Development and Differentiation: The Case of TILCOR/ARDA
Irrigation Activities in Sanyati (Zimbabwe), 1939 to 2000

By

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Promoter : Prof. I. Phimister
Co-promoter : Prof. A. S. Mlambo
“Don’t sell the peasant short; he’s more malleable than his image suggests, and his ancient ways contain a deal of folk wisdom that foreign innovators must stop scorning and start adapting” - C. M. Arensberg, “Upgrading Peasant Agriculture: Is Tradition the Snag?” 63.

Although “at the core of the world’s problems of underdevelopment lies the modernization [sic] of agriculture…the literature available for serious study of this central problem is still very inadequate and in some measure reflects the relative lack of priority [African] farming has suffered in the elaboration of development strategy” – Economist, August 22, 1964, 273.
ABSTRACT

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In this study, two rather distinct forms of differentiation are examined, namely class differentiation that was associated with peasant production (1939-1964) and that which manifested itself with the inception of irrigation schemes in the northwestern part of the country in general and Sanyati in particular in the period 1965 to 2000. The study is, thus, divided into two major parts.

Using a case study approach, this work particularly explores and documents the extent to which the twin processes of development and differentiation took place in Sanyati communal lands in Zimbabwe under both dryland and irrigation conditions from the beginning of the Second World War up to 2000. Research on Tribal Trust Land Development Corporation (TILCOR) or Agricultural and Rural Development Authority (ARDA) schemes in Sanyati (Gowe and the Main Estate) reveals that differentiation as a process has been understudied. This is because of the tendency among scholars and government officials alike to construe ARDA schemes as being devoid of any signs of differentiation (i.e. as homogeneous societal entities) mainly because the plot holders (outgrowers) were allocated standardised or uniform sized plots averaging 3.5 ha which they farmed on a tenancy basis. However, this study challenges this basic assumption and argues that both dryland and irrigation farming in Sanyati facilitated commercialisation and the development of significant disparities in wealth among rural households. Clear patterns of socio-economic differentiation also emerge despite the proscribing effects of the Native Land Husbandry Act (NLHA) of 1950 and the adoption in the 1960s of a lease agreement structure by ARDA which in many ways threatened to incapacitate the irrigation plot holders’ advance towards accumulation. The lease agreement was the contract outgrowers entered into in order to have the right to use government allocated plots for a specified period of time (i.e. 99-year leases) at all ARDA irrigation schemes in Zimbabwe. Although such state interventionist measures threatened to arrest rural differentiation, the study argues that Sanyati peasants still had abundant initiative to blunt both the colonial and post-colonial states’ offensive.

Irrigation has been perceived in state policy circles primarily as a least cost means of famine relief and as a means of settling displaced farmers from Crown Land (government owned land) in the colonial period and other types of land categories after independence. This implies that the government developed schemes in the communal areas mainly on the strength of their social desirability alone. However, this study challenges scholarship which conceives the problem of rural development as no more than moving the rural population from a subsistence economy to a cash economy. It argues that such schemes
as Gowe, on the basis of cotton commodity production, at different stages in the period under review have transcended the social desirability objective and become a source of affluence and economic progress for some innovative and commercially oriented rural farmers. Indeed, the study demonstrates that the introduction of both cotton and irrigation in the 1960s deepened socio-economic inequalities among the plotholding households and dryland farming households in Sanyati.

The important questions the study will answer are:

1. What was the state of the peasant economy (based on dryland farming) in Sanyati prior to irrigation?
2. How far did peasant differentiation emerge in Sanyati prior to irrigation enterprise?
3. Did irrigation facilitate increased production of cotton and other crops as well as increased access to wealth/income?
4. To what extent did irrigation agriculture lead to the emergence of rural differentiation in the region?
5. Did the state (both colonial and post-colonial) promote rural differentiation?

