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THE MASHONA REBELLION IN ORAL TRADITION : MAZOE DISTRICT

by

C. G. CHIVANDA

"Chindunduma" or "Chimurenga".

In this paper I shall try to give all the material on the Mashona rebellion which I collected from oral sources. I will look more closely at the attitudes, the causes and the role of the mhondoro-cult before, during and after the rebellion, particularly in the Mazoe District. I shall then compare the oral tradition with the European point of view, to be found mainly in written accounts.

The result of this undertaking, and especially of the comparison, seems to show that there is much in common in the two accounts. There are, however, some differences in emphasis besides minor unsolved questions. As a whole, a broader view of the rebellion can be obtained.

It would be useful to say something at this stage about oral tradition as a whole and then with special reference to the Mashona Rebellion in the Mazoe District. According to Jan Vansina, "Oral traditions consist of all verbal testimonies which are reported statements concerning the past."(1) Vansina emphasises in his definition the characteristic of oral traditions "as reported statements", which must be distinguished from eye-witness accounts. They consist solely of hearsay accounts. This definition may not agree entirely with the kind of tradition that I collected, in as much as most of my reliable and best informants were either rebels themselves or just observers. But here the time factor should be taken into account. The rebellion occurred seventy years ago, and since then many of the principal actors have died. The account can be called oral because it has not yet been written down, and because some of my informants were not eye-witnesses or participants.

The generally accepted view today about oral tradition is that it is very useful as a historical source among pre-literate or even illiterate societies, but like any other historical source, including written ones, oral tradition must be critically examined. If it can be proved to be reliable, it should be taken seriously as a source, but only one of different possible sources. Even when not reliable, oral tradition almost always gives some idea of the past, though it may be distorted. In this case we are dealing with, oral tradition can be checked by comparing the accounts of two informants or more, or by placing it side by side with a written source.

When dealing with, or reading about the Mashona rebellion, most of what we learn is given by Europeans, though it may not necessarily mean that the view is European. There is no other way at the present time to hear the African point of view except from oral tradition. That is its value. A European account of African views and feelings may be accurate and true, but it is wholly impossible for a European completely to understand the background of African feelings as the African does. The thing which strikes me is that I shall never be able to give in English as accurate a picture as possible of an oral tradition which was given to me in Shona; so much of the people's attitudes and feelings is conveyed best in their own language and expressions.

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(1) Jan Vansina: Oral Tradition, pp.19 ff. Aldine, 1961.

What happened in the Mazoe District, or what the people there thought and felt about the rebellion, cannot be taken to be automatically true about the whole of Mashonaland. But the Mazoe district is very interesting and representative of many other districts. It is interesting in that it was here that the Mhondoro Nehanda had her headquarters in the Mazoe Valley, and her influence was strong in Central Mashonaland in the districts around Salisbury. The Mazoe district at the time of the rebellion covered a larger area than it does today. Then it included what is now Mt. Darwin district, and I wish to point out that I am dealing with Mazoe South of that time, which was mainly the Mazoe Valley and immediate surroundings.

Where and how can the oral tradition be found in the Mazoe district And what was my method of collecting information? I don't pretend to have exhausted the possible sources, but I found out that there are here and there some old men with a reputation for being fundis on oral tradition as a whole. Many would-be informants usually referred me to some of these old men, survivors of the rebellion. Many of these people know each other well, and would refer an inquirer to one another. This is inevitable, of course, since they are in the same district. There are no special people trained to keep oral tradition, which is mainly the privilege of the older people. The oral tradition I collected is not formalised, or the property of a class or political group. It is very informally and freely kept and handed down. Here lies the danger to this type of oral tradition - it can so easily be lost, together with the original informant. I am not implying that there is not some sense of history among these people, and the randomness with which it is handled is probably due to a gradual disintegration of the tribal society. Both political and social changes are affecting oral tradition. Sometimes, however, certain factors keep oral tradition alive. The old people know that they are the repository of the tribe's history and are to a very great extent aware of their duty and obligation to hand it down. There is prestige in being known as the clan's historian, and very often they will tell you their history without your asking for it. The elderly people do know quite a lot, if they have stayed with some clever or experienced men, but very often if there is an old historian around, an inquirer will be referred to that one.

The political crisis in Rhodesia at the time that I was looking for oral traditions both hindered and helped me in my work. It hindered me mainly because I had difficulty in finding informants prepared to talk to an unknown person. On the other hand, the crisis, with its emotionally charged political atmosphere and certain events, helped to revive the memory of my informants, most of whom could trace the existing tensions and attitudes to the time of the rebellion. The African kinship system did enable me to overcome some difficulties, and even to understand the African society of the 1890s. A marriage which took place, say, in 1890 could still, in 1966, secure for me access and opportunity for field work in a locality where I wasn't previously known. The fact that I undertook field work among my own people may be seized upon by some people as an excuse to accuse me of unavoidable bias, but the benefits must not be overlooked: I have heard of some of the traditions since I was young, and I was able to obtain material freely once people knew who I was.

The method that I often used was just to ask an informant to tell me the history of a certain clan or tribe. I found out that most informants like to tell a continuous story, beginning as early as they can remember, and going far beyond what you may require at that moment. Even when one asks for a specific period, one will have to sort out the relevant material from a lot of diversions, probably more interesting to the informant. The rebellion is one of the most dramatically narrated episodes, the favourite part being the great ambush which the Mazoe Patrol encountered on its retreat. (One grey-haired informant, using his walking stick as a gun, was so taken up by his demonstrations and gestures that he fell off his stool and nearly burned himself in the fire near him.) One can see the narrator reliving the rebellious days, and every time I heard the account I felt I wasn't recording the whole impression in my notebook. A tape-recorder would have been most appropriate and useful. In most cases I met

informants who had been interviewed before on other matters and could dictate to an inquirer if asked, but they would unconsciously go on to tell their tale in a narrative, dramatic and lively manner and high-pitched voice. The quality of the tale depends, of course, on the individual informant, and the eye-witnesses are the most interesting and reliable: the story comes so easily and naturally that you will be led to believe all that they tell you.

Since it is often the case that an informant will relate what is most interesting or well known to him and in his own style, it is important that for a more complete picture more than one informant should be interviewed, or the same person must be seen more than once. On the whole, my informants were consistent, with some bias to own clans.

There were several clans in the Mazoe district before the arrival of the Pioneer Column. It appears the area was comparatively well populated, and among the numerous people there were Hwata, Chiweshe, Negamo, Makope and Nyachuru, Mseri, Nyamweda, Mbari. Most of these people had been living here for a long time except Hwata and Chiweshe. The importance of these two peoples we shall see later, but here let us look at their history as given in oral tradition. Hwata and Chiweshe were originally brothers who had immigrated sometime in the middle of the nineteenth century. Three or four brothers, Nyamhangambiri (Chiweshe), Shayachimwe (Hwata), and Gutsa fled by night (an event called "kupfigira") from Nyashanu in Buhera. The reason was that the youngest, Gutsa, was quarrelsome and had committed some murders which made his and his brothers' stay there dangerous. They passed through Wedza (Mbire) and arrived in Seki's country near Kentucky, far from their pursuers. In search of better soil, they settled in Zaregoro, just east of Salisbury, and here they encountered Mbari's (Madombwe's) people. Gutsa continued to cause trouble, and a war was provoked by this man in Chief Mbari's fields. The newcomers knew how to make hoes, which they used to give as presents or tribute to Mbari's people. After a brief war, Mbari was beaten by the newcomers, Hwata and Chiweshe, who were still comparatively small in numbers but more warlike than the people among whom they settled. One feature which seems to have characterised the tribal life of the tribes around present-day Salisbury is warfare. There was a lot of raiding and counter-raiding, for instance, between Chiweshe and Nyamweda, or Chiweshe and some Rozvi group from Zvimba. Cattle, goats and women were taken and redeemed regularly, and either a complete conquest like that inflicted on Mbari, or a marriage alliance between ruling families could only stop warfare. There were, for instance, such marriages between Chiweshe and Vashawasha, Chiweshe and Mrewa or Seki, which made for peaceful co-existence.

The Matabele no doubt came for raids; but it would appear they came in smaller parties, and their exploits were not very different from the local ones. At times they would pose as traders, and then suddenly kill their hosts or just drive away cattle. The Matabele didn't always succeed. One such unsuccessful Matabele impi led by "Mbudzikunyungwa" lost against Chikukwa, a chief of the Chiweshe clan, who had succeeded to the chieftainship as a result of a war against Nyamweda. This clash between Chikukwa and the Matabele "Mbudzikunyungwa" took the form of a duel between the leaders. Many of these conflicts seem to have been of the same type: followers would stand aside while their leaders were engaged in a duel. Sometimes an invader perished due to starvation, the fate of many Matabele impis which failed to secure food.(2) Such a very brief history of one of many tribes should only be considered in the light of what it can show concerning the overall political situation just before Europeans came. Tribal history of the pre-occupation era is, of course, not very well known. But this much is possible to learn from oral sources: constant inter-tribal warfare; lack of overall ruler and conqueror who could not only stop tribal warfare but could also rule effectively. Even the Matabele couldn't establish any regular rule or get cattle without

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(2) Gondo: 31st December, 1965. The story of the migration is well known, and many informants related much the same thing.

fighting for them. Tribal wars were to a large extent responsible for tribal splits and segmentation and migrations. Hwata and Chiweshe, for instance, are said to have split into two different clans when surrounded by an enemy all of a sudden. Also they moved from the Salisbury area because it was too open to Matabele raids, and settled in or near the Mazoe Valley, where there was not only better soil but also mountain fortresses and caves. The tribes seem to have been of about equal strength, or at least none was strong enough to force a combination. The lack of co-operation against the Matabele, who were often in smaller numbers than the local people, is a weakness which is freely and readily admitted in oral tradition. On the other hand, people of the Negomo country, a Rozvi group which claims to own the land in most of Chiweshe Tribal Trust land today, say they were never defeated or had their people and cattle taken by the Matabele. This is the group to which Mapondera and other well-known rebels belong. Politically, the Africans of the Mazoe area considered themselves free from the rule of any other people or tribe, though they had continually to watch against the Matabele and against each other. They were grouped into too many clans for the size of their area. But any invader had to deal with these groups one by one - which was both a weakness and a strength. The Matabele, it is said, had guns before some people in this area, but towards the end of the nineteenth century they were better able to resist the raids when they had guns also.(3)

