

THE ZAMBEZI GOBA IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY: NEW MALE-DOMINANT INSTITUTIONS AND THE DECLINING STATUS OF RURAL WOMEN

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INTRODUCTION: DEVELOPMENT TRENDS IN ZAMBIA

In Zambia the “center” follows the Livingstone-Copperbelt line of rail. The vast bulk of modern national wealth and productivity lies in islands of activity along this main artery: the copper mines, urban centers, other industrial and commercial ventures, the administrative bureaucracy, and commercial farming areas which provide most of the officially preferred urban food, maize. Beyond this belt lies a vast rural periphery, based on village-level subsistence cultivation of sorghums, millets, and cassava, where some 60% to 70% of the people still live.

Because the commercial maize growers at the center have had trouble gearing their harvests to varying market conditions, Zambia has been forced to use scarce foreign exchange and foreign aid to feed the center (Bratton 1980). A major aid agreement for 10 million U.S. dollars provided 100,000 tons of American maize to avert famine after the failure of Zambia's 1979 crop. To counter this alarming weakness, which is being compounded by rapid population growth, Zambian development planning has emphasized commercially oriented capital-intensive advanced technologies. Because the commercial food market is small, conditions have been suitable for only a limited number of large-scale mechanized farming ventures. Agricultural development policy has mainly been geared to help consumers at the center, rather than the multitude of small producers at the periphery. At the national and commercial levels, this emphasis has had the effect of taking food production out of the hands of the small, low-technology farmers in the countryside, whose crop yields are still subject to recurrent drought-induced failure (Schultz 1976; Shaw 1976; Bates 1979).

Simultaneous with the effort to increase and stabilize commercial food production, government policy has favored low-cost food, making it difficult to increase supplies without subsidies or government investment in production. While potential peasant farming males seeking wage incomes have flocked to the cities, adding to food problems there and increasing the subsistence burden on rural women, the countryside in many places has been invaded by urban-based elites planning to engage in large-scale mechanized farming. Thus, while local applicants skilled in the agricultural methods of the periphery are denied a chance to develop cash cropping, these generally unskilled men from the center are able to use their connections with the administrative bureaucracy to obtain subsidized farm inputs to use on “vacant lands” in the periphery.

The talents of the countryside have seldom been fully appreciated at the center. Most European colonists believed that male-oriented labor—and capital-intensive market farming was intrinsically superior to the largely female-oriented land-extensive subsistence farming common in low-density Africa. They tried to recreate in Africa their model of European peasant farming, with male-focused, more intensive methods designed to support larger, class-structured European populations (Hellen 1968; Boserup 1970). Strongly conditioned by their own demographic history and its impact on their cultures, most Europeans failed to understand that a history of land pressure rather than innate superiority had necessitated the European agricultural practices

they favored for Africa. They could not recognize the ecological, economic, and social disadvantages their model would impose in most African settings, and their cultural bias made it difficult for them to appreciate the adaptive advantages of Africa's low-density shifting agriculture.

At the beginning of colonial rule in British Central Africa, Imperial Commissioner Sir Harry Johnston typified what was to be an enduring British attitude when he wrote that "as a rule, native agriculture is conducted on a heedless system, ruinous to the future interests of the country. . . . One of the great lessons we have to teach the Central African negro is fixity of tenure, the need of settling permanently on one piece of land, and by careful manuring, the constant raising of crops from within a certain definite area" (1897:424-425). Half a century later, William Allan, assistant director of agriculture for Northern Rhodesia, championed the notion that African systems of food production, "products of centuries of adaptation to environment, have often much to be said for them" (Allan 1945:13). However, after seventeen years of distinguished agricultural service, he, like most colonial agents, still believed that modifications along European lines were necessary and inevitable (*ibid.*:13-14).