Thus, the study evaluates peasant (especially dryland) agriculture from 1939 and irrigation farming from the 1960s and analyses how the relationship between ARDA-Sanyati and Gowe has developed since the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) up to 2000. At the same time, elements of continuity or change in the interaction of the two are addressed within the context of the colonial and post-colonial paradigms in order to demonstrate how Sanyati society was differentiated in the two major periods under review.
DEDICATIONS

This thesis is dedicated to my children, Mark (Jnr), Miranda and Mike who always kept me motivated in their own little ways. I will always remember their prayers. The thesis is also dedicated to my parents Mr and Mrs Nyandoro for bringing me up and directing my academic career.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am unable to express in full my gratitude to my Supervisor, Prof. Ian Phimister, for his patient guidance of this study from beginning to end. He painstakingly went through all the drafts of this work and selflessly proffered invaluable advice and criticism as he ploughed through the formative and final versions of the thesis. Prof. Phimister has had the most profound impact on my doctoral studies. I want to extend my heart-felt gratitude to Prof. Phimister for being my Chief Supervisor and for the untiring assistance he has given me all the time. I thank him for his continued support and assistance throughout my research and for his attention to detail. I greatly appreciate the many and in-depth structural suggestions he made which have contributed immensely to giving this study its final shape. Professor Phimister deserves special thanks for his generosity and for the role he has played throughout my research which included ensuring that I secure financial support from the Ernest Oppenheimer Memorial Trust (EOMT) and a bursary from the University of Pretoria. Without him I might not have embarked on a PhD programme in the first place. The possibility of doing a PhD looked extremely remote given the difficulties of getting a sponsor for this project in my home country and other logistical problems. I am grateful to him for his encouragement, support and advice throughout this project.

I also owe a debt of gratitude to my Associate Supervisor, Prof. A. S. Mlambo, for going through all the drafts and making extensive editorial comments on them. Special thanks are due to him. His advice and guidance has been invaluable.

I would like to thank Prof. J. S. Bergh - Chairman of the Department of Historical and Heritage Studies - for his invaluable advice and for making his door open to me all the time when I needed his help. In a big way, he complemented my supervisors’ role by keeping a keen interest in my work and proffered important advice whenever he could. He also played a big role in recommending me for a UP bursary award.

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The research leading to the production of this study would not have been possible, neither would it have progressed smoothly without the generous grant, renewable annually for 3 years, obtained from the Ernest Oppenheimer Memorial Trust (EOMT) based in South Africa. I am most grateful to the Trust for availing this grant and in particular, Ms Claire Digby with whom I was in constant contact regarding my financial requirements to cover research expenses, subsistence costs, accommodation and other needs. Ms C. Digby sometimes had to endure a lot of pestering from me for supplementary or top-up support due to runaway inflation in Zimbabwe where the greater part of my research was conducted. I also want to thank her and the Trust most sincerely for availing funds to purchase a printer, which went a long way towards lessening printing costs. I will always be thankful to Oppenheimer for fully funding my research.
My sincere gratitude also goes to all the lecturers in the Department of Historical and Heritage Studies and the Secretary, Mrs T. Van Rensburg. I am also deeply indebted to the many colleagues outside the university environment especially Mr Simon Pazvakavambwa whose rich and diverse knowledge, insight and experience greatly enhanced my own understanding of Zimbabwe’s agricultural history, not least irrigation issues.

I would like to thank Dr. A. P. D. Masunungure for helping me formulate the hypothesis for my proposal and his unrelenting commitment in going through my early draft chapters (before his departure for the USA) and in the process making invaluable comments that helped shape this thesis. I also appreciate Prof. Sam Moyo’s support and advice.

I am deeply indebted to Bishop Loveless Matarirano Manhango for his advice and spiritual guidance. As a member of the church he leads, I benefited a lot from his unwavering support. I also thank Mai Manhango very much for her kindness and generosity and all my friends for the support they gave me continually.

Many thanks too are due to Mr Malcolm Wallis of the Durban Institute of Technology for his assistance with books and papers on Zimbabwe agriculture. I am grateful to him and his wife (Ruth) for accommodating me in their house in Durban on my way to and on my way back from Ramsgate on the east coast where I had gone to see Mr Westcott (the former DC Gatooma) for an oral interview.