Most oral accounts of the rebellion begin at the time of the occupation. The people in Mazoe had some recognisable boundaries between them. Hwata was near the Henderson Agricultural Station; Chiweshe was west of the Iron Mask mountain, or west of Hwata, and coming up to Mt. Hampden and Avondale. Negomo was further south, near where his people are today. Nyachuru was at Amanda. When reports came that white men had arrived at "Rutambo", probably Mt. Hampden, most chiefs sent black cows, Negomo sent a brown bull. It is said when Europeans came that they asked whose country it was they were in. Chiweshe said it was his (country round Mt. Hampden and east). The arrival of the Europeans was reported to Nehanda at Shayarunzwi, her headquarters in the Mazoe Valley. She said to each of the chiefs under her: "Don't be afraid of them - they are only traders. But take a black cow to them and say,'This is the meat with which we greet you'." The chiefs were given some presents in exchange. Chiweshe, who met Forbes near the old prison for the exchange of greetings and presents, was given a blanket or more, white and black rolls of cloth, and "a big, heavy overcoat, red inside".(4) Hwata was represented by one Chakuchichi or Mazuru.(5) Europeans, most informants testify, said they were looking for gold and asked for help in prospecting, as well as peace to enable prospectors to carry on their work. There was alluvial gold in the Mazoe Valley, which was collected by African women (guarded by men) by a process called "Kuonga" and put into reeds. This gold was traded for guns, cloth and salt with the Portuguese.

A people who were used to trade, no matter how small that trade was, readily understood what the newcomers were looking for and even co-operated in the search for gold. Chiweshe (Chandaengerwa), for instance, had a brother-in-law called Guyo Marimo, who was immediately engaged by the Pioneers in looking for gold. Most people, when they saw the behaviour of Europeans change as they struck more roots in the country, said desperately: "We thought they were good people."(6) Nehanda, however, was very cautious; she and most of the people in authority were not discounting a clash. Still, oral tradition emphasises the welcome which was extended to whites when they first came. It was easy to call Europeans a bad, deceitful people when the rebellion was being organised, in view of this aspect of their first contact.

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(3) Gondo: Chakanetsa Gatsi; Feb.4, 1966.
(4) Gondo.
(5) Samuel, Nyakudya Hwata.
(6) Chivarange Kaseke; Gondo.

The occupation of Mashonaland was something that the Mashona were probably not expecting at the very beginning. They had seen isolated travellers like Selous come and go, and Portuguese traders, commonly called "vazungu". "Gouveia" is a well-known personality. But it wasn't long before Nehanda could see that her land was taken; these newcomers were different from the Portuguese. The first Europeans who came were at first thought of as "people without knees" - ("vanhu vasina mabvi") because they put on trousers. The point is that Africans were cautious rather than extending a very warm welcome because they didn't know much about these people. There was a sort of wait-and-see attitude, and people were told not to provoke any dispute unnecessarily. It didn't take long, however, before familiarity began to breed contempt and suspicion. The trader was establishing himself and bringing in many more of his friends. The Africans began to see an increasing interference with their lives, work and government. As far as one can judge, the Mashona were not aware of any treaty between the British South Africa Company and Lobengula, giving rights in Mashonaland. They knew he was powerful; some people from Mazoe had either been captured or gone to Matabeleland on their own, and come back. But the relations between the Mashona and the Chartered Company can at best be described as vague. An exchange of presents didn't mean that the Africans had given up their sovereign or land rights; the Europeans were not there by virtue of conquest either. The situation was dangerous, for the chiefs and their people did as they pleased with their lives and wanted to be left alone to plough and hunt.

In Mazoe district, some oral tradition points to an early incorporation of some Africans into the European system. One informant, Chakanetsa Gatsi, says that the people of the Mazoe district, especially the chiefs, had some servants or semi-slaves. These people, called Vanyai, were quick to switch over to the Europeans either for refuge or because they wanted European goods. These were among the first to join the native police, people who welcomed an opportunity for revenge on their former masters. Other people, like Hwata, are said to have given freely their children either to become policemen or to be educated. These children and police recruits were of course given after the Europeans had asked for them. One factor which influenced the relations between the Europeans and some people in the Mazoe Valley is, according to Gondo, the presence of Shangaans, people from the Zambesi - the Africans foreign to Mazoe. These people, "the Colonial boys" among them, were used to working for Europeans for money, and they attracted the attention of the local people. It wasn't long before people who were used to trade for cloth with the Portuguese began to work for Europeans for cloth and blankets. "We didn't know money or how to use it. It is the Zambesi people who taught us the use of money." The first labourers used to insist on cloth - a very valuable luxury at that time. It is thus very difficult to say that the Europeans were completely boycotted or accepted. Certain groups did, and others did not, come forward to Europeans. With Mapondera there was some sort of an agreement. Chivarange Kaseke says that there was some exchange of guns and cattle, but this does not seem to have been followed up. Here it is only noticeable that presents were larger, and Mapondera was a powerful man. Some informants have said that Africans used to buy guns from the Pioneers with cattle. I do not know if this is a confusion with the agreement between Mapondera and the Europeans.

After the occupation of Mashonaland, the Mashona continued to trade for guns, cloth and beads. As Chitagunda Gomba says, these guns were meant for hunting and general armament. The Europeans knew about them, thought they were meant for hunting purposes and didn't seem to object to their importation.

The attitude of the Europeans towards Africans didn't go unnoticed. The Mashona were not slow to detect some of the characteristics of Europeans. As we have already seen, Nehanda, who was one of the best informed and experienced mhondoro, early foresaw a clash. That they

were being contemptuously regarded and bullied, the Mashona were able to notice. For a people who had just been apparently peacefully received, the Europeans were considered extremely provocative. Europeans appeared cheeky, insolent and proud. "They couldn't listen to the talk of Africans as the owners of the land."(7) They had come in search of gold and yet were using and alienating land - something they hadn't asked for and been granted. The search for riches and land was too obvious to be missed. "The whites coveted our land, its resources and riches."(7) For this land, the Mashona rebelled. The same informant who said the above, tells us how they used to be called by such names as "baboon", "monkey". There is a very widely held belief that Europeans in early Rhodesia caught these animals and sent them home saying that this is what the Africans looked like, except that they had no tails. These names were not taken lightly, and the way they were said conveyed the intention of the one who said them.

African ignorance of European objects was another cause of irritations; misuse of tools would of course irritate a European employer. Chivarango Kaseke speaks of his frustration and irritation at the time (though he now laughs at it) when, in order to change or divide a ten shilling note, they would tear it in the middle and take one piece to the store where it was refused.

Taxation was one of the methods by which Europeans are said to have attempted to establish their rule. Samuel Nyakudya Hwata brings forward clearly the point that Hwata and Chiweshe refused to pay tax to Europeans because they were strangers. For three or four years Europeans were demanding tax, and it didn't seem logical that one who wasn't acknowledged as a ruler should demand tribute. This informant further states that they couldn't pay tax to the English when the Portuguese used to pay tax (44 guns a year) to the Mashona.(8)How far this is true I don't know, for I wasn't able to support it with another informant's evidence. Certainly the Portuguese supplied guns by way of trade; as for tax, there is no evidence. Most people interviewed state that taxation was attempted and rejected by Africans, and only came as a result of defeat. Negomo's people and others definitely refused to pay tax till after their defeat.

But land, taxation and insults didn't contribute, it seems, so much to the reasons for the rebellion as questions of labour, the native police and natural disasters like rinderpest and locusts.

Taking the last two first, it was thought that the coming of the white man had brought such unprecedented calamities. This opinion was not necessarily held only by the religious leaders, but also by the mass of the people. One explanation for this view is probably that no such disasters had ever fallen all at once and so severely before. The European, being a stranger whose origin and purposes for coming seemed secret, and who was different in almost everything, was bound to be thought of as the cause of misfortunes.

The most important and immediate cause of the Mashona rebellion is no doubt flogging. Ask any old man or reasonably well-informed African what caused the rebellion, and almost invariably the answer will be "Mbvuwu" - the sjambok. On this point I must say I secured the evidence and agreement of every man that I interviewed. As stated above, Europeans were considered cheeky, irascible and fond of bullying. The Mashona couldn't understand why they were beaten. "Good or bad, you were beaten."(9) "Heyi-wena boy, mina chaya wena." Flogging was occasioned by the labour question and the veterinary campaign.

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(7) Chivarango Kaseke.
(8) Samuel Nyakudya Hwata, 8th Feb. 1966.
(9) Gondo.

Labour was constantly demanded by the Native Commissioner, who would send his messengers or police to ask for it from the chief. When there were men available, or the season was not one for working in the fields, the chiefs would comply and send some men. What was irritating was that when the men were not enough, the police would come back and raid a village at night for some more men. Labourers were beaten at work and would run away. As a result, police would follow them and punish both relatives and neighbours for the escape of one man. After a while many people refused to work far from their homes. Chiefs Hwata, Chiweshe and Negomo Makope are said to have complained to the Native Commissioner, "Kunyaira", or H.H.Pollard, concerning flogging. He is said to have admitted frequently that his men were wrong, but the practice continued.

Then came the Native police. Some of their members were foreign to the Mazoe district, others were not. Their behaviour was the most provocative. Their raids caused the Mashona to think of the Europeans as bad as the Matabele. They thought they had a right to everything they came across. They would demand some goats, beautiful girls to cook them, and then make these girls their mistresses. Some informants say the African policemen exceeded their orders and made life hard for their own people.