The possibility of intensifying the local food production practices found in higher-density areas of Africa, including parts of precolonial Zambia itself (Lancaster 1976, 1979), was apparently never seriously considered in colonial Northern Rhodesia. African methods were to be done away with entirely. Relatively little was done to encourage existing peasant production by appropriate small-scale technology, as has since been done in new China (Myrdal 1965; Myrdal and Kessle 1970) and advocated convincingly by Schumacher (1973). Indeed, steps were taken to discourage Africans from competing with white farmers (Dixon-Fyle 1977; Muntemba 1978). But when population and land relationships permit sufficiently long fallow periods, traditional mixed-crop farming systems are known to be highly rational and even superior to large-scale mechanical farming. They reduce hazards of climate and disease, provide a balanced diet, and produce sustained yields at low cost without significantly depleting the resource base. Compared to the very high energy costs of capital-intensive agriculture, African systems employing low-impact technologies and low work and capital inputs are more efficient than most people realize, especially since imported fossil fuel prices have skyrocketed and placed additional burdens on Zambia's beleaguered foreign trade balance (Lancaster 1976; Hunter and Ntiri 1978).

Locally adapted drought-resistant varieties of sorghum, millet, and cassava are grown as staples in vast areas of rural Zambia, particularly in the western and northern portions of the country (Kay 1967:52), where the maize originally preferred by colonialists is less successful. In the dry season the gently rolling, trackless plains are easily traversed by truck for marketing purposes. In parts of the country private African entrepreneurs have long collected village crops this way, direct from remote fields and granaries, for resale to low-income African populations at the center, independent of the restrictive policies of the official grain marketing system (see Lancaster 1981: chapter 10). Even without drastic settlement schemes, agricultural retraining, and construction of expensive road networks, some areas might regain much of their migrant male labor force and employ familiar crops and techniques to help feed the overcrowded center, while improving living standards at the periphery. What is needed is a strong incentive pricing policy for African foodstuffs grown by average African families, together with modest government investments in small-scale irrigation facilities, such as lift wells and windmills to offset recurring droughts. Without abandoning large-scale agricultural projects at the center, modest investments could have a significant economic, social, and political impact in many peripheral areas.

Everyone recognizes there has been insufficient improvement since Zambian independence in 1964. Rural development programs, training, and information channels still influenced by European models continue to bypass women,¹ much as they continue to dismiss the crops and methods of indigenous agriculture (Lambard and Tweedie 1972; Dodge 1977). For Dodge, who scarcely mentions it in her review of Zambian agriculture, indigenous rural farming is merely "primitive." Even when development has focused on the African family

farmer, helping to train the husband for commercial agriculture, it is well known that the neglected African woman experiences regressive rather than progressive change. When men turn to cash cropping exotic crops and enter the cash economy, women using customary tools and methods must take up the slack caused by their absence. They must work harder on subsistence crops, often with lowered caloric intakes and on older plots whose fertility has been reduced because the men are unavailable to clear fresh plots regenerated by long-term fallowing on "vacant lands," a system Zambian families relied on successfully for so long. Yet even as their subsistence chores increase, rural women and their children have become more habituated to the cash economy. They try to raise money in the marginal part-time ways available to them and become more dependent on their cash-earning husbands. As many observers have noted, the former complementarity of roles between the sexes, whatever the balance may have been, has generally been altered in favor of men (Richards 1950, 1958; Levine 1966; Boserup 1970; Wellesley Editorial Committee 1977). These patterns are in evidence among the Goba, a group in which women's former relatively high status is eroding. By the end of the 1960s, the status of Goba women was declining in the face of male dominance in the growing village cash economy, a decline linked with important developments in the male-oriented government court. Both trends were clearly due to influences from the center.

THE ZAMBEZI GOBA IN 1967-1969

The Goba speak a northern dialect of the Shona cluster of languages, which is centered in Zimbabwe. The few Goba who have made their homeland in Zambia are concentrated on the north bank of the Zambezi at the Kafue confluence, with an estimated population of 15,000. Throughout remembered history their district has been infested with the cattle-destroying tsetse fly. Rather than using cattle or some other form of bridewealth like the majority of Shona speakers, they have married under a bride-service system. Postmarital residence has been uxori-matrilocal, the wife's descent group has retained filiative rights in the children, and localized matrilineages centered on coresident groups of related women have provided the framework for sociopolitical action. Wives have wielded influence through their control of raw and processed foods and have exercised authority through key positions in the ancestor cult.