I also owe Ms Fiona Mubvumbi sincere thanks for the time she spent typing and printing the draft first chapter of my thesis as well as Mr Elton Gilbert for allowing me to interview him from his hospital bed at West End Hospital in Harare - a really touching moment for me in my academic career.

To my mate, Peter T. Kurauone, thanks for fixing all the tables and illustrations for me.

Furthermore, I feel a great obligation to all my key informants/respondents. These include, the plotholders on the Gowe Irrigation Scheme, Estate employees, Sanyati dryland farmers, the former DC for Gatooma, R. L. Westcott, for helping me understand how Gowe operated in the colonial period, former and present TILCOR/ARDA Estate management, especially the former General Manager of ARDA, Dr Liberty Mhlanga, who accepted my probings and inquisitiveness with a cheerful good humour and a fore-bearing tolerance.

At ARDA, I want to thank the Chief Executive Officer, Dr. J. Z. Z. Matowanyika, for authorising me to use ARDA Archives and documents in the Records Centre section of the National Archives of Zimbabwe. This research would have relied on limited information had this authority not been granted because the ARDA sources housed there are not yet public archives and this would have compromised the quality of this thesis. I also want to acknowledge the rare assistance I got from the Sanyati Estate Manager, Mr Henry Chiona, and other estate officials who always supported me in their different ways during the course of this project. Mr Chiona in particular gave me access to official
correspondence, which contributed immensely towards giving my study originality. His broad insight about the local community (Sanyati) and ARDA operations in the country in general was extremely beneficial to me.

