CHAPTER EIGHT
LONG-TERM RESEARCH IN GWEMBE VALLEY, ZAMBIA
Thayer Scudder and Elizabeth Colson

Introduction

We began our study of the Gwembe or Valley Tonga of Zambia in 1956 when Zambia was the British Colonial Territory of Northern Rhodesia and Gwembe Valley was still a relatively isolated region served by few roads, schools, or shops. Within a decade it had been transformed; and since then each decade, sometimes each year, has brought new challenges.

Gwembe Valley occupies the Zambezi River valley between Victoria Falls and the confluences of the Zambezi and Kafue Rivers (figure 8.1). The valley floor lies at about 1,300 feet above sea level, flanked by 3,000- to 5,000-foot plateaus. In 1956 the larger part of the population lived on the north bank of the Zambezi in Northern Rhodesia, separated by a permeable international boundary from kin living on the south bank in Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). It is with the fortunes of the Zambian inhabitants of Gwembe that we are primarily concerned. Between 1946 and 1991 they were under a single administrative district, Gwembe District, which evolved into three subdistricts: Gwembe North, Gwembe Central, and Gwembe South. In 1991 these became formalized as separate districts: Siavonga, Gwembe, and Sinazongwe. To maintain continuity with earlier publications, we here retain the old designations and use Gwembe to refer to the former district and its subdivisions.

The experience of the Gwembe people since 1956 epitomizes what has been happening throughout much of the Third World, where the building of dams and other massive projects transforms physical environments, populations become more vulnerable to centralized power, and transnational economic forces transform the political and social environment. The Gwembe people have experienced both boom and bust, have found their countryside an arena for guerrilla warfare, have been forced to contend with environmental degradation, have suffered from new diseases (especially AIDS and cholera), have had to compete with incomers intent on exploiting local resources, and have been exposed to the planning strategies of international organizations as well as those of their own government. They have learned to think internationally of donors, foreign exchange, markets, passports, and visas.
Beginning in 1956, one or the other (or both) of us visited Gwembe, at least briefly, on twenty-six different occasions, with the most recent being Colson’s visit in 2001. Colson’s earlier visit to Gwembe Central in June 1949 was incidental to research among the neighboring Plateau Tonga. Mary E. D. Scudder joined us in 1962–1963, 1972, and 1981–1982, while Roger Noll collaborated with us in 1972. Others associated with the study have been Jonathan Habarad, who spent fifteen months in Gwembe during 1987–1988; Sarah Madrid and Carlos Madrid, briefly in the summer of 1991; Sam Clark, some months in 1991, 1995, 1996, 1997–1998; Rhonda Gillett-Netting, in 1993 and 1997; Lisa Clegg, eighteen months in 1994–1995, and in 1996, 1998, and 2001; and Ben Clark, in 1998, 1999, and 2000. Ute Luig and Ulrich Luig, who have worked in Gwembe South intermittently since 1987, are good colleagues with whom we have exchanged field data, although they are not part of the longitudinal study group.

The Gwembe Study through Time

Initiation of the Study

A longitudinal study was not part of the original research design conceived in 1955 by Henry Fosbrooke, then director of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute (later the Institute for African Studies of the University of Zambia, and now the Institute for Economic and Social Research). When he heard that a hydroelec-
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stable ecological context, (2) a disruption, and (3) the emergence of a new equilibrium within a social and physical environment also marked by stability.

Fosbrooke was inclined to opt for a ten-year interval between visits to give the people a chance to change from permanent and semipermanent cultivation of alluvial soils to shifting cultivation and lake fishing, but for logistical reasons he settled on a five-year interval. He recommended a third visit after another five years but sought financing (20,000 pounds, or $56,000) for only the first two phases of the study. We were then recruited to carry out the study. Colson had learned a dialect of Tonga and visited Gwembe during earlier research among the neighboring Plateau Tonga (1946–1947, 1948–1950). Scudder, with a background in biology and geography as well as anthropology, was recruited to work on Gwembe ecology.

It was not until 1962–1963 that we began to comprehend the long-term possibilities involved in a study of continuity and change among a people who, having been forcibly resettled in connection with a major dam, were soon to be incorporated within the independent nation of Zambia as colonial rule gave way to a new political formation. Since then, the Gwembe people have had to contend with further changes. Concomitantly, we have had to modify research plans and methods.

The article prepared for the 1975 Wenner-Gren Conference reported on the first twenty years of the study and was imbued with the optimism associated with the first ten years of Zambian independence when Gwembe District and its people fared relatively well (Scudder and Colson 1979). Since the mid-1970s, they have suffered, along with the majority of Zambians, from the plummeting of the Zambian economy. During the latter half of the 1970s, Gwembe residents also experienced disruptions associated with the war for Zimbabwean independence. Gwembe District borders Zimbabwe and, in consequence, became a war zone. Land mines and commando raids led to the death of at least one person in each of our study villages (Colson 1995). Zimbabwe's independence in 1980 was not followed by improvement in either the local or the Zambian national economy. Unfavorable government policies and adverse international terms of trade for Zambia's major exports and imports led to a continued economic decline, and then to calamitous urban and rural poverty when structural adjustment programs urged on Zambia by its creditors brought the inevitable consequences of unemployment, disruption of basic services, and general malaise.

Gwembe has always been drought prone, but drought years increased in the 1980s and 1990s, making people dependent on imported food in 1981–1984, 1987–1988, 1991–1994, 1996, and 1998. In the mid-1980s, AIDS became a serious health problem. Zambia today has one of the highest AIDS mortality rates in the world. The impact on Gwembe, though grim, has been instrumental in bringing about changes in sexual practices. As health services have declined nationally, other diseases have acquired new significance. In 1991, cholera spread into Gwembe from cities where the infrastructure was breaking down. Drug-resistant strains of malaria and tuberculosis are also now common. Mortality rates have risen (Clark et al. 1995; Clark 2001).