In common with many African societies in which sociopolitical recruitment is conditioned by rules of descent, Goba descent groups are organized as ancestor cults. An individual's fortunes are thought to be influenced by the goodwill and guidance of a same-sex ancestral guardian spirit, with whom one communicates through the mediation of a trusted same-sex elder. Because localized descent groups are woman-centered and ties through female ancestors are important even for men, there is greater demand and scope for the talents of female than of male spirit intermediaries. Principles of seniority based on generation and birth order concentrate this power in the hands of the *vasamukadzi*, the senior sister in each sibling group. It is a system that places considerable power in the hands of older women. Rules of mother-sister-daughter succession order relations between generations of allied *vasamukadzi* in their merging segmentary descent group system.

The village economy is two-tiered. The subsistence sphere is a domestic one, largely in the hands of wives and their unmarried children. In years of adequate rainfall, subsistence agriculture is the main source of food, supplemented by gathering, purchases from country stores, animal husbandry, hunting, fishing, and intervillage trade, in approximately that order of importance. In years of poor rainfall, perhaps one year in every three, the subsidiary food sources assume greater importance and carry the light population (14.6 per square mile west of the Kafue) with little difficulty. Most food cropping is done by women, using a short-handled hoe. They also gather plant foods, care for small stock, and carry on most intervillage trade.

In addition to the domestic subsistence economy, there is a village-level prestige sphere. This managerial sector of the economy focuses on village politics. Each village is dominated by a particular descent group. Political action takes the form of competitive membership recruitment at the expense of rival factions in the segmentary descent group system. Attention of the group focuses on domestic conflicts, marriage prestations, filiation of children, and, above all, positional succession, issues lying at the heart of power in a descent-based society. In the late 1960s, women still had a great deal of influence in such matters in the villages, through their positions in the ancestor cult.

The political economy is also concerned with extra-village affairs, especially those involving the cash economy of the outside world. Rather than working locally for their brides, as in precolonial times, bride-service husbands now seek wage work in distant locations. This arrangement commonly involves the enforcement of marriage prestation remittances from distant husbands and lengthy disputes associated with delays and disagreements over payments, rights in marriage, and the children. Because their greater mobility allows them to track down errant husbands and spend time deliberating in distant courts and villages, this portion of the prestige sphere has been dominated by older men free from the daily demands of subsistence farming and child care.

The Village-Level Cash Economy

Although subsistence agriculture is woman-centered and women have a strong voice in village-level affairs, they participate little in the cash economy compared to men, who spend much of their lives on tours of migrant wage labor. This fact emerged from my study of consumption patterns associated with twenty-eight sorghum fields supporting 90 people, equivalent to an average-sized village. All stages of the domestic cycle were represented in this study sample.

A total of 32,745 pounds of threshed grain was harvested from these fields in 1967, an average yield by local standards. Only 17% of the grain, representing \$492.30 (at 1967 exchange rates),² or \$5.47 per capita and \$10.70 per adult, was diverted from its normal use, which was the production of the staple cereal porridge for home consumption. Aside from small uncounted gifts from wage-working husbands and children in town, this was all that many women had to meet their annual needs for clothing, petty "luxuries," and their children's school expenses.

The women obtained these funds from their sorghum in three ways. Some 5% of the harvest, representing \$100.20, was sold at a lower price to closely allied villagers, partly for social reasons. About 3% of the harvest, which sold for a total of \$21.60, was bartered directly to local shopkeepers and itinerant traders, mainly for cloth. Some \$370.50, accounting for 9% of the grain harvest, was generated through sale of homemade beer, mostly to older men "retired" to the villages after their years of migrant wage work. The women shared even these small proceeds with their husbands, who helped in the fields.