The veterinary campaign involved the chiefs. For instance, Chiweshe was asked by the Native Commissioner Pollard why he hadn't reported the death of cattle at Negomo's. He said plainly that Pollard should use his messengers, not himself. Chiweshe received some very deadly lashes. It is common knowledge in Chiweshe that this chief (Chandaengerwa) died with some marks made by the sjambok still on his back. The Government asked, or rather ordered, Africans to bury or burn their own cattle which died of rinderpest. This was seen as an interference with a people's right to their own property. The cattle which died of rinderpest were called "mombe dzechidarimanga". The Mashona, contrary to the Europeans, thought any cattle that died must be meat for the children - "yafa ngaifunwe irere vana".(10)

The flogging was done mostly by the African police, sometimes alone and at other times under directions of the Native Commissioner, or by the Native Commissioner himself. Most Europeans were said to beat people as much as they liked. Pollard, the then N.C., who was killed at the beginning of the rebellion, had a reputation for flogging indiscriminately. Usually people who were being flogged were tied to some big tree - head down, or fastened by the neck to some kind of a forked slave stick called "kasiga", except that this was very heavy and immovable. The victim would remain a whole day tied down to one place in the same position unless some one came to move him. The sjambok was the favourite weapon used, and was usually applied to the back. There are at least two people who died as a result of this kind of punishment and flogging whose names I heard of from most informants.(11) One is Dandajena, the maternal grandfather of the chief at present ruling the Chiweshe people. The other man is Gukuzenzi, told me by S.K.Hwata. The sjambok was so severe that it made holes on the flank, till the Mashona said: "Hevoka, chiyi chatakaita kuzoti boora hura". "Alas, what have we done to deserve death through flogging."

The rebellion, in short, arose because of cruelty and oppression. Police action, flogging and other acts were interpreted by the Mashona as a pretext for starting a war that would lead to a take-over of their land.

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(10) S.N.Hwata.
(11) e.g. Gondo.

Just before the actual beginning of the rebellion there was trouble in Negomo's country. As everywhere else, beatings and floggings increased in intensity and frequency. There was an Englishman whom the Africans nicknamed Chimkwasha because he was too poor to own a cart or wagon. He had a rickshaw only. He traded in fowls, buying them at Chimbagu or Mutumba, near Mt. Darwin. He relied on porters for transport, most of whom came from the Negomo people. They didn't like this kind of work. One day at Rwanga village (a relation of Mapondera), a man called Chirau refused to carry the load assigned to him. The Englishman, "Chimkwasha", shot Chirau in the arm, whereupon Chirau's people killed him. Rwanga was arrested and had to pay twenty head of cattle.(12)

All this was happening in the eyes of Nehanda and Mwari, and both could not bear to see their people suffering as they were doing. Chiefs and headmen brought their troubles to Nehanda, and she in turn reported to Kagubi at Mashayamombe. She said her people were being illtreated, and were ready to fight. Kagubi assured Nehanda of his aid in getting rid of the white people. Messages and presents were exchanged between Nehanda and Kagubi, messengers travelling mostly at night. The rebellion started in Matabeleland and reached Mazoe from Mashayamombe, and the news travelled far ahead. Little is known of its leaders in Matabeleland, but the role of Kagubi and Mashayamombe is clearly remembered in this refrain sung by the people of Mazoe: "Wakarigona Mashayamombe akati mhungu chena ngaiurayiwe" - ("Mashayamombe was just right when he said that the white cobra must be killed.") Kagubi seems to have been prominent in the organisation of the rebellion. Messages and preparations had been going on for some months in secret, and to small groups of people. Kaguvi gave orders and advice from Mashamombe, and there developed a close network of communication. Kaguvi said whites must be killed - but it would not be said in this manner. Rather than say "White people must be killed", messengers were to say "Nhapi! Nhapi!" "Nhapi" or "dapi" is a Rowley's otomys, and the general idea which Kaguvi conveyed was that people should talk of murdering white men as though they were talking of going for a big hunt. This use of hunting terminology seems to have been extended to tactics as well. The rebels as much as possible preferred to attack from cover, as if afraid of frightening off game. The long grass in June, and the dense forests and the rocks to be found in the Mazoe district afforded excellent cover. The rebels knew the roads frequently used by the Europeans, and when they thought the enemy would be coming a particular way they dug pits across the road, laid sticks, soil and grass on toy, or did anything to increase the effectiveness of the trap, or "hunza".

Back to murders. The main target was of course the white people, but any policemen or Africans who co-operated with whites,as well as all Africans who were not Shona were to be attacked. Secrecy was to be observed, and orders from Nehanda were usually obeyed satisfactorily. Any pretext to get near the enemy was employed: trade, looking for work, hunting together, or just the usual kindness or conversation. The adoption of these tactics necessitated the employment of agents who were acquainted with certain Europeans. The method required extraordinary friendliness and normal behaviour, and there is no doubt the Europeans were taken by surprise.

The murder of Pollard, the Native Commissioner, is illustrative of the use of close acquaintances of the victim, and the Native Commissioner's police, who may have been unwilling or willing agents, had no choice for they had to do it. Hwata Chidamba, the chief who stayed nearest to Nehanda, was sometimes called Chiripanyanga. Some of the Hwata people in high places had joined the police, as for instance Masvi. There was thus an additional reason why the African police were used against their former masters. These men were suspected of selling secrets or information unless they were pushed forward to do it under threats of death.(14)

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(12) Chivarange Kaseke and Chakanetsa Gatsi.
(13) Chigama Muchenje, 28 Jan. 1966.
(14) Nedi Chidamba, 20th Feb. 1966. C. Muchenje, 28 Jan.1966.

Pollard, or "Kunjaira" (someone who walks jerkily or without any dignity), was at Mt. Darwin when the rebellion started. He was caught by his own policemen at Mtemaringa and brought to Nehanda. He was killed by Chiripanyanga or Hwata at the bidding of Nehanda.(15) Before that, however, some say he was made a house servant by his former servants. He was killed mainly for beating people. It appears he had the worst record among Africans of the Mazoe area. Chiripanyanga rather than Hwata or Chidamba is the widely used name of the man who killed Pollard.

The rebels didn't gather into a large crowd until the Europeans had sought refuge at the Alice Mine, which the Africans called "Dambure Mushanda". At the beginning of open fighting, which started with the attack on the Alice Mine laager, most of the people in the district were fighting together. It was only later that some people from Negomo were told by Gwangwadza, their chief mhondoro, to withdraw from the combined force and await their turn.(16) These people, as we have seen, are the ones who got involved in the shooting incident at Rwanga, and they were to carry the rebellion further north later on. Each chief would send his own contingent under himself or an officer to join in the attack. It is here that we begin to see the way the rebellion was organised at the local level. Nehanda was, of course, the overall Mhondoro. She not only gave information of the whereabouts of the enemy, but gave orders and kept up the people's morale by predicting victory and doctoring the rebels. Under Nehanda there were lesser Mhondoro, who carried out the more detailed planning and preparation. Just to give an example: every chief had a principal mhondoro in his clan who co-operated closely with him and established communications with greater spirits like Nehanda. The Nyamweda clan had their own called "Chikare". The Chiweshe clan had one called Chikukwa who had several praise names (Chikukwa Chinovava, Masona and Watsikemhandu). We have seen this mhondoro when discussing the history of Hwata and Chiweshe just prior to the occupation. What specially recommended Chikukwa for the role of a mhondoro leading his people in battle was that he himself was a reputed warrior in his day; he was once a chief and the father of Chandaengerwa, the Chiweshe chief at the time of the rebellion. The spirit or mhondoro of Chikukwa spoke through the medium vaTakai, wife of Chandaengerwa (and mother of Gondo, my informant). Thus there was the greatest possibility of co-operation between the chief and the spiritual leaders who kept the people in fighting mood. "Chikukwa used to tell us also what to do and where to go." The preparations for battle were carried out at night: the war-song was sung, accompanied by Mbira music; a goat or other sacrificial animal was offered to the dead ancestors who had been warriors in their days, and the dance would go on throughout the night, usually in thickets and forests, preferably near a mountain, far from the village. Nothing was more effective than this all-night sacrificial war-dance in working up in people the mood of war. It is important to understand the confidence of people if we realise that the presence of the mhondoro, who was a warrior himself, was constant and reassuring. People felt safe because the mhondoro were believed to be able to prophesy and ward off danger.(17) Anyway, some "muti" was still needed to strengthen the hearts of the warriors, and not only to make bullets turn into water but to make them ineffective when they hit their target. The rebels believed strongly in this power of the "muti" called "ndudzo". Informants testify that not many Africans were killed on account of the use of this "ndudzo". "Ndudzo" is said to have been brought by a certain Mutata and one Chivaura, who lived at Negomo and who were very famous gunners. The people of Negomo, who were considered warlike, had contacts with Dande, or the country around and beyond Mt. Darwin, and were famous for having very good "muti". This "ndudzo" was prepared in the evening with tails, fats, and some pieces of grass and certain types of trees, like mutara: the tail of a zebra, something from the horn of an eland, etc. Men would form a queue, dip first the right hand then the left into the prepared ndudzo, and finally make a mark on the forehead with some special piece of grass, oiled.(18) This was the armour - bullets would just hit and fall. Ndudzo was, however, made ineffective by the rebels' seizure of loot. Nehanda had expressly prohibited

the taking of loot into private homes. She said that her followers should refuse everything that belonged to the white man - clothes and money. "If you accept their money you will be defeated." Anyone who wanted to speak to Nehanda then had to produce a special kind of African snuff, not money or any other European article. She certainly didn't want to see her people distracted by the loot. This order was not, however, obeyed. Since the rebels sometimes spent their time distributing sugar, cloth and other loot, Nehanda could safely attribute defeat to this disobedience. Guns were a different kind of loot. They were immediately made use of by the rebels.

That was how, in the main, preparations were carried out among various clans under the direction of local mhondoro of repute. Detailed strategy didn't seem very difficult. The idea was to storm the Alice Mine laager, and if this failed and the Europeans attempted escape, to ambush them on the main road to Salisbury. This is the most interesting part for many informants, related with some really lively gestures. Gomba describes the approach and attack on the relief column at Chomkoreia: "Tikaona zvino vouya nokoko vakavanga kuHarare no wakere mugwagwa waitevedza rukova Tateguru. Hovóka, hovóka vakati mudungwe dzwarandand. Zvino isu ndokufana tati kwatata mudeve, nemumatombo, kwakanzi zu. Tikaaa misoro nyumwa nyumwa vasedera, iwo mabiza ongoti pata pata. Isu ndokuiger wokutanga atanga apfura zvishomanana. Tikanzwa yatanga imwe iwe! Ndogo riri pabiza, ndogo! riri pamurungu. Dzikati dzorira zvino - ha - iwe kaiwo ndago - pa! pa! Zvigidi zvakavanzwisa musiyo."

