviously, came Pacheco's 'Chisamparo', so Sicard gave him the dates c.1559-86 and identified him with the 'Sebastiao' converted by Silveira in 1561, although one would have thought the fact that 'Sebastiao' was apparently not blind would have warned him that he was on the wrong track.

Sicard was followed in the lists by Stanford Smith. He borrowed quite heavily from Sicard as far as Mutapas were concerned, but he probably also borrowed from H. Capelo and R. Ivens. Thus he perpetuated Sicard's placing of 'Inhampando', 'Boroma' and 'Chissamparo' in the sixteenth century, also equating the latter with 'Sebastiao'. In the year after Stanford Smith's publication, Abraham had not seen all of the documents – indeed, it may be that no one has – but he knew better than to put Pacheco's 'Inhampando' and 'Boroma' in the sixteenth century, and he pushed them back into the eighteenth century from which they had originally come.

Unfortunately he left 'Chisamparo' back in the 1560s where Sicard had put him, also leaving the 'Sebastiao' connection. A year later, he seems to have realized his mistake, and removed the 'Chisamparo' name from that period, but in many ways Abraham's 1959 genealogy was better known than that of 1960, and so from that day to this we have the 'Sebastiao' of the documents being called 'Chisamharu' when in fact this linkage comes from an error made by Sicard in 1946!

The Contribution of Donald Abraham, 1958-1963

Donald Abraham's few works on Mutapa history had a tremendous effect, and his 'oral traditions' affect even the most recent works on

the dynasty. Unfortunately they are extremely unreliable. Possibly because he did not think it wrong, he borrowed information from the documents and earlier writers and made it look as though this had come from his informant's oral traditions. One therefore has to try to decide, when reading his work, just which part did come from his informants. Moreover, Abraham's later works borrow bits and pieces of oral tradition from other areas and tack them onto the original, leading to confusing and unexplained changes. In short, very little of Abraham's work is trustworthy.

The 1959 Article

In 1959 an article appeared in NADA (that is, *Native Administration Department Annual*) that was probably the most influential ever produced on pre-colonial Zimbabwean history: Donald Abraham's '*The Monomotapa Dynasty*'. Indeed, it was so influential that it tended to overshadow Abraham's own additions and alterations to his basic genealogy that were made between 1959 and 1963 when he stopped publication. Thus we will be looking at Abraham's work as it developed in phases during this relatively short period.

When Abraham started field work in July 1958 in the northern plateau and the Dande-Chidima area, he had already published an article on the Makoni Dynasty of Maungwe, and his widening interest in early Shona history can be traced in the references of Sicard through the 1950s. He had carried out interviews in many areas other than Maungwe, and by 1958 he had read many of the Portuguese documents, especially the published ones, but also some in the original. Abraham was therefore the first person to carry out research before collecting traditions on the Mutapa dynasty, just as a modern researcher would do today. However, he was working in a much less academic field than that of his successors, the world of NADA rather than the University College in Salisbury, and the way in which he handled his research in 1958-59 simply would not be accepted today.

Firstly, although he carried out a large number of interviews in three northern Rhodesian districts and the bordering parts of Mocambique in July and August 1958, he combined the results of all these into one, in the form of a dialogue between himself, raising topics from a previously prepared 'questionnaire', and all his

informants, gathered together into an imaginary place at an imaginary time and speaking with a single voice. Matters mentioned in his 'interview' were then discussed in 'Annotations' consisting of Abraham's comments on the relationship between the 'oral tradition' and the other evidence, mostly documentary. Abraham promised that in the book he would eventually be publishing 'a full and critical evaluation of all material relating to the history and the culture of the Monomotapa people, and in which it will be possible to quote all sources of information, both documentary and oral, at length'.

Abraham probably did not realize at that stage just what would be involved in such a project: to carry out this promise would involve whole volumes of transcribed interviews and translated documents in addition to the evaluation itself. Nowadays, historians facing a similar problem transcribe the tapes of their interviews, number them, deposit them where they can be checked, and refer to them in the same way to the archival or published sources used. Abraham never did make his interview material available to other researchers. He revealed the names of some of his informants, but the researcher trying to go through his work has no absolute certainty of what each informant said at what time, and no idea of the exact way in which Abraham's questions were framed, which is one of the virtues of a tape recorder.

Secondly, the relationship between Abraham's informants' oral traditions and his reading of the documents was not always clear. Sometimes, Abraham indicated that a number of names given by informants did not appear in the documents that he had seen, or that a name in the documents was unknown to his informants. The corollary to this should have been that all the other names were supplied by the informants. I will be showing below that this may not have been the case, and that Abraham's record of the answer to his 'Questionnaire' was probably a combination of what he was actually told and his reading of the documents.

Thirdly, the article had in common with his earlier and later work a sense of absolute certainty. Granted that it was ostensibly the collective statement of all his informants, and thus naturally included myths like the opening and closing of a rock and did not include a self-critical element, nearly all of Abraham's comments tend toward the same certainty, and it is clear that Abraham was expecting and

finding a very close correlation between traditional and documentary sources.

Fourthly, although Abraham later named such important informants as Chief Kasekete Hwete who helped with the first article, he made it clear that much of the information came from the medium of Mutota, George Kupara ... If one element of the articles was Abraham, with his knowledge of the documents, talking to Kupara, another was Kupara using Abraham to forward his position to the world ...

The tradition starts with the famous story of Mutota's journey from Guruuswa (depicted as the land south of the Mupfure, 'stretching right down southwards to the area of the present Bulawayo and Fort Victoria'). No father of Mutota is given, but his wives and children are carefully detailed. Not surprisingly, of the sixteen named, eleven are in the standard Kurapa list, while another has the same name as a figure usually three generations farther down and who is so placed in this article as well. There is the usual explanation of the way in which certain major dynasties have been associated with Mutota, either by descent or by political subjection in his 'lifetime'. It is also stated that the Changamire dynasty started with a junior relative of Mutota, who broke away to found his own state. The Pacheco account had vaguely mentioned a relationship. As has been shown elsewhere, because the Mutapa and Changamire dynasties had been so famous, Shona informants had assumed from the eighteenth century onwards that there must have been a relationship.

However, these sources were never consistent. We can accept, at least, that Kupara thought that there was some kind of kinship connection. However, a brother of Changamire named 'Torwa' was apparently also mentioned. This is very odd indeed: whereas the Torwa dynasty had been mentioned frequently from 1506 to 1696, the only case of it being mentioned after that was by a Rozvi informant speaking to an educated African priest in the 1920s, and that may have been the result of feed-back from books. Certainly the possibility arises that it was Abraham who raised the name of Torwa from documents and that Kupara went along with this.

This problem recurs in the next generation: the sons of Matope are given as Kupara usually gave them, but 'Nyahuma' is given the

additional name of 'Mukombero' which does not appear in any of the other lists of Kupara's descendants. The same thing appears in the following generation: Nyahuma's Chikuyo, who turns up as usual in Kupara's lists, gets the extra name 'Chisamarengo', which happens also to be the name of a brother of Matope and Nehanda in both the Pacheco and the usual Kupara genealogy. For Abraham, this was vindication for his basic stance, that oral traditions accurately represented the past of nearly five hundred years ago: with 'Changamire', 'Torwa', 'Mukombero' and 'Chisamarengo' he had all four of the personal names in the Alcacova document of 1506.

The snag was that Kupara never normally mentioned Changamire, Torwa or 'Mukombero' at all, and he didn't put the name 'Chisamarengo' together with his usual 'Chikuyo'. Was it possible that Abraham had actually suggested the contents of the Alcacova document to his informants? With the next of the rulers in Kupara's usual list, Chivere, Abraham was unable to suggest any correlation with the documents, which is logical in view of their failure to mention any specific Mutapas by their Shona names between the early 1500s and the early 1600s (Abraham, however, got an extra name for Chivere, 'Nyasoro', which was not usually offered by Kupara. This at least kept the series of 'double' names going.)

Kupara's next ruler in the list was 'Negomo'. Naturally, he also turned up in the Abraham genealogy, but with the name 'Chisamhuru' added. Here, again, this name was not normally offered by Kupara, but this time we know where Abraham got it. As we have seen, Sicard had mistakenly identified Pacheco's 'Chisamharu' with the Sebastiao baptized by Silveira in 1561, by the device of taking Pacheco's short chronology and stretching it by two centuries to make it fit the documents. Abraham must have spotted that Pacheco's 'Boroma' and 'Inhampando' belonged in the early eighteenth century, but he did not feel like challenging Sicard's dating of 'Chisamharo' to the 1560s. After Negomo, Abraham's genealogy added Gatsi Rusere and Nyamhu Kapararidze, and here the suspicion that Abraham was passing off material from the documents as traditional history becomes near certainty: Kupara had never mentioned these two to anybody else, and each of their double names was in the documents. Indeed, practically no mention of these two in the 'tradition'.

With Abraham's next Mutapa, Mavura, things become a little more certain, but it is worth summing up the sequence so far. Essentially, unless Kupara was in possession of traditional evidence that he would only give to Abraham, or unless there were other sources of traditional history that filled the crucial gap in Kupara's genealogy, there was in fact no correspondence between Kupara's sequence of six father-to-son successions and the Portuguese documents' references to the 1490-1629 period. 'Mavura' might be a simplified version of the common word *mamvura*, but it is not a common name. It turned up twice in Kupara's usual genealogy, as a son of Matope and as a son of Negomo, and it was also used for a very powerful son of Nyamapfeka – the Hurungwe equivalent of Mutota – who allocated land to a dynasty that we know to have been in existence in 1696. Abraham's equation of Kupara's Mavura with the one who ruled from 1629 to 1652 is entirely understandable. The fact that neither Mello e Castro nor Pacheco mentioned him will be discussed below. Kupara usually gave 'Siti' as Mavura's son and successor. If the mass of family detail that Abraham recorded was influenced by the documents, then 'Siti' might well have been the 'Citate Domingos/Joao' of 1652-63, but no document of the time mentions his names 'Siti Kazurukumusapa', and nor Mello e Castro or Pacheco.

Kupara usually mentioned 'Mukombwe' as Siti's brother and successor, and here we have a name remembered by half the dynasties of northern Zimbabwe as an overlord who allocated their land. The problem is that the only contemporary references to a name like 'Mukombwe' are the Alcacova references to a 'Mocomba' killed about 1490, and the Guiao reference to a 'Macombe' reigning briefly after 1704.

Neither of these fits the 'Macombe' who preceded the Christian 'Pande' in Mello e Castro, nor the father who founded the two warring houses of 'Boromo' and 'Inhapando' in Pacheco. Abraham, arguing that the 'Nhacunibiri' of the 1690s was not recalled by informants and that this represented a Portuguese mishearing of 'Mukombwe', was in this case trying to get an exact correspondence between traditional and documentary names, but this was twisting the latter very far indeed. I suggested that 'Mukombwe' was a name applied in retrospect to a powerful ruler or series of rulers in the late seventeenth century, mainly to the Mutapa ruling from 1663 into the

1680s. (Whether he was 'Afonso' or 'Filipe' depends, as we have seen, on just how one interprets the documents.) At this point, however, the genealogies collected from Kupara and other researchers diverge from the Abraham version. This is because all the other researchers were working in the context of Kasekete history. Thus Kupara, when consulted, gave genealogies that followed the lineage that ran from Mukombwe to Chihurinyanga, Kasekete and Chiwawa and so the cluster of dynasties that occupy the Dande today. No-one can pretend that this represented the main Mutapa dynasty. This means, however, that we can only compare the Abraham genealogy with the documents and the Mello e Castro and Pacheco histories.

A point that is worth bearing in mind is that, because Abraham put his separate account together in the way he did, we cannot be sure whether his post-Mukombwe genealogy comes from Kupara himself, other unnamed informants or the documents at either first or second hand. It is not impossible that Kupara, as well as specializing in the Kasekete lineage, took an interest in other, parallel, lineages of the Mutapa dynasty: he was very interested indeed in lineages, and as the medium of Mutota he would have been expected to know something of the genealogy of other descendants of Mutota than the Kasekete branch.

Another point to be remembered is that at that time Abraham's knowledge of the documents was incomplete, and he in fact complained that the number of documents declined as the eighteenth century wore on, which Mudenge has shown is not the case. Did Abraham try to make his 'traditional' version of the post-Mukombwe period to 'fit' the documents, and he fairly obviously did for the earlier period? It is possible that he did in the case of the four sons of Mukombwe whom he recorded, as we will see, but the eight Mutapas that followed them in the genealogy differed so widely from those already available to him from the documents he had seen, that in this case at least it is not possible to suggest that he tried very hard to make the one fit the other.

Abraham's post-Mukombwe genealogy started off with four ruling Mutapas, sons of Mukombwe, who ruled from 1696 to 1735: Nyamaende Mhande, 1696-1707, Nyenyedzi Zenda, 1707-11, Boroma Dangwarangwa 1711-19 and Samatambira Nyamhandu, 1719-35. 'Mhande/Pande' can be found in the contemporary documents, if one

allows a certain amount of latitude; 'Dangwarangwa' was known to Abraham from Sicard, probably Schebesta and perhaps the original, but although it must be tempting to look for a ruler of that period corresponding to the powerful 'Boroma' of Pacheco's version, the fact remains that Mello e Castro recorded them as separate people.

Similarly, 'Samatambira' was in Sicard/Schebesta/Moraes but not any other source, and 'Nyamhandu' was in all major sources from 1710 onwards. However, the contemporary documents make it quite clear that there were ten rulers in this period, not four, and that Abraham's dates and linkages between Boroma-Dangwarangwa and Samatambira-Nyamhandu are quite erroneous. The reader can choose between informants with traditions that had become jumbled, and Abraham trying to interpret them by using an incomplete set of documents.

The eight Mutapas that follow in Abraham's genealogy differ so much from the documents and the Mello e Castro and Pacheco genealogies, that they could very well be the work of someone like Kupara trying to research into lineages not familiar to him. 'Nyatsutsu' of 1735-40, 'Nyamhandu II Chirongamabwe' of 1785-90 and 'Nyasoro' of 1810-35 are not reflected in any other source. 'Dehwe Mapunzagutu' of 1740-59 is a combination of two brothers in Mello e Castro; 'Chiwayo' of 1790-1810 could be the 'Chicuea' of Pacheco, but there is no contemporary document naming him; Changara, Kataruza and Dzuda are all not historical and so, in no way, was Gupo, who was named by Abraham as son of 'Samatambira Nyamhandu' and father of 'Nyamhandu II'.

The post-Mukombwean genealogy of Abraham is widely inaccurate. Whereas Mello e Castro can be used with caution for interpretations of the 1700-1763 period, and Pacheco with even greater caution for the 1700-1862 period, the circumstantial detail given by Abraham of the lives of the rulers of this period is of no value at all if the rulers he names are such a pale reflection of reality.

The 1960 Paper

Between December 1958, when the 1959 article was published, and September 1960 when he presented his next paper on the Mutapa dynasty to the Leverhulme conference at the university in Salisbury,

Abraham moved from the world of NADA to that of academic history. His paper on Mutapa history from 850 to 1589 was based on that of 1959, but with some significant differences.

Firstly, Abraham tried to project back his history by six hundred years from his previous starting point of c.1450. Secondly, he provided very full footnotes, although they were often vague when it came to giving proper references for documents. Thirdly, what had been presented in traditional terms, such as the move to Dande in search of salt, is now discussed in terms of 'demographic pressure and an increase of cattle-holdings'.

On the other hand, some things remained the same: there was still the absolute tone of certainty. A further feature was a tendency, revealed by the footnotes, to argue for major developments on very thin evidence or none at all. Thus Abraham's date of c.850 for the start of a proto-Shona migration from Lake Tanganyika is based on the argument that, since 'Perso-Arabs' had reached the East African coast by c.850, and Shona contains no Persian or Arab words, therefore the Shona must have left Lake Tanganyika at about that time! A detailed conversation between a Mutapa and a Portuguese is given on no evidence except 'deduction' that this is what they might have talked about!

Differences between the 1959 and the 1960 work, as far as Mutapa history was concerned, were numerous. Abraham cited George Kupara and Chief Makope Madomasi of Mazowe to the effect that the ancestors of Mutota had lived at Great Zimbabwe. Makope was a well-known 'expert' on traditional history himself. As a ruler of Budya descent, living next to a Rozvi group on the edges of the Mutota medium's sphere of influence, he had already given a tradition that mixed up eighteenth century Rozvi, fifteenth century Mutapa and seventeenth century Budya history.

A related house of Makope's had already claimed that the first Mutapa had been sent by Mwari to occupy Great Zimbabwe, after its occupants had died in a famine, so perhaps this new claim was understandable, but one would like to know why George Kupara had not mentioned this to Abraham in 1958. Abraham also obtained (from Chief Makosa and the medium of Koswa in modern Rushinga) the name of Mutota's father, which Kupara had never given. Abraham also changed his mind about the first Changamire, making him a son

of Matope rather than a collateral relative of Mutota as in 1959. This change, not Abraham's last in this case, did not agree with what Kupara said about the dynasty in 1958 or to other researchers.

Further differences arose from Abraham's further researches: coming across traditions about a Mutapa 'Munembire' in Mutoko and about a 'Munembire Neshangwe' in Mocambique, Abraham went back to George Kupara. He was told that this was the son of Karembera, the brother of Chikuyo, and a ruling Mutapa whom Kupara had forgotten to mention before. 'Mutapa Neshangwe Munembire' was thus written into history and given the reign c.1530-1550, but Kupara seems not to have bothered to mention him again to anybody else. As I have suggested before, these names are really references to the lands ruled by the Mutapas or lands from which they were thought to have come. Abraham may not have appreciated the pressures put on Kupara as a senior medium to accept 'children' that he had 'forgotten'.

Abraham then went on to base an entire campaign on the name 'Munembire', and to try and build the claims of the Mokomohasha dynasty into the structure. This led to the Mutapas Gatsi Rusere and Nyambu Kapararidze being shifted out of the direct Mutapa line where Abraham had put them in the 1959 article and into a separate house; the wars of the seventeenth century could then be explained by inter-house rivalry. A final change was that Abraham quietly dropped using the name 'Chisamhuru' for the 'Sebastiao' Mutapa of 1560-89, - but confusingly - added the name 'Mapunzagutu'. Abraham's 1960 paper stopped at 1589.

The 1961-63 Articles

As I have shown elsewhere, Abraham's idea as to the relationships between the major Shona states of Mutapa, Torwa and Changamire changed from year to year, but his major alteration to his earlier work in the 1961-3 period was to replace Mutota's father (in the 1960 version) 'Chibatamatosi' by 'Chikurawadyembeu'. According to Abraham, this 'Chikurawadyembeu's' ancestry was as follows: a *soko/chirongo* or *soko/mbereka* dynasty led by NeMbire settled in the north of the Zimbabwean plateau in about 1325 and gave rise to a 'vast, all embracing Karanga empire between the Zambezi and the

Limpopo' which later developed into the Mutapa 'empire'. NeMbire's daughter Negupo married one Mutota Churuchamutapa, and their daughter Senwa or Nehanda had a son, by an unknown father, who was called Chikurawadyembeu, who was installed as the ruler at Great Zimbabwe. The Mutota who had previously figured in Mutapa traditions was probably his son.

This development simultaneously pushed back Shona history by another century, and seemed to show that oral traditions corresponded to archaeology, which at that time saw a new people arriving at and improving Great Zimbabwe. Unfortunately Abraham's only proof put forward for this exciting revelation was an interview with Muchatera, the medium of Chaminuka. Muchatera himself was a *soko* Mbire living in southern Rusape, where ... refugee Rozvi had settled in the nineteenth century not far from the *soko* Svosve dynasty descended from NeMbire. These Rozvi, who had been at the heart of the 1929-30 Rozvi revival..., had a tradition about one Chikurawadyembeu who was the result of a very Biblical virgin birth, but they made it clear that this figure was equivalent to the Changamire Dombo of the late seventeenth century. Moreover, Muchatera had already indicated to Michael Gelfand that in his view, the 'Mutota' whose daughter 'Senwa/Nehanda' had this child 'Chikurawadyembeu' was the Mutota who founded the Mutapa dynasty.

What Muchatera was claiming was that his own *soko* clan was superior genealogically to the *nzou* Mutapas and the *moyo* Rozvi; that his Chaminuka spirit which, he told Gelfand, impregnated 'Senwa/Nehanda', was similarly superior; that his spirit was superior at Great Zimbabwe and that consequently he, Muchatera, was far superior to the upstart George Kupara and his Mutota spirit! (It is true that Muchatera dated all these events to the nineteenth century, but this did not deter Abraham from pushing it back to the fourteenth.) It was a significant claim, but it had no foundation. It did, however, get into a number of school books.

Rebuilding the Structure: the Mutapa Dynasty Reconsidered

It has taken five hundred years for Mutapa oral traditions to evolve from what actually happened to the versions given in this century. It

is clear that the only period in which modern oral traditions tell us anything useful about the Mutapa dynasty is that of about 1629-1700. Prior to that, we have only vague memories of the conquest of the north by the early Mutapas. After that, we can use the Mello e Castro and Pacheco traditions to try to interpret the events recorded by the documents, but it is on the documents that we must rely when in doubt. This does not invalidate oral traditions in general, but it does warn us that we cannot hope to obtain usable oral traditions from states like Changamire or Mutapa that were destroyed well before their traditions were collected.

One has to recall the excitement that Abraham's 1959 article provoked at the time. Whereas it had long been known that there were Portuguese documents on the dynasty, for the first time it seemed possible to write Mutapa history from 'the other side of the hill' from the Portuguese camp. This, and the fact that Abraham continued to promise the imminent publication of his whole history for the next three decades, tended to reduce the amount of criticism that the work received. The works on the Mutapa history that followed were mostly more concerned to use the various pieces of evidence, piece by piece. Mudenge, Randles and I all criticized Abraham's basic 1959 article, while using it at the same time, but we did not go far enough. Here, I have to separate the evidence into its component parts, so that we can discuss it, section by section. From this discussion we can then try to assess the entire body of traditions about the Mutapas, concentrating mainly in the genealogy.

[Professor Beach then does a detailed analysis of the traditions, at the end of which he writes]:

It has taken a long time to arrive at this tentative genealogy, but in view of the fame of the Mutapas it is, in my view, worth it. It is true that we end up with rather less 'history' than we used to possess. We must take Nyatsimba Mutota, Nehanda Nebedza, Matope Nyanhewe, Neshangwe Munembire, Chivere Nyasoro, Negomo Chisamharu, Siti Kazurukamusapa, Boroma Dangwarangwa, Samatambira Nyamhandu, Dewhe Mupunzagutu, Nyatsutsu, Nyamhandu II and a number of other Mutapa rulers who have set securely in Mutapa history for the last thirty years or more, and push them out of

'history' into the world of myth where they belong.⁵² This means that we are left with the Mutapas of the documents, and it is very rarely that we can use any oral traditions of this century to add new dimensions to what the documents reveal. Nor is it always easy to use even the 1763 and 1862 collections of oral traditions. At least, though, in having less 'history' we will at least have something that is a little closer to the truth than the so-called traditions that misinformed us for so long (Beach 1994, 211-243).

The reader can plainly see how unreliable and distorted the histories of Donald Abraham are, and this impacts on all the later works that have relied on his writings as a source. A whole history of the Shona has been built on the basis of research that was improperly done; and not only so, but informed by 20th century Shona spirit mediums. In spite of all the glaring errors, our children are still being fed the lies, and the recollections of twentieth century Shona spirit mediums given more authority over and above contemporary Portuguese documents! Is this not a Hitlarian and Gobbelsian Big Lie? Again, the burden lies with Shona scholars to absolve themselves of this Big Lie that has so contaminated the history and politics of this our great and beloved country called Zimbabwe!

It is my hope that this book will popularize that of Professor David Beach, and also lead to a renewed zeal of research on this portion of history, for, as Andre Brink pointed out: "It is not the past as such that has produced the present or poses the conditions for the future, but the way we think about it." Certainly, the way history is thought of in Zimbabwe has led to some of the tragedies this country has gone through - the Gukuruhundi Genocide being one of the tragedies. And as George Orwell once ably put it: "The most effective way to destroy people is to deny and obliterate the understanding of their history." Let me boldly state that we of Bukalanga will not allow our history and heritage to be obliterated!

⁵² These are the same individuals listed at the beginning of this chapter and taught as Monomotapa leaders in school history textbooks in Zimbabwe!

CHAPTER SEVEN

How Did We End Up With the Shonalized Version of History Continued Part II

Following high on the heels of Donald Abraham's erroneous and distorted histories was Solomon Mutsvairo's work of fiction, *Feso*, originally published in Zezuru in 1957, and later sanitized as a work of history in a 1974 English translation. We are informed by the writer of the introduction to the English version, D. E. Herdeck, that the work is "set in the pre-colonial world of the Zezuru (Shona) speaking people descended from the builders of the famous city of Zimbabwe." The first work, *Feso*, according to Herdeck, "became at once the most popular novel and best seller, capturing the imagination of students from grammar school to university. The Rhodesian Ministry of Education as well as the University of South Africa prescribed it for their students who were studying the Zimbabwean language" (Mutswairo 1974, 9). This just tells us how much this work would have influenced the history reading of many of the students at that time, especially at a time when D. P. Abraham's early works were beginning to filter into the system through his contributions to NADA, and there was a lot of reliance on spirit mediums to provide oral history.

In *Feso*, claim is made that the Shona spirit medium Nehanda has an origin stemming "back to the ancient days of the Kingdom of Monomotapa itself, the realm that created the fortress-city of Zimbabwe" (Mutswairo 1974, 9). That Nehanda's spirit is said to be the spirit of Mbuya Nehanda, the spirit medium who it is alleged was hanged by the British during the 1896-97 rebellions. Notes Herdeck, "All the various poems in FESO invoke ... the spirit of the ancestral Nehanda who speaks for the oppressed of all times and places" (Mutswairo 1974, 10). He continues:

Some years after FESO's publication, the African National Congress was revived in Rhodesia (later to evolve into ZAPU, the Zimbabwe African People's Union, and ZANU, the Zimbabwe African National

Union) and the more militant nationalists seized upon FESO as a subtle tract of protest and call for liberation. The resulting fame, or notoriety, added to the attention the work had already received from its literary success, turned the novel into a “classic” of rebellion and nationalism. The more zealous often recited the work’s poems or paragraphs of the prose in public gatherings to the weeping of the women and the groans and teeth-gnashing of the deeply moved men. A particularly lively reading even led to the arrest of the militant reciting the poem “Nehanda” and FESO quickly became a cause célèbre (Mutswairo 1974, 10).

With such an influence the reader can see just how such a work would have penetrated the national consciousness at that time, and would continue to influence future generations right into independence in 1980. I cannot help but celebrate the contributions of Mutswairo through his work in inspiring the liberation movement. That is to be commended, for indeed the work helped free an oppressed people from the claws of colonial rule. But be that as it may, the truth remains that the work is not based on factual history that can be verified as we have already seen in Professor Beach’s penetrating analysis of the way Zimbabwean history was shaped in the 1950s and 1960s, a time when the liberation movement was beginning to ferment.

Being primarily a Shona work, *Feso’s* influence would have resonated more with those in Mashonaland, and that happened to be the largest support base of ZANU, which would become the country’s ruling party at independence. The party would still carry this work with it right into the shaping of the country’s history curriculum. This can be seen even in the national prominence that the spirit medium Nehanda is given. That became one of the ways in which the ideas of Mutswairo penetrated the Zimbabwean education system, producing the kind of distorted history that we have today, which has been fed into the minds of school students since independence in 1980. In the celebratory spirit of independence, few would have questioned the history that was being taught. Despite new evidence that was being presented in post-independence Zimbabwe, there remained an

attachment to the ideas of the past that had inspired a generation to seek its freedom, and it seems there never was a willingness to reconsider the ideas. Sooner, that kind of history found a new purpose. It would be used to build a history for certain groups, and as already pointed out, that would go on to affect the political economy of the country and even cause a genocide.

In a classic case of theft of heritage, we find Solomon Mutswairo appropriating vast swathes of Bukalanga history to the Shona, based on nothing but a belief based on no evidence whatsoever. Wrote Mutswairo:

Many centuries ago there lived in Mazoe district, far renowned farmers...The people built huts of logs, with rounded roofs decorated with circular grass at the top.⁵³ Such huts today are still to be seen in the villages of many of the Zezurus who still do not have modern houses because of their lack of money for modern materials... In that beautiful land, grassy plain extending as far as the eye can see... we find a tribal clan of the Vahota people under chief Nyan'ombe... They comprise only a small part of the larger group of the Vahota in Marandellas District in the now so-called Chihota Tribal Trust Land, but who consider themselves the descendants of that great and powerful Paramount Chief, Mutasa, of the Manyika tribal group inhabiting the region around Umtali. Their great-grandfather, they say, sitting by the fires at night, was Makombe of the Vabarwe, and his wife, Mureche - the daughter of Matope Nyanhehwe Monomotapa, the original king of the Vakaranga and, later, of all the Vatapa of ancient Zimbabwe (Mutswairo 1957, 17-18).

⁵³ I wonder how it is possible that the descendants of the builders of the *Zimbabwes* would have so degenerated as to build huts of logs. A visit to Great Zimbabwe or Khami will show that no such huts were built, instead the huts there were built of clay as the Kalanga still build their huts up to this day! Back in 1506 Diogo Alcacova had already indicated that the king lived in a city called Zimbabwe in a house which was "of stone and clay very large and of one story" (See Alcacova's letter on p. 150).