Periodization

We have found it useful to break the twentieth-century history of Gwembe into four time periods, defined primarily by economic markers (Scudder 1985). The first (1901–1931) began with the establishment of administrative stations in the district by the British South Africa Company and ended eight years after the company transferred control over Northern Rhodesia to the British Colonial Office. During that period, the primary task of the administrators was to impose "law and order," collect taxes (which forced men to leave the district as labor migrants), and provide famine relief during the periodic years of hunger that have plagued Gwembe to the present. The second period (1932–1954) was characterized by a more active administration that attempted, in various ways, to alleviate hunger and to strengthen such recently established institutions as a district council and treasury and a local court system, as well as to encourage legislation against such practices as child betrothal. Both periods were prior to our involvement with Gwembe. Our field research documents the third and fourth periods.

The third period (1955–1974) was characterized by relatively rapid economic and political change triggered by the building of roads and other infrastructure associated with the Kariba resettlement and the fisheries in the newly formed Kariba Lake, by resistance to European domination symbolized by the formation of the Central African Federation, and then by the expansion of employment opportunities and governmental services during the first decade of independence. Living standards, as assessed by both the people and ourselves, rose for the majority during these years.

The fourth period, starting in the mid-1970s, has been characterized by economic downturn, exacerbated by political discontent which first focused on the single-party system initiated in 1972. The coming of a multiparty system in 1991 and the installation of a new government with different economic priorities and greater openness to criticism were associated with a brief euphoria when people believed that Zambia and Gwembe were entering a new period. Political disaffection then reemerged as inflation soared, corruption became increasingly apparent, intolerance of opposition increased, and the national economy contracted. During this period government has largely ceded its role in the provision of services to a multitude of donor agencies.

Kariba Dam and Its Impact

Since 1958, Gwembe landscape has been dominated by Kariba Lake, impounded behind the 400-foot-high dam which was begun in 1955 and sealed in late 1958. When the waters reached the reservoir margin in 1963, Kariba, then the largest human-made lake in the world, reached a length of over 170 miles and
had a surface area of approximately 2,000 square miles. As the lake filled, it flooded land occupied by 57,000 people (on both sides of the Zambezi). Although those displaced were largely relocated within the lake basin, the majority were no longer “people of the Zambezi,” as they had boasted for generations. They were moved back onto less fertile soils located toward the base of the Middle Zambezi escarpments. Later, during the 1980s and 1990s, more arable land became available when Kariba Lake shrank as a result of the years of drought, but the extent of the drawdown area was greatly reduced when the reservoir returned to full storage level in 2000.

For all their negative impacts, big dams do serve to incorporate local populations into a wider regional and often national system. In the Gwembe case, new roads were built to the dam site prior to the commencement of construction, and feeder roads were extended to relocation areas. Thousands of laborers responded to job opportunities at the dam site or in operations such as bush clearance around the perimeter of the future lake. Within a matter of months, isolation vanished. The new reservoir created a temporarily lucrative fishing industry, initially reserved for Gwembe fishermen. When it was thrown open in 1964 after independence, fishermen from as far away as Malawi, Mozambique, and Tanzania settled in Gwembe and married Gwembe women.

Any economic gains associated with Kariba Dam, however, must be evaluated in light of the reality that opportunities did not necessarily accrue to those who suffered losses. Many benefits, such as those relating to capital-intensive commercial fishing and to tourism, accrued to outsiders. Gwembe women lost rights in land, which undercut their position in subsequent years (Colson 1999). Many seniors who lost land and stock were unable to regain their old degree of affluence. Senior men lost status vis-à-vis younger men who had the strength to clear land, who were able to face the risks of fishing on Kariba Lake, or who were young enough to take advantage of new opportunities for education.

Zambian Independence

The Gwembe study spans the end of colonial rule and the creation of an independent Zambia. During 1956–1957, Northern Rhodesia was a colonial territory and a member of the short-lived Federation of the Rhodesias and Nyasaland (1953–1962), although the British Colonial Office retained responsibility for African affairs in Northern Rhodesia. Gwembe Tonga in Southern Rhodesia fell directly under the control of its settler government, which had very different policies for its African population. In Northern Rhodesia, settler political power was broken in 1962, followed by independence in 1964. Thereafter, deteriorating relationships with settler-dominated Rhodesia closed that country to Zambian labor migrants, including those from Gwembe District. Gwembe migrants then sought work in Zambia, and many took wives and children with them. This, and the new policies of the Zambian government (including universal primary school education and much-improved access to secondary and tertiary education), accelerated the incorporation of Gwembe people into a wider national polity of which they were scarcely aware in 1956.

Gwembe society, basically egalitarian in 1956, became increasingly stratified (Scudder and Colson 1980). In 1956 few were literate in any language; by 1972, probably every village in the district could boast of someone who had been to secondary school. At the start of the twenty-first century, Gwembe men and women in increasing numbers hold university degrees, earned both in Zambia and overseas. They are employed in professional jobs in Zambia and increasingly they also work elsewhere in Africa, Europe, and the United States. Many have graduated from teacher training or technical schools. Those assigned back in Gwembe form a new elite with local businesspeople, a few wealthy farmers, and other government employees. By the late 1990s, they were being joined by a few retired professional people who have returned home to start businesses and take part in local affairs. The Gwembe region also now has a substantial immigrant population, including fishermen and employees in its tourist industry and other enterprises.

In 1956, residence was in small villages. After the 1950s, Gwembe acquired four townships: three grew up around administrative centers; two (including one of the administrative centers) are industrial centers. Zambia's only coal mines opened in Gwembe South in 1965. Gwembe North has a power installation from which Kariba power flows to Zambian copper mines and other industries and to towns and farms along the railway line, but only at the end of the century was there talk of using that power to the direct benefit of Gwembe enterprises. All four townships have recruited diversified workforces, only some of whom originated in Gwembe.

During the "good years" immediately following independence, increased agricultural and veterinary services and the provision of credit encouraged a diversification of the village economy. In the early 1970s, cash cropping (of cotton in particular) and the sale of livestock replaced commercial fishing as the major source of local cash income. Profits were used to educate children and to purchase more productive equipment, with a successful minority also investing in village stores, tea houses, and bars. Carpenters, masons, and other craftspeople also then found a local clientele.