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It must be emphasised, though, that the people mentioned above should be absolved from any blame for the errors or shortcomings in the thesis. Unless, otherwise stated, opinions and conclusions expressed in this study are the sole responsibility of the author.
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AAB  Agricultural Assistance Board
ACCOR  Associated Chambers of Commerce
ADA  Agricultural Development Authority
ADC  Agricultural Development Corporation
ADF  Agricultural Development Fund/African Development Fund
AFC  Agricultural Finance Corporation
AGRIBANK  Agricultural Bank of Zimbabwe
AGRITEX  Department of Agricultural Technical and Extension Services
ALF  Agricultural Loan Fund/African Loan Fund
AMA  Agricultural Marketing Authority
AMC  Agricultural Marketing Corporation
ANC  Assistant Native Commissioner/African National Congress
APAs  African Purchase Areas
APLs  African Purchase Lands
ARDA  Agricultural and Rural Development Authority
AREX  Department of Agricultural Research and Extension
ARnI  Association of Rhodesian Industries
BIC  Bantu Investment Corporation
BP  Blood Pressure
BSACo  British South Africa Company
BSAP  British South Africa Police
CBZ  Commercial Bank of Zimbabwe
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CCC</td>
<td>Cotton Company Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>CCGA</td>
<td>Commercial Cotton Growers Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>CDC</td>
<td>Cameroon Development Corporation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEO</td>
<td>Chief Executive Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFU</td>
<td>Commercial Farmers Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CID</td>
<td>Criminal Investigations Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMB</td>
<td>Cotton Marketing Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNC</td>
<td>Chief Native Commissioner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONEX</td>
<td>Department of Conservation and Extension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COTTCO</td>
<td>Cotton Company of Zimbabwe</td>
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<tr>
<td>CP</td>
<td>Centre Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSC</td>
<td>Cold Storage Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>CTC</td>
<td>Cotton Training Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>DA</td>
<td>District Administrator</td>
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<tr>
<td>DANIDA</td>
<td>Danish International Development Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>DC</td>
<td>District Commissioner</td>
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<td>District Development Fund</td>
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<td>Department of Rural Development</td>
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<td>DEVAG</td>
<td>Department of Agricultural Development</td>
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<td>DMB</td>
<td>Dairy Marketing Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>DZL</td>
<td>Dairiboard Zimbabwe Limited</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECGC</td>
<td>Empire Cotton Growing Corporation</td>
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<tr>
<td>EEC</td>
<td>European Economic Community</td>
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</table>
ESAP  Economic Structural Adjustment Programme
ESC  Electricity Supply Commission
EU  European Union
FAO  Food and Agriculture Organisation
FIF  Farm Irrigation Fund
GDP  Gross Domestic Product
GM  General Manager
GMB  Grain Marketing Board
ICC  Irrigation Co-ordinating Committee
IDC  Industrial Development Corporation
IIMI  International Irrigation Management Institute
IMF  International Monetary Fund
IMT  Irrigation Management Transfer
IWMI  International Water Management Institute
LAA  Land Apportionment Act
LDO  Land Development Officer
MDC  Movement for Democratic Change
MEU  Mechanical Equipment Unit
MOWD  Ministry of Water Development
MP  Member of Parliament
MWEA  Kenyan Rice Project
NAD  Native Affairs Department
NANGO  National Association of Non-Governmental Organisations
NASA (UA) National Archives of South Africa (Union Archives)
NAZ (RC) National Archives of Zimbabwe (Records Centre)
NC Native Commissioner
NDF Native Development Fund
NDP National Democratic Party
NFAZ National Farmers’ Association of Zimbabwe
NGO Non-Governmental Organisation
NLHA Native Land Husbandry Act
NPAs Native Purchase Areas
NRB Natural Resources Board
NRZ National Railways of Zimbabwe
PC Provincial Commissioner
PDO Primary Development Officer
PICC Provincial Irrigation Co-ordinating Committee
PM Prime Minister
PNC Provincial Native Commissioner
POZ Parliament of Zimbabwe
PTA Parents Teachers Association
RAEO Regional Agriculture Extension Officer
RBZ Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe
RDPU Rural Development Promotion Unit
RF Rhodesia Front
RNFU Rhodesia National Farmers Union
RTA  Rhodesian Tobacco Association
SA  South Africa
SADC  Southern Africa Development Committee
SAP  Structural Adjustment Programme
SGB  Sudan Gezira Board
SLA  Sabi-Limpopo Authority
TILCOR  Tribal Trust Land Development Corporation
TTLs  Tribal Trust Lands
UANC  United African National Congress
UDI  Unilateral Declaration of Independence
UK  United Kingdom
UN  United Nations
UNDP  United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO  United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation
USA  United States of America
USAID  United States Agency for International Development
VIDCO  Village Development Committee
WADCO  Ward Development Committee
WB  World Bank
WENELA  Witwatersrand Native Labour Association
WRMS  Water Resources Management Strategy
WTO  World Trade Organisation
WUAs  Water User Associations
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<tr>
<td>WW2</td>
<td>World War 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZANU (PF)</td>
<td>Zimbabwe African National Union (Patriotic Front)</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZAPU (PF)</td>
<td>Zimbabwe African People’s Union (Patriotic Front)</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZBC</td>
<td>Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZBH</td>
<td>Zimbabwe Broadcasting Holdings</td>
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<td>ZESA</td>
<td>Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZFC</td>
<td>Zimbabwe Fertiliser Company/Zimbabwe Farmers Corporation</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZFU</td>
<td>Zimbabwe Farmers Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZIMACE</td>
<td>Zimbabwe Agricultural Commodity Exchange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZIMBANK</td>
<td>Zimbabwe Banking Corporation Limited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZIMCODD</td>
<td>Zimbabwe Coalition on Debt and Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZIMPREST</td>
<td>Zimbabwe Programme for Economic and Social Transformation</td>
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<td>ZINWA</td>
<td>Zimbabwe National Water Authority</td>
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<td>ZISCO</td>
<td>Zimbabwe Iron and Steel Company</td>
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<td>ZNFU</td>
<td>Zimbabwe National Farmers’ Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZRP</td>
<td>Zimbabwe Republic Police</td>
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<td>ZUPCO</td>
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