We see here a whole history built on no evidence whatsoever, but on a people's *consideration* and *belief* that they are descendants of the Monomotapa rulers! Unsurprisingly, Mr. Mutswairo's Shona'ization of Kalanga history was based on that one discredited source: Donald P. Abraham. As already seen in the previous chapter, Matope Nyanhehwe, considered the "original king of the Vakaranga" is one of those mythical figures of Shona legend and folklore given by Shona spirit mediums of the twentieth century, and as has already been convincingly shown by Professor Beach, there is no substance to claims of such figures having been part of the Monomotapa Empire rulers. Yet this is what the bulk of the Zimbabwean history of that time is based on!

It is interesting to note that Solomon Mutswairo begins his book with a long description of the Kalanga (Makaranga), whom he later names Vatapa. We have already seen that the people called Karanga are actually the Kalanga people according to Portuguese documents. As Mutswairo's book moves from introduction, the people suddenly become Zezuru without any explanation at all. What a robbery of heritage! In contradiction of all reasonable evidence, a people impose their own identity on the history of another, and because they happen to be in control of the levers of power, they continue to appropriate that history to themselves.

By 1926, thirty years earlier than Solomon Mutswairo, Mr. Kumile Masola had collected a vast oral history of the Kalanga, *Nau Dza Bakalanga (History of the Kalanga)*, which was later published at the University of South Africa in translation form by Peter Wentzel. But for some very strange reason, (or maybe it is not so strange), Shona scholars totally ignored these oral traditions since publication in 1981. Even Brian Raptopoulos and Alois Mlambo, in their book, *Becoming Zimbabwe*, acknowledge this very point (Raptopoulos and Mlambo 2008, 18-21). Greater prominence has continued to be given to Mutswairo's work, *Feso*, over and above Mr. Kumile Masola's *Nau Dza Bakalanga* and much of the post-independence evidence that new research revealed. This writer, after reading through many works of archaeology, historiography of neighboring peoples, Portuguese documents and other writers cited in this book, could not help but notice that for most of it, *Nau Dza Bakalanga* is the most consistent oral tradition ever collected in Zimbabwe concerning the pre-colonial

history of this country. Yet, conveniently, no attention has been given to the book, probably because it was going to upset the deeply held belief that was being advanced of a Shona past that goes beyond 1700, when in actual fact, as the evidence presented above shows, there is no such pre-1700 Shona history in this land!

And then Enter Chigwedere

Post-independence Zimbabwe also saw the publication of Aenias Chigwedere's works: *From Mutapa to Rhodes*, *Birth of Bantu Africa*, and *The Karanga Empire*. Understandably, Mr. Chigwedere wrote his works in a context of increasing 'political tribalism' that he saw as threatening the coherence and unity of the newly independent country. But that does not in any way justify a presentation of work that is void of evidence as factual historical information. In subsequent years Chigwedere's work would find its way into the school curriculum as he served as the Minister of Education, Sports, Art and Culture in the country. To obtain a sense of his work, I will again fall back on Professor Beach who, more than I, has spent years studying this part of history in professional academic circles. In a 1988 article critiquing Chigwedere's histories, Professor Beach wrote:

The best of Chigwedere's three history books is the first, *From Mutapa to Rhodes* although it ultimately leads to an unrealistic and unproven structure reaching back to the remote past, parts of it, though not supported by checkable evidence; do correspond to the picture given by the available evidence. This applies to the post-1700 period ... It is in the pre-1700 period that Chigwedere's reconstruction runs into increasing trouble as it moves back into the remote past. Firstly, he lumps together all water-oriented and bird totems [*dziba* and *hungwe*] into a single group and follows von Sicard in the assumption that the users of these totems represent a very early 'layer' of settlement in this country, before about AD 1000.

This simply is not supported by the evidence. For example, by following von Sicard's misreading of a Native Department note on the Matibi *mbedzi* dynasty of the south, he ignores the evidence that

Matibi's dynasty was preceded by a *nzou* dynasty as recently as the eighteenth century. Similarly, the *dziva* Ngowa had been in the modern Chivi region only from the eighteenth century, not the tenth, while the neighboring *shiri* people of Zvishavane were even more recent immigrants.⁵⁴

Their genealogies simply do not go back to the remote past. But worse follows: in trying to prove that the *soko* Mbire, by a coincidence (?) his own group, were the 'core' group of most Shona dynasties, Chigwedere builds on the unreliable structure of dynasties assembled by Donald Abraham in the early 1960s. Although he castigates Abraham for exaggerating the importance of 'Mutota' and the Mutapa state, with which few would now disagree, Chigwedere tends to give the main period covered by Abraham's daunting articles (c.1400-1800) a wide berth. Possibly this was because he was unable to read the Portuguese sources that are so vital for most of that period. But he also criticizes Abraham for under-estimating the length of Shona traditional history before the fourteenth century, when even Abraham's ambitious structure was beginning to run short of 'evidence'. In short, by misreading the archaeological evidence and taking separate names of figures from a variety of unconnected sources, Chigwedere builds a superstructure on top of Abraham's structure that goes back from the fourteenth century to the early ninth in about six generations to arrive at a 'first ancestor' named 'Mambiri' in the Ethiopia-Kenya region in about AD 800.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ H. von Sicard, *The origin of some of the tribes in the Belingwe Reserve*, 9 The Pfumbi under Maceto and Mketi', NADA (1952). XXIX, 43. Matibi 'referred to, was the last of his lineage to be appointed 'Chief by the colonial government and the first to use 'Matibi' as a hereditary title. Prior to that his ancestors used the Venda system of personal names instead of hereditary titles, but they went back only two generations to Mafukanoro, who immigrated from Venda.

⁵⁵ D. N. Beach, 'The Mutapa dynasty: A comparison of documentary and traditional evidence', *History In Afrika* (1976), I, 1-17. "There is hardly room in this review for a detailed discussion of the slipshod nature of Chigwedere's methods, but his treatment of this first 'ancestor' will serve as an example: Chigwedere's source is not B. J. M. Foggin, as he thinks (he could not even cite his sources correctly) but Fr J. H. Seed, 'The kinship system of a Bantu tribe', NADA (1932-3). Seed was making an imaginative guess at the origins of totems, and happened to use the name of his basic unit, a boy named Philip Mamiro, as his imaginary first ancestor from whom the Chinamhoras lineage came. Chigwedere, *From Mutapa to Rhodes*, 3, 19, took 'Mamiro' to be a real person changing the name to 'Mambiri' to make it look more 'Mbire'."

The 'evidence' for this is thin where it is not non-existent. But there is one significant point: Chigwedere claims to have relied upon a spirit medium who is said to have emerged in the Hwedza district in 1964. This medium was said to have been possessed by five ancestral mhondoro spirits: Nyahuye, founder of part of the Svosve dynasty to which Chigwedere belongs; Mabwemashava, ruling c.1000, and his brother Chigwangu Rusvingo of c.1050; Gumboreshumba, the 'founder of the Rozvi empire'; and the famous Chaminuka, father of the second two. (These are Chigwedere's dates and given relationships.) But Chigwedere does not name this remarkable medium. Was he by chance Chigwedere himself? I have approached Chigwedere on this point and received no clear answer. If Chigwedere was the medium, then certain questions as to the origin of 'evidence' emerge. If not, then there was a quite exceptional medium operating in Hwedza for sixteen years who escaped the notice of researchers. In short, *From Mutapa to Rhodes* moves backwards in time from the realms of post-1700 history, which is coherent even if little evidence is given, to the remote past and unproven fantasy.

Birth of Bantu Africa is, quite simply, historical balderdash. It proposes that most of Africa was originally inhabited by 'Bushmen', with a small 'Hamite' population in the Nile valley, and that 'commingling' brought about the 'Hottentot' and 'Negro' who then occupied the rest of Africa. The specifically 'Bantu' section of the 'Negro' are said to have begun their migration from north-east Africa about AD 600. Readers will recognize this as part of an obsolete and racist theory that runs back through Seligman in the 1920s to the nineteenth century. The research on Africa that had taken place before 1962 had already killed it, but the work that has been carried out since then has buried it with a stake through its heart. Or so one would assume.

In *The Karanga Empire*, Chigwedere returned to more familiar ground. He was also, to a certain extent, going over his older arguments in more, if not entirely convincing, detail. While he still clung to his ideas over north-eastern African origin for the Bantu-speakers, he tried to use archaeological evidence, with only partial success. This may be because he saw himself as being on the defensive. His letters to me suggest that as late as 1985 he genuinely

believed that he had uncovered certain basic truths about the history of Zimbabwe and Africa that would lift him to pre-eminence in the field. The history conference at the University of Zimbabwe in 1982, in which academics from Tanzania, Zambia, Malawi, Mozambique and Botswana read his work, did not respond positively towards it. So *The Karanga Empire* is in a way a return to the battlefield. Yet the faults of the earlier works persist: based on an incomplete and inadequate command of the sources, it triumphantly asserts points known long before, while at the same time trying to prove some very dubious points of historical ethnography. It remains resolutely non-academic (Beach 1988, Online).

It is this same Chigwedere who has written a heavily distorted high school textbook, *Dynamics of History Book 3*, under the pseudonym of S. Mukanya. The story was revealed by the *Southern Star* newspaper in an article titled *Tribalism Taught at Schools* when it reported that:

One of President Robert Mugabe's trusted lieutenants and henchmen, headman Aenias Chigwedere, has been fingered in a textbook scandal that has seen students at Ordinary Level studying distorted history aimed at portraying the Ndebele community as inferior to their Mashonaland counterparts. The stunning misrepresentations of historical developments between the years 1890 and 1993 are contained in a history textbook, *Dynamics of History Book 3*, written by an S. Mukanya and first published by the College Press in 1994. The book was reprinted from then to 2011. Investigations by the *Southern Star* have since authentically established that the so-called S. Mukanya is indeed Chigwedere, a former cabinet minister who had been assigned by Mugabe to the education, arts, sports and culture portfolio ... Chigwedere is one of the sources of the Zanu PF worshipped approach of trusting spirit mediums in guiding national administration (Ncube and Sibanda 2012, 3).

Just to show how far the distortion of history in Zimbabwe has gone, let us take the example of the Mbire tradition as told by Chigwedere in his books and taught in Zimbabwean school history books. The Mbire people are presented as a group that entered Zimbabwe in the fourteenth century, descended from one NeMbire. These people supposedly spread themselves across the Zimbabwean Tableland. Upon this tradition is based the claim that the Shona once occupied all of Zimbabwe all the way to the Transvaal (Limpopo and North-West Provinces) and all the way to the Makgadikgadi Salt Pans.

According to this same history, at the end of the 14th century, there appears one Chikura Wadyembeu, supposedly a great-grandson of Nembire, who then becomes the first Lozwi Mambo. Already one can see how confused the traditions are. Dombolakona-Tjing'wango Dlembewu Moyo, the so-called Chikura Wadyembewu, only features in history three hundred years later than the Shona traditions say he should have lived when he overthrew Portuguese rule in 1693. A generation later, this same Chikura Wadyembeu is supposed to have been replaced by Nyatsimba Mutota as Mambo, and Nyatsimba Mutota is supposedly the first one to have adopted the praise name Mwene Mutapa or Monomotapa. All this is supposed to have happened at Great Zimbabwe. Not only is the chronology highly confused, but none of the information presented in the traditions appears in the records of the Portuguese documents, not until the 18th century, the time we have positively established that the Shona had started to arrive in the Zimbabwean plateau.

We have already seen in the brilliant analysis of Professor Beach how Shona traditions were intermixed with Portuguese documents by Donald Abraham to make them look like they fit together, in the process pushing back Shona history in the Zimbabwean Tableland by almost a thousand years. In the following few paragraphs I want to look into the sources of some of the names that I have just given above, specifically Mbire and Nyatsimba Mutota. These are of major interest because a whole history has been built upon them, unfortunately, on no evidence whatsoever.

We have already seen above in Professor Beach's footnote that Chigwedere used an imaginary figure, Philip Mambiro, from Fr J. H. Seed's article in NADA, *'The kinship system of a Bantu tribe'*, to build a whole people that supposedly conquered all of the Zimbabwean

plateau and established the 'Mbire Empire', which established itself at Great Zimbabwe around 1050 A.D. (Chigwedere 1980, 39). But what is the origin of this Mbire tradition, and if it is so old, why do we not find it in the early Portuguese documents of the 16th century, only for the tradition to arise in the 19th century? Are we to assume that this tradition was forgotten by people who would have been 400 years away from the times concerned, only to be remembered by people who came 800 years later?

As to the source of the tradition, we have the record of W. G. L. Randles stating that "At the end of the nineteenth century Joao Juliao da Silva recorded a somewhat different account [from that recorded by de Alcacova] related to him by an old woman "130 years old". According to her the Monomotapa who sent Changamire to establish a kingdom to the west of his was Nembire..." (Randles 1979, 6). The record continues as follows:

One of the Emperors called Manamutapa or Nembire, lord of all these vast regions of eastern Africa, in recognition for important services rendered by one of the high members of his court, gave him in marriage his eldest daughter, whom he greatly loved. To endow her well, he gave her chiefs and several headmen together with subjects and sent her with her husband to settle a kingdom to the west of his court and he gave him the title of Xangamire ... As no other source mentions Nembire, it is impossible to be sure of the dates of his reign. On the other hand the oral tradition recorded by Silva gives no information about the circumstances which gave rise to the dispute between the Monomotapa and Changamire (Randles 1979, 6).

Yet despite such glaring lack of evidence to back up Shona claims as far as Zimbabwean history is concerned, the traditions are taught to Zimbabwean children as fact. Shona scholars have seized on the distortions of Abraham to build a whole history from an unverifiable 19th century oral source relating to events that should have happened over 800 years earlier!

As if that was not enough, this Nembire or Mbire or Munembire has a great-grandson who supposedly built Great Zimbabwe, Nyatsimba Mutota, from who a whole lineage is built. Our children are taught that a certain mythical figure brought about a lineage that built the Zimbabwe Civilization, again, contrary to verifiable recorded evidence and archeological findings.

In a way similar to the origin of the Nembire tradition, so did the tradition of Nyatsimba Mutota arise. The tradition arises also in the 19th century. In 1861, Albino Manoel Pacheco recorded the tradition concerning Mutota. Let us keep in mind that nowhere in earlier Portuguese documents from the earliest in 1506 to 1800 have we got mention of Mutota, or the Mbire for that matter. Yet our children are taught in schools that Nyatsimba Mutota founded the Monomotapa Empire. I would like to repeat what Professor Beach has said about the names presented in these traditions which are being taught in schools:

Nyatsimba Mutota, Nehanda Nebedza, Matope Nyanhewe, Chivere Nyasoro, Neshangwe Munembire, Siti Kazurukamusapa, Negomo Chisamharu, Boroma Dangwarangwa, Samatambira Nyamhandu, Dewhe Mupunzagutu, Nyatsutsu, Nyamhandu II and a number of other Mutapa rulers who have set securely in Mutapa history for the last thirty years or more, must be pushed out of 'history' into the world of myth where they belong. This means that we are left with the Mutapas of the documents, and it is very rarely that we can use any oral traditions of this century to add new dimensions to what the documents reveal. Nor is it always easy to use even the 1763 and 1862 collections of oral traditions. At least, though, in having less 'history' we will at least have something that is a little closer to the truth than the so-called traditions that misinformed us for so long.

But, could it be possible that the Shona somehow invented the names that are so common in their oral traditions. I do not think so. We have already established that in giving their traditions, the Shona thought

that the Monomotapa Empire had only started a few years before 1700. I believe that two things happened that influenced their traditions about the kingdom:

1. It may be that most of the names that the Shona gave might actually have been names of their leaders from their original homeland, and those who led them through their migrations down south. When they arrived in the Zimbabwean plateau, they heard of the history of Bukalanga who were already in the land, and took up their traditions and mixed them with their own to make the names 'fit in'. This could have happened consciously or unconsciously. For example, a Portuguese officer might have been enquiring about the former leaders of the Monomotapa Empire in the land, and the source of the Shona oral tradition would have given the names of their own leaders thinking that that was the correct response to the question posed.

2. There might actually have been a Shona Mutapa Dynasty, as opposed to the Kalanga Monomotapa Kingdom. This would have happened in the following manner: about the year 1693, the Kalanga Mambo, Tjanganire Dombolakona-Tjing'wango Dlembewu Moyo, had engaged the Portuguese in war and ejected them from the country. This happened exactly at the time when Shona groups were beginning to migrate into the country. As is common in situations of war, the warring factions always want to install a leadership of their choice in the battleground. It is very likely that the Kalanga in the region, being allies of the enemy of the Portuguese, were overthrown in the region, and replaced by the newly arrived Shona, thus starting up a Shona Mutapa Dynasty on the northeastern edge of Zimbabwe. There is indeed evidence of the Portuguese installing Mutapas in that region in the 18th century. It has been stated by Dr Roland Oliver that "In the 17th century the Monomotapas became Portuguese puppets, and their outlying provinces hived away from their allegiance. By the 18th century there was little trace of the former empire; by the 19th, none" (Oliver, Ranger, page 1).

CHAPTER EIGHT

And Who Actually Built the Zimbabwe Ruins: Back Inside the Zimbabwe Civilization

The latest archaeological researches show that the ruins are neither so mysterious nor so ancient as they have been supposed; that they are not eastern or anything else but African in origin. More precisely, they show a rude civilization in which geometry was unknown, they are remains of mediaeval structures, and they were built by a Bantu people - the natives of South[ern] Africa. The Mashona, however, only arrived in the eighteenth century. Who occupied the country before them? Makalaka; and who before? - S.M. Molema 1920. *The Bantu, Past and Present: An Ethnographical & Historical Study of the Native Races of South Africa.*

Now that we have established how the history of Bukalanga has been distorted and misappropriated to the Shona, let us proceed to look at the question of who actually built what is now the Zimbabwe Ruins. It is now beyond debate after over 100 years of research beginning with the groundbreaking work of Dr David Randall-McIver in 1906 that the Zimbabwe Ruins were the work of an African people. The once popular view amongst colonialists that there was once an ancient people - supposedly Arabian, Phoenician and so on - who settled in Zimbabwe and built the Ruins, has since been demolished. But the question is relevant to ask - what African people was that?

This question is still relevant and important in light of what the archaeologists concluded in their research findings versus what is officially held and taught in the schools of Zimbabwe. The question is also important in light of the new onslaught from the Mthwakazi movement which, in its bid to entrench Ndebele hegemony in the so-called Matabeleland, denies this portion of Bukalanga history and seeks to go back to the colonialists' view.

This chapter seeks to settle this question once and for all by presenting the conclusions of the leading archaeologists who have worked on the question of the *zimbabwe*s between 1900 and 2000. Some of these works are so old that perhaps few people know about them. I shall not go into too much commentary other than to just present the findings of the archaeologists in their own words.

Since we have already established in Chapter Three that contrary to popular wisdom, the Kalanga and the Shona are two distinct peoples, we now have to ask the question of who were the builders of Maphungubgwe, Great Zimbabwe, Khami and similar sites? So-called Zimbabwean 'official history' claims that the Shona were the people responsible for this civilization. But we established in Chapter Three that the arrival of the ancestors of the people now called Shona is too late to have been associated with the Zimbabwe Civilization. As Professor Beach put it, the history of the majority of Shona dynasties cannot be projected back to the Great Zimbabwe period. Neither were there, during his research, any oral traditions amongst the Shona connecting them to the ruins period.

We also saw in previous chapters that Portuguese documents throughout mention Bukalanga in connection with the period in which the *zimbabgwes* were built, and yet in school the Portuguese are associated with the Shona since the period of their arrival in South East Africa in 1500. Portuguese records speak of the Monomotapa, Togwa and Lozwi Kingdoms as Bukalanga polities, yet in school it is taught that they were Shona polities. Similarly, archaeologists have reached a conclusion that the Kalanga peoples were the builders of the Zimbabwe Ruins, yet official school history teaches that the Shona built these edifices.

But let the the archeologists themselves speak to us in their own words concerning their research findings. The question was properly raised by S. M. Molema on who built the *zimbabgwes* when he wrote:

The latest archaeological researches show that the ruins are neither so mysterious nor so ancient as they have been supposed; that they are not eastern or anything else but African in origin. More precisely, they show a rude civilization in which geometry was unknown, they are remains of mediaeval structures, and they were built by a Bantu people - the natives of South[ern] Africa. The Mashona, however, only arrived in the eighteenth century. Who occupied the country before them? Makalaka; and who before? (Molema 1920, 69).

The answer to Molema's question is partly found in the following statement by Messrs Hall and Neal: "All Portuguese accounts agree in stating that the residents of the Zimbaoes or Zimbabwes and the principal population of Monomotapa were Makalangas" (Hall and Neal 1907, 193). But going beyond the statements of Molema, Hall and Neal who sourced their information from Portuguese documents, we have further evidence in the sterling works of several renowned archaeologists that indeed the people responsible for the Zimbabwe Civilization were the Kalanga, contrary to the claims of the official version of history being taught in Zimbabwean schools, and the denials of Kalanga history by Tswana authorities and some sections of the Mthwakazi movement.

We shall look at the conclusions of the five major archaeologists associated with the research into the Zimbabwe Civilization, these being: Dr. David Randall-MacIver; Dr. Gertrude Caton-Thompson; Roger Summers; Professor Keith R. Robinson, and Peter Garlake. We will begin with a look at who these archeologists were and/or what their mandate was. Let us begin with Dr Randall-MacIver.

Dr David Randall-MacIver was a Laycock student of Egyptology at Worcester College, Oxford. He held Master of Arts and Doctor of Science degrees, and was a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society. He was invited by the British Association for the Advancement of Science and the Rhodes Trustees to undertake professional archaeological research into the Zimbabwe Ruins in 1905, after which he prepared his report in the book *Mediaeval Rhodesia*. In the preface to his book, in his own words, Dr Randall-MacIver wrote thus concerning his mandate and resultant work:

The investigations which are described in this volume were undertaken during the spring and summer of 1905 at the invitation and with the support of the British Association and the Rhodes Trustees. Though the problems of the origin and date of the ruins in Rhodesia have been before the public for a whole generation, from the time, in fact, that Mauch rediscovered Zimbabwe, yet remarkably little progress had been made toward their solution. The British

Association, when arranging to visit South Africa in 1905, resolved to make an effort to end this uncertainty, and asked me to precede the visitors by some months in order to prepare a special report upon the subject of the ruins. I reached Southern Rhodesia early in April and continued at work until the middle of September. Owing to the great improvements effected in the means of communication and to the exceptional facilities afforded me; I was enabled to conduct researches over a great extent of country, and to obtain observations which have led to unexpectedly definite conclusions (Randal-McIver 1906).

Following in the footsteps of Dr Randal-MacIver was Dr. Gertrude Caton-Thompson. She too conducted extensive excavations at most of the Ruins between April and September 1929. Concerning her mission she wrote in the introduction to her book:

When in October 1928 the Council of the British Association, with the support of the Rhodes Trustees, invited me to conduct renewed investigations into the more or less dormant question of the history of the Rhodesian ruins, it couched its invitation in well-defined terms: "To undertake the examination of the ruins at Zimbabwe or any monument or monuments of the same kind in Rhodesia, which seem likely to reveal the character, date and source of the culture of the builders. You are asked to go to South Africa as soon as you can; to spend such time as you may think necessary, or the season may require, in preliminary travel and study; to conduct excavation, as soon as the season allows, on a site selected after conference with the local archeologists, and approved by the Government of Rhodesia; to make a full report as is possible to the British Association at Cape Town or Johannesburg, at its meeting in July-August 1929; to supervise the distribution of portable objects from the excavations to Museums or otherwise; and to prepare for publication, as soon as possible, a full account of your researches and conclusions" (Caton-Thompson, 1931, 1-2).

The next work of archaeology done on the Zimbabwe Ruins was by archaeologist Keith R. Robinson in the mid-1940s to mid-1950s, which results were published in 1959 in a report titled *Khami Ruins: Report on excavations undertaken for the Commission for the Preservation of Natural and Historical Monuments and Relics, Southern Rhodesia, 1947-1955*. In the report, Robinson stated:

This book is primarily intended as a record for the use of other investigators in the same field, but I hope it will also be of interest to the more general reader. My aim has been to state as clearly as possible the nature of the evidence and my interpretation of it. I make no claim to have said the last word on the subject, and freely admit my debt to earlier writers, particularly to Miss Caton-Thompson. I have refrained from discussing in greater detail the possible origins of the cultures present at Khami, not because I have no opinions on the subject, but because such opinions are not at present supported by archaeological evidence. That the necessary evidence exists I have no doubt, but to locate it will entail further work over a wide area. Although no competent archaeologist today doubts that our Rhodesian ruins are the work of native Africans, and although it is permissible to connect certain known tribes with Khami or Zimbabwe, it is hardly necessary to stress the fact that there are huge gaps in our knowledge. Intensive work in other parts of Africa would surely supply some of the answers. The vital importance of such work today should be obvious to anyone acquainted with the rapid spread of modern civilization in Africa, which often results in the sudden destruction of ancient occupation sites (Robinson 1959, v).

Robinson later presented a paper, *The Archeology of the Rozwi: The History of the Central African Peoples*, to the Seventeenth Conference of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute for Social Research held at The Oppenheimer College of Social Service and The College of Further Education from May 28th to June 1st 1963 in Lusaka. His purpose for the paper, as stated in the introductory remarks, was to “examine the

archaeological evidence relevant to the period of Rozwi dominance in Southern Rhodesia, and to discuss the possible implications of the Rozwi within Zimbabwe and other ruined sites" (Robinson 1963, 1).

Following and overlapping with Professor Keith Robinson's work was that of Roger Summers. Summers was an English archaeologist; trained at the University of London's Institute of Archaeology; and worked for the National Museum of Southern Rhodesia, Bulawayo (1947-1970), South African Museum, Cape Town, 1970-?; and at the Rhodesia Historical Monuments Department at the time of the publication of his major work on the Zimbabwe Ruins, *Ancient Ruins and Vanquished Civilizations of Southern Africa*, in 1971. In his own words he says that he spent "half a life time" in this work. During that time he spent twenty-five years in research on the ruins of Southern Rhodesia, and in the process was helped by many other people such as Peter Garlake, Professor Thomas Huffman of Wits University, John Thokozane, Keith Robinson, and others. Summers had previously published another major work: *Inyanga: Prehistoric settlements in Southern Africa (with contributions by H.B.S. Cooke, P.V. Tobias, H. Wild, J.F. Schofield and K.R. Robinson.)*

After the work of Summers there followed that of Peter Garlake, whose work was perhaps the most definitive and influential in reaching the conclusion that the Zimbabwe Civilization was a work of African peoples. Mortimer Wheeler, general editor of Garlake's book, *Great Zimbabwe*, wrote:

It will suffice here to welcome this book as a comprehensive and probably final account of Great Zimbabwe as we can recover it from the depredations of half a century of largely (though not entirely) untutored curiosity, written by one who, with his former colleagues in the Rhodesian service, has worked among these stately Ruins and lovingly for many years, and has proportionately more authority than any of his predecessors to tell what may still be told of their elusive story (Garlake 1973, 9).

From July 1964 to December 1970 Garlake was the Senior Inspector of Monuments of the Historical Monuments Commission of Southern Rhodesia and it was under the Commission's auspices that he conducted research and fieldwork throughout the country on the Iron Age of Rhodesia.

These are the archaeologists whose evidence we consider. Of greatest interest to us in this book is what they concluded concerning who actually built the Zimbabwe Ruins. We have already seen that they all concluded that an African people built the edifices. But what we seek to unravel is: which African people? To answer this question, we will look into the conclusions of each one of these archeologists in this regard, or at least at which Africa people group they associated the Zimbabwe Ruins with.

1. Dr David Randall-MacIver

After describing the ruins all the way from Inyanga, Mutare, Dlodlo and Khami, Dr Randall-MacIver concluded that the ruins "might almost have been made by the same hands." He continued to point out that "the remains of cement platforms inside [the ruins] prove it to have been erected by the Khami builders." He further points out about Khami that "the great number of huts still visible, not only within the stone enclosures but outside all over the plain, shows that there was a considerable population at Khami. The date of the settlement must be approximately the same as that at Dhlo-Dhlo, judging from the minute similarity of structural detail" (MacIver 1906, 58). Going on Dr Randall-MacIver wrote:

The records [of the Portuguese] ... indicate that considerable changes were taking place in the distribution of territory among various Negro chiefs in the hinterland of the Portuguese settlements throughout the sixteenth century. And it is quite possible that the paramount lord, who was called by the dynastic name Monomotapa, exercised direct or indirect control over a country further to the south and west when Diogo de Alcacova (1506) and Duarte Barbosa (1514)

wrote their accounts than when Dos Santos (1609) published his great work on "*Eastern Ethiopia*." I am inclined, therefore, to identify the "Zumubany" of Alcacova and the "City of Benamatapa," described by Barbosa with the ruins now existing near Victoria [that is, Great Zimbabwe]. The notes of direction and distance tally closely with what is required, the distance from Sofala being stated as twenty odd day's march by a road which "goes from Sofala inland towards the Cape of Good Hope"... The pottery from [the] lowest level [of strata in the ground floors of huts found within the Eliptical Temple⁵⁶ area] is that which Mr. Hall calls Makalanga, and which is, in fact, exactly like modern Negro pottery ... It is impossible, therefore, to resist the conclusion that the people who inhabited the "Eliptical Temple" when it was being built belonged to tribes whose arts and manufactures were indistinguishable from those of the modern Makalanga.