New opportunities at home were complemented by new job opportunities elsewhere in Zambia. These jobs were primarily for men, who were frequently accompanied by their wives and children. By the early 1970s, Gwembe families were to be found in all the towns along the railway in Southern Province (to which Gwembe District belongs), although the largest concentration was in Lusaka. Women used the opportunity to become marketeers to supplement family incomes and sometimes to maintain themselves as single women. Most migrants continued to maintain links with home areas; people, messages, cash, and other goods flowed back and forth between town and country, encouraged by the new availability of roads and transportation, while Radio Lusaka served both urban and rural areas.
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Economic Downturn

In the mid-1970s, both rural and urban opportunities deteriorated for low-income people. A drop in the price of copper—which had provided approximately 80 percent of Zambia’s foreign exchange—combined with rising oil prices to produce catastrophic economic consequences for most Zambians. Adverse international terms of trade were exacerbated further by the war for neighboring Zimbabwe’s independence, which necessitated the expensive rerouting of exports and imports after the border was closed. Scarce funds went to support freedom fighters from much of southern Africa. Zambia’s policies toward the rural areas were also major factors in the economic downturn (ILO 1981; Seidman 1979).

In Gwembe, the economic downturn and increased danger from Rhodesian land mines led to a cutback in all services in the late 1970s. Tsetse control ceased for a time, and a resurgence of bovine trypanosomiasis reduced cattle herds. Extension officers stopped their visits due to lack of fuel and fear of land mines. Health services and schools deteriorated as supervision slackened and supplies failed to arrive. Village stores and other businesses closed because they could not restock basic commodities or, in some areas, because they could not compete with government parastatals which sold commercial beer, bread, and sewn clothing (Colson and Scudder 1988).

At the very time opportunities in Gwembe were decreasing, worsening urban unemployment and inflation forced many urban migrants to return home. There they had to contend with land shortages, due to the original loss of land to Kariba Lake and to rapid population increase (Clark et al. 1995). By 1982, land pressure was at a point at which many newly married couples could not find land to clear for fields, nor could they count on obtaining sufficient land from kin even to raise subsistence crops, much less to engage in cash cropping. Many established farmers who felt the land pinch in the early 1980s began to leave Gwembe to pioneer land in western Southern Province, a hundred miles from home; later, others drawn by land hunger and better rainfall ventured further north into Lusaka and Central Provinces.

Continuity and Change in the Gwembe Study

Over the years the study has changed significantly, partly in response to the changing circumstances of the Gwembe people and partly due to our own changing interests, but also because a long-term study develops its own dynamics.

As we have attempted to understand continuities and change, the timing and sequencing of events have become more crucial. We have come to see current practices as devices applied to particular situations rather than as stable adaptations that will continue to be invoked. In turn, what is happening at the time of any one visit has the potential for a variety of futures. We find ourselves paying more attention to the interplay between national resources and policies and conditions in Gwembe. During 1956–1957, although decisions made in Salisbury, Lusaka, London, and elsewhere were bringing upheaval to Gwembe, we took this as a given and looked primarily at how Gwembe people ordered their lives and how they viewed the future. During the 1960s and early 1970s, people became increasingly mobile, both geographically and socially, and it was clear that they used different frames of reference as they moved from situation to situation. During these years they saw the world as opening up to them, and they looked outward to the towns as sources of new ideas, styles, and luxuries. By the 1980s, they felt themselves newly constrained by forces beyond their control and understanding.

Like other Zambians, they were concerned with the impact of international politics and talked much about “Forex” (foreign exchange), so desirable and so difficult to acquire. They also began to engage with international donor agencies—which help support schools and health services, provide wells and small dams as well as agricultural inputs and extension work, administer food-for-work programs in drought years, and employ some local people.

In response to this changing field situation, we have attempted to develop research designs and methods flexible enough to cope with the fluidity of people who move geographically, seize or reject new opportunities (or try to cope with the nonavailability of opportunities), use and avoid new national and international agencies, rethink and cling to old ideologies, and are becoming something else while trying to remain themselves (Colson and Kottak 1996).

Research Plans in 1956

Plans for the initial study were built on Colson’s 1949 visit to Chipepo Chiefdom in Gwembe Central and her experience with Gwembe migrants settled in Plateau villages. Most of those she encountered were from Chipepo Chiefdom. We decided to begin work in two Zambezi neighborhoods in Chipepo. Nevertheless, we knew from published sources and talks with district officers that those living both upstream and downstream from Chipepo differed in dialect, subsistence systems, social organization, ritual, and general outlook. Hill residents also differed from those living along the Zambezi. On the other hand, neighborhoods on opposite banks of the Zambezi, although under different national regimes, freely exchanged populations and were similar in most respects. To write about Gwembe we would have to supplement work in Chipepo with other studies and also rely on information in the district files.

In the second phase, we wanted to compare responses to resettlement by Zambezi neighborhoods with different initial resources. We also wanted to examine the effect on host populations who had to share space and other resources with those resettled. Initially, we also wanted to compare the impact of the different resettlement policies of the regimes on either side of the Zambezi. Ideally, intensive studies should have been carried out in some ten neighborhoods and these supplemented with a general survey. This was too much for two people given a one-year time schedule, even if we had not also needed to look at local government, the local court system, and the roles of the district administration.
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and various patterns and rituals. It is important to note that this work was conducted in the 1950s, a time when the government was actively involved in the classification of African groups. The study focused on the Kwena people, who were considered to be one of the two main groups in the area. The researchers observed the Kwena group for two years, during which time they collected data on a variety of topics, including language, religion, and social organization.

The Kwena people are known for their agricultural practices, which are still in use today. They grow a variety of crops, including maize, beans, and vegetables. The study also highlighted the Kwena people's strong sense of community and their ability to work together for the benefit of the whole group.

The researchers used a combination of methods to collect data, including observation, interviews, and the use of participant observers. The data collected was then analyzed to identify patterns and trends, and to gain a better understanding of the Kwena people's way of life.

The study found that the Kwena people were highly organized and that their society was based on a strong sense of community. The researchers also noted that the Kwena people were able to adapt to changing circumstances, such as the introduction of new crops and technologies, by modifying their traditional practices as necessary.

The findings of this study have been used to inform policy-making and development efforts in the Kwena area, and continue to be studied by anthropologists and other social scientists. The study was published in a number of academic journals, and has been widely cited in subsequent research on African societies.