The offensive by the united rebels was limited to the attack on the laager which lasted two days, and the various ambushes on the Europeans to and from Mazoe. They were aware of the strength of Europeans in Salisbury, and preferred to fight in their own area where fortresses could be found when needed. The rebels could not fight far from their home ground effectively. Life had to carry on as usual at home. Thus some rebels took turns to go and attack or loot while others were looking after the villages and animals. Chakanetsa Gatsi, one of my informants, remembers lonely days as a herd boy during the rebellion.

The exact sequence and locations of various future campaigns are not clear in oral tradition, but a few are well known. For instance, the first use of the maxim "Chigwagwagwa" by the European forces. On a certain day a column arrived and outspanned in a plain. The rebels started shooting at them from trenches, and the white forces fired volleys into the nearby mountain. One rebel, who was shot through both legs, caused the rebels to direct their fire from hiding. The maxim gun was greatly feared.

Details apart, there are two main trends which characterise the time that the rebels began to go on the defensive. First, each clan knew that the Europeans would be returning since they had escaped except for a few. Therefore each leader led his people to his own stronghold. Henceforth, although information and advice and encouragement was freely exchanged, the rebels nevertheless no longer fought as one whole body. The second thing is that the rebels of the Hwata group and all those near the European headquarters began to bear much of the brunt of the fighting. Chidamba is very prominent and famous for his resistance, considered very heroic at Chivi and Shayarunzwe. He was the guardian of Nehanda, the spiritual powerhouse of the rebels. When Hwata's brother, Chiweshe, heard of an approaching force (they were at a dance), they left for their own stronghold at a bare mountain stronghold called Husaka, west of the Mazoe Valley. These caves had water, some stored grain, kraals

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(footnotes from previous page):

(15) Gondo.
(16) Chakanetsa Gatsi.
(17) Gondo; Chitaguda Gomba.

for cattle, and were very inaccessible except through narrow and dangerous passages. When Chiweshe left his home at Chivavarire for Husaka, he expected the whites to follow him if they wanted a fight. But besides the fact that the rebels were fleeing from attack, they definitely wished to have a stronghold from which to attack if possible. It was also the same tactic so often used against the Matabele - to wear down the enemy by depriving him of food and the opportunity to fight. It had worked well at times when the Matabele could only catch those who had ignored the warnings to retire to caves.

But the persistance of Europeans was noticeable. The rebels were already impressed by the Mazoe Patrol: how certain men escaped death and kept on firing at the rebels or over their heads; how they never abandoned their dead comrade or his weapon, and the fact that women could fight - all this was so impressive that Europeans were thought by some to be "nyuchi", "vana vengwena" (bees and children of the hyena).(18) Europeans were considered good fighters, but this didn't mean there was to be no resistance. Chidamba and his followers were the most stubborn of the rebels. The Hwata clan produced Chinipanyanga, the man who killed Pollard. They also brought forward another well known rebel called Mhasvi, an ex-policeman. There are some points on which information is conflicting in the oral tradition. The first is: were the people of Hwata, who visited Lobengula and came back with gifts of cattle, captured or did they just go on their own? One story goes like this: Lobengula heard of the fame of Hwata and Nehanda, especially concerning rainmaking powers. Also Hwata (Mazarura) had a wife peculiar in some way. Lobengula sent some of his men who captured Mazarura. Chinipanyanga ran to inform Nehanda, who provided Mazarura with a "mukombe" or small calabash, from which to drink water and ensure his return. Mazarura arrived in Matabeleland; Lobengula asked him to demonstrate his powers of making rain, and for a week or so there were very heavy downpours as a result of Mazarura's prayers to Nehanda. He was released and given cattle and men to accompany him to Mazoe, some of whom were killed on their return by Lobengula for taking some of Mazarura's cattle. Mazarura is said also to have brought some kind of a ngundu - a crown - the first of its kind in the Hwata chieftainship.(19) Another story says the people from Hwata's group went to Matabeleland out of curiosity, just to see.(20) There is no doubt of the need for more investigations as to the details, but one thing is indisputable, and that is that some of Hwata's people went to Lobengula and returned. Some of course are still there today (one recently paid a visit to the Chidamba family). Those who returned did so with Lobengula's permission. The other point very clear is that Lobengula knew of Nehanda as a powerful raingoddess and seems to have respected her spiritual power. Chiripanyanga, however, was rewarded by Nehanda with the chieftainship of the Hwata clan for having helped to recover Mazarura (says N. Chidamba). What I can conclude from the different sources about Hwata is that some of the important men were somehow in contact both with Matabeleland and the Europeans, as well as Nehanda. When the rebellion came, some of these men could speak Sindebele. They, however, abandoned the friendship with whites, for the time being at least, and the African messengers and police set on their masters.

The origin of Masvi is also unsolved. Nedi Chidamba says that Masvi belongs to the Hwata group. To confirm this he says the present chief of the Hwata clan belongs to the family of Masvi. An African sergeant in the B.S.A.P., Sanhokwe, is quoted by Dr. R.C.Howland (21) as giving another side to the origin of Masvi. Sanhokwe says Masvi was an African Constable in Salisbury, that he belonged to the Nyandoro (Harava) clan of modern Marandellas district. Masvi, continues Sanhokwe,

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(18) Chivarange Kaseke.
(19) Nedi Chidamba (Highfield, 533), Feb.20, 1966.
(20) Musodzi, March 1st, 1966. (Chiweshe).
(21) Dr.R.C.Howland, in Rhodesiana, Publication No.8 of the Rhodesiana Society, 1963, p.17.

brought the rebellion to Hwata and Nehanda, and offered to train and lead Hwata's people in the rebellion. He deserted the police in sympathy with his fellow Africans, knowing from his experiences as a policeman what "caused all the concern amongst the Africans" he was certain Hwata's people would respond to a call to arms. Masvi is important in negotiations and attempts at making peace. The best informant on Masvi, Muchenje Chigama, seems to assume that he belonged to Hwata, and I agree with this view. Masvi had been the chief policeman of "Kunjaira" or Pollard, the N.C. He was a wanted man in connection with the death of Pollard, and the European forces thought Chidamba was harbouring him. Chidamba denied any knowledge of the whereabouts of Masvi, but was forced to admit by the storming of his stronghold and capture of some of his cattle and other stock. Chidamba was forced to leave his stronghold and negotiate for the return of his animals. This is how contact was at first established: a European force would arrive at the bottom of a hill and start shouting at Chidamba's people. Usually Chidamba was at the back, and negotiations were carried out through his lieutenants. Europeans would shout: "Chidamba, buruka titaurirane. Usuraye vanhu vako nenzara! Buruka." (Chidamba, come down and let's negotiate. Don't let your people starve! Come down!) - or "Tinoda Masvi." (We want Masvi). Hwata or Chidamba was very reluctant to come down, and only several parleys and the storming of his stronghold forced him to come forward. Europeans as a whole were patient and took their time, relying on the effect of hunger to do the work. On the appointed day for negotiations, Chidamba did not want to be too close, and insisted that they should talk across a stream - a tributary of the Mazoe River, or that river itself. Chidamba didn't want to surrender Masvi for fear of losing him. Mhasvi, to save his people trouble, gave himself up, told his people to keep calm and peaceful till his return. Immediately on crossing the stream he was arrested and led off by the men on horseback. The Europeans wanted to know from Mhasvi the fate of "Kunjaira", to which he answered in the negative. He was away on an errand when "Kunjaira" was taken away. Meanwhile, the rebels wanted to know whether Mhasvi was safe; and Mhasvi was taken into custody, handcuffed and chained by the legs. There was no strong jail or fortification, but Mhasvi was guarded by several guards. Then he planned an escape. On the first day he succeeded in creeping some fifteen to twenty yards, just to see whether he could safely do so without being discovered. The following night, the guards were sleeping heavily; he tried to sit and see whether they would wake up. They didn't, and so, slowly and carefully he crept away into a nearby mountain where he undid the shackles with the aid of a stone. When he had seen his people he left that very night for Amanda, whence he was removed further north.

Mhasvi and his people may have rejoiced at his escape, but they certainly knew that this brought war nearer, for Mhasvi was wanted badly and at any cost. Moreover, the case of Mhasvi tended to concentrate the wrath and power of Europeans on Chidamba, and likewise on Nehanda who was with him. At some time, therefore - and here oral tradition doesn't exactly say when, except that it was after fighting had gone on for more than a year - Nehanda sensed the danger of being surprised and captured in her caves. She was probably aware that she was losing, and had heard of the army that came from the east, which is said to have been terrible. Why exactly Nehanda decided to leave I have not been able to ascertain. But before she left she called Chidamba, Chiweshe and others, and told them to take care of themselves since she was going to Dande where she originally came from. Also before she left she is said to have sent thunder and lightning which tore up trees and sent stones flying into the midst of an invading European army.(22) Others talk of the "big gun" from heaven which stopped the fighting. "Pfuti huru yekudenga ndiyo yakazodzimura kurwa. Yakarira ikadengenyeka," and the white men are said to have knowledge of it, though they thought it couldn't be done.(23) There are, for instance, many mysteries which are said to have been caused by Mwari, such as a hare bringing a bag of bullets from the forest.(24) Someone, a rebel, is reported to have shouted, "Ndini Mwari" (Iam Mwari) from a rock or the forest.(25) Curiously enough, Kaguvi is thought of by some as perhaps the wind which lays down trees or grass. Usually

when referring to Mwari, an informant would point to the sky and talk of him as Providence, or Someone powerful and invisible. What I can make out of these fantastic allusions is that there was a strong belief in the powers of the spirits over certain natural forces which could be used to secure victory. Nehanda was a rain-goddess, and everyone of her followers believed in her powers to such an extent that a report of a storm sent by her is easily believed and passed on. The Europeans are believed to have witnessed some of these happenings, and when the rebels were clearly losing and saw it, they thought the white men had either through prayer or by other means come to know the secrets of their gods and power.(26) People then began to flee in fear. This probably means that when the spiritual leaders were being harassed by the Europeans, or were no longer confident of victory, the followers began to weaken. The rebellion was over as soon as Nehanda left Mazoe for Dande. Another cause for surrender was the surrender of Mashayamombe and Kaguvi. Kaguvi came to Mazoe when fighting there had virtually stopped. He didn't settle there, but proceeded north with his dancing girls, six wives, eight sons and seven daughters, and about twelve donkeys to the Darwin district.