The "Temple" is evidently a fort, and may probably be regarded as an elaboration and development on a very large scale of the little strongholds built on the kopjes of Inyanga and the Neikerk Ruins ... Indeed, the Zimbabwe Temple is mainly distinguished only by its greater dimensions and its more massive construction. Otherwise the analogy of general idea is very close, although, of course, as the royal residence and probably the original capital of the Monomotapan State, Zimbabwe parades a grandeur superior to anything that can be found among the humble inhabitants of the northern districts [Mashonaland]. Zimbabwe may very probably be identified as the old Monomotapan capital (MacIver 1906, 60-71).

We already know from previous chapters that the Monomotapas were Kalanga kings, and the Monomotapa Kingdom was a Kalanga polity. We need not make any further elaborations on that. Let us proceed to the findings of Dr Gertrude Caton-Thompson.

2. Dr. Gertrude Caton-Thompson

⁵⁶ Refers to one of the buildings at Great Zimbabwe, the tallest of them all.

After undertaking extensive excavations of the Zimbabwe Ruins, Dr Caton-Thompson wrote the following in conclusion about who was responsible for the construction of the edifices:

I am of the opinion that the outlying groups of ruins were all built as satellites to the main structure - the Elliptical Building - which implies synchronism of period, but not actually of building date. In as much as all existing evidence points emphatically to indigenous origin, the function of the Elliptical Building is, to my mind, without doubt that of the kraal of a paramount chief, 'a divine king' - probably in the zenith of their prosperity and power, the dwelling place of those great potentates the Monomotapa themselves, one of whom, long afterwards, in the Portuguese period of their progressive and rapid decline, was described 'like a King ... in the obedience rendered to him ... He is very powerful, and has many leagues of territory, and kings and great lords for his vassals' (Caton-Thompson 1931, 119).

It is plain clear that Dr Caton-Thompson and Dr Randall MacIver find a connection between the Monomotapa people and the *zimbabgwes*. Concerning the native traditions related to the Zimbabwe Ruins, Dr Caton-Thompson wrote that:

With a date as late as 1700 for building operations at these ruins (Dhlo-Dhlo, Mshosho, Chiwona), there should surely be extant native tradition concerning its builders. This there is, though over-laden with confusion and uncertainties that inevitably grow up in a land that has been a cock-pit of tribal invasions, amalgamations, intrusions, extrusions. No less a student of, and authority on, native customs and traditions than Bullock tells us: Native legend should carry us back for a length of time (i.e. 400 years quoted as the probable date of Zimbabwe's erection), so far as the existence of a Bantu race with such outstanding building propensities is concerned - or of any other race.

Again, it must be granted from the results of investigation that the tribe or race which built the larger ruins had established itself for many years - probably centuries - and had a system of Government and habits of life conducive to work being done of a nature other than that of primary production ... But the widely diffused tales and legends, still current amongst old Natives, almost point to the BaLozwi [Mbava, a Lozwi chief, informed Mrs. Lloyd, of Rusape, that Zimbabwe was built by his ancestor, Chief Togwa (Bullock)] as being pre-eminently the tribe with the characteristic mentioned. We hear of other tribes, possibly more highly disciplined and better equipped for the usual business of raiding, but the legendary attributes of creative, unproductive work and long-established habitation at 'Zimbahwes' belong emphatically and especially to that tribe.

There are the Tower of Babel tales of Lozwi attempts to build scaffolding to reach the moon, so that they might catch it ... The tales, too, of their concerted efforts to move Mutikwiri, Urungwe, Nyandoro, and other mountains, and build them up against Zimbahwe are common amongst all the tribes; and are, therefore, almost admissible as evidence that a great impression was made by some unusual work done by the BaLozwi. Again, it is traditionally established that their system of Government was near an absolute monarchy than that of most tribes, and so better suited to obtain the obedience necessary to such works as the building of Zimbahwe, Matendere, Gorongwe, Khami, Dhlo-Dhlo, or other similar ruins yet to be located.

There is strong traditional support for [the] view that the BaLozwi used religion as a means of holding in subjection, or control, the Chiefs of other tribes. Their emissaries claimed that 'they knew God' (that is, Mwali); and had been sent by him to their nephews ... They carried a gourd cup and wore the insignia of black beads - as do the "children of god" to this day. They claimed obedience in the name of Mwali, perhaps more than by the power of Mambo (Bullock, *The Mashona*, pp. 38-41, in Caton-Thompson 1931, 177-178).

Dr Caton-Thompson continues and gives oral traditions that that she was able to collect or obtain from others all connecting Bukalanga

with the Zimbabwe Ruins. She gives the following:

Turning now from the general to the particular, Dornan, who I cannot quote in full, says: I shall now give three statements made to me at different times by intelligent natives regarding the origin and use of these buildings. They are typical of many others that I have heard, but I give them because they were made by men who were unknown to each other and who came from widely separated localities and belonged to different tribes ... My first informant is Tjapa ... He was chamberlain to Lobengula, and came up from the Transvaal with Mzilikazi in 1839 or 1840. He was a small boy at the time, and thus, when he gave me the information in 1911, he was an old man upwards of 80 years. His faculties were quite unimpaired ... Here is his statement:

When the Amaswazi arrived in Rhodesia (the first wave of Zulu immigration) the Mambo was living in his castle at Thaba's ka Mambo. Thus we were not the first to destroy these fortifications. They were ruins before we arrived. (The Amaswazi destroyed them. The Amaswazi remained about two years) ... They came immediately before us, about two or three years. That is why we got such an easy conquest, because the Amaswazi had killed the Mambo's people. The Mambo went up our river (the Inkwesi), where he built another fort, which still exists, about eight miles from here (Inyathi). They had not treamed the stones up there: they had to take the stones as they found them (as they had not time to trim them). The son of this Mambo, whom we killed, went over to Tjibi to the Zimbabwe there. Inyanigwe is the name of the mountain near the ruins (Zimbabwe). Inhamohamo was the name of the chief. He was the son of this Mambo. He built it first. The same Mambo (of the Thaba's ka Mambo) who built Dhlo-Dhlo, when the Amaswazi drove him out of Dhlo-Dhlo, came over to Thaba's ka Mambo and built it. The stones were only for the fort; the houses inside were ordinary huts' (S. S. Dornan, R.R., pp. 6-7).

Space compels me to cut Dornan's evidence, and skip to the narrative of his third witness: Tjiminya, a Batonga from the neighborhood of Victoria Falls. He is neither Matabele nor Mashuna (Shona), and so his testimony is all the more valuable on that account ... It runs as

follows:

I have heard from the old Makalanga and Matabele that the Mambo lived at Thaba's ka Mambo, built Thaba's ka Mambo and Khami. I have heard them say so many times. He did not use these places to live, but he used them to fight in, when anybody came to fight him like the Amaswazi ... I have heard it said that the Mambo of Thaba's ka Mambo ruled as far as Tjibi ([Great] Zimbabwe) and that those towns were built by his orders. I have never heard it said that he employed Arabs (Mazungu) to build them, but I have often heard that there were plenty of Arabs in the country at the time, and that the Portuguese drove them away. But not all of them, as some of them were married to native women. They came for gold and elephants' teeth. There were many of them, and they built themselves houses.

Here, again, we have definite information connecting the ruins with the natives, whose descendants live in the country at the present time, and that they were built by those people. I do not attach great weight to the statement that the Mambo of Thaba's ka Mambo built Zimbabwe, although my first witness Tjapa said the same thing. I think a Mambo was meant, one who lived a long time ago, but the way the statement is made shows that there is an intimate connexion between Zimbabwe and the other ruins, such as Khami, Dhlo-Dhlo, and Thaba's ka Mambo.

From Mbava, paramount chief of the BaLozwi, comes the following tradition, communicated by E. M. Lloyd:

Chief Mbava thinks that the great chief of the BaLozwi, called Togwa, was the one who built Zimbabwe ... Togwa was a very great chief indeed, and all the chiefs went to him to Zimbabwe to pay homage. It was from this place that his messengers were sent to choose the lesser chiefs - Makoni, Umtasa, Makombi, Zimunya, Marange, Mutema, Nyashanu, Sweswe, Nyandoro, Mashayamombe, and all the chiefs of this country. King Togwa did not build Zimbabwe only; there are many other places like Zimbabwe which have never yet been seen by the white men (Elaine M. Lloyd, Mbava, in Nada, 1925, pp. 62-3).

Now, no one is so foolish as to take native stories such as these as final; tribal memory, even if honestly imparted to the white man, is proverbially short, and so over-laden with anachronisms that it is a

fragile aid to archaeology, useful only as a contributory flow of corroborative evidence.

BaLozwi memory appears able to carry back intelligently to the Amaswazi invasion of about 1830, and to retain a tradition of the building and occupation of such ruins as Khami, Thaba's ka Mambo, and Dhlo-Dhlo at some indefinite time before. Unfortunately we are without guide as to when the BaLozwi arrived south of the Zambesi; and a serious authority, F.W.T. Posselt, refers to the question thus:

The Native evidence refers to the BaLozwi Empire, with its kings bearing the hereditary title of Mambo. Whether this empire is identical with that of Monomotapa, so frequently mentioned by the Portuguese writers, or whether it took the place thereof, cannot definitely be ascertained. But, after weighing all the available facts, it seems logical to conclude that the two empires were identical. Curiously, we find no reference to the term 'BaLozwi' by the Portuguese, though Dos Santos states a name of one of the Monomotapas as "Mambo"... A very old BaLemba chief named Mposi, who died at the end of the last century, related that he learnt from his forefathers that when the BaLozwi occupied the Zimbabwe Ruins they found therein human remains and implements which were removed by them ... (*A Survey of the Native Tribes of Southern Rhodesia*, pp. 8-9).

And so we come to the full stop, certain only if this much: that the BaLozwi were living in various ruins at the time of the Swazi invasion, about a hundred years ago: that they have built - and other tribes admit their claim to have built - some, at least, of the ruins: but as there is, owing to the almost complete lacuna in our knowledge concerning Bantu history, no check upon their earlier movements, and they are not even mentioned in the Portuguese records - not at least by a recognizable name (Bullock adds a footnote to p. 25 of *The Mashona* (1927) to the effect that Father Schebesta, in *Anthropos*, writes that he has found this tribe (or one similarly named) mentioned in seventeenth-century Portuguese records) - we are not in a position to admit them into an archaeological question involving a date even as late as the dawn of the eighteenth century.

There is just one fact which suggests that the BaLozwi were occupying Dhlo-Dhlo at about our period - and that is the decorated pottery which MacIver figures as typical of this site. This is the black

pottery with geometric patterns in red bands and with incised decoration. This, I believe, is BaLozwi pottery, our Class D at Zimbabwe (polychrome ware, red incised bands on discolored black ground); and, if the type were found beneath the cement floor of the upper occupation level with the Nankin china, we have evidence for comparatively early BaLozwi occupation of the site (*Med. Rh.*, p.49: 'The pottery of this site is peculiarly beautiful')...

All, therefore, we can say with certainty on the Dhlo-Dhlo evidence is that a Bantu people, capable of erecting excellent stone walling with elaborate decoration, far superior to anything with which the BaLozwi or other stone-building tribe of Rhodesia would now be accredited, occupied Enclosure D.m., at a period as late as A.D.1700 (Hall, G.Z., p.85: 'Barotse, Amangwa, and Makalanga have built walls and near the ruins. They state that their ancestors used to construct excellent walls' [Mr. Drew, N.C., is of opinion that the Barotse [BaLozwi] now build better walls than do the present Makalanga. The Makalanga were always famous as good builders with stone) (Caton-Thompson 1931, 178-182).

We now know that the individuals and people groups mentioned in the evidence presented by Dr Caton-Thompson - the Monomotapa, Togwa, the BaLozwi, the Mambo - were all of the Kalangaitic race and polities. For further and more detailed information on the Kalanga identity of the BaLozwi the reader is referred to Chapter Four where I have dealt at length with the question of whether the BaLozwi were a Bukalanga or Shona people group.

The BaLozwi happened to be the paramount and ruling tribe for the last one hundred and fifty years before the Nguni invasions of the nineteenth century. That is why that era was generally referred to as the Kingdom of BuLozwi. It is natural that any major governmental achievements would have been attributed to them even though the whole nation was involved, just as different periods of development be it in Egypt or Babylonia or Sumeria are referred to by the name of the ruling dynasty of the day. As for the Mambos, we already know that they were the kings, with Mambo being the dynastic title just

like Monomotapa and Tjibundule were other Kalanga dynastic titles of the national leaders.

Let us now turn to the findings of Professor Keith Robinson. His are mainly based on studies at Khami Ruins and other ruined sites across the so-called Matabeleland. He, too, like Drs Randall-MacIver and Caton-Thompson, reached the conclusion that the Lozwi-Kalanga were responsible for the construction of the Zimbabwe Ruins. Let us hear what he had to say.

3. Professor Keith R. Robinson

On the pottery found in the ruins: The pottery beakers are unlike any other pots recovered from Khami so far, and their purpose is uncertain. Their shape is very similar to the wooden milk pails still carved out of tree trunks by the more remote Makalanga.

On a hoard of weapons found at Khami Ruins: The hoard of weapons, judged by their unusual forms and the probability that they were wrapped in cloth and some kind of wicker work, were almost certainly of ceremonial importance. It is possible that they may have been ancestral weapons, such as the ancestral spears of the Venda. These spears seem to have represented the king's power ... the presence outside hut Cb1 of the hoard of bronze and iron spears and an axe, and other finds from within the hut passage, may indicate relationship with the Venda now living in the northern Transvaal. According to van Warmelo (1950, pp. 134-7) *mapfumo* or spears were possessed only by royal families. Each spear represented a male ancestor who was the first-born son of a chief's wife. The spears were always kept in the chief's dwelling, and brought only to the annual sacrifice at the graves. Possession of the spears meant possession of the chieftainship, but such possession was controlled by the *makhadzi*, the dead chief's great wife. Not only does the above fit our hoard of weapons like a glove, but it may also be noted that Mbita (an informant) stated that Khami was ruled by the great wife of the Mambo (*vha hosi*). The Venda, moreover, are known to have built in stone; Dzata in the northern Transvaal in particular can be connected with them.

On Venda traditions related to the ruins: Venda today living in Southern Rhodesian territory near Beitbridge also claim to have built certain ruined buildings in that area (information obtained personally from various sources), which resemble, in their general architecture, the ruins of Khami. The Venda, we are told (Stayt, 1931) are 'a composite people ... the tribe is composed of sibs and groups of unrelated people, who have, in varying circumstances and localities, came into contact with a small homogenous nucleus and have become identified with it'. Their traditions, language and culture indicate a northern origin. The leading elements among them appear to have migrated in small groups from somewhere in Southern Rhodesia at several periods. One of these migrations is given in some detail in the legend *Ngoma Lungundu* (van Warmelo, 1940), where reference is made to early stone building, and to the building of Dzata. The pottery from the old Venda sites is decorated in the colored band and panel style although, so far as can be discovered, it was inferior both in finish and in variety of pot forms to the pottery of Khami or Dhlo-Dhlo. In view of the above there can be no doubt that the people called Lozwi and certain of the Venda groups are related.

On the Venda-Lemba-Lozwi-Kalanga relationship: It is safe to say that Khami was built and occupied by the Lozwi, but it is necessary to be clear what is meant by 'Lozwi', as there seems to be some doubt as to whether or not the name has an ethnic significance. Von Sicard (1953, p.70) considers that it was a term applied to more than one conquering tribe or group at different periods. However this may be, there are people today who regard themselves as of Lozwi stock and descended from the people who were in power in Southern Rhodesia prior to the arrival of the Nguni under Zwangendaba in the early nineteenth century. Their powerful chiefs were addressed as Mambo, and, latterly at least, were of the *moyo* or heart totem. It is claimed by some authorities (Posselt, 1935, 134-9) that this line of Mambos was descended from one Tjanganamire, who is said to have rebelled against the Munumutapa towards the end of the seventeenth century.

In what manner was Khami related to Zimbabwe and other ruins in Southern Rhodesia? Caton-Thompson (1931,194) in her conclusions on the Zimbabwe Culture expresses the opinion that "it was to some ascendant and now disintegrated tribal unit, of which BaLozwi and

BaVenda are two of the offspring, that the 'ruin builders' belonged."

Another fragment of information given by Mbita is worthy of note in this connection. He stated that the women of the Humbe [Whumbe] or the Lilima tribe in the Plumtree district came especially to do this work [of pottery-making]. It is of interest to compare this with Stayt's statement (1931, p. 13) that with the Venda the making of pottery had long been in the hands of the BaLemba women. This information, if true, is significant. It has been shown that all the pottery in the Khami Ruin field is of the same class; the ceremonial pottery, although more elaborate, is still the same. Therefore it would appear that the Humbe were closely connected with the ruling clan. Was their position analogous to that of the BaLemba towards the Venda? This hardly seems likely; the BaLemba were, and still are, a peculiar people of Semitic type who are in the habit of associating themselves with other unrelated tribes for whom they undertake various kinds of work, mainly metal-work. They are said to have had formerly a pottery tradition of their own (Schofield, 1948). The Humbe, on the other hand, appear to have lived a perfectly normal tribal existence. According to von Sicard (1954, p.70) they were originally an offshoot of the Rolong and are perhaps related to the Pedi. They were incorporated into the Kalanga group and given a Nyai chief named Nimakwala. When this occurred is not clear, but apparently it was during the period of Lozwi dominance.⁵⁷

...However this may be, the Venda employed BaLemba to make their pottery, and it is probable that the Lozwi of Khami employed the Humbe women for the same purpose. In both instances the same type of polychrome decoration occurs. It seems reasonable to conclude, therefore, that during the eighteenth century, and perhaps earlier, polychrome ware similar to that of Khami was being made by several tribal groups over an area comprising the Northern Transvaal, north-eastern Bechuanaland, and most of Matabeleland (Robinson 1958, 108-120).

⁵⁷ It is very likely that Sicard was referring to only a small section of the Whumbe. Instead of the Whumbe being originally Barolong, it is the Barolong who settled among and got assimilated by the Whumbe. Cartrien van Waarden (1988) in *The Oral History of the Bakalanga of Botswana* dismisses the idea that the Whumbe were once of Barolong stock. He argues that it is the Barolong who were assimilated into the Whumbe (p.28).

It is also very interesting to note that after conducting extensive archaeological researches into the Khami Ruins, Robinson could not help but reach the conclusion that it was the Kalanga peoples responsible for the construction of the edifices. When he sought to find out if there are native traditions to corroborate his findings, he was able to obtain information from thirteen different people from such places as Francistown, Bulawayo, Plumtree, Masvingo, Victoria Falls and Mtoko. Ten out of thirteen attributed the construction of Khami and other ruins to Bukalanga!

Also, all the people groups that have been referred to by Robinson in connection with the ruins: Venda, Lozwi, Humbe/Lilima, Lemba, Bakalanga, we have already positively established, belong to the Kalangaitic race or Bukalanga, in Chapters Two, Three and Four. This obviously flies in the face of what is officially held and taught in Zimbabwean schools that the Shona people were the builders of the Zimbabwe Civilization.

An interesting story has it that once, Bertrand Russell, the atheistic British philosopher, was asked what he would say to God as a disclaimer of why he did not believe in God when upon his death he finds that God actually exists. He responded by saying he would tell God that he didn't give him enough evidence. In response to Russell's position, Dr Ravi Zacharias, that eminent Christian philosopher, quipped that for man the problem is not the absence of evidence, instead it is the suppression of it. One may choose to disbelieve the evidence, but they cannot say that it wasn't there!

4. Roger Summers

After conducting extensive excavations and investigations into the Zimbabwe Ruins, Roger Summers also attempted an ethnographic history to try and establish what ethnic group might have been responsible for the ruins. His conclusions follow:

Archaeology shows very clearly the dual origin of the Iron Age of Rhodesia. First came a group of farmers with sheep and goats and a

knowledge of iron technology, who arrived on the Zambesi about A.D. 100. These were the *Iron Age A* people, to give them their archaeological name. Secondly, there was a different group called *Iron Age B* who crossed the Zambesi around A.D. 700. They had a different material culture from the A-group and, using the normal rules of archaeological interpretation (V. G. Childe, *Piecing the Past Together*), one infers that they spoke a different language. For the moment it is better to refer to these two as A-group and B-group. What made all the world of difference between the two groups was that B had cattle but A had not. This greatly restricted the area open to B because cattle need water and good pasture all year round, some shelter and not too much movement, besides which they are prone to many more diseases than the hardy sheep and goats belonging to the A-group. It happened, apparently accidentally, that A and B came in by different routes and that the good pasture needed by B had very few A settlers on it. So A and B developed independently for some centuries without disturbing each other until they collided in the Limpopo Valley.

At last, probably about A.D. 1000, B's herds grew too large for their restricted area and the group had to adopt a new pasture technique which involved taking in more land, this time at the A-group's expense. This led to a series of wars which only ended when all the A-group had either moved south or been absorbed by B. After about 1100 A no longer had a separate existence north of the Limpopo whereas almost all iron-age cultures south of that river derive directly from the A-group.

The boundary between A and B was not actually on the Limpopo but some 80-100 km further south, on the crest of the Zoutpansberg [or Makhado Mountains], with a fluctuating frontier in the Limpopo valley. This boundary is not only an archaeological one; it also marks a cultural and linguistic division. North of the line languages belong to the Shona⁵⁸ group and south of it various Sotho languages are spoken. If we are correct in our inference that A and B spoke different languages, it would seem that A is to be identified with Sotho and B with [Kalanga] Shona.

⁵⁸ Roger Summers held the view that Kalanga is a Shona dialect, hence his use of Shona here. We of course know from previous chapters that this is a reference to Bukalanga. as we shall see below Summers is actually referring to the Kalanga.

B's cattle were not a unique possession for very long and once A established themselves in what is now the Transvaal they too acquired cattle, presumably from B, and in due time they too were restricted in their settlement area. Besides, these two Bantu-speaking groups, the ruin area contained a third, tiny in numbers but rich and influential. This consisted of the traders and exploiters of the gold-mines and was called *Mwenye* [Lemba] by the Bantu. Of mixed African and Asian origin, the Mwenye had a good deal of Arab and possibly some Indian blood.

The A-group may have profited to some extent from trade with the Mwenye but the B-group, or rather its chiefs, became steadily richer from the profits of the gold trade until it became powerful enough to crush the Mwenye. The B-group's cattle suffered severely during ... climatic fluctuations that [were] probably responsible for famines which caused the decline in the effectiveness of the B-group and its defeat by Nguni invaders during the 1820's and 30's.⁵⁹

Now let us try to give these people names instead of conventional letters. So long as the A-group was north of the Limpopo, its name is unknown to us and it is but an archaeological abstraction, but south of the Limpopo it includes the almost legendary Ghoya [Lekgoya], the slightly better known Fokeng and Rolong and historically known tribes such as Tlaping and Hurutse, all of whom speak Sotho dialects today. In ruin terms, the A- (or Sotho) group would seem to have been responsible for Types 1⁶⁰ and Type 6 in all its manifestations.

Turning to the B-group, its traditions refer to its earliest members being the Mbire whom one authority suggested crossed the Zambesi in the fourteenth century "or maybe earlier".⁶¹ It would seem that this

⁵⁹ This gives us a clue as to what people group the B-group would have been since we already know that the people who were crushed by the Nguni invaders are the Kalanga in the south-west of Zimbabwe.

⁶⁰ More easily seen to their best advantage in certain parts of Inyanga district, but they are difficult to detect as they are so frequently covered with thick vegetation. The terrace walls consist of rough, angular pieces of granite, thrown together without any attempt at building -p. 66.

⁶¹ Summers obtained the information of the 'Mbire tradition' from the oral traditions of Donald P. Abraham (Summers 1971: 176) which, as we saw in Chapter Six, are very much distorted and unreliable. But we cannot blame the archaeologist, for that was the published oral tradition available to him then.

event must be pushed back six or seven hundred years, which goes to show how very difficult it is to obtain dates from oral traditions alone. Since Kalanga seems to be the oldest form of Shona now surviving, we would perhaps label the original B-group settlers as “Kalanga” as has been done by some workers. However, I prefer the non-committal “B-group” until the Kalanga emerge into the light of written records in the fifteenth century.

These early B-people, whatever we like to call them, were responsible for Type 2 buildings⁶² and probably 1A⁶³ as well. As there are no stone ruins in Zambia, despite ample available building stone, it would seem that the B-group did not start building until they had crossed the Zambezi and one can go further and suggest that they acquired this art from the A-group.

Type 3 appears in the eleventh century, before the word “Kalanga” is known and Type 5 may be nearly as early (but so far there are no dates). However, Type 3A⁶⁴ is associated with Kalanga chiefs who, by their plundering, earned the not so honorable nickname of Mwenemutapa [Monomotapa] (“master pillager”) but which they adopted as a glorious dynastic title. Their soldiers were Nyais from the southern part of the country and Fernandes saw them erecting a stone building in the north which they called “Camanhaya” or, as we should say, “Nyaitown” (i.e., *kamaNyayi*). The southerners did not call them Nyais, however, but used a descriptive term Rosvi (Lozwi), which means “destroyers”... All this B-group expansion is interpreted from Portuguese documents, chiefly a famous report of 1506 from Diogo Alcacova describing the state of the country inland from the fort of Sofala which the Portuguese had just built.⁶⁵

⁶² Walls are often neatly built and are much shorter and retain a far smaller mass. They have been designed as a whole and mould the building material to an artificial shape, instead of following the natural shape of a hilltop, p. 68-9.

⁶³ Are often buried by hillwash and only come to light when some farmer or builder digs a trench; moreover they are recognized if there happens to be an archeologically minded person about –p. 68.

⁶⁴ This type of ruins is technically and culturally more advanced than the previous ones and there remain not only walls, but also other stone-built accessories such as steps, buttresses, corner platforms, towers (apparently solid), ‘turrets’ on walls, standing stones and so on, while dagga of a very high quality has been used for interior structures –p. 74.

⁶⁵ The reference to Diogo Alcacova’s 1506 report seals our argument that the people being referred to here are actually the Kalanga.

We learn that Mutota left the important chief Togwa in charge of the south;⁶⁶ this chief is believed to have lived at Khami which he, or an immediate predecessor in the title, had started to build only just before. Now there is so much at Khami to remind one of Maphungubgwe, which had been ravaged by a great fire only a generation earlier, that one is tempted to connect this chiefly dynasty with Maphungubgwe and Type 2 buildings, although one is on surer ground in connecting them with Type 4.⁶⁷

Undoubtedly, Maphungubgwe was a post guarding the southern frontier and the fire of 1400 coupled with a resettlement of an unfortified place at the foot of the Hill is a little puzzling. It seems hardly likely that the Sotho (A-group) swept north, for there are few of their buildings north of the Limpopo; but there is a great concentration further south from whence one may deduce that for some reason they drew away and settled in the well-watered pastures south of the Magaliesberge about this time. This is not altogether a guess for we know that there was a brief, drier period in the fourteenth century which would have made cattle-keeping in the upper Limpopo valley very difficult (Summers 1971, 176-181).

I am sure it has been a long and grueling read for some readers with all the technical detail of archaeology. But nonetheless, it is clear that Summers also reaches the same conclusions that the Kalanga were responsible for the construction of the Ruins even though he relies on Donald Abraham for his oral traditions. His Iron Age B group he equates to Bukalanga, though questions would obviously have to be raised with his dating of their arrival about 700 AD. From our arguments in Chapter One it would seem they arrived far earlier than

⁶⁶ Nowhere is the Mutota character mentioned in Alcacova's letter. Alcacova mentions Mokomba. The legend of Mutota only arises in Shona oral traditions of 1862 collected by the Portuguese officer Albino Manoel Pacheco. The tradition was later popularized by Donald Abraham in the late 1950s and early 1960s. See Chapters Six and Seven above and D.N. Beach's *Shona Dynastic Histories*.

⁶⁷ Consists of large and high platform, usually built round large boulders or even a small koppie. The platforms are supported by retaining walls which may rise up to a total height of 9-10 m, usually built in stages each about 2 m high and steeped back giving, in some cases, what Schoffield called a "wedding cake" appearance -p.76.

that.

I have to admit that in his own text, he sometimes uses the word 'Karanga', but that was just in keeping with the tendency of some authors who used Kalanga and Karanga interchangeably, which he himself does in his book. We can see from his references to the Monomotapas, the letter of Diogo de Alcacova, Togwa, Buthwa, the Lozwi and Maphungubgwe kingdoms that he is actually writing of the Kalanga, for the evidence provided by Portuguese documents and other writers is to the effect that these were Kalanga institutions as we have already seen in many instances in previous chapters. Whilst there might be trifling differences when it comes to archaeological interpretation amongst the archaeologists, basically the oral traditions that back up archaeology have been found to consistently point to Bukalanga as the people responsible for the Zimbabwe Civilization.

5. Peter Garlake

The work of Peter Garlake sealed the debate about whether the Zimbabwe Civilization was a work of Bantu peoples or the so-called 'Ancients'. He too attempted to establish what African people were responsible for the structures. It will be seen that Garlake also reaches the conclusion that the Togwa/Lozwi/Kalanga people were the most closely associated with the construction of Great Zimbabwe and other ruined cities, though he relied on the discredited works of D.P. Abraham for his oral traditions.