Although female sorghum growers shared earnings of \$492.30 from their 1967 sorghum crop, the total cash involvement of the 90 people in the study sample was far larger. The amount of this involvement can be estimated in three ways: by measuring the main avenues through which cash was injected into the settlement, by monitoring the channels through which funds were drained off to the outside world, and by measuring the store of cash value residing more permanently on the local scene.

Despite high unemployment rates, low wages, and poor working conditions, migrant wage labor remittances were still the most reliable sources of cash for most villagers, averaging about \$144 annually for the sample village of 90 people, equivalent to \$1.60 per capita and \$3.13 per adult. In years of adequate rainfall, sales of indigenous tobacco far outstripped wage labor as a cash source; \$691 was earned this way in 1967, representing \$15.02 per adult, though nothing

at all was produced during the extreme drought of 1967-68. An embryonic cotton industry produced another \$79 for the sample village in 1967, though again nothing was earned from the 1968 planting. Total cash injections for 1967 came to \$914, or \$19.87 per adult.

On the other hand, country dry goods stores drained off an estimated \$320 from the modal or average settlement in 1967, and beer halls and bottle stores accounted for another \$315, giving a total annual drain of \$635 (\$13.80 per adult). Most of this money was spent by men.

The estimated stock of money in circulation in connection with the previously mentioned village-level sorghum trade, together with the cash value of reserves held within the average village, stood at \$2,933 in 1967, representing \$1,238 in money hoards, \$814 in cattle kept outside the tsetse zone, \$389 in sheep and goats, and \$492 circulating more or less constantly in the women's sorghum trade. These important cash reserves came into play in the recurrent drought years so common in the region.

Social Change and Male Dominance in the Cash Economy

As is common in central Africa, the cash economy is dominated by men. Older men have specialized in growing tobacco, the principal cash crop. Younger men are the wage labor migrants, the most reliable source of funds. However, many men die before freeing themselves of this cultural obligation that all villagers have come to depend on. The emerging cotton industry is also in male hands, though woman-power is significant in the production of both tobacco and cotton and female subsistence labor makes it possible for the cash-remitting males to be absent so much of the time.

Once they have earned cash and brought it back to the villages, men invest it in livestock and plows in tsetse-free areas. They also distribute money, largely among themselves, in the form of marriage prestations and court judgments. Money not in circulation is saved, again largely by men. Some had hoards as large as \$150; the average woman had only \$8.60. The earning, investment, saving, and distribution of cash is therefore largely concentrated in male hands. Even consumer expenditures are mainly a male prerogative. Country dry goods stores, beer halls, and bottle stores, the main exporters of cash, have become elite places which support male prestige. Everyone considers them "off limits" to respectable women.

Conservative older males, who have enjoyed little success in wage labor, are still oriented toward investment in cattle kept in safer tsetse-free areas in Tonga country to the west, as in earlier decades of this century. There is a slight but noticeable trend among the men toward ceasing migrant labor in favor of growing cotton locally once their bride-service obligations have been met, especially if they can avoid the anxiety of a government loan. An independent cotton patch holds out the hope that a man can be self-employed and remain at home while earning his family's cash needs. More progressive and financially successful men are increasing the size of their cotton operations, running stores, and engaging in local government and party politics. They are adopting a Tonga ethnic identity and abandoning time-consuming tobacco operations. This growing interest in cash wealth is undermining the older political economy based on succession to coveted social positions within a matrilineal system providing relatively high status for village women.

When an adult's estate is divided, two basic distinctions are made: that which devolves to the main heir (*nhaka mudzimu*) and that portion (*chirumu*) distributed to subsidiary heirs. The main heir is chosen to succeed to important sociopolitical positions formerly occupied by the deceased. This common pattern in central Africa is known as positional succession (Richards 1960). Material objects passed on to the main heir are designed to enable the successor to carry on the new roles successfully. The deciding factor in determining whether there shall be a main heir has always been the presence of living children. If any survive their biological parent, the name and structural position of the dead parent are passed on to an experienced successor

capable of continuing the necessary relationships. In the case of a departed father, the successor necessarily becomes polygynous and should be a kinsman of the deceased, preferably resident in the same village or nearby. Because he must be an acceptable mate to the widow and able to maintain a home for her and the children, a genealogically distant kinsman must sometimes be chosen. In case a mother has died, the former marriage and household are dissolved, and the female successor, who is normally a married sister capable of caring for a few extra mouths, need only act as surrogate mother.