Apart from the Mhondoro's surrender, other causes of defeat were starvation and weariness. The Europeans' turn to loot and burn African crops and livestock and villages had come. The rebels couldn't fight as well as tend to their gardens profitably. "Chiweshe gave up in consideration of his children. He had left his home, Chivavarire, and gone to Chikapanya or Husaka, and stayed there till he was tired of hiding and wished to surrender." Thus Chiweshe said "Ndatera" (I have surrendered).

Chiweshe becomes very important as soon as the general surrendering of arms was taking place everywhere. Like everyone else, he had been warned by Nehanda about her departure for Dande. As a consequence of Nehanda's decision and the approach of more and more troops, many people and clans started fleeing northward too, rather than surrender. Chiweshe is generally acknowledged as the first to surrender, but after his example many smaller clans did likewise. Some people accuse Chiweshe of giving up first, whilst Chiweshe says he was the one who gathered together the various peoples who were fleeing rather than preparing for another fight.(27) Chiweshe seems to have seen the opportunity of gaining the advantage of at least staying where he was rather than leaving for unknown lands. Chidamba was the man who had done most of the fighting, and his surrender was due mainly to repeated attacks by Europeans.

The way Chiweshe surrendered is also very illustrative of the role of the mhondoro. Chikukwa, the Chiweshe mhondoro, whom we have already seen in connection with the way battles were prepared for, said, when his chief had surrendered: "Ndapinda, ndakodza. Vana vangu chirimai zvenyu." (I have secured some good terms: my people, you may now settle down and cultivate your fields.) He clearly implied that he had done the surrendering. The whole of the Tribal Trust land in the Mazoe district is called "Chiweshe Tribal Trust land" after Chiweshe. Its council is likewise called "Chiweshe Council". There are four main chiefs: Chiweshe, Hwata, Makope and Negomo, and a sub-chief, Nyachuru. The four chiefs are in practice and powers equal in status, and Chiweshe's paramountcy is only in the name given to the tribal lands. Why is this? The reason is found by many of the inhabitants to be in the fact that Chiweshe was the first to surrender. The N.C. is reported to have said: "Chiweshe ndiwe wava mukuru nokuti ndiwe watanga kutera." (Chiweshe you are now paramount because you were the first to surrender.) This is a clear example of the results of the rebellion. Not only are the former rebels now living about thirty or more miles from their former homes, but the Europeans could now appoint or dictate the status of Chiefs. Choweshe and Hwata are two brothers and strangers in the Mazoe Valley. They had from time to time to appease the owners of the land among whom

they had settled. Now one of them is made paramount, though in name only. But the original owners, like Negomo, Mbari and VaZamba still, of course, claim their rights.

While still on the subject of surrender, let's look at the manner in which the giving up of arms and pacification was done between Chiweshe and the Government. Chiweshe didn't go himself at first to talk for peace. He sent his son, Zvikaramba, to the fort at Mazoe. When Zvikaramba said, "I am tired; let us make peace," he was given a letter and a flag which Chiweshe would hoist when approaching the fort on the next day when bringing in arms and all his people. On the appointed day he brought in some guns, but not all. The others had been left either at Husaka or hidden somewhere else. As to how many guns were surrendered, there is no definite number, though some say twelve. Anyway, as Chiweshe approached the fort, a trumpet was sounded, and shots fired by well-dressed and uniformed European soldiers. Some African police and messengers met them. Charlie and Jack received the guns. Chiweshe was given two tents, pots, mealie meal, sugar, beef, etc., and spent a full day at the fort. Some of Chiweshe's people were there and then employed, and others came the following day to join the police force. This was, of course, at the request of the authorities. Once they had surrendered and joined the police force, these people were used in the search for the murderers of the late rebellion. Others, like Zenda Chikukwa, served under Kenny in the suppression of the revolt in Mt. Darwin district, fighting against Mapondera who had fled there in order to renew his struggle far from the main centre of European settlement. (One of my informants, and who who has supplied me with most of this information, was a policeman drafted in this way.)(28)

Chiweshe was, as a whole, able to gather his people, including others from different clans, into a very large and impressive settlement at "Hosha" or "Baradzanwa" (from where the people dispersed to their present scattered villages) at the Mrodzi River, near Jumbo. This settlement is so widely spoken of in the whole of the Mazoe district as having been the largest and best in lay-out and construction of huts. To illustrate the extent of the new home, many say no deaths of children which occurred were heard of in another quarter unless someone brought the news, (bearing in mind that when a person died people cried loudly).

The result of the rebellion was a clear idea and conception of the relationship between the Africans and Europeans. The shifting from settlement to settlement was the first effect felt after defeat in arms. Europeans were now clearly regarded as rulers because they had won. But the feeling of restlessness and sense of right in fighting against an intruder didn't end with defeat. Even after the pacification, taxation was introduced slowly and persuasively, for the people were not to be antagonised by immediate harsh treatment. It is useful to remember that as Mazoe South was pacified, Mazoe North was just beginning to revolt seriously, and the Government needed the help of its former enemies - if not in the form of contingents, at least by remaining neutral. Though at first recruitment of a police force from amongst the ranks of the ex-rebels was a condition of peace, later some came forward voluntarily.

The treatment received at the hands of Europeans before the rebellion may have been drastically changed after the rebellion, but forced labour of some sort is known to have persisted up to the 1950s, what is commonly known in the rural areas as "chibaro". Flogging certainly became less severe, but it cannot be said to have disappeared when we remember that the victors sometimes would revenge for the murders committed at the beginning of the rebellion.

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(28) Gomba.

After the rebellion, taxation came seriously, and there was no hope of avoiding it without incurring punishment. The word for "to surrender" in Shona is "kutera". From the root of this word - "tera" - comes the word for taxation in Shona: "mutero". Thus tax is not looked upon as a contribution to the expenses of administering the country for the good of everybody, but as a form of tribute demanded by a conquering people. Taxation regarded in this light can never have been welcomed. At first the tax-collectors went round pulling a piece of grass from each hut, as a sign of the power to impose taxation, not as a contribution to revenue. Later each piece of grass represented 2/6d., 5/- or 10/-. The Mashona commonly say "Takatanga kutera nohuswa" (we started paying tax with grass).

There was one particular aspect in the relations between the Native Commissioner and the people under his care which developed soon after peace was restored. There were many dances and feasts given by the Native Commissioner at his office, to which the inhabitants were invited. But it appears that after the rebellion the N.C. instead went round the villages visiting and generally learning about the way his people lived. These shows, called Dembe or "Ngoma yejeketera" were well prepared for in advance of the expected arrival of the Native Commissioner. They were sometimes termed "mujawe" or competitions between different villages, held preferably at the chief's place, and sometimes lasting a week. Generally, the people seem to have been excited and happy at these shows, and some Native Commissioners joined in the dances, as one at Mazoe called "Shumba" (probably Armstrong). Some suspicious young men would, however, either not turn up or run away from the dance in case the N.C. was looking for labourers. Some lost the competitions through absence or half-hearted faith in the intentions of the N.C. in whose honour they were held.

At the time of surrender, the Government demanded all dangerous weapons, although they were not all handed in. Guns, battle-axes and spears were seized immediately they were discovered. One day a certain group of people killed a lion that had eaten up many livestock. The Native Commissioner saw the danger to people from wild animals, and that many were hiding spears and guns. He therefore allowed people to make some spears for hunting and self-protection. The headmen were given a gun each. This was definitely after the authorities were satisfied that no more trouble was likely to arise.(29)

The last question to be solved by the Government, and one in which they required the aid of the rebels, was to find out the actual part played by the mhondoro cult. This is the reason for the numerous and long investigations which took place between the Native Commissioner, aided by the Chief Native Commissioner on the one side, and Chiweshe and Hwata and their people on the other. These investigations were apparently carried out after Nehanda's medium had been executed. Let us look at the trials first. Most Africans remember that the medium of Nehanda was killed by Europeans on account of the rebellion. They had been led by her, and had believed strongly in her supernatural powers. When she left Mazoe Valley for Dande, they remember that she managed to dodge the pursuing European army, or police force. Even after her followers were aware of defeat, the fact that she could still use her ability to foresee and avoid danger successfully meant that her prestige did not fall. People were still fond of her, and they felt forlorn when she was arrested. The arrest of Nehanda was the final blow to the rebels. Still, they were happy that Nehanda gave herself up only when some of her close followers had been taken. There was some very genuine affection and loyalty felt towards Nehanda, something that made people want to protect her from blame or responsibility, especially at the trial. There were some people arrested with her, the best known being Chiripanyanga or Hwata, and Gutsa.

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(29) Chakanotsa Gatsi.