Writing on the relationship between the archeological sites from Leopard's Kopje to Mapela to Maphungubgwe, Great Zimbabwe, and Khami and showing them to be the creation of the same hands, Garlake states the following:

About the ninth or tenth century, new immigrants entered the dry Acacia sand veld of south-west Matabeleland, introducing what is known as the Leopard's Kopje culture [we have already learned these were the Kalanga peoples] ... During the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries this culture underwent a series of changes, perhaps stimulated partly by the final and complete elimination of all Early

Iron Age competitors and also by the establishment of contacts with the growing East Coast towns. New lands were settled and long-lived villages grew up in the more fertile but heavy and less easily tilled soils of the Matabeleland gold belt. These are exemplified by several settlement mounds on Woolandale Farm outside Bulawayo. This expansion must have initiated the first mining and working of gold in south-central Africa to judge from a crucible at one site, sherds of the culture in gold workings and the circular depressions or 'dolly holes', probably used for milling the ores, to be seen in the rocks at many other sites. In the drier grazing lands on the southern periphery, pressures seem to have been such that very large communities concentrated around naturally well-defended, habitable, flat-topped hills such as Maphungubgwe on the Limpopo River and Mapela, sixty miles upstream on the Shashi River.

...The economy was also now so controlled that the major southern sites many miles from the gold-fields could reap considerable benefits from the production of the metal: during the final stages of Maphungubgwe's occupation, three people were buried with gold beads, wire bangles and wooded objects covered in beaten gold sheets. Thus, in its later stages, the Leopard's Kopje culture exhibited a number of highly significant new features: new artisan skills in mining and building, increased trade, a more diversified and controlled economy, a concentration of population that led to the formation of settlements of greatly increased numbers, having a new permanency and requiring considerable organized labor for their construction and, finally, a stratified society. So power and wealth became concentrated amongst a small sector of society at a few major centres.

All these features are of immediate relevance to Great Zimbabwe, the contemporary of the Leopard's Kopje culture that grew up on the eastern edge of its culture area like the greater centres on the southern periphery, for they are precisely the factors one would expect to stimulate the growth of the site like Great Zimbabwe. In fact, its people seem to have developed in the same directions at much the same time. This suggests the possibility of closer cultural connections ... Close affinities between their [Great Zimbabwe people] pottery and the earlier Leopard's Kopje ceramics are apparent ... These affinities are sufficiently obvious, continuous and wide

ranging to show that the two cultures were closely connected. The growing divergences postulate a common origin, and it is even possible that further investigations will show that the distinctions between the Leopard's Kopje and Zimbabwe people cannot be upheld and that they are culturally identical. In the later stages, distribution patterns make it possible to envisage Great Zimbabwe as an eastern regional variant of a single 'later Leopard's Kopje-Zimbabwe culture', and to see Maphungubgwe and Mapela as the southern variant of this culture and the Woolandale sites as the western variant.

But such classifications are questions of degree and, until precise assessments and definitions are possible, semantics. It is more important to recognize that Great Zimbabwe shares a fundamental identity with the Leopard's Kopje culture and that, from about the late twelfth century, diversification, expansion, affluence and, a concomitant of these, increased social, economic and functional specialization took place in both cultures so that in the end, entire settlements could, like areas within sites, be built and used for limited functions by certain groups or classes of people. Great Zimbabwe looks increasingly as if it was such a site (Garlake 1973, 158-9).

Discussing the relationships and continuity between Great Zimbabwe and Khami, Garlake stated:

The roots of these people [Khami builders] in the culture of Great Zimbabwe is demonstrated in obvious similarities in architecture, building techniques and artifacts but substantial modifications are equally apparent: inevitable changes due to time and perhaps the influences of the previous inhabitants rather than to new peoples and cultures. The builders of later Matabeleland ruins can be identified without doubt as Lozwi for the polychrome pottery in them is universally recognized as characteristic Lozwi ware. Moreover, in oral tradition many of these ruins are attributed to specific Lozwi rulers and events associated with them are remembered in detail. The area of these ruins is that of the Lozwi territory of Guruhuswa [or Guni-

buhwa] or, as it was known to the Portuguese, Butua.⁶⁸ These ruins are therefore the architectural manifestation of the historical Lozwi kingdom of the Tjangamire dynasty (Garlake 1973, 171).

The above information as supplied by Garlake establishes for us that the Leopard's Kopje Culture people, already positively identified as the Kalanga, are the same people responsible for the cultures of Maphungubgwe, Great Zimbabwe, Khami and so forth. He sees cultural continuity from Leopard's Kopje through Maphungubgwe and Great Zimbabwe to Khami. And to seal the proposition that it is the Kalanga people who were responsible for these edifices, Garlake identifies the builders of the ruins in Matabeleland as Lozwi, and the Togwa dynasty as particularly responsible. It is beyond any reasonable doubt that the Kalanga were the people responsible for the Zimbabwe Civilization instead of the Shona as is held in official circles and taught in Zimbabwean schools.

Still Remembered Folklore on the Zimbabwe Ruins

In addition to the findings of the archaeologists cited above, we also have folklore that was still remembered by the people at the turn of the 20th century, and recorded by Stayt (1931) and van Warmelo (1940). The information has been synthesized for us by Wilfrid Mallows in his 1984 book, *The Mystery of the Great Zimbabwe: The key to a major archaeological enigma*. Mallows wrote:

The last source about the people who built the ruins comes from unrecorded folklore of the survivors of the tribes themselves. Unfortunately, this is many times removed from the scene of the action, for it is the BaVenda tribe in South Africa, on the southern borders of the Limpopo, and that semi-independent tribe within the

⁶⁸ For the location of Butua/Buthwa and the meaning of Guruhuswa/Guni-buhwa, see Chapter Three. Briefly, it is the land identified today as the modern-day Matabeleland and Masvingo Provinces.

BaVenda, the BaLemba, who have Kalanga connections and who appear most likely to be connected with the Zimbabwe culture. Both had preserved their folklore sufficiently well to get it down by ethnologists in the first half of the present century.

The story they tell is that of an ancient homeland to the north from which they had to emigrate, and of religious and political events connected with the emigration to their present home, the country south of the Limpopo and stretching west from the Mocambique border for 100 miles or more. It has still today a separate identity, Vendaland.

Their folklore describes their homeland as 'a country of great rivers and lakes, of dense forest and jungles, overflowing with water and many forests and fruits, of bananas, of tubers and peanuts in great variety'. That was the origin of the Vha Senzi, today called Vha Venda. They were ruled by a king called Mwali (some relics of the legend king-god), who could work miracles with the big drum of the gods, called *ngoma-lungundu*. The King lived in a village of tremendous size on a mountain. 'Its walls were built with huge stones; it was impregnable. The houses were built of shining slabs ... No man was permitted to see the King, they merely heard what he spoke to the High Priest in a tremendous voice that reverberated in a terrifying manner ... whosoever should gaze at [the King] was immediately slain ... they feared Mwali himself as if he were an ancestor spirit'.

Later the king-god Mwali died. Fighting broke out about the succession, and a great migration south started, 'with cattle, sheep, goats, dogs and others so that a tremendous herd was formed, to drive which was a great labor'. Eventually, the people crossed the Limpopo and got to their present homeland. The magic drum goes with them and finally, in the valley of the Nzhelele River, they built Dzata: their new capital, with stone walls still standing today.

Another account tells how these stone towns were built: wherever the people heard the drum, 'they were beside themselves with terror and by means of it the people were subjected. They came and built the walls and sleeping huts of the royal town: a great wall was built around the town and other walls to enclose the roads and to separate the different quarters. There were two courtyards on the inside, one being only reached by stooping underneath huge slabs, its

doorway being opposite a wall that surrounded the small private quarters of the queens and the council chamber ... In this courtyard they used to blow *tshikona* [a kind of ritual dance]'. The great wall and the other had loopholes through which one might look out in times of danger, shoot arrows through them.

All these legends and stories of the Vha Venda substantiate the other evidence that they have definite connections with the Zimbabwe culture. The account in particular of how walls were built enclosing roads (that is, passage ways) and spaces on which sleeping huts were built is an accurate account of both past and present planning of these towns. The legend of the Vha Lemba also corroborates this tribe's known characteristics: their refusal to become assimilated; their rigid adherence to their own law; their habit of trading and being always on the move, without fixed habitation, their striking Semitic traits – circumcision, refusal to eat the meat of animals that have not been ritually killed by throat cutting and draining of all their blood; even the ending of the prayers with 'Amen'. All this suggests they had an ancient Muslim or Jewish ancestry.

There were stories of another group, of miners of iron, coming from the east and south, perhaps even far descendants of those earliest miners in Swaziland, who came up and mined at Phalaborwa, hoping for iron but finding the copper mixed with iron and calling it M'sina, the 'spoiler', the thing that spoiled their iron. So, gradually, by a series of accidents finding and mining copper, they came further and further north, almost to the Limpopo. They were different, this group, nothing to do with the Lemba or Venda. They did not practice circumcision, and most extraordinary for this time and place, they ate their food with a wooden spoon - some brushoff from India or Indonesia or Portugal: no one knows.

In time this group became absorbed into the Venda nation, so their separate identity was lost; but their hereditary skill remained and was passed on. So strong was this that these M'sina miners were still mining copper when the white prospectors came north and found them. The whites took over the mines with modern techniques and called their new town Messina. So close in time was ancient mining to the modern that in 1920 the last copper miner of M'sina, one Mukushu Dau, was still alive and able to be photographed.

These legends in sum total show the remains of two races: one used to rule, with traditions of a powerful god-king ruling over other kings, of building towns in stone, of skill in iron making, and of flocks and herds and agriculture, and another race keeping themselves ruthlessly apart, not intermarrying, also absorbed in iron making, but living as itinerant traders, travelling widely and constantly throughout this southern part of Africa.

Whatever the truth of their connection to Great Zimbabwe, however strong or weak it may be, it is certain the Venda have still something different from their neighbors - some sense of group identity still articulate and still proud.

This then is the story as far as the known facts can carry it, and the picture begins to have an outline. It is about a land, warm and hospitable and productive, with good soil and a climate without excessive winter cold or summer heat; full of elephant and wild game predators, but clear of the worst diseases of man and beast once the coastal badlands and mountain barriers had been crossed and the highlands reached. Into this land had come most ancient man, many millennia back, and when the present story opens, some few centuries after the start of the Christian era, there is already a mixture of people - some of mixed stock with origins not yet clear; others, coming from the north; some perhaps from the sea, with skill in cattle breeding, iron making, and growing new types of food. For some reason, not yet clear, they also begin building fortress hide-outs hidden among great boulders on hill-tops.

The why and wherefore of all this burst of activity is the great question, and the answer may lie elsewhere than Africa in a wide sweep of history, set around the Indian Ocean. We must look at all the theories put out to date about the origins and then do a diagnosis of the buildings themselves before embarking on the quest of this Holy Grail, the answer to the riddle of the Great, the Ancient, Zimbabwe (Mallows 1984, 99-101)

Such are some of the still remembered folklore. What we can surely satisfy ourselves with now is that there is overwhelming evidence that the Kalanga peoples, or Bukalanga, or what I like to call the

Kalangaitic Race - BaKalanga, BaTalawunda, BaLemba, BaNambya, BaLilima, BaPfumbi, BaTwamambo, BaTembe, Ba-ka-BaLoyi, Bakgalaka or BaLobedu, BaLembethu, VhaVenda, and some sections of Vakaranga - are the people whose ancestors were responsible for the construction of the sites from Maphungubgwe, Great Zimbabwe, Khami, Dzata, and all Zimbabwe type buildings in Zimbabwe, South Africa and Botswana. These are the true Zimbabwe Civilization people, a people whose ancestors established the greatest civilization known to Sub-Saharan Africa, they of who it could be said:

The old Makalanga were in their former semi-civilized state the dominant and most cultured of all South African tribes, and were always noted for their skills in mathematics ... and today among the native tribes still retain the preeminence in matters requiring calculation ... The Makalangas, whose ancestors had, under the influence of the ancients, become to a large extent civilized, still showed in their commercial capacities, their industries, arts, and religious faiths, the impressions left upon them by the former settlement of the ancients in this country, impressions that in some departments of life can still be noticed in the Makalanga of today. The Makalanga ... were to a large extent civilized and certainly well versed and expert in various arts, such as those of metalworking and textile manufacture; were admirable men of business, possessing the power of calculating money, and commercial instincts beyond those of any other tribes, and, according to Arab writers of the thirteenth century, themselves mined and washed for gold and traded it with the Arab merchants at the coast - (Hall and Neal 1904, 107, 121-22).

CHAPTER NINE

The Pre-Christian Worldview of Bukalanga: The Mwali Religion

Any study of Bukalanga that does not include their pre-Christian religious worldview would be very incomplete, for this is one of those unique features that show the Kalanga to be a truly distinctive and exceptional people among all black African races. One of the most baffling questions about Kalanga religion, the Mwali Religion, is its similarity to the Hebrew Religion - Yahwe'ism. Not a single African people held so distinctive an idea of the Supreme Being as the Kalanga. Due to the enormous importance of the Mwali Religion to Bukalanga life, we will devote this whole chapter to this interesting religion. I do not intend to establish any matters of right or wrong, truth or lack thereof as far as the religion is concerned, but to just report on its beliefs and practices.

We are told by Dr Theal, "the Makalanga had [by the 1500s] developed their religious system and their industries more highly than any of the other tribes of Southern or Eastern Africa" (Theal 1907, 295). Traveling amongst the Kalanga in 1891, JT Bent reported that in religion:

[T]he Makalanga are monotheists – that is to say, they believe in a Supreme Being called Muali [Mwali], between whom and them their ancestors, or *mozimos*, to whom they sacrifice, act as intercessors. They lay out food for their dead; they have a day of rest during the ploughing season, which they call Muali's day [or *Nsii*]; they have dynastic names for their chiefs, like the Pharaohs of old; they sacrifice a goat to ward off pestilence and famine; circumcision is practiced amongst some of them (Bent 1892, 56-57).

Traveling through the same region twenty years earlier, Karl Mauch found things as they were later found by Mr. Bent. He had the

following to say about Kalanga religion as he had found it practiced at Great Zimbabwe:

The Makalaka believe in a God, called "Mali" [Mwali] who lodges "*pa tenga*" [in heaven], for he eats, drinks and has plenty of everything. At times he also descends to earth and announces his coming through a messenger. This messenger roams the country, eats only meat and fine porridge, drinks beer and dances throughout the nights. According to the way in which he is treated he either promises rain or he withholds it. In an earlier visit to the kraal I offered some "nice smelling" zebra meat to him after which he [the messenger] begged for some linen and then went away. "Mali" himself, however, never puts in a personal appearance, but makes himself known below the earth, that is, in a cave in the Makala Mountains which lie in the country of the Matabele to the west of here. Food is brought to that place and the priest, probably a cheating ventriloquist, let the Mali talk from below the ground and answer questions. Mali is the sender of everything that is good (Bernhard and Bernhard 1969, 202).

In his Tuesday 21st May 1872 diary entry, Karl Mauch gave a detailed description of a ritual that was being conducted in honor of Mwali in intervals of two, three or four years at Great Zimbabwe. It is perhaps the most detailed we have ever had on the way Mwali was worshiped prior to the arrival of the Ndebele who disrupted the way things were at that time. Mauch's description goes as follows:

At intervals of 2 or 3 or 4 years, fixed from [Great] Zimbabwe, or from God (Mali or Mambo), the Balosse (the natives who are inclined to Jewry) foregather with great numbers of cattle after the harvest (that is during the month of May) at the foot of the mountain to celebrate a great feast - to sacrifice to Mali. Such a feast generally lasts for 3 days, and is connected with sacrifices. At the appropriate time the high

priest appears with his helpers, 2 virgins, 2 young women and 1 man. Silently, greeted by all with clapping of hands, he walks through the crowd and proceeds to the mountain top. 2 oxen and a heifer, all black and without blemish, are driven behind him. On arrival on the top, the heifer is laid on a pile of firewood, tied down and burnt alive. One ox is slaughtered and consumed. The other, however, is taken away and driven down the mountain slope and killed some distance away from the mountain. After the pieces have been scattered in all directions, its meat is left to vultures and thieves and scoundrels - it, therefore, is the scape-goat. The officiating priest enters the cave where the pot is and pours beer over it and prays (*pila*).

When the Balosse come to Zimbabye with their many oxen, the priest goes there. All greet him with handclapping, but he keeps silent and hits the ground thrice with his stick. An ox is led behind him and is slaughtered in the cave already mentioned, where the broken bowl of stone is to be found, and is then eaten. The high priest, dressed in black linen (*dema*=black or indigo blue) then enters the dark interior to pray. Having completed his prayers, he returns with the announcement that Mali is content. After this all the oxen are slaughtered at the foot of the hill, though not immediately consumed, but one ox is removed to some distance, killed, cut up and, after all those present have had a bite, chewed and spat out; they scatter its meat. Mali is invoked to take away sickness [sin?] from the people and to preserve the health ones. When the slaughtering of the great number of oxen is done, it is arranged that everyone in a set of 4 falls in a different direction of the world. The priest pours beer into the flat bowl. The Balosse return to their homes once everything has been consumed. The festivities usually last 3 days (Bernhard and Bernhard 1969, 215-217).

I know I have already stated this point, but if the reader has read the Old Testament of the Bible, they cannot miss seeing the obvious similarities of Mwali'ism [the Mwali Religion] with Yahwe'ism [the Hebrew Religion] as it was practiced in the Old Testament. We will see this even more when we come to consider the Ngoma Lungundu tradition and its shocking similarity to the story of the Ark of the

Tabernacle of the Jews, part of which we have already seen in the previous chapter. But we may ask, what then happened to this liturgy of Kalanga religion? Why do the Kalanga seem so different now from then? Why do they no longer hold their religious festivities of Mwali as they did in the past, at least for those who are not Christian? We will only partially answer the question here, leaving the full answer to Chapter Eleven. For now, our partial answer comes again from Karl Mauch. He wrote in his diary:

These festivals were done until about 30-40 years ago, when the Matabele from the W and the Zulu from the E invaded the country, fought the Balosse and, by their raids repeated yearly, caused misery and poverty among the Makalaka ... These raids, of course, are not without their quarrels, the obstinate Makalakas, living along their route, are simply murdered if they cannot escape with their cattle. The brutal robbers, mostly young people, then have their fun in wrapping any captured or surprised old women in grass, setting it alight and forcing them to run. Girls and children are carried along with them as slaves. They behave worse still when they reach their goal (Bernhard and Bernhard 1969, 211-214).

But who was Mwali? To answer that question and provide a fuller understanding of the Mwali Religion, we turn to excerpts from a paper written by Professor Gerald Fortune titled *Who was Mwari?* Whilst Professor Fortune uses the word Mwari, I have altered that to Mwali since we now know how Kalanga words have been altered and *shonalized*. But in any case we will notice from the article and the people that he mentions that Mwali is the proper rendering. Let us turn to the article.

Among one of the Matobo Hills there is one with a particularly fine display of rock paintings which is called *Ntsvetuki* [Ntsheduki or

Nswetuki?]. The name of the cave is a word in the Kalanga dialect of Shona and means the Jumper or the Leaper. The name was given to the hill because of a small depression in the granite which is popularly thought to resemble a giant footprint. Legend has interpreted the depression as the footprint left by the god Mwali as he leapt from Ntsvetuki to the neighboring hill, Khalanyoni.

...This reference to the footprint on the rock has been made to symbolize the thesis of this article, that the cult, and still more the belief, surrounding the god Mwali is an old institution in Rhodesia, going back to the time when the animals still spoke, and the cork trees still had totem marks cut into them, namely the time before history, the time of legend. The argument, however, is based not merely on legend, but also on oral traditions and the work of recent archaeologists and historians, in order to trace the story of Mwali.

... Very similar to the conception [of God/Mwali] is that held by the Venda who live to the south-east and south of the Kalanga and the Karanga, on both sides of the Limpopo. Stayt tells us that Raluvhimba [or Nwali] is a god identified by the Venda themselves with Mwali. The Venda appear to have had a historical relationship with Mwali similar to that of their counterparts north of the Limpopo, the Tjanganire Lozwi. In both cases Mwali was closely associated with the chieftainship. In the current traditions of both, he travelled with them from their place of origin, leading them to a new home.

The Lozwi subjugated and imposed themselves upon people speaking the distinctive form of Shona called Kalanga in present-day Matebeleland, whose descendants are now called Kalanga. The Venda had a special relationship with the endogamous caste of smiths and craftsmen called the Lemba who have Islamic [actually Jaudaic] traits in their culture. These people are also well known, of course, north of the Limpopo. In Vendaland this group still speaks a form of Kalanga and, in Rhodesia, the only specimen of Lemba that the writer has seen is certainly Kalanga. This form of Shona was adopted by the Tjanganire Lozwi as a result of their conquest of the Togwa state, ruled from Khami, towards the end of the sixteenth century. The culture of Togwa was that which had spread westward from Zimbabwe after that site had been abandoned in the mid-fifteenth century. Khami is understood to have been the centre of the polity which succeeded Zimbabwe. In tradition it is associated with the

names of Tjibundule and Tumbale, and within its domain lie the shrines of the oracle god, Mwali.

The people among whom the Togwa state grew up at some time after the decline of Zimbabwe in the mid-fifteenth century were those associated with the relatively simpler Leopard's Kopje Culture, so called from the name of the site, near Khami, where evidence of its existence was first found. This culture dates from c. 900 AD. One of the most interesting conclusions to emerge from the identification of the Leopard's Kopje tradition and the discovery of its relationship to the subsequent states of Togwa, the Tjangamire Lozwi, the Ndebele in Rhodesia, is that the language spoken by the peasantry in the south-west of the country, namely Kalanga, must also date from the tenth century. It is still the language used by the Mwali oracle in his shrines today. For how long has this been so?

It is here that the Venda differ from the Lozwi. They appear to have been a Lozwi offshoot, and to have carried the cult of Mwali with them into present-day Vendaland. They also appear to have been Kalanga-speaking at the time of their conquest of the Ngona and Mbedzi, but, just as the language of Togwa (Kalanga) overcame that of the Lozwi invaders, so the basic Venda language of the bulk of the Ngona and Mbedzi overcame that of the Singo newcomers.⁶⁹ The Singo proper stopped speaking Kalanga in the early nineteenth century (the Singo dynasty of the Venda and its associates imposed themselves upon their predecessors in Vendaland, the Ngona and the Mbedzi, but the Twamamba of Tshivula who seem to have anticipated the later Singo and who were forced by them to the Saltpan area towards Mapungubwe, continued to speak Kalanga. So did the endogamous and exclusive Lemba).

The Tjangamire Lozwi who came down from the north-east⁷⁰ to conquer the state of Togwa, and who ruled from sites near Khami such as Manyanga and Dangaleng'ombe (Dlodlo), must have found the Mwali cult in their new area of occupation. It was, no doubt, not new to them since traditions which show that the Tjangamire dynasty

⁶⁹ We have already argued in Chapter Four that the Lozwi were just but one segment of the Kalanga from the southern end of Bukalanga country.

⁷⁰ We have already concluded that the best evidence points to a southern origin of the Lozwi, not north-east. Of course Fortune was relying on the published works of Donald Abraham at this time.

claimed that their leader Chikurawadyembewu (Dlembewu) or Dombo-lakona-Tjing'wango was summoned by Mwali to carry out the conquest. Subsequently they exploited and extended their association with the Mwali cult with the result that traditions similar to those possessed by the Venda, of a special tutelary relationship to Mwali, were spread by the Lozwi throughout their former nuclear area which they continued to rule.

The Mwali cult was not the creation of the Lozwi, and its officials seem to have kept their independence vis-à-vis the Mambo judging from the frequent mention of clashes of interest between them. The different relationships of the Venda and the Lozwi to the Mwali cult remain a puzzle. Whatever the case, the cult of shrines, priesthood and oracles, with their attendant entourage and the expression of the cult through systematic offerings of tribute from chieftainships both in the north and south of the country never took such root in Vendaland as it did among the Matobo Hills. There are references to the cult and its centres there but these seem to have died out. The Venda now, as for some time past, go to Matobo to pay tribute and make supplication, and there are Venda officials at a number of the shrines.

Schoffeleers has recently made a penetrating study of the way in which the shrines in the Matobo appear to work together. He makes the point that their location in the Matobo offers such great advantages of co-operation and competition in the holding of ceremonies, the pooling of information and the advantageous division of the territory from which their clients come that one is led to wonder whether shrines belonging to the Mwali organization proper ever existed outside the area of the mountains. He makes the further point that so many different clans are represented among the staff of each shrine as to make it likely that the location of the cult in the Matobo (he talks about the Matobo "compulsion") is to be regarded as an ancient structural feature. We find that priests, dancers, concentrated women and messengers are drawn from such diverse groups as the Kalanga, the Karanga, the Mbire, the Hera, the Lozwi and the Venda. This points to a longstanding system of co-operation and competition between peoples of different origin who shared a vast territory. The area which the Mwali cult works today, through a regular system of messengers bringing tribute to the

shrines and directives back to the people who have sent the tribute, is the southern part of the country. Daneel has found the system of messengers and tribute still in operation between Matonjeni and the Districts of Chilimanzi, Gutu, Victoria, Melsetter, Bikita, Ndanga, Chibi, Chipinga, Belingwe, Gwanda, Plumtree, Nyamandlovu, and centres in Vendaland both north and south of the Limpopo (Fortune 1973, 1-5).

A further understanding of Mwali and the Mwali Religion is to be had from the works of M. L. Daneel. Daneel was born at Morgenster Mission near Bulawayo and graduated from the Free University in Amsterdam. With grants from the Netherlands Foundation of the Advancement of Tropical Research and the Afrika Studiecentrum, Leiden, he spent two and a half years, from 1965 to 1967, conducting research on the Mwali Religion. According to him, his informants were local messengers (Banyayi) of the High God, Mwali, and other tribal authorities who introduced him to the cult-centre, and he also visited the Matonjeni shrine in the Matobo Hills. In the foreword to Daneel's book, J. F. Holleman informs us that Daneel was fluent in the vernacular languages, presumably TjiKalanga and IsiNdebele. Daneel claims to have actually been addressed by the voice of Mwali from the sacred cave during a ceremonial session on matters of serious import, and tape recorded the session with the knowledge of the cult officials (Daneel 1970, 9).

Holleman further states that Daneel's analysis of the Mwali Religion is a penetrating one and exposes the fact that Mwali is not a vaguely defined Power, once the Creator of all, but long since retired from the scene of his creation into obscure remoteness – or in J. V. Taylor's words, "pushed through the skylight and lost sight of." The picture presented by Daneel is quite different. It is that of a Deity no longer remote, but actively watchful, adaptive to change, and even politically minded (Daneel 1970, 11). The God of Matonjeni is called by Holleman "the sustaining Power of resilient tradition and custodian of an ancient but faded glory" (Daneel 1970, 12).

It is such a God that the Kalanga have been associated with for centuries, and their religion has been an instrumental political

organizing force. Writing of the Mwali-Kalanga relationship, Daneel says:

Of all the southern and eastern African tribes the Southern Shona [meaning the Kalanga] have the most elaborate cult for worshipping and consulting the Supreme Being. For centuries they have believed in Mwali as the final authority behind their ancestors, a High-God who was perhaps less directly involved in the affairs of individual lives than the ancestors, but one who could be consulted on matters of communal import. Far from being a remote deity, Mwali was believed to control the fertility of Kalanga⁷¹ occupied country, to give rain in times of drought and advice on the course of action in times of national crisis. Thus the pre-Christian belief in a Supreme Being contributed considerably towards shaping the destiny of the Kalanga people. Unlike that of some of the other African tribes the Kalanga conception of God is not that of a disinterested *dues otiosus*, isolated from His creation in an abstract remoteness. His first concern was with the tribe as a whole, not with its individual members. Especially in times of national crisis His presence was felt to be very real and His commands entailed both moral and “political” obligations. The main attributes ascribed to this deity are clearly reflected in the many traditional names which missionaries found to be present in Kalanga religion when they arrived towards the end of the last century (Daneel 1970, 15).

For a further understanding of the past history and operation of the Mwali Religion from Daneel’s perspective, let us look at excerpts from a chapter in his book, *The God of the Matopo Hills*, followed by comment on his findings. It will be noticed in Daneel’s research that

⁷¹ Daneel uses ‘Southern Shona’ in reference to the Kalanga, hence my use of Kalanga here. A look at the map he provides on page 53 of his book shows the center and sphere of influence of the religion to be the geographical area of Bukalanga, sweeping from Venda to Victoria Falls. Of course we already know from previous chapters that references to the Southern and Western Shona were to the Kalanga.

there are, indeed, similarities between Mwali'ism and Yahwe'ism, something that perhaps shall always be shrouded in the mystery of the past until further research can unearth more information. Let us get into the excerpts from Daneel's book. He wrote:

Whatever the beliefs in this connection [the origins of the Mwali Religion], it is apparent from most sources that the Mwali cult played an important role as a centralizing religious authority at Zimbabwe and later at Matonjeni, before the Nguni invasions broke up the Lozwi confederacy. While the kings of the Lozwi - the recognized "Prussians" of the Shona tribes - administratively controlled their loosely affiliated vassal states, they relied on the [Lubimbi]⁷² priests to conduct cult ceremonies at the "Temple". Like the Israelite tribes depending on the Levites for their priestly functions, so the Lubimbi, although political vassals of the royal Lozwi, became the acknowledged guardians of the Mwali shrines and ritual functionaries of the Shona tribes belonging to the Lozwi confederacy. In this way the cult became closely identified with the Lozwi people, and its sphere of influence spread with the expanding boundaries of the Lozwi confederacy.