In conclusion, the Kwena study is an important example of how long-term research can provide valuable insights into the social, cultural, and economic aspects of a particular community. By focusing on a single group over an extended period of time, researchers are able to gain a deep understanding of the dynamics of their society, and the ways in which it is changing over time.

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INCORPORATING NEW PHENOMENA IN THE STUDY

In the mid-1960s, we shifted our interest away from the Gwembe area...
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Production for urban markets became feasible and reliable, with the increasing number of people flocking to urban centers encouraged by the growing number of jobs and opportunities. However, with the increasing number of people flocking to urban centers, the demand for agricultural produce increased, leading to a decrease in the cultivation of food crops.

As the demand for agricultural produce increased, the government introduced policies to encourage the cultivation of cash crops, such as cotton and tobacco. This led to a decrease in the cultivation of food crops, leading to a food crisis in the region.

In the late 1960s, a new industry began to emerge in the region - the banana plantation. The government introduced policies to encourage the cultivation of bananas, leading to a significant increase in the production of bananas.

In the early 1970s, the government introduced policies to encourage the cultivation of cash crops, such as tea and coffee. This led to a significant increase in the production of these crops.

In the late 1970s, the government introduced policies to encourage the cultivation of oil palm, leading to a significant increase in the production of oil palm.

In the late 1980s, the government introduced policies to encourage the cultivation of rice, leading to a significant increase in the production of rice.

In the early 1990s, the government introduced policies to encourage the cultivation of maize, leading to a significant increase in the production of maize.

In the late 1990s, the government introduced policies to encourage the cultivation of vegetables, leading to a significant increase in the production of vegetables.

In the early 2000s, the government introduced policies to encourage the cultivation of fruits, leading to a significant increase in the production of fruits.

In the late 2000s, the government introduced policies to encourage the cultivation of spices, leading to a significant increase in the production of spices.

In the early 2010s, the government introduced policies to encourage the cultivation of legumes, leading to a significant increase in the production of legumes.

In the late 2010s, the government introduced policies to encourage the cultivation of pulses, leading to a significant increase in the production of pulses.

In the early 2020s, the government introduced policies to encourage the cultivation of sesame, leading to a significant increase in the production of sesame.

In the late 2020s, the government introduced policies to encourage the cultivation of sunflower, leading to a significant increase in the production of sunflower.

The government also introduced policies to encourage the cultivation of oilseeds, leading to a significant increase in the production of oilseeds.

Although the government has introduced policies to encourage the cultivation of these crops, the success of these policies has been mixed. In some cases, the policies have been successful, leading to a significant increase in the production of these crops. In other cases, the policies have not been successful, leading to a decrease in the production of these crops.
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1990s, the three newcomers to the study [Clark, Cheiky, and Gillett-Nilling]
their general awareness of national policies, their consumption preferences, their
created samples of their own for studies they are undertaking on nutritional sat-...e with
their own aesthetic sense, and their own architecture, their own building materials.

The extension of the Gwembe study into urban migration, to secondary school
students, and to other elites who do not live to urban migrants, to secondary school
students, and to other elites who do not live

As a result, we do not find useful such concepts as "encapsulation," "compartmentalization,"...villagers are less modern (or "postmodern") than they

People move between town and country. In the early 1960s, fishermen on
Kariba Lake sold their fish fresh at the lakeside, as a practice favored by a number
of factors including pricing and location of markets. Today, by selling their
fish products through the government marketing system, they are able to make
substantial profits. These profits have enabled them to purchase more modern
fish products through the government marketing system, they are able to make
substantial profits. These profits have enabled them to purchase more modern

Small traders and business operators were their efforts between rural and urban
markets. Men and women traders transport fish, chickens, and vegetables to

Family businesses are the most innovative form of business. For example, a man
in Lusaka, he built a four-room house in a low-income suburb in Lusaka. From his profits, he bought land and

Children are moved during the dry season with their families to live in urban
houses in Lusaka. They may live with their families or in the houses they

Those residing in the rural do not differ from urban in their

may or may not publish studies prepared for it (e.g., Bakwele 1995; Brandt

Beliefs about witchcraft are based on an entrenched view that humans, especially senior men, are strongly motivated by ambition, envy, and malice; and that, in their search for advantage, they are willing to sacrifice others, even close kin. Hardships associated with increasing economic differentiation at the village level activate suspicions. By the early 1980s, witchcraft had become the principal explanation for misfortunes, whether it be sickness of people or livestock, poor crop yields, or other adverse outcomes. In the early 1980s, every neighborhood in Gwembe summoned at least one “witch-finder,” and in most neighborhoods almost every senior man was accused of being a witch and was forced to pay to be cleansed (Colson 2000).

In the 1980s and 1990s, witch finding became endemic in Gwembe, as elsewhere in Zambia. Witchcraft beliefs, however, have changed over the decades to accommodate the wider world within which Gwembe people operate. In 1956, witches could only affect those near at hand; by 1973, they were accused of traveling hundreds of miles in a second on magic horses and airplanes. In the early decades of our study, witches were kin, neighbors, or fellow workmates, all persons intimately involved with their victims. By the 1970s, they might be strangers out to drain the life force from victims to the benefit of powerful contenders for economic and political power. By the 1990s, stories circulated that gangs operating under a European or Indian boss were extracting organs for export to Europe and America to meet the demand for organ transplants, a practice labeled as witchcraft. Thus, Gwembe people now see both their life force (verbalized as the ability to work) and their bodies as being exploited by powerful national and international others who—like local magnates—are seen as eager to benefit from the misery of others.

To protect themselves against witchcraft or simply to empower themselves, Gwembe men continue to purchase medicines, usually from town-based practitioners. Women, who have less cash and less access to such medicines, are more likely to strengthen themselves through membership in healing cults. Such cults teach people how to deal with alien spirits who seize control of one’s body and how to cope with the demons now said to be inherent in their own nature. These cults have continued to proliferate through the decades of the study, though the nature of the alien spirits usually reflects the particular fears of the moment (Ute Luig 1995b, 1999). Some of the cults draw on the teaching of Pentecostal churches. Fear of witchcraft and the envy associated with it—along with the increased consumption of alcoholic beverages and associated violence and a high incidence of theft, especially in hunger years—contributes to village disharmony and to the breakup of villages, whose coherence is already made difficult by a lack of land for expansion and by the expansion of their populations beyond traditional organizational frameworks. It also shifts much of the hostility engendered by failed government policies back into the home community and away from those officials responsible for making and carrying out policy.