Although Europeans are unlikely to think in these terms, the chief attractions of an individual's estate have not been temporary usufruct rights to communal land nor private rights to cattle, cash, or other material goods. The prime attractions have been sociopolitical positions held by the deceased and vacated by death. Transfer of these to a successor provides the heir with valuable, publicly recognized positions within the segmentary descent system and its ancestor cult.

Goba political economy, epitomized by positional succession and jockeying for power, has been open to manipulation by both sexes, and some of both sexes have achieved high status. But the cash economy, dominated by men, has enhanced the male role in the balance of power between the sexes and has been changing the social system. Men are the labor migrants seeking funds for marriage payments (known as *mapadza*), which they deliver to older men back home. The payments range from \$62.40 to \$312, average \$96, and may take twelve years to pay (see Lancaster 1974, 1981).³ Village-bound mothers, who have no husbands or active male elders to help them, find their daughters difficult to control in the earlier stages of the daughters' marriage cycle and eager to escape to the novelty of the towns, where many young women find themselves burdened with children and abandoned by their men. The older village-dwelling men are freer than the older women to track down errant husbands and exert the pressures necessary to enforce the bride-service remittance system on the young males. Without this pressure, the long bride-service cycle would seldom be completed and the pattern of matrilocal extended families forming woman-centered village cores would cease to exist.

The marriage prestations that symbolize completion of required stages in the marriage cycle are dependent on senior men for their proper execution, and the resulting woman-centered residence pattern has given women a good deal of social, religious, and political authority in the villages. Under this system, elite male behavior has been coordinated with that of their elite female counterparts. As they mature, members of both sexes accumulate valuable sociopolitical roles, resulting in impressively large families and prestigious polygynous marriages for older men and women of high status.

The basic inflows of cash, from tobacco gardening, labor migration, and cash cropping, are dominated by men, who also control most of village cash reserves, the money hoards, the cattle, goats, and sheep. New institutions, the country stores, bottle stores, and beer halls, have developed to tap this male-oriented cash economy. In the process they have formed a new set of elite male facilities supporting male prestige. A similar male-oriented institution, the new local government court, like the others accessible to women only in a limited and disadvantaged way, has had similar effects in enhancing male status.

Male Dominance at Court

The most far-reaching impact one can project from continuing growth of the village cash economy is likely to be associated with its increasing involvement with marriage payments. In recounting recollections about their youth and the lives of their parents and grandparents, village elders point out that husbands once had to live in their wives' villages and perform bride service for an indefinite, sometimes never-ending period. There is neither memory nor legend of a time when this rule did not exist in their Zambezi Valley homeland. Corroboration comes from a report by the then colonial Secretary for Native Affairs, dated October 1909: "The custom is for the men in this District to go live at their mother-in-law's as part payment of

'*luselo*.'"⁴ Notebook and tour reports kept by other early colonial administrators similarly record that in the early years of this century uxori-matrilocal bride service was usual.

By the late 1960s the rise of cash as an acceptable form of marriage prestation had led to the establishment of payments serving as cash equivalents for elopement damages and for the manual labor the groom once performed in person in the bride's village. Life histories and genealogies suggest that this system had begun by the 1930s. The rise of cash wealth also led to inception of a terminal cash bridewealth prestation in the standard marriage sequence. Since this development in the 1930s and 1940s, younger men have become increasingly dissatisfied with the expense and the time required to pay for the earlier stages of the marriage cycle. They have resented the fact that elopement damages, bride-service equivalents, bridewealth, and other customary marriage payments have gradually escalated to the point where they averaged \$96 in 1967-69, a very large amount in their economy. If the village cash economy should continue to grow, it is probably only a matter of time before most men will be able to curtail the expenses of the marriage cycle by delivering their payments more quickly, a probability enhanced by the fact that other forces are working in the same direction.