The importance of the cult, when its main shrine was still at Zimbabwe near the present-day Fort Victoria, is aptly described by Blake Thompson and [Roger] Summers. "Zimbabwe was a religious centre. All the miscellany of buildings on the Hill and in the valley were attracted here because of the special sanctity of the site. Some were undoubtedly royal buildings, other administrative buildings or even trading places, but they crowded round the sacred area as King, Parliament, Government, trade and commerce all crowd round the royal church at Westminster Abbey."

Rituals were probably conducted at the 'Eastern Enclosure' of the

⁷² Daneel uses 'Mbire'. In reality it is the Lubimbi clan that ministers at the Matobo shrines (something that can still be verified by a visit to Njelele today), as opposed to the Shona Mbire who, in Chapter Three, we know to have not arrived in the Zimbabwean Tableland before 1700. Therefore, we are replacing Mbire with Lubimbi in this article, unless if by Mbire the Shona refer to the Lubimbi clan. The 'Mbire' source, for Daneel, like many other writers, is D. P. Abraham, whose works we have already seen how unreliable they are. Also see Masola, 1981.

'Acropolis' and within the 'Temple'. Karl Mauch, who came upon the ruins in 1871, obtained a description of how the ritual ceremonies had been conducted. Every second year after harvest time, a big meeting was held at Zimbabwe. A black cow was offered to Mwali at the 'Acropolis' with a request for rain. In addition, two head of cattle were slaughtered, one for the feasting priests and the other for the wild animals in the veld. The carcass of the latter would be left in a bush near the Temple and if signs of scavengers could be found at a later stage, it was believed that Mwali and the senior tribal spirits had accepted the offerings. During the ritual a priest entered a special cave on the Acropolis, where a pot of beer had been placed for the occasion. The beer was sprinkled at the mouth of the cave, and a plea addressed to Mwali that he keep his people healthy. When the priest ultimately reappeared from the cave he would greet the people outside with the assurance that the One Above would take care of all their needs.

The hierarchically structured cult organization resembled that of a chief's court. "The addressing of petitions to one official, the issue of edicts by another, a secret intelligence service and a numerous court were common form." At the central shrine the highest priestly offices were those of 'Eyes', the 'Ear' and the 'Mouth'. With regular reports coming in from the various districts of the confederacy these offices became of vital importance for the interpretation of messages and the transmission of Mwali's commands to the messengers. Presumably the Lozwi exploited and elaborated the cult for political purposes. According to Father Devlin, the office of the eye was "the most powerful because it was the most effective link between the temple and the people; it controlled the external organization of the cult." By reserving this office for one of their kinsmen the Lozwi rulers could use the valuable 'secret intelligence service' to serve their own ends. In this way they were able to combine religious authority with political sovereignty over their vassal states (Daneel 1970, 22-24).

We see in the above article that Mwali'ism played a very central role in the national life of Bukalanga just like Yahwe'ism played a very central role in the national life of Israel. It was not some far removed

religion from the people. From the ritual to the political function, the religion is closely involved the same way we find the Yahweh of the Hebrews involved in their national life. Mwali speaks from the mountain caves where he cannot be seen; is sacrificed to in a manner much similar to that of the Hebrew God; he has priests from one tribe ministering to him; and the offerings to him are of animals without blemish. Is this mere coincidence, or there is some link with Yahwe'ism, the religion of the Hebrews, from the ancient and remote past?

Had Mwali'ism been a religion that arose after the missionaries came to the region, then we could say that it borrowed its concepts from the Society of Jesus missionaries who first contacted the Kalanga in the 16th century. But as we have seen above, the religion dates back many centuries, perhaps to even before 1000 A.D. Even if that date could be disputed as too early for the religion, we still find that it was in vogue at Great Zimbabwe, and Great Zimbabwe fell before any missionary landed foot in South East Africa. We cannot help but conclude that Mwali'ism has origins far beyond the missionary era. Perhaps we are right to think that the religion has its origins in the Ancient Near East, for, as we shall see below, the evidence we have overwhelmingly points in that direction. Considering all that has been said by several writers about the Kalanga and their connection with the Semitic races of the Ancient Near East, could it not be possible that this religion has its origins in that part of the world?

Before we answer that question, let us first turn to the Ngoma Lungundu, (*The Voice that Thunders*) tradition which we have already stated contains amazing similarities with the Exodus story of the Ark of the Tabernacle. Let us briefly recount again what the tradition holds below:

The tradition has it that the people were ruled by a king called Mwali who could work miracles with the big drum, called *ngoma-lungundu*. The King lived in a village of tremendous size on a mountain. The walls of the town were built with huge stones; it was impregnable. The houses were built of shining slabs ... No man was permitted to see the King, they merely heard what he spoke to the High Priest in a

tremendous voice that reverberated in a terrifying manner ... whosoever should gaze at [the King] was immediately slain ... Mwali himself was tremendously feared (Mallows 1984, 99). The Ngoma Lungundu, the object itself, was venerated and carried around by priests and was never allowed to touch the ground. The drum was revered as the "Voice of God" and was also used as a potent military weapon that could destroy enemies with brimstone and fire (from <http://www.allAfrica.com>).

The similarities with the Ark of the Covenant story as told in the Bible are very striking. It is not my intention to determine the truth or lack thereof in the claims of the tradition, but to only show that somehow, whatever the truth be, there is certainly some kind of connection between Mwali'sm and Yahwe'ism, and indeed between Bukalanga and the Semitic races. Why else would such a tradition have existed among a people with so many other traits similar to those of the peoples of the Ancient Near East and a religion bearing so close a resemblance to Yahwe'ism, one of the religions of the Semites? The religion of Mwali, the Ngoma Lungundu Tradition, and the alleged 'Semitic drop of blood in the Kalanga' are subjects that will always puzzle us for many years to come. But for now, let us turn to the likely origins of Mwali'ism - the Mwali Religion.

The Likely Origins of the Mwali Religion

We have a fine analysis on the likely origins of the Mwali Religion in the work of R. Gayre. Even though he was committed to the theory that the Zimbabwe Civilization was not the work of Bantu peoples, there is no doubt that there is a grain of truth in his suggestion about the possible origins of the Mwali Religion. Like other writers referred to in this book, he finds a connection between Mwali'sm and the religions of the Ancient Near East, and indeed suggests that the name for God used by the Kalanga, Nambya and Venda - Mwali or Nwali - may actually have its sources from the same names used by most of the religions of the Semitic world, especially in the pre-Judaic era. He wrote:

Further light is thrown on the religion of Zimbabwe not only by the clearly Jewish traits in the religion of the Lemba and Venda peoples, but also in the name used for God by the Bantu Kalanga of Rhodesia. The Kalanga are the descendants of the people whom Monomotapa ruled when the Arabs were still controlling the African east coast at the time the Portuguese arrived. This was an all-powerful and omniscient God, who in some ways resembled Jehovah, and was called Muari or Muali.

Among those who have been sufficiently perceptive to see the relationship, it is usual to ascribe this god and his name to the Islamic-Arabs – and look upon it as a variant of Allah. Since we have shown that the outside religious influence among the Lemba is Judaic, and not Islamic, there is no reason to look to Islam for the origin of Muali. Since in pre-Islamic, pre-Judaic, and pre-Christian Saba, and elsewhere in Arabia, the concept of the high God was given the name Ilu or Allah, it would seem that in Muari or Muali we have the same God. There were, of course, other deities, many of them female, such as the Three Crannes worshipped at Mecca, who were oppressed by Mohamet.

...the occurrence of Muali, that is, Ilu, for the name of God, with all these other traits of the falcon god, of a megalithic and phallic religion, circumcision, sun and moon deities, is wholly consistent with a corpus of religion coming from Saba, in Arabia, both from before the Judaizing of that state and before it was Christian⁷³. The later arrival of what were only partially Judaized Sabaeans added the Mosaic element, as found in the traditions of the Lemba, out of which, as so often happens, a synthesis of the two was made.

...Common to the Semitic world was the concept of God – Il, El, Ilu, or Allah, which God had varying degrees of monotheism associated with Him. The fact that in Rhodesia there is among the Bantu some evidence of a monotheistic cult which is not generally shared by the Bantu everywhere is not without significance. This very concept is foreign to the Bantu, as is also that of the name of God as Mwali, Muari, or Muali, which is clearly no other than a corrupt form

⁷³ Professor Gayre thought the Zimbabwe Civilization was built by a Sabaeen people.

of Il, El, Ilu or Allah, the God of the Semitic peoples. Muali is associated with wind and high places which is a feature of the God of the Bible and of the Semites. Mr. Roger Summers admits, despite the pro-Bantu stance he has taken [that the Zimbabwe Civilization was the work of African peoples], that Muali or Muari in many ways has Semitic connections (Gayre 1972, 157-160).

It can be seen from the propositions of Gayre that indeed, the Mwali Religion might have its origins in the Semitic world. For how is it that, in a region thousands of miles away from North-east Africa and the Middle East, where the Semitic races come from, a religion with practices similar to one of the religions of the Semites is found? Not only are its practices similar to Yahwe'ism, but its name for God is similar to the name for God from the religions of the Semitic world. Surprisingly, that happens in a region where no other people group held a similar idea for the Supreme Being, nor had any surrounding peoples a material culture similar to that of the adherents of the Mwali Religion - the Kalanga peoples. Not only do other people in the region not hold a similar idea of the Supreme Being, but Bukalanga - the Mwali Religion people - happen to have had a distinct form of government, a distinct form of material culture, a distinct form of agriculture (terrace agriculture) not practiced anywhere else in the region, and practiced stone walling and gold, iron and copper mining and smithing at an era when no other neighboring people group was involved in the same. Indeed, as was pointed out by Rider Haggard in *An African Romance*, the "Makalanga are a strange folk. I believe their name means the People of the Sun; at any rate, they are the last of some ancient race" (Haggard 1906, Online).

Perhaps this is the stage at which to hazard on the question of the likely origins of Bukalanga and the alleged Semitic blood said to be running in their veins. That will be the subject of the next chapter. But before we go there, it would be prudent perhaps to look into what the other two groups most closely associated with the Kalanga believed in prior to the advent of Christianity. To do that let us look into the pre-Christian religion of the Shona and that of the AmaNdebele.

The Shona People and the Mhondoro Religion

Professor G. Fortune notes that the Shona came to be associated with the Mwali Religion in two ways. First it was via the agency of the Lozwi, who were then the ruling people, and closely associated with Mwali. Secondly, it was through the missionaries when the name Mwali was adopted as the name for the Biblical God. But in what did the Shona believe prior to that time?

To help us answer that question we turn to Dr Michael Gelfand, who, perhaps, did more work on Shona religion than any other writer of his time. Lest the reader be tempted into dismissing Gelfand as a European ignorant of African customs, he or she needs to know that the doctor was assisted and/or informed by the following people in his research: Mr. Simon Taoneyi and his wife, Chiefs Mangwende, Chinamora and Chikwaka, as well as Dzingisai Gabriel Gapare and Tsikai Austin Hakunawanhu (Gelfand 1956, 10). That should make the doctor's findings fairly reliable. But again, many honest Shona people will attest to the truth of his findings even today.

Dr Gelfand states that the religious system of the Shona varies considerably in different areas, but there is striking similarity of practice among the different tribes of Mashonaland. The differences he ascribes to the fact that since nothing was committed to writing, different practices continued to develop in isolated communities, resulting in variations in expressions and thought as far as the religion is concerned (1956, 11). These differences would also have been exacerbated by the fact that the Shona were never organized into large city or nation-states which could have been necessary for the standardization of religion by a central government. Let us now take a few excerpts from Dr Gelfand's book, *Medicine and Magic Among the Mashona*. It will be interesting to note that Dr Gelfand's findings are consistent with those of Professor G. Fortune and M. L. Daneel that the concept of Mwali did not hold so much sway amongst the Central and Northern Shona (that is, the Zezuru and Manyika) as it did amongst Bukalanga in the south. Dr Gelfand wrote:

The Shona accepts the existence of God (Mwari) but rarely prays to

him, for Mwari is indifferent to man and is not much concerned with the welfare of the individual or tribe. He is the Creator of the sun, stars, moon and trees, and controller of the elements ... Over each family and community the Shona recognizes a tutelary spirit whom he admits to be under the great Mwari ... These spirits are the intermediaries between man and Mwari. At times, Mwari, in anger, may cause lightning, thunder, plague and epidemics, but normally the welfare of the individual or tribe depends on the lesser spirits who may be the ancestors of the family or the tutelary spirits (Mhondoro) of the tribe itself. The day-to-day life of the Shona is taken up with these lesser spirits ... The tribal spirit (Mhondoro) is concerned with matters that affect the tribe, such as the fertility of the soil, rainfall, crops, invasion, rebellion, general behavior, epidemics - especially small pox, meningitis and scabies - and with major future events. Even the pests (e.g. army worm) that destroy the crops are his concern. If birds persist in perking the grain from the fields, the people may ask the Mhondoro to prevent this.

In its social organization, the administrative or executive head of each tribe is the chief and under him are the subchiefs or headman. Associated with the tribe, on the spiritual side, is the Mhondoro system of spirits who were originally connected with the founding of the tribe, or even of the whole Shona people. The Mhondoro is not, and does not necessarily represent, the spirit of the chief and his ancestors, but he is the spirit of some rainmaker, magician or prophet. The term *mhondoro* (with a small *m* refers to the human medium of the spirit) is often applied, in practice, not only to the spirit itself but to the medium it uses as its instrument. One spirit may be the protector of several tribes, as in the case with Nehanda, the tutelary spirit of tribes living in Goromonzi, Chikwaka and Chinamhora areas.

Every *mhondoro* has a permanent acolyte or intermediary, known as *nechombo* or *muzukuru*, through whom all communications are made. If any person or group of people wishes to consult the Mhondoro, it can be arranged only through the *nechombo* who will tell them whether or not the medium will become possessed in order to answer their particular problem. The *nechombo* serves the *mhondoro* whenever there is an occasion for so doing.

Just as the whole tribe is under the tutelage of a principal Mhondoro, so each sub-section of the tribe is watched over by a lesser

Mhondoro ... The lesser has powers similar to those of the principal Mhondoro, but they are lesser powers. However, as being more easily approachable, the lesser Mhondoro is the first to be invoked for rain. If the efforts of the lesser Mhondoro fail, his *svikiro* (medium) will refer the people to the principal Mhondoro.

There are four principal or chief Mhondoro in Mashonaland, each with a roughly prescribed territory, although there is nothing to prohibit people from one zone approaching the Mhondoro of another zone, should they wish to do so. As a rule, however, they would consult the principal rain spirit if they lived in his sphere of influence. In Central Mashonaland, Goromonzi, Chinamhora, Wedza and Mrewa, the overruling Mhondoro is Nehanda; in the Makoni and Seke areas it is Chaminuka; in the Hurungwe area, Dzivaguru and in the north-eastern part of the country there lives Karuwa. After the four principals come the Mhondoro of lesser importance or status. In each reserve there is one (or more) Mhondoro who may be thought of as the provincial Mhondoro who is consulted should the district or local Mhondoro fail to provide what has been requested, or if the matter is considered of such wide importance that the provincial Mhondoro should be interviewed (Gelfand 1956, 12-20).

We can plainly see from the foregoing that the Shona, whilst they might acknowledge Mwali as God, their pre-Christian belief system was mainly entrenched in the Mhondoro Religion. Even in common speech today one hears the Shona speak more of the 'Mhondoro' than Mwali, who, nowadays, one hears spoken of in church settings, of which we already have had an explanation above.

The Ndebele and the uNkulukulu Religion

It is now common knowledge that once the Ndebele had established themselves in Bukalanga and conquered the Kalanga, they too were religiously conquered by Bukalanga. But what was their belief system like before that? For an answer let us turn to the Reverend Thomas Morgan Thomas who lived among the AmaNdebele for many years. Concerning their religion he wrote:

The Ilindebele says that the transmigration [of the human soul that supposedly takes place soon after the individual dies] is from man into a snake, in which new state he is called *ihlozi*, (a ghost or spirit) plural *amhlozi* (*idlozi*, *amadlozi*). The number of these ghosts is very large, and hence the multitudes of snakes which serve as their visible forms. These snakes are never interfered with, not even though they enter the kraals, the sheep and goat folds, and even the very huts of the people, in the presence of their owners. Nor will the natives, if they can possibly help, allow anyone to injure or disturb some of these reptiles. Rather they greet and worship them as the spirits of their worthy ancestors that have come to pay them a friendly visit. The errands upon which these *amahlozi*, in snaky forms, are said thus occasionally to come are many, but the most common of all are to demand sacrifices and offerings, or to call certain members of families - also to become snakes.

The first man who is said to have undergone this change is called Unkulunkulu. He is also considered to have been the first human being, at least of a dark colour. The tradition says that he and his wife Umbelengangi [uMvelingqangi], came out of a marshy place where there were reeds, and found cattle and corn awaiting them in abundance. They lived together and children were born to them, and having brought them up, given them various laws, customs, habits and property, the old people went under the ground again, became snakes, and have remained there in snake-like forms ever afterwards. Their descendants, from generation to generation, until the present time, have followed their example, and have all at death passed from human beings into those of reptiles (Thomas 1873, 280-281).

Writing in *The Matabele at Home*, Peter Nielsen noted the following concerning the Ndebele and their religion:

The step between the idea of an old wise man [uNkulunkulu], wise

enough to make this world, and that of a being above and beyond all human kind, that is a God, had not yet been made by the Zulus [i.e., Ndebele] when the first missionaries entered their territory. They were a barbarous and strictly military people and they had neither time nor inclination to ponder long over natural phenomena and their hidden causes. Their lives were made up of fighting and feasting, whereas the meek and mild Amakalanga whom they conquered and despoiled, being anything but a fighting race, held notions of a comparatively speaking high order, concerning a single Supreme Being, whom they regarded as the creator and sustainer of all things (Neilson n.d, 35).

Perhaps let us close the chapter with a recall of the Kalanga prayer as addressed to Mwali, again with a striking resemblance to the prayers one may find in the Old Testament. The prayer is as follows, courtesy of Kumile Masola:

Iwe Mwali nkulu (*Hail Mwali the Great One*)
Wakalunji gusipfume ngubo (*Of the needle which does not sew clothes*)
Gosimila pfuma pasi (*But which is strong enough to sew the earth*)
BaThobela baMbedzi (*Hail to the Mbedzi*)
Bankwakwa usiwome (*They of the monkey orange which does not dry up*)
Unodliwa nabana muhhihha (*Which is eaten by the children in summer*)
BakaLubimbi (*Those of Lubimbi*)
Bakampani usina mhako (*Of the mopani tree which does not have holes*)
Wakanotjiza Sindi yanyalala (*Which saved the squirrel after it was silent*)
Bhabanyi wahongwe (*Bhabanyi of the rock*)
Imwi Mwali nkulu (*You Mwali the Great One*)
Mbuluki wenjilikadzi nesiyaŋ'wa (*Saviour of the widow and the orphan*)
Ndau, Thobela (*Your Highness, be greeted*)
Imwi gumbo ivula (*You, the leg which is rain*)
Motandabala ikabe mivumbi (*When you stretch your legs, it showers*).

CHAPTER TEN

On the Origins of Bukalanga and the Question of 'Semitic Blood'

As we have seen in previous chapters, a number of writers since the 1500s state that Bukalanga peoples have Semitic, Asiatic and/or Jewish blood in their veins. This is one of the most contentious questions whenever Bukalanga identity is under discussion, and many will dismiss whoever makes that claim today as a crazy lunatic. But, were the previously cited writers wrong in declaring that the Kalanga have Semitic and/or Asiatic blood in their veins? Before answering that question, let us just take a look at the statements that have been made about Bukalanga on this very question by some of the travellers who encountered them since the early 1500s. Some of the statements are as follows:

1. Of all the Bantu they had the largest proportion of Asiatic blood in their veins...Their skulls more nearly approached those of Europeans in shape, many of them had the high nose, thin lips, and the general features of the people of South-Western Asia. Even their hands and feet were in numerous instances small and well-shaped, unlike those of ordinary blacks, which are large and coarse. Their appearance thus indicated a strong infusion of foreign blood, though not sufficient to denationalize them as Bantu. That blood may not have been Arab alone; it is likely that some was Persian, and possibly some Indian ... Their language was regarded by the Christians as being pleasanter than Arabic to the ear (Theal 1907, 297).

2. [Among the Kalanga can be seen] unmistakable traces of these [Semitics] still remaining to this day, and these are to be seen in the arched noses, thin lips, and refined type of Semitic countenance commonly met with, especially among the Makalangas and Zambesi tribes, the Jewish rites, particularly with regard to food, the superior intelligence and calculating capacities and business instincts, the metallurgical cleverness still in vogue, and knowledge of astronomy, and the polytheistic faiths learned from the ancients, and still preserving several distinctly Semitic practices (Hall & Neal 1904, 114).

3. Some of [the Kalanga] are decidedly handsome ... many of them have a distinctly Arab cast of countenance, and with their peculiar rows of tufts on top of their heads looked *en profil* like the figures one sees on Egyptian tombs. There is certainly a Semite drop of blood in their veins, whence it comes will probably never be known, but it is marked both on their countenances and in their customs (Bent 1892, 31-32).

4. I have observed the Makalanga during the six months I spent amongst them with great interest, and I have studied their manners and customs ... As regards their blood, they belong essentially to the Bantu tribes of East Africa, but they have a stronger influx of Asiatic blood than any other nation which I know. Their type is not so much Arab, for they are decidedly Jewish ... Many of the men are tall and strong - real Bantu figures. Then, again, one sees small forms with very refined, clever expressions; ... The girls are prettier than those of most Bantu tribes, and at Misongwe they remind you of European ladies (Peters 1902, 121-124).

5. The Makalaka had perhaps more infusion of foreign blood than any other Bantu tribe. From the earliest time, the Asiatics who traded in East Africa, and later the Portuguese, freely mixed their blood with them - producing a mongrel race, neither Asiatic, European, nor African (Molema 1920, 68).

It is very easy to dismiss these claims as nothing more than European racist verbiage that was meant to 'prove' that indeed there has been a Semitic race that established the Zimbabwe Civilization; or that it is nothing more than a divide and rule strategy that sought to find non-existent differences amongst African races. The claim of Semitic blood might even be dismissed by some as nothing but racist rhetoric meant to prop up Bukalanga identity, or as some charge, supremacy, as if there is anything supreme about the Semitic races. But the reality is that it is nothing of that sort, but a sincere and innocent expose on Bukalanga heritage and identity after many years of suppression.

It has been stated by Professor David Beach that "a great deal of speculative writing has been published by unscientific writers who claim to see [in the Lemba] the descendants of early Muslim Arabs,

pre-Muslim Arabs or even Jews ... These claims, however, are swiftly reduced to the 'not proven category'" (Beach 1994, 183). We note with interest that when Professor Beach wrote the preceding statement, that was before any scientific evidence was produced to the effect that the Lemba, a Kalanga group, indeed have Semitic blood in their veins. We therefore can no longer reduce the above claims to a 'not proven category'.

Gladly, after 1994 when Professor Beach published his work, two scientific tests were conducted that proved the "unscientific writers" correct. These tests focused on the Lemba, not on all the Kalanga in general. Perhaps as a result of this work, some scientist somewhere will conduct more extensive tests covering various Bukalanga groups. The Lemba seem to have more Semitic blood in their veins than any other Kalanga group, and the study focused on them.

We established in Chapter Two that the Lemba are classified as one of the twelve tribes of Bukalanga, and in fact for most of the time in the precolonial era spoke TjiKalanga as their home language. The changes of recent times, especially in Zimbabwe in which many of them now speak Karanga, only took place in recent years in the colonial period when Zimbabwe was divided into Mashonaland and Matabeleland. Otherwise prior to that time they had always spoken TjiKalanga and Tshivenda. With that said, let us consider below some evidence of the Semitic ancestry of the Lemba.

Evidence for a Semitic Ancestry of BaLemba

In a 1996 DNA study, Professor Tudor Parfitt and his colleagues at the University of London established a DNA match between the Lemba tribe and people in the Hadramaut region of the Yemen. Particularly surprising about the findings of that research was the discovery that members of the most senior Lemba clan displayed what is called the Cohen Modal Haplotype, which is a distinctive feature of Jewish priesthood. Furthermore, this genetic pattern is carried by the Y-chromosome, so it is passed through the male line. The DNA suggested that more than fifty percent of the Lemba Y chromosomes are Semitic in origin. The results of the 1996 study were confirmed in a subsequent study in 2000 which reported more specifically that a substantial number of Lemba men carry the Cohen

Modal Haplotype (CMH) Y chromosome. The study also found that they carry what is termed the Y-DNA Haplogroup J which is found amongst some Jews and in other populations across the Middle East. Studies have also suggested that there is no Semitic female contribution to the Lemba gene pool. One particular sub-clan within the Lemba, the Buba clan, is considered by the Lemba to be the priestly clan, while among Jews, the Kohanim are the priestly clan. The Buba clan carried most of the CMH found in the Lemba. Among Jews the marker is also most prevalent among Jewish Kohanim, or priests. As recounted in Lemba oral tradition, the Buba clan “had a leadership role in bringing the Lemba out of Israel” and into Southern Africa.

Let us now go into excerpts from the report presented by The American Society for Human Genetics from the 2000 Lemba genetic study. The report was titled *Y Chromosomes Traveling South: The Cohen Modal Haplotype and the Origins of the Lemba - the “Black Jews of Southern Africa.”*⁷⁴ The excerpts read:

The Lemba, once referred to as “Kruger’s Jews” (because President Paul Kruger, President of Transvaal during 1883-1900, was thought to have discovered them), are commonly referred to as the “black Jews” of South Africa. Their claim of Jewish origin is based on slim evidence: a persistent oral tradition of uncertain antiquity and a number of suggestive customs, from circumcision to food taboos, which appear to be “Judaic” but could be Muslim or, indeed, in the case of circumcision, African (Mandivenga 1983). Lemba tradition holds that the tribe came from “Sena in the north by boat.” The original group is said to have been entirely male, with half of their

⁷⁴ The following scientists were involved in the study: Mark G. Thomas – The Center for Genetic Anthropology, Departments of Biology and Anthropology, University College, London; James F. Wilson – Galton Laboratory, Department of Biology, University College, London; Tudor Parfitt – School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London; Debora A. Weiss – Department of Anthropology, University of California, Davis; Karl Skorecki – Bruce Rappaport Faculty of Medicine and Research Institute, Technion and Rambam Medical Center, Haifa, Israel; Magdel le Roux – Department of Old Testament, University of South Africa, Pretoria; David B. Goldstein – Department of Zoology, University of Oxford, Oxford.

number having been lost at sea; the remainder made their way to the coasts of Africa.

Once there, they rebuilt their city of Sena, later leaving it to build a second city of the same name. "Sena" is variously identified by the Lemba as Sanaa in Yemen, Judea, Egypt, or Ethiopia (Ruwitah 1997; Parfitt 1997). The first clear and unambiguous reference to the Lemba as a separate tribe and perhaps polity is from a Dutch report from 1721 (Liesenbang 1977). Today the religious life of the Lemba is highly syncretistic. Many of them belong to various Christian churches (e.g., the Zion Christian Church and Pentecostal groups), whereas some in Zimbabwe are Muslims. Others, however, claim to be Lemba by religious practice as well as by ethnic identification. The religious practices of these Lemba do not have much in common with Judaism as it is practiced elsewhere.

There are thought to be ~50,000 Lemba spread over South Africa and Zimbabwe, with some closely connected groups in Malawi (Parfitt 1997). At some time in the past they became scattered among the more powerful neighboring tribes, where they served particularly as "medicine men," iron and copper workers, traders, and officials with ritual responsibilities. They traded throughout southern Africa. The Lemba have >12 clans, some of which appear to correlate with place names in the Hadramaut (Parfitt 1997). The Buba clan is recognized as being the senior clan, both the oldest and, for some ritual purposes, the most important. Parfitt (1997) has claimed to have discovered the original Sena of the Lemba in the eastern Hadramaut in the Yemen.

[After detailing the scientific data, the report goes on thus in the conclusion]

The genetic evidence revealed in this study is consistent with both a Lemba history involving an origin in a Jewish population outside Africa and male-mediated gene flow from other Semitic immigrants (both of these populations could have formed founding groups for at least some of the Lemba clans) and with admixture with Bantu neighbors; all three groups are likely to have been contributors to the Lemba gene pool, and there is no need to present an Arab versus a Judaic contribution to that gene pool, since contributions from both are likely to have occurred. The CMH present in the Lemba could,

however, have an exclusively Judaic origin. The female contribution to the Lemba gene pool may be very different from the paternal, although still consistent with Lemba oral tradition. Soodyall (1993), analyzing mtDNA, found no evidence of Semitic admixture. Significantly, more than one-quarter of the Lemba sampled by Soodyall et al. (1996) had the African intergenic COII/tRNA^{Lys} 9-bp deletion. Our study provides no evidence of a specific contribution from the ancestors of the present-day [Arabic] residents of Sena (Thomas, Wilson, Parfitt, Weiss, Skorecki, le Roux, and Goldstein 2000, Online).