Still, it would be a mistake to assume that social malaise will continue to evoke the same explanations and solutions to perceived problems. By the mid-1980s,
Gwembe Tonga had begun to revive old crafts to replace the factory-made goods no longer available or affordable. They experimented with a reordering of local government, using the village development committees instituted by government as a model (Habarad 1988), and elected committees to organize various activities they now deem necessary. The search for new spiritual support and the prominence of new churches are two other manifestations of the desire for change (Ulrich Luig 1997). In 1965, less than 5 percent of the population of Gwembe District identified itself as Christian; by 1988 over half of those living along Kariba Lake in Gwembe North did so (Copestake 1990). During the 1990s, people in the sample villages turned increasingly to Christianity and refused to participate in rituals and ceremonies they called "heathen." Conceptual frameworks may be resistant to change, but they are cultural constructs and so by definition are changeable.

The Formulation of Relocation Theory

The Gwembe study played a major role in developing a better theoretical understanding of the implications of compulsory resettlement, a development with which Scudder has been particularly concerned (Scudder 1966, 1973a, 1973b, 1975, 1997a, 1997b; Scudder and Colson 1982; Colson 1971b). His participation, during 1961–1962, in the study of the Nubian people of Egypt who were soon to be displaced by the Aswan High Dam scheme provided one basis for comparison with what happened in Gwembe. In the middle 1960s, he visited the Volta and Kainji Dam Projects in Ghana and Nigeria, which together displaced over 125,000 people. By then he had come to the conclusion that rural communities undergoing compulsory resettlement respond in the same general fashion irrespective of their sociocultural backgrounds and the policies of resettlement authorities, a conclusion later validated by a large number of studies. This led to the formulation of what he has called Relocation Theory.

Initially, because of the paucity of longitudinal studies, Relocation Theory dealt only with the years immediately preceding relocation, the process of physical removal, and the difficult period following removal, when people respond to the extreme stress associated with resettlement. In coping with this stress, the majority behave as if they saw sociocultural systems as closed systems. They cling to familiar people and familiar institutions, changing during the initial years following resettlement no more than necessary to come to terms with the new habitat and its inhabitants. Presumably because the level of stress is close to a critical threshold, radical changes from within (revitalization movements, for example) and from without (including attempts at social engineering by development planners) are rejected.

Records of Gwembe Tonga responses at different periods provided the empirical basis for initial theory formulation. In 1956–1957, we did not pay enough attention to indications that the threatened resettlement was already having an impact, nor did we arrange to observe what happened during the move. At that time, people did not seem particularly preoccupied by the threat of removal; many proceeded on the assumption that it would not occur. Even headmen who had been taken to the dam site built new homesteads at the old site in 1957, though they had been told that the move would take place within the year. We now recognize that they were adopting a strategy of denial, a common response to threat.

Our observations and Tonga comments during 1962–1963 made it clear that relocation involved multidimensional stress which began to diminish only in 1963, approximately four to five years after the move (Colson 1971b). By then, most people were economically on their feet; indeed, for many, material standards had improved. Full funeral ceremonies, greatly curtailed immediately after resettlement, reappeared. Personal and lineage shrines were rebuilt or newly initiated. Prophets were again active. The continued absence of communal rituals associated with a sense of belonging to a locale, however, pointed to a continued uncertainty about their future in the new areas. Despite this, the good harvest of 1963 reconciled many people to the new sites. Scudder hypothesized that at this stage (indicated by renewed self-sufficiency and familiarity with new habitat and hosts), people should begin to experiment with new possibilities that might lead to a period of rapid socioeconomic change. In fact, the rate of innovation is probably higher than before the move (cf. Barnett 1953). This would be due partly to increased confidence arising from the knowledge that they had survived the trauma of resettlement, partly to recognition of new opportunities, and partly due to a loosening of previous cultural constraints on innovation. Gwembe resistance to innovation during the early years of resettlement, however, represented at least in part a subversive protest against those who had displaced and humiliated them. The willingness to innovate evident during 1962–1963 was affected by the triumphant sense of empowerment shared by Africans throughout the country when the 1962 election spelled the demise of European control and the installment of an African-dominated government.

The relocation process, if it is to provide long-term benefits, involves four stages: the recruitment stage, the adjustment or the coping stage, the stage of potential socioeconomic development, and the final handing over/incorporation stage—with the entire process taking at least two generations (Scudder and Colson 1982). The same sequence of stages has been observed both in sponsored land settlement schemes of voluntary settlers and in spontaneous land settlement areas (Scudder 1984a, 1991).

Relocation Theory obviously has policy implications. As a consultant for the Bandama River Authority in the Ivory Coast in the late 1960s, Scudder made a number of policy recommendations based on the theory. More recently, it has been incorporated into the World Bank's guidelines for bank-financed projects that involve dislocation of populations (World Bank 1980; Cernea 1988), while the study of phenomena associated with involuntary resettlement has become a subfield of social science (DeWet 1993; Cernea and Guggenheim 1993; Cernea 1999; Cernea and McDowell 2000).
Contribution of the Study to the People of Gwembe

Some Gwembe people involved in the study have come to see our function in life to be the maintenance of their demographic histories. They even ask who will undertake that task when we are too old to carry on. Some have seen our publications and are pleased that they are known in Europe and America. Three books and one monograph were published through the Institute for African Studies (now the Institute for Economic and Social Research) to ensure that they were available within Zambia. Unfortunately, the Institute has lacked funds to keep them in print although all royalties were given to the University of Zambia and the Institute to further research in Zambia. Financial restraints on publication in Zambia have forced us to publish our last two books elsewhere and the only copies in Zambia are those we have sent to various agencies, to colleagues, and to some chiefs, headmen, and villagers. We have made a point of sending reprints of articles published in journals and books to the University of Zambia, as well as to interested persons in Gwembe and elsewhere.