It is these people who are accused of incriminating the medium of Nehanda in order to save their skins. Hwata's people are still accused of abandoning Nehanda to a cruel fate, and it is thought that they should have protected her rather than given evidence against her. This type of accusation against Hwata's conduct is not confined to those outside of his clan only; even his fellow-members accuse him of neglecting Nehanda, and even more, of causing her death. At the scaffold, for instance, Nehanda is known to have somehow defied death. It is said the first two attempts to take her life failed. But Hwata's people, who were present, pointed out to the Europeans why she was able to resist execution: she had her snuff with her, which she took just before going for execution. The people of Hwata advised the executioners to remove the snuff from her, and Nehanda, disappointed but courageous, gave it away and went to meet her death.(30) The culprit for Nehanda's fate was found, and this seemed to be further confirmed in the investigations on Nehanda's responsibility in the rebellion. She had died already. (One of my informants, Gondo, a son of the Chiweshe chief Chandaengerwa, was one of the two people, the other was Magutakuona - who travelled between Amanda and Mazoe as the aide of Chiweshe.) Chiweshe and Hwata were considered the protectors, as well as the special protégés of Nehanda. The two were asked to supply information. Hwata is said to have refused to testify; Chiweshe refused to disclose any information. The Nehanda medium's father at Shayamuzwe refused to come to Amanda. Chiweshe's people claim that everybody seemed to leave the business in their hands. Whatever the differences between Hwata and Chiweshe, the Mhondoro Nehanda was not to be given out as the main cause of the rebellion. A false mhondoro, called Chinyumira, was invented, and the blame put on him.(31)

The role of the Mhondoro-cult will, I hope, be clear from the foregoing. In the Mazoe Valley the Mhondoro cult is the most prominent religious pattern. Mwari is known to exist, but he is rather remote and only approachable through the Mhondoro, who are able to connect the dead with the living. Murenga is considered as associated with Mwari. The Rozvi group, like Negomo, are slightly different. They talk more of Mwari than either Chiweshe or Hwata. Their mhondoro system is slightly different. There are other mhondoro which don't appear in tales of war because each mhondoro has its special field to take care of. It also depends a lot on the personality of the medium and the worshippers. Very often mhondoro used to follow the feelings and prejudices of its people, and were in the main used as an instrument of organisation. Being spirits of departed ancestors, they were also the most conservative group, which as much as possible resisted changes. In the rebellion I would give more initiative to the people around the mhondoro, and even more responsibility. This can be shown by the fact that any mhondoro could be deserted or betrayed by a leader who felt his interests no longer agreed with those of the mhondoro. Nehanda, as Hwata and Chiweshe said, was mainly responsible for rain: that was her speciality. She was also, however, a prophetess, and had for a long time warned against enemies and advised on what course people were to take. One gets the impression that she could turn her hand to anything. On the other hand, she was in most cases just an adviser, though an influential one, for some of the chiefs she dealt with were strong, independent secular rulers. On the whole, it was an example of successful co-operation between religious and secular leaders, especially in the beginning, and the misunderstandings and bickering towards the end are probably the results of defeat. The responsibility for causing the rebellion should, I think, be shared, because no mhondoro could get the obedience and co-operation of people who were not also inclined towards the same aim.

I am now going to compare the oral account given above with what can be found in written sources. The aim is not to rewrite here the Mashona Rebellion on the basis of written sources, but to confirm or point out a different point of view. This would be the best way to criticise Oral tradition.

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(30) Nedi Chidamba.
(31) Gondo.

The Europeans were attracted to Mashonaland by the rumours of gold there. Most Europeans, especially the British Government and the British South Africa Company, assumed that Mashonaland was a province of the Matabele kingdom; the Mashonas at the mercy of the Matabele whom they couldn't resist, and "a congeries of semi-independent tribes of various origins under petty dynastic chiefs".(32) In 1890, Colquhoun was instructed that neither time nor money should be wasted on the so-called Mashona Chiefs.(33) Yet to legal-minded men this was not so; many people doubted the wisdom of classifying the Matabele raiding system as a basis for legal purposes, and thought the Mashona were legally the owners of their own country.

Some white men acknowledge the welcome given to the Pioneer Column. "It is not pleasant to notice the way in which the latter [the Mashona] avoid coming into contact with the settlers, and to recollect that when we first went up to Mashonaland they welcomed us gladly."(34) This, however, wasn't the only view. Marshall Hole thinks local Africans treated the European arrival with haughty aloofness,(35) and for a long time were not quite free from suspecting that Europeans had come with sinister designs. .

It can be confirmed from European sources that Africans collected alluvial gold in the Mazoe river and traded with the Portuguese at Tete or Zuda in Mazoe District for guns and other European goods. Some Africans were reported to be paying tax in the form of gold.(36)

The attitudes of Europeans, and the causes of the rebellion which can be discovered in their writings, are very revealing and tie up with what is obtained in oral tradition. Africans were thought to be of the opinion that the English would be in the country only for a short time like the Portuguese,(35) and that is why perhaps they did not hesitate to displease the Europeans.

When the Europeans occupied Mashonaland they were not immediately resisted by force by the local inhabitants. Almost unconcerned about the Mashona, they went about their business of founding a new home. But occasionally one hears of European aims in their relations with Africans. There may have been little interest in the African world for its own sake, but the first contacts were responsible for the growth of certain European attitudes towards Africans. Concerning the African, one of the aims or duties of the Europeans was conceived as "to improve that which is good in them and eradicate what is bad". The Mashona was considered almost altogether bad, and it was also the object of Europeans to impress upon him that he was inferior in everything and would never hope to be otherwise. Another basic attitude of the Europeans, which no doubt contributed a great deal to their treatment of Africans, is shown in this extract from the Rhodesia Herald: "The natives are children in everything but vice, and as children we should treat them. Our natives, the Mashona, are a bad lot. They are nothing but a horde of cunning, treacherous, cowardly, idle thieves. Their hatred of work is only equalled by their love of thieving. So long as they can keep body and soul together, no power on earth, short of compulsion, will induce them to work."(37) Work was considered essentially good in itself. If Africans could be persuaded to work, then to force

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(32) H.Marshall Hole, The Making of Rhodesia, p.376. Macmillan, 1926.
(33) L.H.Gann, A History of Southern Rhodesia, Early Days to 1934, p.103.
(34) H.C.Thomson, Rhodesia and its Government, p.84.
(35) H.M.Hole, op.cit., p.45 ff.
(36) Rhodesia Herald, March 2, 1899.
(37) Ibid, December 2, 1896.

them would definitely be wrong. "Persuasion has hitherto utterly failed, and, therefore, compulsion becomes an imperative duty - a duty which we owe both to ourselves and to the natives."(38) The Herald was answering the charges of Labouchere and the Aborigines Protection Society. "Most of the boys employed in farms, houses and stables," wrote Marshall Hole, "were supplied with idiotic English names, and took a pride in them. One whose real name might be "Indafuna" or something equally melodious, would cheerfully answer to "Lobster" or "Monkey".(39) This was no doubt because at first they didn't know what those names meant, but later I don't think the Africans answered cheerfully to names like "monkey" or "baboon". It is to be remembered that Africans, too, gave Europeans some nicknames, such as Kunjaira, given to H.H.Pollard, the first Native Commissioner at Mazoe, and by which he is commonly known among the Africans in that district. Europeans could see for themselves that Africans were unused to their ways, justice and material civilisation. With regard to justice, for instance, there is a constant note running through most European ideas about the way Africans should be treated. They believed Africans must be handled with firmness and severity and in such a way as not to impair the prestige of the white man.(40).

Many of the European attitudes, opinions and relationships with Africans of early Rhodesia were such that they largely contributed to the causes of the rebellion. It is on the basis of such ideas that Europeans treated Africans in the way they did. The Africans in Mashonaland rebelled to a large extent because of the treatment they received from severe masters, some of whom believed they were doing it for the good of the Mashona.

From written sources, the causes of the Mashona rebellion are attributed to incitement of the Matabele and religious leaders, forced labour, taxation, the conduct of the native police, and the veterinary campaign. The Matabele rising was attributed to the incompleteness of their defeat in 1893.(41) Sir Richard Martin discusses mainly Matabeleland, and though he admitted compulsory labour existed in Matabeleland, he had not sufficient evidence to show that it existed in Mashonaland. The Matabele were said to have rebelled because they were harshly treated.

One would not be far wrong to transfer conditions existing in Matabeleland even with some modification to Mashonaland. If people thought the Matabele had no proper idea of European power after 1893, this could even be a reason equally strong for the revolt in Mashonaland, if not stronger. I would not suggest that the Mashona rebelled largely because they had never had an armed clash with Europeans, for it can be shown that they were provoked into revolt. As H.C.Thomson says, the ill-treatment of the Mashona before the rebellion "converted the Mashonas from a people who welcomed us as deliverers from Matabili oppression into a people who have dared death in its most abhorrent form in the hope of shaking off our rule."

The Martin Report does not contain the views of the Native Commissioner at Mazoe. It is possible, however, to deduce what life there was like from the district records.(42) The first Native Commissioner was Pollard or Kunyaira. The only records that bear his name are several telegrams dating from September 1895, mostly to Chief Native Commissioner. It is very clear that Pollard supplied employers with labour. On September 4, 1895, he sent a telegraph: "I am supplying A.S.S.C. with as many boys as can get." The police used to do the recruitment: "Expect police back today with about twenty five boys."(43)

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(38) Rhodesia Herald, April 21, 1897.
(39) H.M.Hole, Old Rhodesian Days, p.53.
(40) Rhodesia Herald, Jan.24, 1892.
(41) The Martin Report, C.8547, 1897, p.11.
(42) N 1/1/6, National Archives.
(43) Pollard to Lingard, Salisbury, October 29, 1895, N 1/1/6.

Pollard used to get the wages for the labourers from the employers. At one time he is asking Captain Roach of T.T. Co., Ruia River, for fifty-two, etc. as boys' wages.(44) He also gives an event that probably frightened many labourers off. Some labourers were killed by falling stone in Denoons workings, head of the Mazoe River.(45)

We get an insight into the conduct of the Native Commissioner's police. Usually he calls them detectives. One day, some detectives took labourers working on Mr. Cass's farm at the Salvation Army Settlement. "When Mrs. Cass took them from detectives they [the detectives] were very cheeky to her." On November 30, 1895, Pollard informed Taberer: "Several headmen complain that your [detectives?], who out here took and killed several goats, settled cases and generally misbehaved themselves. I will send in headmen on Tuesday."(46) There were also some complaints by someone from Mapondera against a Mr. Jacob of the English Mission which Pollard was to look into.

There is very scanty information in Pollard's telegraphs concerning the Austin murder case. It involved Chirau (witness), Rwanga and Kanyemba.(47) This should be the case of the trader who was murdered at Rwanga. This was in 1895, as the correspondence shows. Already it can be seen that in Negomo area there were murders and desertions from villages, and Pollard was occupied in tracking down the murderers. There was thus some unrest in the Mazoe district just before the rebellion started.