Such is the brief from the research findings of The American Society for Human Genetics concerning the Lemba, one of the groups of Bukalanga, if not perhaps the core-Kalanga group. We surely can no longer at this stage say that claims of Semitic blood amongst Bukalanga are far-fetched, but close to reality. Where this admixture occurred, we certainly may never know. All we know is that these people were already settled Africa south of the Zambezi by 100 AD, and it would seem that they were already referred to by the names BaLemba, Bakalanga or Bukalanga way before they crossed the Zambezi. According to Dr Theal and Professor Mathole Motshekga, Executive Director of the Kara Heritage Institute in Pretoria, there is an island in the Lake Victoria called Kalangaland, meaning land of the Kalanga people, with the surrounding areas known as Bukalanga, and the inhabitants known as Bakalanga (Motshekga 2008, Online). It has also been pointed out to me in personal communication by retired journalist Saul Gwakuba-Ndlovu that there are Kalanga communities in Central and East African countries, including the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Tanzania. More detailed information on this, he told me, will be presented in his upcoming publication on the prehistoric migrations of Bukalanga. In that work he says he traces Bukalanga origins to North East Africa. That same origin was also pointed to by Kumile Masola in the early 1920s in his Kalanga oral traditions, *Nau dza Bakalanga*, collected among Bakalanga of the District of Bulilima-mangwe. This is the same region pointed to by Professor Motshekga in a paper he presented before the Gauteng

Legislature in September 2007 titled *The Story of African Origins*. He pointed to north-east Africa as the origin of Bukalanga, citing Naphta or what is now Kordofan in the Sudan as the original Bukalanga, which was the heartland of ancient Ethiopia (2007, Online). This same North East African origin is consistent with that pointed to by Lemba elders.

If this North East African Bukalanga origin of Masola, Gwakuba-Ndlovu, Mathole and the Lemba elders is true - and there is no reason to doubt it bearing in mind all the other traits of Bukalanga linking them with the Semitic races - it is possible that the Kalanga made a halfway settlement on their way down south on the Lake Victoria region⁷⁵, perhaps having migrated down south following the water courses of the Nile River. This would have been in very remote times since they were already south of the Zambezi by about 100 AD.

But then a question arises. How are Bukalanga a Bantu-Semitic or Afro-Asiatic race and yet black, so much that their Semitic strain of blood could not denationalize them as Bantu, as Dr Theal has put it? This question arises especially because in modern times, Semitic has become associated very closely with white Ashkenazi Jews, so much that many have come to believe that the Semites are all a purely white race. But is there such a thing as an Afro-Asiatic race or black Semitic race? The answer is a resounding yes. That we find in the Ethiopian Jews, or the Falashas, also known as Beta-Israel. Let us take a look at their story first.

The Beta-Israel or Ethiopian Jews

There are several traditions and theories about the origin of Ethiopian Jews today, but the most commonly accepted is one that links them to the Israeli tribe of Dan. It is interesting to note that when the twelve tribes of Israel are listed in the Revelation, the tribe of Dan is not mentioned. Their story, as extracted from the online encyclopedia, Wikipedia and the original sources, is as follows:

⁷⁵ Of course it ought not be forgotten that some of these Bukalanga communities may have resettled in these regions as a result of the *mfecane* wars. But the fact that Dr Theal mentioned their presence in these parts in the 1890s without reference to any south to north migration may show that there were some already settled there.

The tribe of Dan tradition relates that the Beta Israel are descendants of Eldad ha-Dani, a Danite Jewish man of dark skin who suddenly turned up in Egypt in the 9th century and created a great stir in the Egyptian Jewish community (and elsewhere in the Mediterranean Jewish communities among whom he traveled) with claims that he had come from a Jewish kingdom of pastoralists far to the south. The only language he spoke was a hitherto unknown dialect of Hebrew. He carried Hebrew books with him that supported his explanation of *halakhah*, and he was able to cite ancient authorities in the sagely traditions of his own people⁷⁶. He said that the Jews of his own kingdom derived from the tribe of Dan, which had fled the civil war in the Kingdom of Israel between Solomon's son Rehoboam and Jeroboam the son of Nebat, by resettling in Egypt. From there they moved southwards up the Nile into Ethiopia, and the Beta Israel say this confirms that they are descended from these Danites (Adler 1987, 9).

Some Beta Israel, however, assert even nowadays that their Danite origins go back to the time of Moses, when some Danites parted from other Jews right after the Exodus and moved south to Ethiopia. Eldad the Danite does indeed speak of three waves of Jewish immigration into his region, creating other Jewish tribes and kingdoms, including the earliest wave that settled in a remote kingdom of the "tribe of Moses": this was the strongest and most secure Jewish kingdom of all, with farming villages, cities and great wealth (*ibid.*, pp. 12-14). The Mosaic claims of the Beta Israel are clearly very ancient⁷⁷. Eldad's testimony is not the only mediaeval testimony to Jewish communities living far to the south of Egypt, which strengthens the credibility of Eldad's account as well. Rabbi Ovadiah Yare of Bertinoro wrote in a letter from Jerusalem in 1488:

⁷⁶ This helped persuade Rabbinic authorities of the day regarding the validity of his practices, even if they differed from their own traditions. This remarkable story is told in the testimony of Hasdai ibn Sharput, the Torah scholar and princely Jew of Cordoba, concerning Eldad's learning, in his letter to Joseph, King of the Khazars, around 960 CE., reproduced in Franz Kobler, ed., *Letters of Jews Through the Ages*, Second Edition (London: East and West Library, 1953), vol. 1, p. 105.

⁷⁷ We have the testimony of James Bruce (*Travels in Abyssinia*, 1773) which repeats these accounts of Mosaic antiquity for the Beta Israel.

I myself saw two of them in Egypt. They are dark-skinned ... and one could not tell whether they keep the teaching of the Karaites, or of the Rabbis, for some of their practices resemble the Karaite teaching ... but in other things they appear to follow the instruction of the Rabbis, and they say they are related to the tribe of Dan.

Some Jewish legal authorities have also asserted that the Beta Israel are the descendants of the tribe of Dan, one of the Ten Lost Tribes, that is, those tribes of ancient Israel that formed the Kingdom of Israel and which disappeared from Biblical and all other historical accounts after the kingdom was destroyed in about 720 BC by ancient Assyria. In their view, these people established a Jewish kingdom that lasted for hundreds of years. With the rise of Christianity and later Islam, schisms arose resulting in three kingdoms. Eventually, the Christian and Muslim kingdoms reduced the Jewish kingdom to a small impoverished section. The earliest authority to rule this way was Rabbai David ben Zimra (1479-1573). Ben Zimra explains in a responsum concerning the state of a Beta Israel slave:

But those Jews who come from the land of Cush are without doubt from the tribe of Dan, and since they did not have in their midst sages who were masters of the tradition, they clung to the simple meaning of the Scriptures. If they had been taught, however, they would not be irreverent towards the words of our sages, so their status is comparable to a Jewish infant taken captive by non-Jews.⁷⁸

The above gives us a clue that indeed, there are black Jewish, or at least Semitic peoples, who migrated down south from the Ancient Near East, whether from the time of Moses during the Exodus or during the dissolution of the Kingdom of Israel, we may not know. But what we know is that there certainly was such a migration of a Semitic race of dark skin to the south of Egypt, and Bukalanga may just have been part of such a race as we shall see below, especially when we look at the great number of traits that show a link between Bukalanga and the Semitic races in the north.

⁷⁸ Responsum of the Radbaz on the Falasha Slave, Part 7. No. 5, in Corinaldi, 1998: 196.

But we still find ourselves faced with another problem: we are simply told in the Beta-Israel traditions that Eldad ha-Dani was “a Danite Jewish man of dark skin who suddenly turned up in Egypt in the 9th century and created a great stir in the Egyptian Jewish community (and elsewhere in the Mediterranean Jewish communities among whom he traveled) with claims that he had come from a Jewish kingdom of pastoralists far to the south.” Where would this “Danite Jewish man of dark skin” have come from, that is, apart from the geographical location of his fellow country man? In other words, are there any Jewish or Semitic people of dark skin?

To find an answer to the question we would need to go back into the Ancient Near East and seek to find out if there ever was a Semitic people there of dark skin. To do so, let us begin with the following interesting piece from Dr Cain Hope Felder which appeared in the African American Jubilee Bible, published by the American Bible Society in 1999. Dr Felder is Professor of New Testament Language and Literature at the Howard University School of Divinity in Washington D.C. The article, titled *Blacks in Biblical Antiquity*, reads (with a few additions of information from me):

The view of Africa that has evolved in recent centuries has little or no historical integrity inasmuch as it reflects Eurocentric interpretations of the Bible. However, new light is shining on biblical antiquity, and layers of unfavorable biases are being peeled away. In their place is a more congenial basis for inclusiveness and reconciliation in conjunction with an emergence of critical studies on the Black presence in the Bible and the recovery of ancient African heritage in the Scriptures. Consequently, persons of African descent now have the opportunity to rediscover consistent and favorable mentioning of their forebears within the pages of the Bible. The presence of Blacks in the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible is rather substantial; fortunately ours is an age that increasingly allows such an important fact to be acknowledged more widely than perhaps ever before. Since this specific topic has long been studied by Dr. Gene Rice, Professor of Old Testament, he has supplied a representative listing of key Old Testament passages that mention, indeed often celebrate, the Black

biblical presence. He has graciously offered the following:

1. Nimrod, son of Cush, grandson of Ham, and great-grandson of Noah, “the first on earth to become a mighty warrior.” Nimrod is also credited with founding and ruling the principal cities of Mesopotamia (Genesis 10:8-12). Cush, the father of Nimrod, is traditionally considered the eponymous ancestor of the people of Cush, a dark-skinned people inhabiting the country surrounded by the River Gihon, identified in antiquity with Arabia Felix (i.e. the Yemen) and Aethiopia (i.e. all Sub-Saharan Africa, mainly the Upper Nile) (2008, Online).

2. Hagar, the Egyptian maid of Abraham’s wife Sarah (Genesis 16; 21:8-21). If Abraham had had his way, Hagar would have become the forebear of the covenant people (Genesis 17:18).

3. Asenath, daughter of Potiphera, priest of On (Heliopolis), wife of Joseph and mother of Ephraim and Manasseh (Genesis 41:45, 51, 52; 46:20), whom Jacob claimed and adopted. (Genesis 48).

4. Moses’ Cushite wife (Numbers 12:1). She was probably Zipporah of the Kenite clan of the Midianites (Exodus 2:21-23). If Moses’ Cushite wife is indeed Zipporah, then her father, Jethro, (also called Reuel), would also have been an African. Since Jethro was the priest of Midian (Exodus 2:16; 3:1; 18:1) and the mountain of God where Moses was called was located in Midian (Exodus 3:1; 18:5), and Jethro presided at a meal where Aaron and the elders of Israel were guests (Exodus 18:12), the Kenites may have been the original worshipers of God by the name of the LORD, that is Yahweh (YHWH). Jethro also instructed Moses in the governance of the newly liberated Israelites (Exodus 8:13-27).

5. Phinehas, the grandson of Aaron and a high priest (Exodus 6:25). The name, Phinehas, is Egyptian and means literally, “The Nubian,” or “The Dark-skinned One.” The mixed multitude that accompanied the Israelites when they left Egypt undoubtedly included various African and Asian peoples (Exodus 12:38).

6. The unnamed Cushite soldier in David's army. He bore the news of Absalom's death to David, and, in contrast to Ahimaaz, had the courage to tell David the truth about Absalom (2 Samuel 18:21, 31,32).

7. Solomon's Egyptian wife. She was an Egyptian princess and by his marriage to her, Solomon sealed an alliance with Egypt. (1 Kings 3:1; 11:1).

8. The Queen of Sheba. She ruled a kingdom that included territory in both Arabia and Africa. When she visited Solomon, she was accorded the dignity and status of a head of state (1 Kings 10:1-13).

9. Zerah, the Ethiopian. He commanded a military garrison at Gerar in South West Palestine and fought against King Asa of Judah and almost defeated him (2 Chronicles 14:9-15). After Egyptian influence ceased in Palestine, the Cushite soldiers stationed at Gerar settled down and became farmers. Some two centuries after the time of Zerah, the Simeonites took over Gerar "where they found rich, good pasture, and the land was very broad, quiet, and peaceful; for the former inhabitants there belonged to Ham" (2 Chronicles 4:40).

10. Cush, a Benjaminite (heading to Psalm 7). He is identified as Saul in the Talmud, a central text of mainstream Judaism, considered second to the Torah, the first five books of the Jewish Bible or Old Testament to us Christians.

11. The Ethiopian ambassadors who came to Jerusalem to establish diplomatic relations with Judah (Isaiah 18:1,2). They represented the Ethiopian Pharaoh, Shabaka (716-702) of the Twenty-fifth Dynasty of Egypt.

12. The Ethiopian, Taharqa, spelled Tirhakah in the Bible. When Hezekiah revolted against Assyria in 705 B.C., he did so with the support of Shabaka and Shebitku (702-690), rulers of the Twenty-fifth Dynasty of Egypt. Tirhakah led an army in support of Judah during Hezekiah's revolt against Assyria (2 Kings 19:9; Isaiah 37:9). Tirhakah later ruled Egypt from 690-664.

13. The Old Testament Prophet Zephaniah. Zephaniah's father was Cushi, his grandfather Gedaliah, his great-grandfather Amariah. King Hezekiah was his great-great-grandfather (Zephaniah 1:1). Zephaniah was active about 630 B.C. and sparked a religious revival in Judah.

14. Jehudi ben Nathaniah ben Shlemiah ben Cushi. The context in Jeremiah 36 indicates that Jehudi was a trusted member of the cabinet of King Jehoiakim of Judah (Jeremiah 36:14, 21, 23).

15. Ebed-melech ("Royal Servant"), the Ethiopian. He was an officer of King Zedekiah who, at great risk to himself, saved Jeremiah's life (Jeremiah 38:7-13), and was blessed by Jeremiah (Jeremiah 39:15-18) (Felder 1999, Online).

Now, the above just proves to us that there were in the Semitic world peoples of dark skin, and they did intermarry with the actual Semites, the sons of Shem from whom are descended the Hebrews (now generally referred to as Jews), producing the dark-skinned Afro-Asiatics. It does not necessarily say these people were of Bukalanga or Beta-Israel stock, but it does show us that there is such a thing as an Afro-Asiatic race or people of dark skin with Semitic blood in their veins, and this is consistent with the claims being made for Bukalanga and the Beta-Israel that they are an Afro-Asiatic and/or Bantu-Semitic race. May then this not be the source of part of Bukalanga, for indeed, Bukalanga claim origins in North-east Africa and the Yemen, and this is the very place identified in antiquity with Arabia Felix (the Yemen) and Aethiopia (i.e. all Sub-Saharan Africa, mainly the Upper Nile)?

Could it then not be that this same Afro-Asiatic or Bantu-Semitic race - from which Bukalanga are mostly likely descended - is the same race that the colonialists called the 'Semitic Ancients' who established the Zimbabwe Civilization? Perhaps this becomes near certain when we look at some traits linking Bukalanga with the Northern Afro-Asiatic peoples or with the Semitic races in general. We may take a look at just a few of these:

The Mwali Religion - we have already studied Mwali'sm in the last

chapter and its apparent links with Yahwe'ism and other religions of the Ancient Near East have already been mentioned. It is interesting to read this in light of what was mentioned by Drs. Felder and Rice in connection with Jethro that "since Jethro was the priest of Midian (Exodus 2:16; 3:1; 18:1) and the mountain of God where Moses was called was located in Midian (Exodus 3:1; 18:5), and Jethro presided at a meal where Aaron and the elders of Israel were guests (Exodus 18:12), the Kenites may have been the original worshipers of God by the name of the LORD, that is Yahweh (Exodus 8:13-27)." May then this not also be the origin of the Mwali Religion as was propositioned by Gayre, and admitted by Daneel and Summers that however one looks at it, the Mwali Religion has links to, or at least similarities with Yahwe'ism?

The Ngoma Lungundu - we pointed in the previous chapter the striking similarities between the Ngoma Lungundu Tradition and the story of the Ark of the Covenant as told in the Bible. Is it mere coincidence that thousands of miles from North-east Africa, we find a people who not only have a religion resembling Yahwe'ism, but even a detailed tradition exactly like one possessed by the people of Yahweh? And is it a coincidence that we find the same people claiming origins from the self-same region where we find traced Yahwe'ism itself, in Midian, or at least where it was first revealed to Moses? And is it a coincidence that we have in the Beta-Israel a tradition of a break away from Israel by a people who moved and settled in the south of Egypt at the time of the Exodus? All this certainly does not look like mere coincidence.

The Zimbabwe Ruins - if there is one of the most striking features of Bukalanga identity it is the Zimbabwe Ruins. Whence was this culture which has no parallel anywhere else in Africa other than back in the very same region that Bukalanga claim origins, in North-east Africa? That parallel is to be found in the pyramids of Sudan and Egypt, and nowhere else in the continent. May it then not be that the Zimbabwe Civilization has its origins in the Egyptian Civilization? How about the Tower of Babel stories amongst the BaLozwi? What can we make of them than surmise that there is some link with the Afro-Asiatic Semites? Even if we were to look at the date given by other Beta-Israel

of their origins during the desolution of Israel into Israel and Judah, things still remain interesting. We read in the biblical text (1 Kings 11) that at the time of the dissolution of the Kingdom Jeroboam, who led the apostasy against Yahweh and created a religious system much similar to Mwali'sm, had formerly been in charge of the building and maintenance of the walls of Jerusalem. Could this, alternatively, be the origins of the walls of Southern Africa - the Zimbabwe Ruins? Or perhaps not origins but shared mutual influences? Such mutual influences with the north cannot be discounted, for as Welch noted in 1948:

Both in the Congo and on the rivers of the east coast, they [the Bantu] had a tradition of intercourse with Berbers, Arabs and probably Egyptians. The Makalangas had a large infusion of Persian, Arab and Indian blood as well. Their tradition of a Congo contact is confirmed by the visit that Martin Afonso paid them in 1498 at Inhambane, when he was interpreter of the first expedition of Vasco da Gama. Afonso had lived many years in Manicongo; and not only did the Makalangas understand him well, but Damian de Goes has preserved the contemporary opinion that three tall Negroes of the Limpopo area had been in contact with those of the Guinea coast. We are therefore not surprised to find that in 1554 Perestrelo, after passing through Pondoland and Natal, found in the Delagoa Bay region the first tribes that would accept money as payment for the meat and millet that the weary travellers needed. Their business instinct had evidently been developed by the tribal contacts with the traders of the other coast, as barter was yet the only method of the east coast (Welch 1948, 279-80).

I know that the above sounds like a return to the colonialist's view that the Zimbabwean Civilization was not a work of Africans. But I firmly believe that the Afro-Asiatic Bukalanga are the very people that the colonialists called the "Semitic Ancients". There are just too many traits confirming their claimed North-east African origins to discount that as untrue.

Gold mining and international trade - we established in Chapter One and subsequent chapters that Bukalanga were the exploiters of gold in what is presently Zimbabwe since before 500 AD. Interestingly, the gold workings are located in the same areas that the Zimbabwe Ruins are (see R. Gayre's map, *Areas of Ancient Gold Workings*, on page 182 of his *The Origin of the Zimbabwean Civilisation*). For over 1000 years, no other people in Southern Africa apart from Bukalanga were known to be involved in gold mining and smithing. Gold is known to have been one of the most treasured commodities in the Ancient Near East, and Gayre suggests that much of the gold that was traded and used in that region may have had its origins in Zimbabwe, including the gold that adorned the Solomonic Temple and Palace. This Gayre suggests in light of the fact that the Ancient Near East itself does not have any significant gold deposits of the quantities that were being traded in the region, and also the fact that Solomon's ships manned by the Phoenicians were taking three years to return from their voyages (Gayre 1972: 24-29). If those ships were collecting the gold anywhere near the Ancient Near East, there would have had been no need to for their voyages to take three years, even if the alternative suggested source of the gold, India, was considered.

What the preceding information suggests to us is that indeed, there certainly is a link between Bukalanga and the northern peoples. It is not being suggested that Bantu could not have invented and practiced these industries by themselves, it is simply being recognized that the similarities are just too numerous as to be something beyond coincidence. Bukalanga were involved in these industries at an era when not a single other sub-Saharan African peoples were involved in the same.

Also worth noting in connection with the metal smithing industry and mining, and the relationship of Bukalanga to the Semitic races, namely the Beta-Israel, is that Bukalanga are historically famous as metal smiths and workers. That is something for which the Beta-Israel were also famous for. They served as craftsmen, masons and carpenters for Ethiopian emperors from the 16th century onwards, when they had lost their autonomy to the Emperor Susenyos who confiscated their lands, sold some of them into slavery, and forcibly baptized some into Christianity (Kaplan 2003, 554). Manoel de Azevedo, a 17th Century Portuguese diplomat and traveler wrote of

the Beta Israel that “they live by weaving cloth and by making *zargunchos* [spears], ploughs and other iron articles, for they are great smiths” (Beckingham and Huntingford 1954, 54-55) (as quoted in Wikipedia). We saw in previous chapters that these are industries that Bukalanga were famous for among Bantu peoples. Again, this may not be mere coincidence.

The Dynastic Kingdoms - the organization of the three kingdoms of Bukalanga - the Monomotapa, Togwa and Lozwi Kingdoms - are strikingly similar to the way the Pharaohnic Kingdoms of Egypt were organized. Dynastic kingdoms and names such as Monomotapa, Tjibundule and Mambo, were a rare phenomenon in sub-Saharan Africa at a time when they were in vogue in Bukalanga. This has been suggested as showing links with North East Africa.

Indeed, with the evidence and arguments presented in this chapter and the book in general, the claimed origins of Bukalanga in the Semitic world, namely North-east Africa (or Arabia Felix [the Yemen] and Aethiopia) cannot be totally dismissed as without basis. Not only do Bukalanga oral traditions point to North-east African origins, but many other traits point to that same region as the source of many of the cultures, industries and political systems of Bukalanga. It is just worth noting at this stage that there is a very high possibility many of those ancients who would have left North-east Africa may have been mainly males, and would have married women of typically Negroid stock, in the process forming the Bantu-Semitic or Afro-Asiatic Kalanga. The likelihood of this having taken place has been pointed out by David McNaughton in a blog posting in the NOVA Website, a website which deals with matters of religion, history and culture that:

[T]here is a likelihood that the Lemba absorbed a lot of Bantu genes during the centuries immediately after their Middle Eastern ancestors arrived in Southeast Africa. That would certainly explain the comparatively dark skin of modern-day Lemba, as well as their original Bantu-type language a dialect of Makalanga. During those early centuries, Semitic immigrants into southeast Africa probably

comprised many more males than females, in which case the men would have taken Bantu women as concubines (rather than as wives, constrained as they probably were by Semitic laws and customs). And it is a well-known fact that children learn their mother's language more readily than their father's so it was not surprising that the original Semitic language was eventually replaced by a Bantu one (leaving only a few Hebrew or Arabic-sounding names)(McNaughton 2000, Online).

Whilst McNaughton thinks that this admixture may have taken place Africa south of the Zambezi, in light of the evidence presented herein, I believe it may have taken place right there in North-east Africa (that is, Aethiopia and Arabia Felix) as we have seen above that indeed, Cushitic blacks and Jews intermarried for centuries. This process would have been carried on southwards into the rich jungles of Central Africa as the people moved south and, encountering peoples of purely Negroid stock, who are known to have reached Central Africa about 2500 to 3000 years ago. The southward push, which was the general direction of migration, would have continued and landed Bukalanga south of the Zambezi at an earlier period than any other group as we saw in Chapter One, and without much movement from the north for centuries, would have given them enough time to start establishing the Zimbabwe Civilization, perhaps a relic from their ancient homeland in North-east Africa.

In all the above perhaps we find the origins of Bukalanga - that Bantu-Semitic or Afro-Asiatic race, which we would now call the Kalangaitic Race, which was the first non-Khoisan community to settle Africa south of the Zambezi, and would go on to establish the greatest civilization Africa south of the Sahara, and indeed, of which it could be said:

Of all the Bantu they had the largest proportion of Asiatic blood in their veins...Their skulls more nearly approached those of Europeans in shape, many of them had the high nose, thin lips, and the general

features of the people of South-Western Asia. Even their hands and feet were, in numerous instances, small and well-shaped, unlike those of ordinary blacks, which are large and coarse. Their appearance thus indicated a strong infusion of foreign blood, though not sufficient to denationalize them as Bantu (Theal 1907, 297).

It will perhaps be forever very hard to tell where this Kalangaitic Race came from other than point to North-east Africa, and how they, amongst all African peoples, came to develop unique systems of government such as the Monomotapa, Togwa and Lozwi Kingdoms; came to develop an idea of a Supreme Being and religious system unheard of anywhere else in sub-Saharan Africa - Mwali'sm - with its apparent links to Yahwe'ism; came to develop unique industries that were not practiced anywhere in the subcontinent such as the *nzi mabgwe* stone walling, terrace agriculture, gold-mining, iron and copper smelting at an era before any other African peoples were involved in such. Whence the Semitic blood, we can only have to look to the North-east African origins as possible sources. Perhaps we shall never know much more than this. As Mr. Bent put it - it shall forever be unknown where the Semitic strain of blood in Bukalanga comes from. Only further research can solve the puzzle only if it can bring out any new information. What can be guaranteed for now is that this will remain one of the most contentious topics whenever the identity of Bukalanga is under discussion, and I have no doubt that this book will become a groundbreaking work in inspiring a renewed interest in Bukalanga as much as Dr Theodore Herzl's *Der Judenstaat* (or "The Jewish State") published in 1896 inspired the re-establishment of the State of Israel in their ancient homeland. Will *The Rebirth of Bukalanga* also inspire the re-establishment of Bukalanga as the great nation that it was in the precolonial era? Only time will tell. But I do not have the slightest doubt that the process has begun with the publication of this book.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

But What Happened to the Great Nation of Bukalanga : Inside the Great Dispersion and Diaspora

*The Kalanga were a large and progressive tribe, until their "empire" broke up, and they were ruined by their more warlike neighbors, as the Bangoni under Zwangendaba(1825), the Makololo of Sebitloane (1830), and Matabele of Moselekatse (1838) ... Once amongst the foremost of African people, they were now forced to grovel in ignominy. They were now a miserable race of outcasts fleeing to the mountain fastnesses on the approach of the Matabele raid, hounded and robbed until there was no more spirit in them - S.M. Molema, 1920. **The Bantu, Past and Present: An Ethnographical & Historical Study of the Native Races of South Africa.***

The obvious question perhaps already running in the reader's mind by now is: But what happened to so great a nation that Bukalanga once was? Why are the Kalanga not as prominent as in the past, at least identifiable by their ethnicity and language? What happened to their culture and industries? What happened to the builders of the greatest civilization Africa south of the Zambezi epitomized by such edifices as Great Zimbabwe, Maphungubgwe, Khami, Nhalatale, Domboshaba, Luswingo, Dzata, Bumbusi, etc? What happened to the race that had the best developed idea of the Supreme Being, and had the best organized form of government for about a thousand years? These are the questions that we seek to answer in this chapter.

In the preceding chapters, we partly answered the questions in various ways and in a number of sections, for example, when we dealt with the subject of the Monomotapa and Lozwi Kingdoms and how they broke up. What we will do in this chapter is look at two factors that have been responsible for the destruction and demise of Bukalanga: the Ndebele massacres of the 19th Century and the 1980s Zanu/Zezuru (elite)-sponsored Gukurahundi Genocide. Before I am accused of pushing all the blame for the destruction of Bukalanga to others, I want to admit that internal rivalry and decay did contribute too to the destruction of the Kalanga nation, though not as much as the external forces. For its nearly 2000-year history, the great Kalanga Nation had always had civil wars like any other, but it survived them

all to remain a loose confederacy of states still bound together by its religious beliefs and allegiance to the kings. Therefore, we cannot just explain the demise of Bukalanga solely in terms of internal rivalry. It has been the external forces that drove the wedge of death into the Kalanga Nation.

I admit too that British colonialism had a severely negative and destructive impact on the progress of the Kalanga nation, but it has not been as severe as the effects of Ndebele conquest and Zezuru (and Tswana) domination. I therefore do not attribute the demise of Bukalanga much to colonialism, for when the British colonialists came the Kalanga had already been subjugated and subjected to the most barbaric acts of humankind ever experienced by any nation.⁷⁹ Let us begin with a look at what I call the Ndebele Massacres.

The Ndebele Massacres

It is well known that the Lozwi Kingdom was destroyed by the Ngoni and Swazi under Zwangendaba and iNkosikati Nyamazana. We gave a brief on the manner in which this happened at the end of Chapter Five. For now we turn our attention to the time of the arrival of Mzilikazi and his AmaNdebele in Bukalanga.

It has become very common nowadays that whoever tries to point out the history of violence of the AmaNdebele of Mzilikazi suffers untold abuse, especially on that precious platform called Facebook. Thank God for social networking, for some of the verbal abuse people suffer on Facebook could well turn into violent murders. I am very sure that this chapter is going to raise more hate language from some of the Ndebele more than anything I have ever posted on Facebook. However, we shall not be stopped from telling the truth for fear of what other people might say.

The Ndebele were only the worst case scenario of what happened to Bukalanga, responsible for what I call *Golomodzo Gulu lo Bukalanga*, the Great Dispersion and Diaspora of Bukalanga. Having existed for at least about a thousand years in the form of the

⁷⁹ Some would argue, as the Europeans like to, that colonialism brought “civilization”. But I would argue that the way Bukalanga had been advancing and with its links with the rest of the world, it would have naturally and speedily caught up with the rest of the world even without British Colonialism.