It is difficult to point to more specific contributions to the welfare of Gwembe. Like many other anthropologists, we have made gifts in cash and kind, including assistance with school costs; or provided various services while in residence, such as obtaining information, dispensing medical supplies, or providing transportation. We do not know how to assess the impact of various consultancies we have undertaken in Gwembe: Scudder for FAO in 1967; Colson, M. E. D. Scudder, and T. Scudder for the Gossner Service Team in 1982; Habarad for the Gossner Service Team in 1988; Scudder for Harvest Help/Zambia in 1990; and Scudder for the World Bank in 1995 and 1996. Nor do we know how to assess the impact of Scudder's (1986) critique of the multinational Gwembe Valley Development Company.

Although Fosbrooke hoped the findings from 1956–1957 would influence the planning of resettlement, we were not asked to provide a written report or give formal advice. Informally, district officers and technical officers probed for what might be useful to them, but at the time neither they nor we thought us to be experts on resettlement. We could make predictions about the probable outcomes of certain proposed actions, based on the first year of study and anthropological precepts. Fortunately, it was accepted that we talk in general terms. Neither then nor later has either of us been expected to discuss the actions of individuals, nor would we do so if asked.

We could tell officials that their plan to move social units rather than individuals was in accord with anthropological theory, but that in Gwembe the significant social units were neighborhoods rather than villages. We urged that neighborhoods be moved as units and emphasized the recurrent plea of villagers that, if they must move, they be allowed to move inland along the tributaries about whose deltas they clustered. Old ties of kinship and friendship with those living along the tributary would ease their adjustment to a new region. We pointed out that fear of resettlement was exacerbated when people were asked to move to an unfamiliar area. With reference to the future lake fishery, we assured district personnel that Gwembe men were good fishermen given existing conditions and could be expected to adopt techniques for successful lake fishing, though they would need training and capitalization (Scudder 1960). We doubted, however, that they would operate any enterprise requiring the cooperation of a large number of men over time, given the individualistic nature of Gwembe work organization. We also questioned official optimism that expected the fishing industry to compensate people for the loss of arable soils. We predicted that a future crisis would occur when the first round of shifting cultivation had encountered soils and new fields were not available. We queried the method of computing compensation for destruction of homesteads that placed a value only on the dwellings.

We had no hesitation in querying official plans to allocate land in resettlement areas on a per capita basis to males on the tax rolls. We stressed that both men and women owned land. We had no evidence that chiefs were regarded as custodians of the lands of a people who, for the most part, regarded chiefs as government officials rather than hereditary rulers. It seemed unlikely that people would take kindly to any allocation of land by chiefs or district officers; in fact, they refused to do so.

Finally, we were skeptical of the officials' belief that neighborhood shrines could be transferred to resettlement areas. Our observations had shown that these shrines represented not the communities that were moving but rather the relationship of these communities to particular known physical environments—thus, the shrines were the media through which communities tried to influence natural forces impinging on their particular locality. We not only expected that shrine custodians would lose their office, but also thought that both ritual and political leaders would be undermined by their failure to counter the government's demand that people move.

For the most part, officials disregarded our comments, either because they were helpless to change plans formulated at higher levels or because they thought us misinformed. Three of the five neighborhoods in our original study suffered disruption. We did not make a follow-up study of one neighborhood which moved as a unit; the other seemed the most contentious by the mid-1960s of the four neighborhoods we continued to follow. Those that were moved inland along their own tributary found initial adjustment easier than those moved to unfamiliar terrain. People resented not being compensated for granaries and other homestead structures, as we had predicted, but we had not realized in 1957 how much strain the method of compensation would place on family relationships (Colson 1971b).

Scudder's work on fishing seems to have been influential in the decision to restrict commercial fishing on the Zambian side of Kariba Lake to Gwembe Tonga initially, and the early success of the fisheries is evidence of the rightness
of the prediction that they would take to lake fishing. Furthermore, as we had predicted, the government was unsuccessful in trying to introduce larger units than the traditional workgroup composed of a single fisherman joined by a few relatives and hired hands (Scudder and Habarad 1991).

Our predictions with respect to land allocation were also borne out. People disregarded attempts to parcel out new fields on a per capita basis, so the attempt was abandoned. Following resettlement, we were struck by the continuity in the formal rules of land tenure even though resettlement for the moment revolutionized land holdings and the rights of cultivators to dispose of their holdings have varied greatly over the years. Immediately after resettlement, when everyone was cultivating newly cleared land, individual freedom to dispose of land was at a maximum. Thereafter, as the original cultivators died and their rights were inherited, land again became subject to lineage claims that compromised the freedom of the holder. Major fluctuations in actual rights can therefore take place without anyone raising questions about the advisability of reformulating rules of tenure (Colson 1967). People query particular claims rather than the system itself. In the 1990s, however, they were faced with a radical change in the Zambian law of inheritance, which provides for inheritance of a portion of an estate by spouses and children as opposed to matrilineal kin who, however, still try to demand the lion's share. At the beginning of a new century, they are facing an even more radical change as government policy now privileges the privatizing of land through survey and the issuance of formal title. With land increasingly being treated as a commodity, we fear that many will lose their holdings.

We predicted that resettlement would change the informal power structure of neighborhoods when the land base was destroyed. During 1956–1957, power was diffuse but linked to land ownership. Men with the biggest holdings of inherited alluvial soils were usually well off in food and livestock, which gave them influence over others. They could afford to marry a number of wives who not only did much of the agricultural work but also prepared food for guests. More wives meant more children and, since much of a girl's bridewealth was taken by her father, more wealth. When people were moved, the old land base which supported wealth differentials was eliminated, at least for the time being, for everyone had an equal chance to claim land in the new region. We thought it likely that younger men able to undertake the physical labor of land clearance would emerge as the dominant members of the community, while older men, deprived of their principal asset, would be reduced in status. The experience of many seniors bore this out, but we had not counted sufficiently on the importance of personal ability. Middle-aged men who had influence in 1956–1957 usually succeeded in reestablishing themselves by mobilizing a variety of assets to ensure that they obtained large fields of the best soils available. Young men, in fact, did improve their situation vis-à-vis their elders in the 1960s and early 1970s on account of the abundance of wage labor and the availability of land. One result was that they

...married earlier and the polygyny rate temporarily went up; another was that they established themselves in a position to become the dominant elders of the 1980s and 1990s. As conditions deteriorated during the latter part of the 1970s and the 1980s, still younger men were not able to follow their example. Polygyny rates fell, although that small percentage of elders who had the capital and energy to develop as cash-crop farmers on a substantial scale increased their labor force by marrying more wives.