Now that the government's rural court system has been removed from the direct influence of village women and placed in the hands of progressive young men employed by the Ministry of Justice, there is increased pressure for a single large marriage payment early in the marriage. A contributing factor toward this change has been the continuing growth of cattle holdings as westernmost Goba continue to orient toward healthier upland cattle areas. Greater cattle holdings increase the wealth available for marriage payments. Pressure for acceptance of final payments early in marriage also stems from the fact that both the neighboring Plateau and Valley Tonga marry that way themselves (Colson 1958, 1971). Since the Zambian Goba have been changing their ethnic identity and most have actually been considered Tonga for many years, their desire to merge with the more prestigious Tonga should eventually lead to more closely similar systems of marriage and residence.⁵

Probably the single most pressing issue favoring change in the marriage system is the problem of divorce. Both sexes think that the divorce rate is too high, attributing it to the large cash demands and time-consuming nature of the bride-service system, which keeps many men away in the towns; the expenses and inconvenience of town life, where the couple are free from stabilizing parental influences; the fact that wives must eventually return to the villages to feed and care for their children; and the tendency for men to prefer town life and fail to return. Using the methodology developed by Barnes (1949:ratio A), I estimate the divorce rate for the Goba at 19.8%, based on my sample of 119 marriages. A more accurate figure might come closer to the 30-50% range found in matrilineal societies of central Africa.

It is difficult to obtain a realistic figure for the divorce rate. Most marriages begin with elopements to town, many of which are brief and easily forgotten as marriages. If the marriage lasts a few years, the young woman is eventually forced to return to her mother's village to care for her children. Even if unburdened with children, she finds it impossible to obtain a respectable job in town. She must eventually return home and gamble on her husband's commitment to work, save, and await the day, perhaps some ten years distant, when he too may return home with his marriage payments behind him. Many men waver in view of the availability of town women, the difficulty of finding and keeping jobs, and the problem of saving money even when living alone in the expensive towns. Most men under age 40 are thus fairly permanent town residents. Some develop emotional ties with other women and may become alienated from their demanding in-laws and jealous wife back home. While many men are, in effect, almost polygynous during these years, lonely village wives too may take lovers. Frustrated husbands return to the villages at this point and try to catch their wives in compromising positions in order to win sizeable verdicts for adultery damages at the government court.

It is rare that a husband in this position will be able to take the children upon dissolution of the marriage. Prestations for the patrification of children come late in the marriage cycle, when the marriage is likely to be more stable. Most marriage failures occur well before that time. In any event, it is unheard of for young children to follow their divorced fathers to live

with stepmothers interested in their own children. The youngsters remain with their own mother, who continues to grow their food, see to their petty cash needs at the local store, and care for them with the help of her mother and sisters.

Although a divorced father is deprived of his children's company, villagers sometimes permit a man to make retroactive payments for patrification of children reared in this way by divorced mothers. This payment usually occurs long after the separation, when the children are on the brink of marriage. By then the father is in a better position to make a large cash investment, and residence with a jealous stepmother is no longer a problem. In 1967-69, retroactive payments were made only for girls because families of coresident daughters were still considered the proper basis for village organization and because cash remittances from the absent young husbands finally freed the fathers from migrant labor.

Retroactive filiation penalizes the mother and her kin by deflecting at the eleventh hour all the income to be generated by a daughter's marriage into the hands of a father who may never have visited the girl or contributed to her support. There is no provision that a father must share any of the proceeds he receives in this way.