Maphungubgwe, Monomotapa, Togwa and Lozwi Kingdoms, Bukalanga found itself in the throes of a more destructive force worse than anything it had ever experienced in its history. Perhaps the only destruction similar to that inflicted by the AmaNdebele on Bukalanga was that by the cannibal people, the Mazimba, recorded in Portuguese documents; and incidentally, the Nguni people (the AbaMbo or Mumbos) who would inflict great damage to Bukalanga 300 years later again. We are given the record of the Mazimba by Father Nicolao do Rosario who was residing at Tete and also became Chaplain at Sena towards the end of the 17th Century, incidentally the time of the immigration of what are now the Shona tribes. He wrote thus of them:

The Zimbas or Muzimbas are new people who from their native parts have entered Ethiopia [South East Africa], killing everything. They are 20,000 in number, without any women, wives, or sons, kill and devour everything, eating human flesh. They are to this country what the Goths, Huns, and Vandals were to Europe. They advanced quickly through many lands, and, as they met with no resistance, desolated all. The natives hide their provisions and join these barbarians to escape death and their teeth. They ran through three hundred leagues on the shores and entered Monomotapa, entrenched themselves, and went out on excursions (in Wilmot 1896, 213).

Dr Theal, writing of the destruction on the Monomotapa Kingdom inflicted by these same peoples and the Mumbos or AbaMbo, says:

During the more than twenty years the country north of the Zambesi had been a scene of widespread pillage and devastation. A vast horde of savages had made its appearance from somewhere in the interior of the continent, no one knew exactly where, and had spread like locusts over the territory along the coast. They were warded off for a

time by Portuguese and the Batonga warriors. In 1592 two sections of these savages were found on the northern bank of the lower Zambesi (and crossed that same year going with them a spate of destruction). One was called by the Portuguese the Mumbos, the other was the far dreaded Mazimba. Dos Santos says the Mazimba were cannibals, and there is no reason to doubt this assertion, for traditions concerning them are still current all over southern Africa, in which they are represented as inhuman monsters, and their name is used generally to imply eaters of human flesh. The men were much stronger and more robust than the Makalanga. They carried immense shields made of oxhide, and were variously armed with assagais, battle axes, and bows and arrows (Theal 1896, 182-183).

It is from these people I believe that the traditions of “*madla banhu*” stem from. This was even put on record by F. W. Posselt in 1935. He wrote, “Of the Wadzimba (Mazimba) we still have vague traditions as the “*madjabanhu*” or man-eaters (Posselt 1935, 136). There were only two other events of national destruction that were to sweep across Bukalanga comparable to that of the Mazimba and the Mumbos. These were the invasions of the AmaNdebele of Mzilikazi; and the Zezuru elite-sponsored Gukurahundi Genocide of the early 1980s. One would be forgiven for comparing these events to the destruction of Israel in various times of their long history by the Assyrians, the Babylonians and the Romans.

As was previously pointed out, there are concerted efforts on the part of some to deny the violent career of Mzilikazi as nothing but the exaggerations of colonial government writers who wanted the overthrow of the Ndebele State. The denial is similar to that of the Shona who appropriate Kalanga history to themselves, or the Tswana who want to erase the history of Bukalanga in the land that they have erroneously named Botswana – the Land of the Tswana – a land they found the Kalanga inhabiting for at least 500 years.

Because of the denials of Ndebele violence against Bukalanga, we will try by all means to incorporate eyewitness accounts of what the Ndebele did against our Great Nation, Bukalanga. The publication of information on these massacres in this book should lead us all - the

Kalanga and the Ndebele - to say never again in the land of our forefathers. The same applies to the Zezuru. When we point out to the evils of the Zezuru-(elite)-sponsored Gukurahundi Genocide of the early 1980s, it is not a call to hatred or pursuit of revenge, but to a simple recognition of the injustices of the past for what they are, and to seek a peaceful way forward. I am firmly convinced that not all the sons and daughters of that ethnic group supported or support Gukurahundi. It was the work of a few zealous Zezuru nationalists, which is why I am at pains to state "Zezuru elites," not the Zezuru in general. And again it is not all Zezuru elites, but those that were at the head of government in the early years of independence. Such are they at whose feet we lay blame for these evil deeds.

Now, going back to the Ndebele Massacres, it has been argued by Kent-Rasmussen that "most of what has already been written on Ndebele history is so erroneous that it is almost worthless, and that it is time to wipe the slate clean for a fresh start" (1978, 1). In his book, *Migrant Kingdom: Mzilikazi's Ndebele in South Africa*, he focuses on two themes - migration and warfare, and states that:

Clearly, the Ndebele devoted only a small part of their time and energy in these pursuits. The overwhelming concerns of their lives were the business of producing food, building homes, and organizing their ever-expanding society. Nevertheless, Ndebele migrations and wars were the activities most thoroughly discussed by contemporary literate chroniclers; they were the phenomena having the greatest impact upon the many peoples whom the Ndebele encountered during their travels; and they are the activities best remembered by the Ndebele themselves (Rasmussen 1978, 2-3).

But it would be interesting to know what the Ndebele did with the "small part of their time and energy" that they spent on migration and warfare. The Scriptures tell us that at the mouth of two or three witnesses shall a matter be established. We surely are more inclined to believe the testimony of two or three over and above that of one

person. With that in mind, therefore, we will incorporate below the testimony of a number of writers who have worked on the history of the Ndebele, some of them eyewitnesses, some of them informed by men of Ndebele stock.

It is well known that Mzilikazi was a fugitive of war running away from the terrible assegai of the Zulu King, Tshaka, so we shall not concern ourselves much about his background. Let us first tell the story of Mzilikazi and his Ndebele impis as told by the missionary the Reverend Thomas Morgan Thomas of the London Missionary Society. Thomas was born in South Wales, on 13th March, 1828 and sailed for Cape Town in 1858 with a group of London Missionary Society (LMS) missionaries appointed to establish a mission station among the Makololo on the Zambesi, and another at Inyathi. He established the Matabele mission station at Inyathi on 15th December, 1859, and set up the first permanent white settlement in Rhodesia. Thomas established a cordial relationship with Mzilikazi, serving as his physician until the Ndebele king's death in 1868.

After the death of Mzilikazi, Thomas became involved in the Matabele succession issue, contravening the Society's rules which forbade trading and political involvement. In July, 1870, he was ordered to England to answer charges on these scores. Lobengula, whose coronation he had attended, allowed him to leave only after extracting a promise that he would return. The hearing before the Board of the L.M.S. and Thomas' appeal extended over several months but despite the support of prominent white settlers in Matabeleland, and of Lobengula himself, he was discharged by the Society on 23rd September, 1872, and in 1874 he returned to Matabeleland. As the missionaries objected to having him at Inyathi, Lobengula offered him a new site about 25 miles away which he called Shiloh. There he lived the rest of his life teaching, trading, farming and translating the New Testament into IsiNdebele. His work is one of the earliest dealing with Matabeleland and is particularly valuable for its excellent insight into the habits and customs of the Ndebele people and their history prior to British occupation.

Perhaps Thomas, of all writers on the AmaNdebele, speaks more favorably of them than any other, but still he could not help but notice their career of violence, rapine and murder in the early years of their settlement in Bukalanga. Let us hear the eyewitness account of

Mzilikazi's career in Thomas' own words:

The ten years intervening between the escape from the Zulu land and his receding further into the interior wilds – from 1827 to 1837 – constitute a very eventful period in Umzilikazi's life. We may therefore enter into details which are not devoid of interest, while they exhibit the ruthless character of the man, and show in its true light the sanguinary course of a heathen warrior, confirming the statement of revelation that "the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty".

Umzilikazi was about 27 years old, when having escaped from Tjaka, and followed only by a few men as resolute and fearless as himself, he left the territories of his father, Matjobana. Recognizing no law but that of the "strong hand", no principle but that of self-preservation and aggrandizement, these fearless men under his command, subdued tribe after tribe, increasing numbers, until, before the end of their ten years' sojourn in Bechuanaland, they had conquered the whole country. The chiefs Unyoga, Umhatjo, Umzila, Utjingwane [Tjilangwane?], Utulwane, Usibindi, Ulanga, Umjiba, Usikali, Upahlapahla, Ukwali, Upilana, and Umakaba, had become their victims, and many of their people incorporated with the followers of their conqueror ... After this long and severe training in the land of the Bechuanas, in his engagements with such tribes as the Bakhatla, Bakwena, Bahurutse, Basutu, and especially the Amazulu, and the Dutch farmers, Umzilikazi was more than a match for the harmless, defenseless, and timid tribes of the far interior, while they were ill-prepared, and a little disposed to meet such a powerful and bold intruder.

Thus the Amakalanga, Amaswina, Amahunti, Abayeye, Amatonga, and other tribes that thickly populated the very extensive and fertile country ... were scattered at his very appearance. They fled in confusion, some towards the Zambesi River, others into the distant mountains in the east and south-east, while numbers hid themselves in the Amadobo Hills [Matobo Hills]. Some of them, however, managed to take a number of Umzilikazi's cattle and flocks with them, hiding them so securely in their distant rocky retreats, that their owners, notwithstanding their rapacity and cunning, have not

yet recovered them all. The Amandebele, using this as an excuse for making war upon the mountaineers, attack them as often as they like. Still these industrious and peaceable aborigines were not altogether wanting in courage. Warlike in character, and delighting in plunder, they [the Ndebele] went out in hundreds every year against some of the surrounding tribes. But while they made their war upon others annually, they were always at peace among themselves. In 1870, however, a civil war broke out among them over the succession question.

Since Umzilikazi, on his arrival from Marikoe, he conquered the neighboring Amaswina and Amakalanga chiefs, he had adopted a very effectual way of annihilating their subjects as tribes. Referring to this, some years ago, I wrote:-

The love of slave-holding is very often the cause of war, for the captives always become slaves. In common with all African tribes, the Amandebele are exceedingly fond of being served: their motto always is, not to do anything themselves which may be done by others. The consequence is that everyone, from the child of five to the man of sixty, endeavors by all possible means to become master; and when he cannot get servants in his own country, he will go in search of them in other lands. This has often been done by the Amandebele since our stay with them. Hundreds together set off in the direction of a certain tribe; and at the dawn of an appointed day, from different points, and whilst the defenseless and innocent objects of their cruel intentions are still asleep, they suddenly take several villages by storm, murdering all the men, and leading the terrified women and children captives. On their way back, when they sleep, the helpless captives are fastened to a tree, or coupled with soldiers; and, having arrived at home, they either employ those whom they have captured as their own servants, or sell them to others for cattle, corn, or karosses, &c. The value of two children, about ten years of age, is that of an ox or cow (Thomas 1873, 160-164, 409-411).

The next description of the Ndebele career of rapine is from by W. A. Willis and L. T. Collingbridge. In their account they describe the

career of Mzilikazi and the AmaNdebele in the following terms:

Umziligazi established his sovereignty throughout the countries now somewhat loosely termed Matebeleland and Mashonaland. The Makalakas, Balotsi [i.e., BaLozwi], and Banyai [all one people group as we saw in Chapter Two], all numerous tribes already inhabiting these countries were subjected to a policy of extermination; though in some cases, Umziligazi appears to have been satisfied by a profession of submission and the payment of tribute by the vassal tribes. At any rate, fixing upon the magnificent plateau now known as Matebeleland as a centre for his military kraals, he extended his sphere of influence between the two great rivers mentioned [th Limpopo and Zambezi], to the Portuguese frontier on the west, and to the borders of the Gaza country on the east. The tribe, or certain portions, no doubt deteriorated in physique and in other respects from the intermarriage with the women captured in its raids, but maintained, on the whole, its Zulu characteristics – the contempt of danger and death, the love of battle, the military organization, and the ingrained aversion to agricultural labor, which distinguished the splendid legions of Chaka. In the course of time, Umziligazi waxed fat and flourishing. Matebeleland, watered by perpetual springs and streamlets, timbered like a vast English park, and healthy from its high altitude above the sea, was soon covered with enormous herds of cattle captured from the subject tribes ... Meantime, the old system of raiding, murder, and pillage was diligently continued by Umziligazi's warriors, either as training for the young braves who had not yet dipped their assegais in blood, or for what may be called strictly business purposes – namely, the acquisition of cattle and other loot upon which the Matabele supported a happy existence.

The formula applied was both simple and invariable. At the break of day, the Matabele impi would rush up the hapless kraal selected for their operations with terrible shouts. All who came within the range of the formidable stabbing assegai were at once exterminated. Old men and young, matrons and maids, children, and babes at the mother's breast – all would be sacrificed to the horrid Zulu lust for bloodshed, save a few young women, who would be

carried as the spoils of victory ... A few young men and boys, too, would be occasionally taken alive as slaves, to act as porters and cattle herds. Instances might be cited ad infinitum; but here it will be sufficient to say this picture is by no means overdrawn, and that it is founded on the published experiences of the members of the European missions which have come into actual contact with the Matabele.

Among these, Mr. [FC] Selous mentions that veteran missionary the Rev. Robert Moffat, and the Revs. S. H. Edwards, C. D. Helm, W. A. Elliot, John Mackenzie, and M. Jalla, of the Paris Missionary Society. The European travelers through Matebeleland, too, have had the same story to tell. Mr. Selous, chief among these, has recited his experiences before many of the learned societies of this kingdom [i.e., the United Kingdom]. His testimony is especially valuable, since he bears in South Africa the reputation of being a cool and careful observer, and an unexaggerative and, of course, absolutely reliable witness.

But, indeed, it is not only against other tribes that the Matabele were guilty of gross cruelty and insatiable bloodthirstiness, which has, for the matter of that, characterized all other South African tribes before the establishment of white rule ... In Matebeleland, no subject of the barbarian despots was at any time safe from mutilation, or death under torture, for the most trivial and imaginary offences. Under Umziligazi and his successor, nothing was more certain to attract the king's wrath and summary vengeance, than the report that an induna or petty chief was growing too rich, too popular, or too powerful.

Emissaries would, in the usual course, at once be sent to scatter the unhappy chief's brains with a knobkerrie, or to decree him to the more honorable method of execution with the assegai. To do them justice, the doomed men almost invariably suffered death with firmness, or even tranquility, and without attempt to evade the royal displeasure by escape. Ready as they were to inflict pain, the warriors of Matebeleland were no less ready to meet it with what, among more humane nations, would be called heroic fortitude.

In 1868, Umziligazi's career of rapine and bloodshed was brought to a natural close. Kuruman [Nkulumane], the former heir apparent, had been "removed", and Lobengula, a younger son, was

elected to reign in his stead, after brief interregnum during which the nation was governed by a council of indunas. Lobengula faithfully followed in the footsteps of his forefathers. The military and social traditions of the Zulu race were carefully observed, and the royal authority was exercised and maintained throughout the vast areas subject to his influence in the usually sanguinary manner (Collingbridge and Willis 1894, 19-21).

Let us now turn to the Ndebele story as told by Peter Becker in his book, *Path of Blood: The Rise and Conquests of Mzilikazi Founder of the Matabele*. The detail supplied by Becker gives a most chilling and blood curdling account of wanton destruction of human life. And it makes any Kalanga question why we are being asked today to hero-worship such an evil tyrant like Mzilikazi Khumalo who could easily fit into the league of Adolph Hitler, Haille Mengistu Mariam, Idi Amin, Charles Taylor, Benito Mussolini, Mao Tse Tung, Joseph Stalin, Slobodan Milosevic, Robert Mugabe and many other such tyrants who murdered thousands and millions in the name of nation-building. Wrote Becker:

They called him the Bull Elephant, the King of the Black Kings, the Founder of the mighty Matabele Empire. In his rise to power, he completely exterminated 28 tribes; pillaged half a million square miles of Africa; ruthlessly took girls for his harems and men for his army, leaving the corpses of the slain in smoking ruins to be devoured by hungry lions and leopards ... His name? Mzilikazi. Here is the full, vivid and fascinating story of the most savage tyrant who ever cast his shadow across the blood stained history of Africa - the most dreaded warrior since Attila's hordes swept across the plains of Europe.

While writing this book I travelled, from time to time, to the territories of the tribes who, during the last century, were subjected to the cruel, despotic rule of Mzilikazi king of the Ndebele. I also followed the trail blazed by King Mzilikazi through southern Africa,

setting out from the tyrant's birth-place in Zululand and reaching my journey's end at the place of his entombment, in the Matopo ranges of Southern Rhodesia. It was my privilege to conduct research among the Nguni tribes of the east coast of South Africa, the Southern Sotho of the Orange Free State and Basutoland Protectorate, the Northern Sotho of the Northern and Eastern Transvaal, the Tswana tribes of British Bechuanaland and the Western Transvaal, and the Makalanga, Mashona and Matabele (Amandebele) tribal groups in Southern Rhodesia. In all parts of the sub-continent I received cordial assistance from tribal chieftains, their headmen and subjects, and also from white traders, missionaries, recruiters, farmers and Government officials.

In thanking the scores of people, both Black and White, whose co-operation and encouragement greatly assisted my investigations into the life of Mzilikazi, I should like to record especially the names of Paramount Chiefs Nyangayezizwe Cyprian Bhekuzulu, direct descendant of Shaka and Dingane of the Zulu; Bathoen II, CBE., of the Bangwaketsi tribe; Kgari Sechele II, OBE., of the Bakwena; Kebalipile Montshioa of the Barolong; Chieftaincies Mantsebo Seeiso (until recently the Regent of Basuto); and also Chiefs Letsie of Thaba Bosiu, Kuini M. Mopeli of Butha-Buthe, and Wilson K. Mosielele of the Bakgatla of Moshupha. These rulers appointed expert guides to conduct me to historic sites, royal kraals and important landmarks, and they all contributed directly towards the happiness I experienced in their territories. I am most grateful to my old friend Gatsha Mangosuthu ka Mathole, Chief of the Buthelezi, for the constant interest he took in the progress of this book, and also to his mother, Princess Magogo uZulu kaDinuzulu, for the tidbits of information concerning Mzilikazi's early life she sent me from time to time⁸⁰

...In 1840 Southern Rhodesia was inhabited by the miscellany of insignificant tribes, each governed by a patriarchal chief, each cultivating its crops and tending its cattle. Occupying the immense stretch of country between the Maclautsi River in the south west, the Tuli in the east and the Maitengwe in the north-west, were several of these tribes, who for the sake of convenience ethnologists have

⁸⁰ I have included the above to serve as a guard against the accusations that the work of Becker is unreliable. It can be seen that his information was supplied by Africans, it wasn't crafted from some office in colonial Europe.

termed the Makalanga. About Gibixhegu and in the region of the Matopo ranges small scattered groups of the BaLozwi lived under the Mambos, or chiefs, while in the great plateau extending to the north-east were located a hotch-potch of tribes known collectively as the Mashona.

During the past century and a half the BaLozwi had ruled supreme over the other tribes of Southern Rhodesia, but only four years before Mzilikazi's arrival in the territory Zwangendaba, a fugitive from Zululand, had invaded and crushed them and then moved northwards to found the Angoni tribe of Nyasaland. Among Zwangendaba's host was a Swazi queen named Nyamazana – the Antelope – who preferred not to proceed to the Zambezi but to settle in the Matopo region. On meeting her, Mzilikazi married her and housed her in one of his harems. The king incorporated the queen's followers in his tribe and bestowed upon them the honor of joining his Abezansi, the inner circle of aristocratic and privileged Matabele.

During the next five years there was to be carnage in Southern Rhodesia and the tribes were to buckle beneath the might of the Matabele army. The BaLozwi settlements were invaded, the once autocratic mambos ousted from their thrones and the huts, cattle-folds and granaries pillaged and destroyed. The BaLozwi, once the conquerors of the Monomotapa dynasty, a proud ruler-tribe of farmers, expert hunters, smiths and artisans, were swept out of Matebeleland into the tsetse country fringing the Zambezi. Their ranks decimated, their young women taken prisoner and their men enslaved, the BaLozwi tumbled into the jungle country to the north in a bid to elude the Matabele regiments. The relentless onslaught of Mzilikazi's forces eventually compelled the BaLozwi to cross the Zambezi and seek a home among the tribes of Northern Rhodesia.⁸¹

⁸¹ As a result of this, some people tend to confuse the BaLozwi with the BaLozi. These are two different groups, although the BaLozwi who live among the BaLozi now identify by that name. I recently received a comment on my blog from one Mbulayi in Zambia stating: "Interesting piece on the Kalanga nation. There are three clans of Bakalanga in Western Zambia or Barotseland. These are the Mananzwa, Manyai and Mahumbe. As should be expected these people are now Lozi or Rotse by acculturation. Their mother tongue is now Silozi and not iKalanga. I am a descendant of an ironsmith by the name of Machambuzi. Our village is also called Machambuzi. We still carry our Kalanga names such as Mbulayi, Mbulawa, Mbano, Siyanda, Mukundu, Galilo, Mulapesi, Tubapi, Chibu, Kwati, Lumbidzani, etc." (Email received on June 15th, 2012).

One section of these fled from the Matopos to the sources of the Tati River, and the mambo, an influential ruler, took to the hills with his servants and wives to seek shelter in a cave. Looking on to the slopes below him, the mambo could see the Matabele approaching, and rather than fall into their hand, he decapitated his wives and then allowed himself and the other corpses to be consumed in the flames of brushwood pyre.

The Makalanga tribes suffered a fate similar to that of the BaLozwi.⁸² Until the latter half of the seventeenth century they had been the rulers of Southern Rhodesia under the Monomotapa dynasty, and on being conquered by the BaLozwi armies they degenerated into a timid and inoffensive people. The Makalanga were butchered by the Matabele; indeed, the atrocities that took place followed the Mzilikazian pattern of the past, except that by this time the Matabele tyrant had decided to leave several of the settlements unscathed so that the inhabitants might be allowed to breed conscripts for the Matabele army and also produce crops and herds for their overlords.⁸³

Although the Makalanga were amongst the least warlike tribes the Matabele ever encountered in southern Africa, they had an extraordinarily high reputation for their powers in witchcraft and magic. Their diviners and hereditary priests led the tribe in the worship of Mwali, a deity they believed had created the universe, controlled rain and dwelt in an inaccessible fastness in the Matopos. Mzilikazi regarded the Mwali priests with the deepest respect, and never attempting to injure them, and lavishing gifts regularly upon them. Often the Matabele heard Mwali, the great god, speaking oracularly in the Matopos. They were awestruck, for they did not know that the mysterious voices were in fact those of the priests, who were masters in the traditional art of ventriloquism. Although

⁸² Becker apparently thought that the Kalanga and BaLozwi were two different peoples, which we have proved not to be the case in previous chapters.

⁸³ In June 2012 I had the fortune to meet the Revered Mothibi Tshuma, great-grandson of Zhange (Hwange) who told me that his great-grandfather was murdered by Mzilikazi's man and skinned. Rev. Mothibi is over 70 years old. His grandfather, he told me, was originally a Moyo but changed to Tjuma because the Moyo-Lozwi were being hunted and murdered by the Ndebele as they were the national leaders. This also explains the change of many surnames, for example, the Nkiwane and Mthunzi were originally Moyo but changed as a way to evade murder by the Ndebele impis.

eventually the Makalanga tribes were subjugated by the Matabele and forced to pay tribute to Mzilikazi, their magicians enjoyed the privilege of being summoned periodically to the capital to give advice on important religious matters (Becker 1966, 15-21, 184-188).

Indeed, what a sad tale, what a painful story. As the *Cape Argus* noted in commentary on Becker's book, "No story of America's Wild West, of Chicago's gangsters, of the torturers of the Spanish Inquisition, or of the mass guillotining of the French Revolution equals the history of Mzilikazi's 18 years of terror as he marched from Zululand to the Zambezi in the last century." Indeed, so destructive was the Ndebele career of rapine, violence and murder in Bukalanga that 170 years later, it is still memorialized in the San word used by Bakalanga to refer to the Ndebele, that is, *Mapothoko*, (pronounced Mapo-tro-ko), meaning killers or murderers!

I honestly still do not understand, and probably never will, why the children of Bukalanga are being asked to see Mzilikazi as a nation-builder and hero. This is a line especially advanced by the Mthwakazi liberation movements, and was originally conceived by the Matabele Homeland Society in the 1950s. The question is will this continue for as long as we live, or shall it be stopped at some point in the near future? The people shall decide, and only time will tell. Let us now turn to another sad story that contributed to the Great Dispersion of Bukalanga - Golomodzo Gulu le Bukalanga.

The Zezuru-elite-sponsored Gukurahundi Genocide

One of the worst things to happen to the Kalanga nation was the Gukurahundi Genocide that was unleashed by the exclusively Shona-speaking 5th Brigade army unit of the government of Robert Mugabe in the period 1982-1987. Whatever the cause or motive of that barbaric act, the thing is that, whilst the Ndebele and Tonga were affected, Bukalanga were the worst affected, being the majority population of the so-called Matabeleland. I would say it falls upon this generation of Bukalanga to ensure that nothing of this sort ever happens again, for rarely in human history has a nation been subjected to such

inhuman brutality, savagery and barbarism in recent times. To help us understand this one of the most barbaric acts ever unleashed on Bukalanga, I have turned to a report on the genocide by Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP). Following are excerpts from that report.

A Summary of 5 Brigade Impact in Matabeleland North

To summarize, 5 Brigade [a North Korean trained all-Shona speaking army unit] was deployed in Matabeleland North in January 1983, coinciding with the imposition of a severe curfew in the region. Thousands of atrocities, including murders, mass physical torture and the burnings of property occurred in the ensuing 6 weeks. 5 Brigade was withdrawn for a month in the middle of the year, then redeployed. Disappearances and detentions became more common than other offences.

Mbamba Camp in the south of Tsholotsho is frequently referred to as a detention centre. 5 Brigade was mainly deployed in Matabeleland South in early 1984, although a platoon of 5 Brigade was in Matabeleland North at this time too. However, there was no curfew in force in Matabeleland North in 1984, and 5 Brigade activities were centred on the southern half of the country.

The presence of the 5 Brigade in an area in 1983 meant an initial outburst of intense brutality, usually lasting a few days, followed by random incidents of beatings, burnings and murders in the ensuing weeks, months and years. It meant that any community which had once experienced 5 Brigade lived in a state of intense anxiety and fear, unsure where and when it might strike again, or who its next victims might be.

The terror and insecurity throughout the region also led to many hundreds of people, especially young men, fleeing to urban centres such as Bulawayo, or to Botswana. To stay in the area if you were a young man meant almost certain victimization by 5 Brigade, who assumed that all such people were ex-ZIPRA [the ZAPU army unit] and therefore dissidents.

Many communities suffered massive material loss in the initial onslaught, losing huts and granaries. They also lost village members who had been killed or abducted, and were frequently forced to

watch others close to them dying slowly from injuries sustained from beating, burning, shooting or bayoneting. Villagers were warned not to seek medical help, and risked being shot for curfew breaking if they did seek help. Many who were beaten were left with permanent disabilities, ranging from paralysis, blindness, deafness, miscarriage, impotence, infertility, and kidney damage, to partial lameness and recurring back and headaches. These injuries have left victims with impaired ability to work in their fields or do any of the heavy labor, such as carrying water, on which survival in the rural areas depends. Inability to work in the fields is a recurring theme in interviews.

In addition to the physical injuries, it is clear from interviews that large numbers of people in Tsholotsho suffered some degree of psychological trauma, leading in extreme cases to insanity, and in many cases to recurring depression, dizzy spells, anxiety, anger, or a permanent fear and distrust of Government officials. Wives were left without breadwinners. Children were left without one or both parents, and with the trauma of having witnessed appalling violence against those they loved. Families were left without the consolation of truly knowing the fate of their kin, or their burial places.

Communities were left to deal with the trauma of having seen their parents, husbands and community leaders harmed and humiliated. Many families have had to face practical problems arising from the number of dead for whom death certificates were never issued. This has meant problems gaining birth certificates for children, or drawing money from bank books in the name of the deceased. Other people who fled employment in the area in order to protect their lives have been denied pensions for having broken their service without notice.

A Brief Chronology of Events in Matabeleland South

In February 1983, the northernmost areas of Matabeleland South felt the effects of the first 5 Brigade onslaught, which hitherto had primarily affected Matabeleland North. Civilians using the main Bulawayo-Plumtree road were particularly vulnerable, with several recorded instances of people being taken from buses at road blocks, and never seen again.

The 5 Brigade was first reported further south in Matabeleland

South in July 1983, where they were reported at Brunapeg Mission, in Bulilima-mangwe. By late 1983, there were several major 5 Brigade incidents on record, including some deaths, beatings and the burning of 24 homesteads in Mbembeswana in Matobo. However, it was in February 1984 that the 5 Brigade launched a systematic campaign of mass beatings and mass detentions in Matabeleland South, lasting several months. These tailed off after May 1984, after which the 5 Brigade was withdrawn for retraining. Sporadic reports of violations by both the army and dissidents continued throughout the ensuing years, until the Amnesty in 1988.

Apart from abuses at the hands of 5 Brigade, there was a far higher incidence of CIO as perpetrator than in Matabeleland North, mainly because of their involvement at Bhalagwe Camp and Sun Yet Sen. In addition, there were several reports of "Grey's Scouts", or a mounted unit, abusing people while on follow-up operations. There were no complaints filed against mounted ZNA units in Tsholotsho.

1. The Food Embargo

The Food Embargo was a major factor in events in Matabeleland South in 1984. Throughout the early months of 1984, residents of Matabeleland South were suffering from starvation caused in the first place, by three consecutive years of drought and in the second place, by government restrictions preventing all movement of food into and around the region. Drought relief was stopped and stores were closed. Almost no people were allowed into and out of the region to buy food, and private food supplies were destroyed.