On the question of flogging by Pollard, here is a quotation from the memory of a certain European, recounting what happened in 1896. "I heard a tale that Kenny was at Kanyemba's one day when Pollard, the N.C. then stationed in the Darwin district, made a call. Kenny was hustled out of it and Pollard proceeded to his business accompanied by some use of the sjambok; he then left. The yarn goes that Kanyemba never got over the treatment he had received from Pollard; he waited for the rebellion before he got his own back."(48)

From the Mazoe district notes, it is clear that labour, police action and individual European conduct was the cause of unrest. As for Pollard, it can be confirmed both from African and European sources that he employed his sjambok very often and severely. Though there were murders and general unrest in the Mazoe district as far back as 1895, we hear H.Marshall Hole reporting on the Salisbury and Mazoe districts that all was quiet in these districts till June 14, 1896.(49) The Mazoe inhabitants were apprehensive, and asked and received 1,000 rounds of ammunition in April, 1896. But it was only a precautionary measure, and they didn't want to be called into camp in case they caused uneasiness among the Africans.(50)

In June 1896 the rebellion started, and in Mazoe Pollard was murdered and his"native police joined the rebels at the commencement of the rising, and have since taken a prominent part in the rebellion."(51) He had gone to Mt. Darwin to investigate the murder of a Mr. Brodie, was attacked and tortured and killed by his own police. Nehanda comes into the picture from the time of the murder of Pollard, of which she was accused and convicted on the evidence of Kwata, the agent who, with others, carried it out. One resident of Mazoe describes how "a few days before the rising I had a lot of women [native] at my camp trading meal and mealies, and they asked me to get out certain other kinds of trading goods as they wished to purchase them."(53) The preparations for the rebellion went on unnoticed, and many Europeans admitted that it came as a surprise.

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(44) Pollard to C.N.C., 20/12/1896. (45) Pollard to Taberer, 20/12/1895.
(46) Pollard to Taberer. (47) Pollard to Lingard, 22/10/1895 and 29/10/95, Dec.6 and Dec.14, 1895.
(48) Memories of Davy Evans and van Niekerk, "Some Happenings of 1896", NADA vol.15, 1938, p.29 ff. Nat.Archives.
(49) H.M.Hole, The B.S.A.Co. Report on the Native Disturbances in Rhodesia, 1896/97. March 1898, p.55.
(50) Letter and Petition to Acting Admin. from J.Dickenson, J.P.Mazoe,

Kagubi is the mhondoro who is said to have brought the rebellion to the Mazoe Valley and ordered Nehanda and the chiefs to kill all white men. At his trial in 1898, Kagubi accused Nehanda and vaMponga for having started the rebellion.(52) This may refer to the appeals that Nehanda is said to have made to Kagubi on behalf of the people of Mazoe. As for the organisation and conduct of the rebellion, Kagubi had quite a big part to play. Before the rebellion he was an unimportant mhondoro who specialised in providing some "muti".to hunters who wanted to prosper. This profession of Kagubi ties in very well with the methods he used to spread the intention of murdering whites as revealed by oral tradition. "Bush telegraph" was one of the methods used by the Mashona to transmit messages. One way of doing it is by sending a messenger on foot, especially if the message is a secret one. People in those days were famous for walking great distances.

From accounts written by Europeans concerning the Mazoe Patrol we can confirm certain African tactics and numbers and fortunes. Most of the members of the Patrol wrote about their experiences, and they are mostly from their point of view, but it was not all against the rebels.

The Government, in the Gazette of April 15, 1896, warned people to be on the look-out in case the Mashona rose as a result of the Matabele revolt. The residents of Mazoe were at least well provided with ammunition, but they had refused to retire to a camp. When trouble came they were forced to build a laager at the Alice Mine hurriedly. Even Salisbury underestimated the nature of the rebellion and sent only two men, Blackiston and Zimmerman, to rescue the Mazoe party. Captain Judson and later Inspector Nesbitt had to come to the rescue of the besieged party, which for "two days and two nights [was] continually on the alert and fighting, which is very tiring."(55) The smallness of the Mazoe Patrol and its success in bringing out of danger most of the Europeans is one of the reasons for its fame. It is a heroic tale which few people today celebrate except the children of a school named after Blakiston.(56)

J.F.Darling was one of those impressed by the diplomacy and courage displayed by the rebels. J.W.Salthouse, the manager of the Alice Mine, wrote: "It appeared to us, indeed, like the Valley of the Shadow of Death." The hills were swarming with rebels, "black demons"; bullets rained over the Europeans, coming from about 1,500 rebels, firing about 2,000 shots from 500 rifles or thereabouts.(57) There are a few points found in oral tradition that happened at the beginning of the rebellion or during the great ambush on the patrol. One was the courage and bravery of the few men, which impressed many rebels. The Europeans never left a comrade and rifle lying down if they could do something - a reference to the picking up of the rifle and bandolier of van Staaden. Oneother impressive spectacle was that the European women were also fighting back. "Mrs. Cass, it is said, actually joined in the firing at the rebels."(58) Dr. R.C.Howland also mentions that the rebels knew of Nesbitt's departure from Salisbury, and signals of fire were seen from hill to hill right up to Shamva.

On the pits or "hunza" mentioned in the oral account, here is one observation: "On the way to Mazoe Fort we passed the spot where the famous Mazoe Patrol had had such a rough time, and I observed with interes the excavation dug at the roadside, designed to upset the armoured wagon, and only just detected in time."(59)

[footnotes 51 - 53 from previous page]

51) H.M.Hole, B.S.A.Co. Report, p.57.
52) See S.401, Nos.252 and 253. Nat.Archives, for the Trials.
53) J.F.Darling, Schedule V, in B.S.A.Co. Report by H.M.Hole.
54) Kenny to C.N.C. Mashonaland, 30th Oct. 1897, in the C.N.C.'s Report, N 1/1/6.
55) J.F.Darling, op.cit., p.94.
56) The Sunday Mail, June 5, 1966.
57) J.W.Salthouse, Schedule III, p.87 of the B.S.A.Co. Report.
58) Dr. R.C.Howland, op.cit., p.27.
59) D.N.McGregor, in The Outpost, Vol.12, 1934/35; July 1934. pp.19-2

As for the actual campaigns carried out by the rebels after the first few weeks, we hear very little. Europeans had very different ideas on the Mashona as fighters, and also on the general situation at the time. On 14 August, 1896, Mr. Duncan wrote to Judge Vintcent. "As for the rebellion, I regard it as a war of baboons against man. As a military proposition it is twaddle, Mashonaland requires police forts and patrols. There is no military proposition as far as I can judge."(60) On the other hand one hears reports that some of the rebels had good rifles and good shots, and Europeans found the campaigns up steep hillsides dangerous and tedious. The rebels were firing heavily from concealed positions.(61) Or, as the Rhodesia Herald said indignantly: "Time without number have the Mashonas been described as timid, abject creatures who were incapable of showing fight, and within a few weeks of the actual outbreak the same thing was said: the Mashona rise? The idea was too absurd! Alas! that it was not true, for then we should not miss the many familiar faces now no longer seen. It is now a matter of history that they did rise, and, what was worse, could fight in their own peculiar way, far better than the Matabele."(62) But even the Herald wasn't consistent, for few people are: it depends on the occasion it is said. The Rhodesia Herald was conducting a campaign to bring in more police reinforcements as well as trying to make the authorities not repeat their blunder of under-estimating danger in order to attract prospectors or please public opinion at home, and Duncan had just had a successful campaign. Even then, the campaign in the Mazoe district was one of the toughest for the Government forces. Chidamba (Hwata) is famous both in the Shona oral tradition and European accounts. He was stormed several times, but was stubborn in resistance. His whole range of kraals could absorb the whole of the Rhodesian forces.(63)

The difficulty faced by the Rhodesian authorities was very great at the end of 1896. As impartial observers pointed out, the rebellion was still going on. The Government forces failed to quell it before the rains, just because the rebels retreated as Chiweshe did into Husaka. Some Europeans saw that in Mazoe, for instance, they were playing the same game as the Matabele. The enemy was inaccessible, or frankly didn't want to surrender. The abortive peace moves attempted by Colonel Alderson and Judge Vintcent illustrate some of the difficulties of the campaign. The Government, after the Imperial troops had left towards the end of 1896, tried to end the rebellion by every means available. Before a rebel chief was attacked, he must be asked if he wished to surrender or not. If he refused to surrender he could be attacked.(64) This policy was tried on Chidamba, who was considered the most powerful chief in the Mazoe area. This attempt brings into the picture the rebel Masvi, but in a different light in certain respects from that given in oral tradition. There were also six other chiefs together with Chidamba.

In August 1896, Duncan and Grey's scouts had some notable successes in the Mazoe Valley. They burnt thirteen kraals and took cattle and goats, and were under the command of Captain Montgomery. Nehanda took refuge with Chidamba, and many chiefs retreated into their caves. Chidamba was captured. In September, after further attempts to capture Nehanda, Chidamba is reported to have sued for peace, and talks were arranged to take place between Judge Vintcent and Colonel Alderson and Chidamba on 21st September 1896. Chidamba appeared desirous of peace, or pretended he did, "and gave up on the spot one Mazwe [Mhasvi] who was an ex-native policeman, much to his disgust."(65) No arms were surrendered, and the younger rebels wouldn't surrender unless they saw Masvi alive. Even when Masvi was shown to them, they wouldn't surrender. Masvi made his "cat-like escape", and the authorities returned to Salisbury empty-handed. The white community was furious at the attempts to negotiate. They thought they were playing into the treacherous hands of the Mashona.

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(60) Duncan, Mazoe, in a despatch to Judge Vintcent, A 1/12/25.
(61) D.N.McGregor, op.cit., July 1934.
(62) The Rhodesia Herald, Dec.9, 1896.
(63) Ibid, Sept.30, 1896.
(64) MacAndrew and van Niekerk, "Recollections of the Rebellion, 1896", NADA, 1936/7, vol.14, pp.49-61. Ed.N.H.D.Spicer.
(65)

The "peace-at-any-price" party was abused. McMahon was ordered to renew the war against Chidamba and others.