This development, so favorable to fathers, can be credited to the new male-dominated government court. Before Zambian independence in 1964, the conservative chief was sole judge of cases not settled in the villages. In an effort to strengthen the chiefs and thus facilitate indirect rule, the early colonial administrators established "native courts" wherein every chief was made president of a court. This system was established among the Goba in 1930. As senior male elder in the chiefdom's largest descent group, and as a politician sensitive to public opinion, the chief was sympathetic to the old matrilocal system dependent upon lengthy bride service. The chiefs preserved the old system by helping to develop a series of conventional cash equivalences for the groom's former bride-service labors. But the new court judges who have replaced the chiefs are civil servants independent of the old order. As young married men who have themselves tasted the frustrations of bride service, they stand openly on the side of the husbands who want change. Whenever they can they use their position at court to strike down elopement damages and bride-service equivalences claimed by a girl's parents, or interpret such payments as equivalents of early bridewealth, signaling patrification of the children, an end to further payments, and both legal and residential independence for the husband/father. The institution of retroactive filiation, which the court supports, illustrates the younger judges' rebellion against the old marriage system. Now parents are in a much weaker position when daughters elope and marriage payments fail to materialize.

CONCLUSION: THE DECLINING STATUS OF GOBA WOMEN

Basic changes in the twentieth century have begun to alter the relationship between the sexes. One outstanding trend has been the growth of a village cash economy dominated by men. Another has been the monetization of the bride-service cycle. Wife-seekers, once easily controlled as they toiled locally for brides, now scatter individually or in small groups in search of wage-paying jobs. The money they remit is an important contribution no one wants to do without, especially in drought years. This dependence promises to intensify in coming decades as increasing land pressure further restricts hunting, gathering, and fishing. Young male wage earners have bargaining power, as do the older men who must police their remittances and see that they return home. The matrilocal bride-service system has given senior women relatively high status, but the monetization of marriage payments has begun to merge marriage, residence, and social organization with the male-dominated cash economy, and women have been losing ground.

Male-oriented institutions have been making the village cash economy more prominent and prestigious, and they quickly draw off cash which once circulated more slowly and widely in the villages, where it could be tapped by women. Women have participated in the cash economy through their beer brewing and small village trade in sorghum. Since the poor in the expanding urban and periurban centers subsist on this popular food, stimulation of the sorghum trade might capitalize on women's skills and increase exports in years of adequate rainfall. But the stores and beerhalls are displacing the women, and newer male-oriented cash crops have been encouraged instead.

And finally, the center of gravity in the local legal system has moved from its former locus in the village arena, where women still have an important voice, to a government courthouse located in the chief's village. Now the former chief court is run by progressive young men appointed by remote officials. The court is too far away for most women to attend hearings held in it. Like the stores and beerhalls, the court has become one more influential place where males congregate and male views predominate. These trends may be expected to continue as growth of the cash economy enhances male status and influences marriage prestations accordingly. The initial, once perpetual period of bride-service obligations was clearly on its way out by the late 1960s. There was strong pressure for an early bridewealth payment signaling patrification of children and independence for a securely dominant young male household head. Women realize that virilocal residence would make it easier to merge more successfully with their neighbors, the politically dominant Tonga peoples of southern Zambia, thus facilitating fuller participation of the Goba in the cash economy. Unless markets develop for their traditional subsistence crops, the united sorghum-growing women in woman-centered villages seem destined for a future as dependent wives of market-oriented peasant farming men. How this system will work out in practice remains to be seen.

NOTES

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¹ At best, women are the focus of home economics and social development workers at Zambian farm training centers. Agricultural development programs are usually male-oriented, particularly in government-sponsored settlement projects, where women's activities are not built into the schemes (Thayer Scudder, personal communication).

² In early 1967, one Zambian pound was equivalent to one U.K. pound sterling and to U.S. \$2.40.

³ Lancaster (1974) gives marriage payments in terms of the earlier U.S. \$1.40 value of the pound.

⁴ Guimbi Sub-District Inquiry, Secretary for Native Affairs, memorandum dated October 28, 1909, on the "Sigongo Uprising," in the Zambian National Archives, Lusaka.

⁵ For the most part the Goba of Namainga under Chief Sikaongo, often known as Sigongo or Sikongo in the literature, were classified as "Lower River Valley Tonga" when the first professional anthropological survey was conducted in this area (Colson 1960).

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