The psychological impact of the food embargo was profound. While the village by village summary which follows does not make continuous reference to the food embargo, many of those interviewed mentioned its effects. All events which occurred did so against the background of a seriously weakened and demoralized populace, who were having to watch their children cry and beg for food which their parents were unable to provide on a daily basis. State officials, largely in the form of the 5 Brigade, also actively punished those villagers who shared food with starving neighbors. The speeches of 5 Brigade commanders at rallies repeatedly stated the desire of the government to starve all the Ndebele to death, as punishment for their being

dissidents. In the cruelest speeches, people in the region were told they would be starved until they ate each other, including their own wives and children. Those interviewed recount how they struggled to stay alive during the embargo, by eating the roots and fruits of wild plants. However, in some areas the 5 Brigade tried to prevent even this, and punished people for eating wild marula fruit. Even water was severely rationed. People also talk of risking their lives and breaking the curfew to share food with neighbors after dark, and their disbelief at seeing bags of maize ripped open and destroyed wherever 5 Brigade found them – on buses or in homes.

CCJP archives reveal grave concern at the food situation, which church missions in Matabeleland South monitored on a continual basis. Their requests to be allowed to administer food in rationed amounts to their parishioners and employees were denied by the authorities, although St Joseph's Mission was allowed to feed 300 under-fives on a daily basis. Other feeding schemes which had been operating collapsed as mealie meal stocks ran out.⁸⁴

CCJP also kept track of which stores were open, and on which days. From March onwards, the total ban on stores was slightly modified. 3 stores in Matobo were opened for only 2 days a week, at

⁸⁴ CCJP have it on file as a sworn statement, dated 8 March 1984. On Thursday, 23 February (1984), the soldiers called a meeting at Sibomvu (in Gwanda district, Mat South). The leader of the 5 Brigade soldiers there, named Jesus, stated, "I am one of the leaders of the Gukurahundi." These are some of the things he said at the meeting: he had some gallons of blood in his car. The blood came from people. His life is to drink human blood. He wanted more blood because his supply was running low. They had come to this place to kill, not to play. They had come to kill the Mandebele because the dissidents were found only in their area and not in Mashonaland. Commander Jesus said he found his boys doing nothing – beating up people instead of killing them. He did not mind thousands of people being killed.

"You are going to eat eggs, after eggs hens, after hens goats, after goats cattle. Then you shall eat cats, dogs, and donkeys. Then you are going to eat your children. After that you shall eat your wives. Then the men will remain, and because dissidents have guns, they will kill the men and only dissidents will remain. That's when we will find the dissidents."

Commander Jesus spoke in Shona while one of the soldiers translated into Ndebele. The ordinary soldiers are better. They go around nicely asking about dissidents and then they go their way. If these ordinary soldiers came we would be prepared to tell them the truth. But with 5 Brigade, truth or lies, the result is the same.

Bidi, Kezi, and Maphisa (Antelope). This meant that people near St Joseph's Mission were 60 km away from the nearest store, too far to walk in a day under curfew conditions. Others were even further away. People were banned from the use of any form of transport under the curfew. This not only affected access to operating stores, but also access to clinics. All the hospitals and clinics in Matabeleland South reported falling attendances, and a concern at the fact that sick people were unable to walk the often extensive distances to reach help, and could die as a result. In addition, those being beaten by 5 Brigade were expressly forbidden to seek medical help, even if they were within the vicinity of a clinic.

There is mention that even operating stores were not allowed to sell mealie meal. On some occasions the stores were opened purely for propaganda purposes. There is a reference in mission correspondence to Col Simpson of the Paratroopers opening a store for 3 hours to coincide with a tour by the local press on 10 March 1984. On 21 March, 84 people gathered at Bidi Store and waited all day only to be told that no mealie meal was to be sold. This was the pattern at other stores too, where people gathered, having walked 30 km or more, and would wait for hours only to be told they could not buy anything.

Stores were not allowed to restock any products during the curfews, and those which occasionally opened soon had no food of any kind to sell. The army took control of the regional National Foods depot to ensure mealie meal was not distributed to stores. Anyone wishing to buy food in Bulawayo to send to relatives in curfew zones, needed a permit from the police or army, and these were rarely granted. There are also in interviews many accounts of people being brutally tortured when found waiting at shopping centres, the accusation being that they were trying to break the food curfew.

School-teachers were among the few who were allowed food, as the government expressly intended the schools to remain open, but the teachers were severely restricted in terms of how much they could request, to prevent them from feeding others in the region. Mechanisms of how teachers received food depended on the orders of local army commanders: some were allowed transport into Bulawayo to buy for themselves, others were only allowed to place a food order with the army who then purchased on their behalf. This placed

teachers in an awkward position with others starving in their areas: while teachers may have had some food, their pupils had none. CCJP records indicate a request for supplementary feeding through the schools being denied, and reports falling school attendance as pupils become faint with hunger, and as others flee the area hoping to find a place in schools in Bulawayo. At some mission schools, pupils would be given a drink of 'mahewu', made from a local grain by mission staff during lessons, but staff comment that this was not enough to sustain their growing bodies. Pupils also had to face being picked up and beaten up by the army – mission staff were very aware this was happening, but were powerless to protect the school children. In addition to preventing food from coming into the area, 5 Brigade also broke down fences around fields to allow cattle to graze whatever few hardy crops might have survived the drought, thus ensuring that starvation was absolute.

Catholic Mission staff in affected areas expressed increasing alarm and by the end of March 1984 they began to fear for the lives of the sick, the elderly and the very young. As people became more desperate, there were even those who wished to be detained, in the hope that in custody they might at least receive food. In fact, those in custody were kept in appalling conditions and received little food. Hunger and the problem of getting food to those nearing starvation became a dominant theme in CCJP correspondence during the curfew months. The food embargo alone was thus a significant and effective strategy which proved to 400,000 ordinary people in Matabeleland South the power of the State to cause extreme hardship.

2. The 5 Brigade and CIO

In Matabeleland South in 1984, the pattern of 5 Brigade behavior differed notably from their behavior in 1983. Killings were less likely to occur in the village setting. However, mass beatings remained very widespread, with many variations on a theme. While the most common pattern still involved making people lie face down in rows, after which they were beaten with thick sticks, there are a large number of interviews referring to sadistic refinements in mass physical torture. People were on occasion made to lie on thorny branches first, after which 5 Brigade ran along their backs to embed

the thorns before the beatings. People were made to roll in and out of water while being beaten, sometimes naked. They were made to push government vehicles with their heads only, and were then beaten for bleeding on government property. Women were made to climb up trees and open their legs, so 5 Brigade could insult their genitals, while simultaneously beating them. Men and women were made to run round in circles with their index fingers on the ground, and were beaten for falling over.

These mass beatings invariably ended with at least some victims so badly injured that they were unable to move, so that they had to be carried away by others the following day. As in Matabeleland North, people were threatened with death if they reported to hospitals or clinics, and the majority of injuries remained untreated. Victims mention fractured limbs which set themselves crookedly, perforated ear drums which became infected, and other injuries which might have been simply treated, resulting in long-term health problems.

Genital mutilation is more commonly reported in Matobo than in Matabeleland North. The practice of forcing sharp sticks into women's vaginas is independently reported by several witnesses. This phenomenon was apparently common at Bhalagwe, and witnesses refer to women at Bhalagwe adopting a characteristic, painful, wide-legged gait after receiving such torture. In addition, men were also subjected to beatings which focused on their genitalia. The testicles would be bound in rubber strips and then beaten with a truncheon.

Some men complain of permanent problems with erections and urinating as a result of such beatings. At least one man is reported as dying after his scrotum was burst during a beating. Several witnesses also report being told to have sex with donkeys while at Bhalagwe, and being beaten when they failed to do so. The practice of widespread rape, of young women being "given as wives" to 5 Brigade at Bhalagwe is also referred to by several independent sources.

The CIO seemed to work very closely with the 5 Brigade in Matabeleland South, and gained a reputation for being even more lethal in their methods of torture than 5 Brigade. The CIO conducted most of the "interrogation" at Bhalagwe and Sun Yet Sen: they would ask questions, while 5 Brigade, who could not speak or understand

Ndebele, beat the victim regardless of how he/she responded. CIO used electric shocks to torture people. They attached wires to the backs, ears and mouths of witnesses before shocking them. Witnesses frequently refer to being tortured by 5 Brigade and then CIO consecutively, or being passed from the custody of one to the other and back again. In Bhalagwe, there is repeated reference to a particularly cruel woman CIO officer who used to sexually torment her male victims. Water torture was also apparently wide-spread under both CIO and 5 Brigade. This commonly involved either holding a person's head under water, or forcing a shirt into somebody's mouth, then pouring water onto the shirt until the victim choked and lost consciousness. The perpetrator would then jump on the victim's stomach until s/he vomited up the water. This practice commonly stopped once the victim was vomiting blood.

While killing by 5 Brigade was less widespread than in Matabeleland North in 1983, there are still many horrific atrocities on record, including the following, all perpetrated by 5 Brigade. A four month-old infant was axed three times, and the mother forced to eat the flesh of her dead child. An eighteen year-old girl was raped by six soldiers and then killed. An eleven year-old child had her vagina burnt with plastic and was later shot. Twin infants were buried alive.

3. *Mass Detention*

Mass beatings and rallies invariably ended in mass detentions in 1984. Those detained included all ex-ZIPRAs, all ZAPU officials, and other men and women selected on a seemingly random basis. Those detained could include the elderly, and also schoolchildren. Trucks seemed to patrol, picking up anyone they met and taking them to detention camps.

It was usual for detainees to be taken first to the nearest 5 Brigade base, for one or more days, before being transferred to Bhalagwe. Interviewees report being held in small 5 Brigade camps, until there were enough of them to fill an army vehicle to Bhalagwe. A truck-load seems to have been around 100 people. In southern Matobo, the main 'holding camp' was at Sun Yet Sen, where both the CIO and the 5 Brigade were based. This camp reportedly held up to 800 detainees at one time, and people were sometimes held here for a

week or longer. There were smaller bases in the west and north. Detainees in southern Matobo were commonly beaten before their detention, tortured at Sun Yet Sen, and then transferred to Bhalagwe for further torture and detention. In addition to detentions after rallies or mass beatings, 5 Brigade also went through some areas on foot, hauling out villagers from the homesteads they passed, and then herding them ahead on foot, while beating them. Some interviewees report covering extensive distances in this way, as 5 Brigade made a sweep through many villages in an area, gathering a growing number of detainees as they went.

The Notorious Bhalagwe Detention Center

The most notorious detention centre of all was Bhalagwe Camp, situated just west of Antelope Mine. From interviews, Bhalagwe operated at full capacity throughout the early months of 1984, from the beginning of February until the end of May, a period of 4 months. It continued to operate after this, but the phenomenon of mass detentions had dissipated by then, and there were fewer new inmates after this.

On 15 May 1982 aerial photographs of the Bhalagwe area were taken for the purposes of updating maps of the area. An enlarged section of one such photograph shows that at this date, Bhalagwe was an operational military camp: military vehicles are visible, as are soldiers on parade. It would appear that 1:7 Battalion was based here in 1982, consisting mainly of ex ZIPRAs incorporated into the Zimbabwe National Army.

At some point in 1982, the ZIPRAs here were allegedly accused of being dissidents, and Bhalagwe Camp was surrounded by elite Paratroop and Commando units and was shut down. However, a military presence was maintained here, as there are references to Bhalagwe being used as a detention centre for ex-ZIPRAs and others from mid-1982 onwards, when the anti-ZIPRA sweep in the wake of the tourist kidnapping gained momentum [ex-ZIPRA were accused by the government of kidnapping the tourists].

Visible at Bhalagwe in May 1982, are 180 large, round roofed asbestos “holding sheds”, each measuring approximately 12 meters by 6 meters, and 36 half-sized ones, measuring 6 meters by 6 meters.

According to testimonies on record since March 1984, which have been confirmed in interviews in 1996, these asbestos structures were where detainees were kept. It is also clear from the aerial photography, that these structures were arranged, apparently within fences, in groups of a dozen – eleven 12 x 6 meter structures and 1 smaller one. What is not clear is how many of these groupings were used in 1984 to house detainees, and how many were used to house military personnel, or served storage or interrogation purposes. Perhaps many were out of use. There is also reference by some detainees to some of the asbestos sheds having suffered wind and storm damage, so by February 1984 the camp may have been less intact than it appears in the May 1982 photograph.

Detainees confirm that 136 people were routinely kept in each 12 x 6 meter shed. There were no beds, and the floor space was so limited people had to sleep squeezed together on their sides, in 3 rows. There were no blankets or toilet facilities. An assumption, based on affidavits, of 136 per shed would allow for the detention of at least 1500 people within each fenced enclosure of a dozen sheds. Bhalagwe camp has been variously estimated by ex-detainees to have had 1800, 2000, 3000 up to 5000 people detained at one time. On 7 February 1984, the number of detainees was 1 856, consisting of 1000 men and 856 women. This figure was given to CCJP in 1984 by a detainee who was ordered by 5 Brigade to help others count the number of detainees. As the curfew had only been in effect a few days at this stage, and the phase of mass detentions was just beginning, it is very likely the number rose over the following weeks. It is quite clear from the aerial photograph that Bhalagwe's holding capacity was vast, and easily capable of absorbing at one time the highest figure currently claimed, that of 5 000. However, the exact number detained at Bhalagwe's peak remains unconfirmed.

The first records of detentions in the Bhalagwe area date from the middle of 1982, coinciding with the detention exercises going on in Matabeleland North at that time. Reported detentions in 1982 and 1983 are few, however: it is in February 1984 that Bhalagwe becomes the centre of detentions throughout Matabeleland. The remains of Bhalagwe Camp were still visible in November 1996. The camp is ideally situated in terms of combining maximum space, with maximum privacy. There are natural barriers on three sides:

Bhalagwe hill lies to the south, and Zamanyone hill demarcates its western edge. The eastern perimeter lies in the direction of Antelope Dam, and there are no villages between the camp and the dam. Water was piped in from Antelope Dam nearby, into water storage tanks. Although the camp is scarcely a kilometer from the main road running south of Bhalagwe hill, it is invisible to passers' by.

People were trucked in from all over Matabeleland South to Bhalagwe, not just from Matobo. Women and men were separated. Different zones within the camp were designated to detainees who had been brought in from the different bases at Bulilima-mangwe, Plumtree, Gwanda, Mberengwa, Sun Yet Sen and northern Matobo. There is even reference to detainees from Chipinge – these could have been potential MNR dissidents, although who they were exactly is not clear. As well as being sorted by district, Bhalagwe survivors refer to new arrivals being sorted and designated holding rooms on the basis of their usual line of work and their employers, such as whether they worked in town or were communal farmers. At times school children were also sorted and kept separately. Detainees also refer to identity documents and letters related to employment being taken by 5 Brigade, and the latter destroyed. Interviewees also refer to the fact that ex-ZIPRAs and ZAPU officials were kept separately from the ordinary civilians.

As detainees at any one time at Bhalagwe had been selected from a wide area, people in detention together seldom knew more than a handful of the other detainees. As most travel in the rural areas is on foot, people then (and now) did not know those who lived even a few villages away from their usual footpaths. One of the consequences was that when a person died in detention, possibly only one or two other inmates from the same village, and possibly nobody at all, would know that person's name. Inmates of Bhalagwe speak of daily deaths in the camp, but they are seldom able to name victims. They will merely comment how they witnessed people being beaten or shot, or how on certain mornings there would be people in their barracks who had died in the course of the night, as a result of the previous day's beatings. The digging of graves is mentioned as a daily chore by some in early February. However according to witnesses, at a certain point, although the date is not clear, these graves were dug up, and the bodies taken away on the trucks. The

empty grave sites were still clearly visible in November 1996. Other accounts refer to the nightly departure of army trucks, carrying away the dead and dying to an unknown destination. It is now believed that these people were disposed of in local mine shafts, and in 1992, human remains were found in Antelope Mine, adjacent to Bhalagwe. Other people speak of their belief that Legion Mine, near Sun Yet Sen, also contains human remains from the 1980s.

The ex-ZIPRAs and ZAPU officials were singled out and kept in a separate area, in small buildings with low roofs and no windows, although there were ventilation slats. They were also kept shackled throughout their detentions, unlike the other detainees, and were subjected to the most brutal torture.

Turn-over at Bhalagwe was high. The length of detentions varied greatly. Most people recount having spent a few days or weeks in Bhalagwe. Approximately one to two weeks seemed a common detention period. Some interviewees claim to have spent as long as six to nine months in detention here, but these tend to be the ex-ZIPRAs and ZAPU officials. Women were commonly held a few days, unless selected as “wives” for the soldiers, in which case their detention might stretch to a few weeks. If two weeks was assumed as an average stay, and a conservative turnover of 1000 every two weeks was assumed, it could be estimated that around 8000 people passed through Bhalagwe in the four months it operated at its peak. The turnover could have been nearer double this figure.

Whatever the length of detention, those detained were subjected to at least one brutal interrogation experience. The majority were beaten on more than one occasion. There is reference to electric shocks being administered by the CIO. Some witnesses report making false confessions under torture, naming invented people as dissidents, only to be caught out the next day when they failed to remember their previous day’s testimony.

Interrogations always involved accusing people of being dissidents or feeding dissidents or of failing to report dissidents. This was routine, with no evidence being cited. The sexual focus of much of the torture has already been mentioned, with widespread rape, genital mutilation and forced sex with animals. Bhalagwe survivors have referred to a wide variety of physical tortures. One pastime for the 5 Brigade was to force large numbers of detained men and

women, to climb on to branches of trees, until the weight of human bodies snapped the branch, sending everyone crashing to earth. People broke limbs as a result of this. Several interviewees comment on the way 5 Brigade laughed to see them suffer.

Another form of torture was to force three men to climb into a 2 meter asbestos drainage pipe. The ones on each end would be told to come out, and as they started to leave the pipe, the 5 Brigade would begin to beat them fiercely, causing the men to spontaneously pull back in to the pipe, crushing the third man who would be crowded in the middle. On occasion, this resulted in the man in the middle being crushed and kicked to death by his two panicking companions.

Detainees were fed only once every second day, when mealie meal would be dished up on dustbin lids, with between 10 and 20 people per lid. Sometimes people would be forced to eat without using hands, for the amusement of 5 Brigade. People were given half a cup of water a day each. Detainees had to dig toilets, wash army clothes and pots, and chop firewood in between their interrogation sessions. Interrogations used to begin at 5.30 a.m. every day.

The Legacy of the 1980s for the Victims

The full scale of the impact of the civil conflict on those who survived it has yet to be forensically established. However, from interviews now on record, it is apparent that those years have left people with a legacy of problems which include physical, psychological and practical difficulties. Some of these negative legacies are listed below:-

1. Families were left destitute, without breadwinners and without shelter.
2. Many people, possibly thousands, suffered permanent damage to their health as a result of physical torture, inhibiting their ability to seek work, or to maintain their lands and perform daily chores such as carrying water.
3. Possibly hundreds of murder victims have never been officially declared dead. The lack of death certificates has resulted in a multitude of practical problems for their children, who battle to receive birth certificates, and for their spouses who, for example, cannot legally inherit savings accounts.

4. Others who fled their homes to protect themselves were considered to have deserted their employment without due notice, and forfeited benefits including pensions as a result.
5. Many people, possibly thousands, who were either victims of physical torture, or forced to witness it, continue to suffer psychological disorders indicative of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Such disorders as unexplained anxieties, dizziness, insomnia, hypochondria and a permanent fear and distrust of senior government officials are evident in victims. Typically, such victims pass on their stress to their children and create a heavy extra burden on existing health care structures.⁸⁵
6. As a result of the atrocities, children could not attend school properly, partly because their parents were unable to see them through school, and because of the prevailing situation of starvation in Matabeleland South. This has affected a whole generation as parents' lack of access to work and educational opportunities during the Gukurahundi Genocide has meant lack of access to economic opportunity, leading to a vicious cycle of poverty. To add salt to the wound, today Bukalanga [as well as the Tonga and Ndebele] are being accused of being "un-educated" when they raise complaints over lack of access to job opportunities in their home area, where most jobs are given away to Shona people, and when they complain about the unfair distribution of jobs, they are in some cases arrested and charged with inciting tribalism, as recently happened in Victoria Falls in March 2012.
7. The lack of educational opportunities, combined with an evident general distrust and "fear" of government officials has often meant that the people of Bukalanga cannot access political power which is necessary for their access to economic opportunity, with those in power mostly just there to do the bidding of the Zezuru-led government which has monopolized all real power in Mashonaland. This is seen even today when people generally are slow in taking up whatever government is offering in terms of development in fear of the ramifications if required to pay back.

⁸⁵ Points No. 6 to 8 do not appear in the original report, they are my own additions based on observations. It will be noted that the most affected areas were the heartland of Bukalanga. This is not to imply that the Tonga and Ndebele were not affected, nor is it meant to minimize the pain that those lovely souls suffered.

8. The lack of opportunity in their homeland has resulted in migration to neighboring countries, notably Botswana and South Africa, leading to broken families and women and child-headed families, with dire consequences for children who grow up without both parents or at least one parent to nurture them. This results in untold psychological problems, teenage pregnancies, further lack of access to educational opportunities, and so on, in turn leading to an unending vicious cycle.
9. The spread of HIV and AIDS is one of the horrifying legacies of the Gukurahundi Genocide as families are forced to live apart for extended periods of time in search of economic opportunity. In a sense by the agency of the HIV/AIDS virus the genocide continues in this generation. Matabeleland South is the province with the highest HIV infection rate in Zimbabwe today. Whilst admittedly this is a problem for all countries in Southern Africa, there can be no doubt that the Gukurahundi Genocide has compounded the problem for Bukalanga and other communities living in the so-called Matabeleland.

Such has been the lot of Bukalanga in the land of our forefathers. Hounded and hunted, murdered and dislocated, marginalized and discriminated against for no other reason other than that we are not Ndebele or Shona. How is it that we can still continue to be denied our identity after all that has happened to us? Surely, not only the international Jew had to face this question. It is time for us to begin finding answers to the Bukalanga Question. Shall we, perhaps the first Bantu to arrive in Southern Africa, remain a stateless people, or should steps begin to be taken to seek sovereign statehood? I only imagine how great and prosperous a nation would be built if we, the Great Nationa of Bukalanga - Bakalanga, Banambya and Vhavenda - peaceably pursued sovereign statehood and united with our fellow compatriots across the border, Bakalanga in the so-called Botswana, that is, the North-east and North-Central Districts, and created our own state in a Federal Republic of Zimbabwe. Well, like Dr Martin Luther King Jr., I have a dream.⁸⁶ But let us leave that for now and

⁸⁶ I mentioned Bakalanga, BaNambya and Vhavenda because they are the ones still speaking and identifying by the historic languages of Bukalanga as still found in Zimbabwe and Botswana.

take a look at how war affected the aptness for civilization and progress of Bukalanga. To do so let us take a look at the writings of S. M. Molema on the de-civilizing and retrogressive effects of war as was practiced during the Ndebele Massacres and the Zezuru-elite-sponsored Gukurahundi Genocide. Mr. Molema wrote:

The effects of the inter-tribal wars among the Bantu can easily be understood. Large tracts of the country were entirely depopulated by the complete extermination of their inhabitants, whole tribes being wiped off the face of the earth, as by the bloody campaigns of Tshaka ... in the middle of the nineteenth century - and the almost equally relentless, though unprovoked, massacres of the Matabele by Moselekatse; the remaining tribes, if conquered and put to flight, were so confused as to lose connection for ever with their ethnical relatives, thus leaving gaps which are to be found in the ethnographical history of the Bantu.

But these effects were trivial when compared with the third effect which war, especially constant inter-tribal war, must invariably produce, and that is, the production of stagnation, the hindrance to, and prevention of any social progress and intellectual advancement. For it is a remarkable fact that while the love of war itself is primarily a result of ignorance, war in its return reacts on the people who practice it as to arrest all progress, and is thus at once a cause and effect of ignorance and backwardness. And while the stagnation and stereotype of the Bantu cannot be explained away simply on the ground of their devotion to war, yet it cannot be denied that war has been one of the chief factors of their lagging behind in the general onward march of humanity. This fact is beautifully illustrated in the relative condition of the Bantu themselves, for we have already shown that, according as their devotion to war decreased, or in other words an inverse ratio existed between their practice of war and their degree of civilization (Molema 1920, 120-121).

If these be the effects of war, it is easy to explain why for so many

centuries the Great Nation of Bukalanga has progressed so much as we saw in the earlier chapters, for it has for most of its history been characterized by a great love for peace. I am not suggesting perfection on the part of Bukalanga, but there can be no doubt that it is that love for peace, among other factors, which helped it to attain the levels of civilization that it enjoyed during the pre-colonial era which no other nation in Southern or Central Africa was anywhere close. And it is unfortunate to say that, since the destruction of the Lozwi Kingdom, Bukalanga has remained a persecuted and subjected nation.

Another factor which has contributed to the present situation of Bukalanga is the colonial legacy, especially as far as language and culture are concerned. One of the questions asked by many people is why are the three great historic languages of Bukalanga - TjiKalanga, TshiVenda and TjiNambya - are not as prominent today as they were in the past few decades? This is easy to explain. Once the colonialists had decided to create their 'standard Shona' in the 1920s, they went on to suppress all other languages, and for their own administrative expediency, the Native Commissioners promoted their so-called standard Shona, which is actually nothing more than Zezuru with a few words from other dialects.

In the so-called Matabeleland (an erroneous name which I do hope and am sure will change soon to a Khoisan-given name), they went on to suppress TjiKalanga, TshiVenda and TjiNambya which were then the most widely spoken languages, and promoted IsiNdebele, which was the language of the Ndebele indunas who were ruling over Bukalanga since the massacres of the 19th Century. Across the region, IsiNdebele was promoted at the expense of all of our languages, hence our situation today.

The book is indeed, a Manifesto for the Liberation of a Great People with a Proud History. Concerning the proposed way forward for Bukalanga in particular and Zimbabwe and Botswana in general, please see my two upcoming books, *Zimbabwe: The Case for Federalism* and *The Bukalanga State from Venda to Victoria Falls* which calls for the rebuilding of the Great Nation of Bukalanga made up of the following Districts: Beitbridge, Gwanda, Matobo, Bulilima-Mangwe, Tjolotjo, Hwange, and the North East and North-Central Districts of Botswana, with a confederacy of the three languages of Bukalanga - TjiKalanga,

TjiNambya and TshiVenda as the official languages of Government, Education, Commerce and Science and Technology.

In closing the book I want to leave the reader with the following declaration, borrowed and adapted from President Thabo Mbeki's speech before the South African Parliament at the dedication of that country's magnificent Constitution titled *I am an African*:

I AM KALANGA!

At a time such as this, we should, perhaps, start from the beginning.

So, let me begin. I am Kalanga.

I owe my being to the hills and the valleys, the mountains and the glades, the rivers, the deserts, the trees, the flowers, the lakes and the ever-changing seasons that define the face of our native land. My body has frozen in our frosts and in our latter day snows. It has thawed in the warmth of our sunshine and melted in the heat of the midday sun.

The crack and the rumble of the summer thunders, lashed by startling lightning, have been a cause both of trembling and of hope. The fragrances of nature have been as pleasant to us as the sight of the wild blooms of the citizens of the veld.

The dramatic shapes of the Matopo and Makhado Mountains, the curvaceous slopes of the Nzhelele Valley, the soil-colored waters of the Zambezi, the Limpopo and the Shashe, the sparkling waters of the Victoria Falls and the sands of the Kalahari, the beautiful stone ruins of Maphungubgwe, Great Zimbabwe, and Khami that adorn our land, have all been panels of the set on the stage on which we act out the foolish deeds of the theatre of our day.

At times, and in fear, I have wondered whether I should concede equal citizenship of our country to the leopard and the lion, the elephant and the springbok, the hyena, the black mamba and the pestilential mosquito. A human presence among all these, a feature

on the face of our native land thus defined, I know that none dare challenge me when I say - I am Kalanga!

I owe my being to those ancestral BaLozwi, BaLemba, Bakalanga, Vhavenda, and BaNambya whose desolate souls haunt the great expanses of our beautiful land - they who fell victim to the most merciless genocide our native land has ever seen, they who were the first to lose their lives in the struggle to defend our freedom and independence and they who, as a people, perished in the result.

Today, as a nation, we keep an audible silence about these ancestors of the generations that live, fearful to admit the horror of a former deed, seeking to obliterate from our memories a cruel occurrence which, in its remembering, should teach us not and never to be inhuman again. I am formed of the migrants who left North-east Africa to find a new homeland in Southern Africa. In my veins courses the blood of the Afro-Asiatic Semites who came from the North-east Africa. Their proud dignity informs my bearing, their culture a part of my essence.

I am the grandchild of the warrior men and women that Dr. Joshua Nkomo, Jason Ziyaphapha Moyo and Masotja Ndlovu led, the patriots that Mphephu took to battle, the soldiers George Malani Silundika taught never to dishonor the cause of freedom. I am the child of such Bukalanga greats as Shamuyendazwa Nkalanga, Malambodzibgwa, Mambo Dombolakona-Tjing'wango Dlembewu Moyo, Thoho-ya-Ndou, Togwa Madabhale Ncube, Tjibundule Shoko Ncube, Tumbale Bhepe-la-Mambo Moyo, Mphaphuli, Mpephu, Dzugudini, Tshivhase, Meng'we, Tjilangwane and John Mudau Nswazwi Khupe.

I am he who made it possible to trade in the world markets in diamonds, in gold, in the same food for which my stomach yearns. Being part of all these people, and in the knowledge that none dare contest that assertion, I shall claim that - I am Kalanga!

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