We predicted that local shrines could not be moved. The district officers tried anyway; poles from the shrines were attached to the lorries that transported people to new sites in 1958 to leave a drag trail for the spirits to follow. But it was ten years later, after people had become familiar with their new habitats, that the first shrines were reestablished. Even twenty years later, many were skeptical of their authenticity, and, if they addressed themselves to any shrine, they preferred shrines associated with their hosts in the relocation area. Then the spread of Christian sects further undermined belief in the efficacy of such shrines.

A further prediction, borne out during 1962–1963, concerned the demise of the ritual office of shrine custodian who officiated over rituals associated with the annual cycle. We argued that since the office—like the shrine—was tied to a locality, it would be discredited when the spirits associated with the office failed to protect their people against forcible removal. Shrine custodians, or their heirs, became ritually active again only ten years later when shrines were rebuilt, but have never regained the status they held back in 1956. We also expected resettlement to discredit the political order created by the colonial administration and supported by the administration as an agent for resettlement. By 1957 it was already regarded as an enemy. Antagonism to chiefs, headmen, and officers of the Rural Council persisted through the 1960s. Indeed, by the 1960s, the majority of Gwembe people opposed the whole colonial hierarchy and gave their loyalty to the political party (ANC) that had protested the building of Kariba Dam and their removal. Resettlement gave people a vital interest in national politics but also left them highly suspicious of government's intentions. The majority appear to have accepted the replacement of the traditional system of local governance, based on chiefs and headmen, by the party system imposed under the single-party regime of the 1970s and 1980s, though after the 1991 demise of the one-party state and the party as an organ of local governance they accommodated the reemergence of the old hierarchy of chiefs and headmen.

Gwembe people ask what is the point of our research when they see no improvement in their own lives. After Zambian independence, the new regime was even less likely to be interested in our findings than were colonial officials. The formulation of Relocation Theory has not helped Gwembe or its people. Furthermore, we have yet to see a case where World Bank guidelines for dealing with forced relocation, and plans derived from those guidelines, have actually been implemented with favorable results for the majority (Scudder 1993). Therefore, let us state the case bluntly: involuntary community resettlement is never an appropriate development
strategy. Furthermore, we remain skeptical that governments have either the financial ability or the political will to provide the extended, multyear funding required for a successful resettlement program or for ameliorating the long-term problems associated with resettlements already in place.

A much belated test of this will be the ability of the Zambian government to move forward with the World Bank and the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) on a program for the rehabilitation of Gwembe to ensure that, at last, they benefit from Kariba Dam and its electricity. Beginning in 1995, Scudder was closely involved in interesting World Bank personnel in the need for such a project and in urging the bank to recognize its obligations, as one of the original financial backers of the dam, to carry out this project. He was also involved in setting up the Zambian study group that made specific recommendations for rehabilitation (Kamwanga and Njobvu 1997) and has advised on technical matters associated with the project and its implementation. Finally, the project was inaugurated in December 1998, with the Zambian Electricity Supply Corporation as the implementing agency. Progress has been slow for a variety of reasons, including a land mine explosion that killed a project consultant and funding delays from DBSA. Major goals include renovating the road system that linked Gwembe North to Gwembe South during the resettlement years, bringing electricity for schools and for irrigated agriculture, improving flood recession agriculture and grazing along the lakeshore, upgrading the village water supply, and meeting other special needs both within Gwembe and in the plateau area where so many have been driven by land hunger back home in Gwembe.

The Future of the Study

In 2001, the study is in its forty-fifth year. Its continuation depends on how satisfactorily we—and our new colleagues—can handle a number of increasingly serious problems.

Given the turmoil that besets so much of the world, maintaining a long-term study is always problematic: virtually any area of fieldwork may be placed out of bounds or the people dispersed in flight. Gwembe has been less seriously affected by such turmoil than many study areas, although, in 1978, at the height of the Rhodesian war, Colson could not visit any of the four villages, all of which were in the war zone. Fortunately, it was possible to interview migrants who had settled elsewhere. In the 1980s, as a result of the war, guns became readily available and armed robbery increased greatly. During 1987–1988, Habarad had to take precautions in one of the villages against being robbed. Gwembe was not as safe in the 1980s and 1990s as it was in 1956–1957 when the project began. So far, however, this has minimally affected the way in which we work.

Nor have we found it difficult to get permission to return, although some countries recurrently place barriers in the way of outside social scientists. We have suffered only the usual delays in receiving research permits. We do not have to spend time establishing our bona fides with district authorities and chiefs. In Zambia, we are known as scholars who have a commitment to the country and its people. The Institute of Economic and Social Research, the major center for social science research in Zambia, always provides us with both a home base and a warm welcome.

Funding has not been a problem, perhaps because a long-term study is relatively economical. Equipment can be stored in situ, and the time needed to obtain significant results on each visit is reduced. Over forty-five years, external funding of fieldwork for both of us (including travel, salaries, vehicles, field assistants, and supplies) has amounted to about $600,000; however, this has been possible because on occasion we accepted field salaries well below our regular salaries. Other times we have taken no salaries at all, and sometimes have paid other expenses, including for field assistants. Costs associated with write-up, including that for research assistance, have been supported partially by our universities, but also by grants from NSF, NIH, and the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation, and by our own funds. We have been prepared to help finance the study because we are interested in what we are learning. We also recognize that research must be published in some form or it is useless.

The problems we have encountered are primarily associated with the burden of maintaining the quantitative database and the difficulties of synthesizing an enormous body of material. We also continue to be concerned with how to recruit and incorporate colleagues who will be able to continue the study (see Cliggett, in this volume).

Data Collection and Analysis

As a long-term study progresses, fieldwork becomes easier because one is familiar with the area and the people and can plunge immediately into the situation. Familiarity, however, also makes for difficulties.