McMahon describes the way negotiations started between the white forces and Chidamba up in a mountain stronghold.(66) They can only be described as tedious from the European point of view. Chidamba was at Chivi, "The Granite Range", and Chidamba's people on top of rocks. Confidence was difficult to show in Chidamba's people. Each day conversation commenced by shouting in sing-song voice from about half a mile, then the meaning was conveyed to the Chief further back. Even when they came down to talk, they insisted on talking peace terms across a small stream, and the horses had to be left at a distance.(66) This account of the way negotiations were conducted agrees very much with what Chigama Muchenje said in an interview. The difference comes in concerning Masvi: there is agreement on the fact that he was an ex-policeman, suspected of murdering Pollard. He was a natural, alert leader of influence, but in McMahon's account he was sent as representative and not, as in oral tradition, the man who offered himself since the white men wanted him. The white men didn't demand Mhasvi, as my informants say. According to McMahon, it seems Mhasvi was unknown and introduced himself. The question is difficult to resolve. Mhasvi appears to have been the leader in the field of fighting. "One particular native, considered then to be a Matabele, but now known to be Masvi, was 400 yards on a rock, firing accurate shots."(67) At the time of the rebel attack on the Alice Mine laager, many Europeans thought the Matabele led the rebels and exhorted the Mashona to fight. Some thought there were horsemen among the rebels. The presence of Matabele warriors is not confirmed by Shona informants. Many rebel forces were mostly composed of and led by members of the clan. At the beginning of the rebellion, according to Sgt. Sanhokwe, Masvi led the rebels in the great ambush. One factor mentioned in oral tradition is that some of Hwata's people had been to Matabeleland, and certainly knew how to speak Sindebele.

The renewed attack on Chidamba wasn't successful. It was abandoned after a day of little advance. The general view that the Mashona were difficult to subdue because they had no paramount chief may be true up to a certain point. But not one chief in the Mazoe district had been completely defeated. "The Mashonas as a hostile whole must remain unconquered,partly because of the sporadic character of their resistance and the inaccessible nature of their kopjes, until after the rains."(68) Since it was difficult to subdue the Mashona, it was impossible to demand their surrender. On 2nd December, 1896, The Rhodesia Herald declared: "Until we are in a position to compel surrender, we ought not to demand it." The general European public wanted to prevent another rising by defeating the rebels thoroughly. The Government had to find a way out of the deadlock. It wanted peace - the country had come almost to a standstill - but couldn't impose it. It is then that the Government troops, advised by its African friendlies, began to burn and destroy rebel crops, in order to force the rebels to come forward.

In Mazoe area, the defeat of Mashayamombe and Kagubi helped to pacify Mazoe Valley. Nehanda had left Chivi for Dande, and Kaguvi didn' stop in Mazoe on his way north. In October, 1897, Hwata and Chiweshe, Negomo, Makope and the other chiefs were ordered to bring forward guns. At first the Chiefs were reluctant to come themselves, but they were ordered to come in person, give the police a stipulated number of guns.(69) Chiweshe seems to have been obeying orders, and was allowed to remain in his old village. Chidamba was rather difficult. At the same time, the authorities knew very well that not all guns were handed in. On 25th October, 1897, Kenny, N.C., wrote to the C.N.C: "The natives who have

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(66) Alderson, op.cit., p.171 ff.
(67) Dr. R.C.Howland, op.cit., p.24.
(68) Rhodesia Herald, 2nd September 1896.
(69) E.J.B.Hosking, N.C. Mazoe, September 1897. N 1/1/6.

surrendered in this district have handed in very few guns." Also, as trouble was ending around Mazoe Valley, much of Nazoe North was still armed and many people were continually fleeing north, Mapondera, Zuda, and others such as Mhasvi. Mhasvi was arrested by Alderson, but later was released because Alderson's action was reprehensive.

Those who had surrendered were ordered to leave their hills and caves and come into open space under paramount chiefs. But others would not. "Last week several men cleared off north Darwin way sooner than obey the order to join the paramount."(70) Chiweshe was one of those who first obeyed the order to come to a location. On 22nd July, 1898, the Native Commissioner, E. Armstrong, who was touring the locations, wrote of Chiweshe's Location: "It was a most cheering sight, and fully bore out what I had recently heard re Cheweshwe [Chiweshe], and the attempts being made by certain low country people to stir up trouble. [Reference to overtures from Kore Kore, Mt. Darwin, that he should fight again.] On an open ridge, in open country, on the head of the Mrodzi river and about twelve miles South-West of my Camp, Cheweshwe's people are putting up very large huts and corn stores. Eighty huts I saw in course of erection yesterday, and twenty or so to be built later. With this chief I have, after a lot of trouble and patience, succeeded in getting six separate villages to amalgamate."(70)

Although Chief Chidamba and others were only to be removed into locations by force, fighting had ceased in the Mazoe Valley. He had been regarded by the Europeans as paramount over Chiweshe. The authorities may have verbally told Chiweshe their satisfaction and appreciation at re-settlement, and there is no doubt that the description of the location of Chiweshe is very much similar to the oral one.

During the trial of Nehanda, Hwata testified that she had sent him to kill Pollard and confiscate his guns. Hwata's reputation is low among his own people, and the trial and execution were seen as the final blow to the struggle for the moment. Some Europeans thought the trials were unfair, since murders were acts of war. The vindictiveness of Europeans, though natural, made trials a perfect farce.(71) They were thought of as sound political policy and a deterrent to trouble-makers by the Europeans, but Sir Alfred Milner thought they should end in view of the general pacification of the country two years after the end of the rebellion.(72)

The last question which requires confirmation from other sources is admirably dealt with. This concerns the investigations between the Chief Native Commissioner and Chiefs Hwata and Chiweshe. Gondo, an informant, who was also the son who accompanied his father Chiweshe on these investigations in 1906, says that a false mhondoro named Chinyumira was invented in order to save Nehanda from blame and responsibility. It is sometimes possible that one person can be a medium for two spirits. But it wasn't so here. Nehanda's medium of the rebellion was dead by 1906, and a new one had been possessed. That Hwata and Chiweshe succeeded in giving the Chief Native Commissioner the view they intended him to hold can be seen in this report of Taberer after a long interview with Hwata and Chiweshe at Amanda's: "...I am pleased to report that, as far as I can gather, the reports made that this woman was inciting natives to take up arms against the Government were unfounded.... Briefly, the late Nyanda had two Mhondoros, namely, (1) Shinyamira [Chinyumira], the mhondoro that advised her to start the late rebellion, and (2) Nyanda - the rain spirit. Both Wata and Chiweshe informed me that it was the rain spirit that had entered this woman [Vamativirira, new medium of Nehanda] and that they really believed she could make rain.

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(70) E. Armstrong, N.C.Mazoe, to C.N.C., 23/7/1898.
(71) H.C.Thomson, op.cit., p.241.
(72) Sir A. Milner to Earl Grey, 6/6/97. The Milner Papers: South Africa, 1897-1899.

They also stated that the Shinyumira Mhondoro had left the country and would not return. They said it was mad, and if it reappeared they would report the matter as they were desirous of peace and would not rebel again."(73)

The Government, however, feared trouble. There was uneasy feeling in Mazoe, with people awaiting a mhondoro from the north to deliver the Mashona from their conquerors, as promised by Chaminuka. It may be well to point out here that the north of Mazoe Valley, that is the country called Dande, was very famous as refuge from the Europeans who had occupied the South. It was also the spiritual headquarters of Chaminuka, and as has already been pointed out, Nehanda originally came from there. The Government after 1898 kept a close watch on the spiritual and secular leaders. It had a network of African spies, and in 1915 some Mwari messengers from Matabeleland (some of them were really Shona, but captured by Matabele) were arrested at Rusike, near Goromonzi.(73) This caution and watchfulness was the direct result of the rebellion. In 1915 there was fear that Germans had asked for African aid against the English. In 1913 there were also suspicious movements of Mlimo messengers who could contact other religious leaders quickly and secretly. The other results of the rebellion were that Europeans changed drastically their ideas on the Mashona, especially as far as character was concerned. "This little war was really a nasty business."(74) The Rhodesia Herald, which represented to a great extent settler opinion, blamed the big bosses of the Chartered Company, and the over-confidence of the Europeans. The paper admitted the Mashona had got the better of their masters. "We may as well be honest and take broad views: the 'nigger', with all his ignorance and cowardice, has, in cunning and native strategem, proved for once superior to his proper masters."(75) Henceforth the Mashona were to be regarded as deep and treacherous foes (76), to be punished or given their "25" for rebelling. So suspicious did the Rhodesia Herald become that it wondered why African women were collecting old and new tins, burning them and collecting the solder. The Mashona were a "mercuric lot of aborigines to be closely studied".(77) Finally, "it is not too much to say that our limited powers today are due to a too hasty treatment of the natives in the past", and everything must be done to win back the confidence of Home opinion.(78) On the whole, there could be no room for pretending that the Africans liked the Europeans.

The Africans, on the other hand, after suffering defeat seem to have accepted it as complete, and especially when in front of a Native Commissioner. "The chiefs in Southern Mazoe were interviewed and expressed themselves well contented with the Government." For the time being, Chiweshe had had enough and refused to help the Kore Kore against the English, at least not until they had begun to succeed.(79)

European authority was felt in the introduction of taxation, the constant shifting and continual presence of the White Chief, the Native Commissioner, who demanded to be addressed as "Mambo". But as The Herald of 8th December, 1897, warned, the Africans would seize an opportunity to revenge, and they attributed defeat to their own blunders, not to the virtues of their civilised conquerors "whom they detest more than ever". As some of the ex-rebels say frequently: "They have always troubled us." The attitude of the Mashona after the rebellion was, in private, one of hatred and dislike for the conquerors, but in the presence of the victors, and with the memory of the rebellion still fresh, one of caution and compliance, so that "one of the greatest difficulties in the situation is the profound mystery in which the purposes and wishes of the natives are shrouded. Not even the oldest and most experienced Native Commissioners and residents are able to do more than make guesses."(80)

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(73) Corres. on Nehanda, 1906, N.3/31/4.
(74) Milner to Lord Selbourne, 29/12/97, in Milner Papers: South Africa.
(75) Rhodesia Herald, 5th August, 1896.
(76) Ibid, 30/12/1896.
(77) Ibid, 6/4/1898
(78) Ibid, 5/11/1898.
(79) Ibid, 13/8/1898.
(80) Ibid, 17 June, 1897.