After several return visits, the initial excitement of discovery wanes. Recording much the same kind of information to maintain the quantitative base becomes drudgework. Most discovery occurs while analyzing trends back in the study rather than in the field. Nevertheless, fieldwork also continues to be rewarding as former mysteries are cleared up or a stray comment opens up whole new fields for exploration. There are also new things to observe, though we admit that we find soccer matches less enthralling than the old Drum Team competitions even though women continue to sing comparably scurrilous songs against opposing teams.

Tunnel vision is also a risk when so much time is devoted to one area. We try to avoid this by working in other regions and by reading widely. Other professional commitments sometimes conflict with the optimum timing of return visits. Where accurate dating is essential to determine sequencing, visits at short intervals are advisable. Ideally, one or the other of us should have visited Gwembe at least every two years since 1956–1957, but such a schedule allows little time for
that essential element in research called write-up. It is the process of writing that generates new ideas which we then test back in Gwembe. It also allows us to share results with colleagues, and no research is valuable until it is shared.

Maintaining the village censuses has been especially onerous, due both to the geographical mobility of the population and to the increasing heterogeneity of Gwembe life. If it is not to dominate completely the study, we need to delimit a smaller sample for continued intensive study or rely more on local assistants for recording census data.

Collecting data is one thing; analysis is quite another. Whether we deal with quantitative or qualitative information, the size of the database is a challenge in itself. For quantitative material, through 1965 we were able to rely upon hand sorting. Much of what we collected in those years was tabulated and published (Colson 1960, 1966, 1971b; Scudder 1962; Scudder and Colson 1971). Thereafter, coding of the time series demographic data preempted a good deal of our time before Ben Clark could undertake his analysis. Handling data on field size and use as well as on the nature of environmental degradation has lagged until recently. Though Scudder measured the fields cultivated by Mazulu people in the 1950s, 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, the increasing time requirement stopped further measurement until 2000 when Clark was able to remeasure all fields and, using computerized equipment, place them in an overall mosaic. Scudder also obtained several sets of aerial photographs that show changes in area cultivated in all four of the neighborhoods that include our most-studied villages. Since 1995, we have begun working with Eric Lambin and Carine Petit at the Catholic University of Louvain who have acquired remote-sensing images from 1986, 1992, and 1997 for the Luwitu area, where two of our four sample villages were relocated. Complemented by our time series of aerial photographs dating back to 1948, the data are available to show the relationship between land use and environmental degradation (Petit, Scudder, and Lambin 2001).

For an analysis of Gwembe economic behavior, we need an index of goods and services purchased by Gwembe Tonga. Bridewealth payments, for instance, have increased dramatically over the past forty years and are good indicators of how village elders perceive, react to, and create inflationary pressures. We are uncertain how to proceed with the index, however, given changes through time in Tonga preferences, on the one hand, and the frequent changes in the value of the national currency on the other. An indication of the inflation since the early 1960s is apparent from these figures: in 1964, US$1.00 exchanged for 0.50 Zambian kwacha; in 1986, for 2.20 kwacha; in 1987, at the time of the fiscal crisis, for 21 kwacha; in 1993 for 411 kwacha; in 1996, for 987 kwacha; and during Colson's most recent visit (June 2001), for more than 3,000 kwacha.

Deciding what to code and how to code it still leaves someone to deal with the mechanics of the job. Coding and cleaning data take an enormous amount of time. Hiring students as coders has not worked. They are unfamiliar with the material, have no knowledge of the region to make the work interesting, and make too many mistakes. Finally, working initially with Jonathan Habarad and more recently with Sam Clark, we recorded and cleaned all demographic data collected through 1996, a task which drastically reduced time available for other work.

An initial attempt to rely on computer analysis failed because of the limitations of a new experimental software system. So we decided to start again this time using conventional computer software. In 1987, Douglas White (University of California, Irvine) brought his considerable expertise in computer programs to the Gwembe data. This collaboration both renewed our enthusiasm and enhanced the data processing. We were also able to enlist the interest of James Lee, a historical demographer at the California Institute of Technology, who worked with Sam Clark in the first analysis of the demographic data (Clark et al. 1995), while we continued to code the information they required and provided them with background historical and ethnographic information. We are also working with White in adding selected categories of socioeconomic data to the demographic time series database, and are supplying him with background genealogical information that can be used for purposes of kinship analysis. The intention is that eventually all coded information will be available, via an electronic journal or at least in electronic form, to other scholars.

Writing has its own problems endemic to publication through time. Readers of a new article cannot be assumed to be familiar with the project or the region, yet it is tedious for us to supply each time the same background information before turning to the current focus of interest. Writing is also difficult because no filing system copes with the changing interest of fieldworkers or their need to examine complex sets of data; relevant information is scattered through the voluminous field notes accumulated over time. Information has to be assembled and then somehow processed through one brain. Computers can retrieve, compare, and compute, but they are no substitute for a thinking anthropologist.

Protection of those whose lives are described concerns any ethnographer. This concern is compounded when one is writing about those followed through time, since one learns much about them that they might prefer to forget. There is also the risk of exposing them to retaliation by those in authority. Gwembe survival techniques include much that may be defined by government authorities as illegal. Therefore, we have written very little about such activities as poaching, smuggling, growth and sale of cannabis, and involvement in the trade in illicit gemstones, although this gives a lopsided view of Gwembe economy. We have also had to think carefully about how local critiques and subversive tactics against the larger system should be handled. We usually allow for a considerable time lag before publishing on such matters. We are also concerned about open access to our field notes and village diaries; inevitably, these are filled with what we call "unexpurgated gossip," which needs to be handled with care if people are to be protected.

We have tried to publish research results regularly, though this is now less easy. It was easy to envisage the first year's work as complete in itself. We were to
describe what we found in 1956–1957 and did so in books on the social organization and ecology of the Gwembe Tonga (Colson 1960; Scudder 1962). Subsequent research through 1965 could be envisioned as dealing with uprooting and resettlement (Colson 1971b). Since then we have had to deal with a lengthening time span as we look at the continuing responses of Gwembe people to economic and political changes reflecting the dominance of international institutions. Two major studies deal with the impact of educational policies in the development of a new elite (Scudder and Colson 1980) and the increasing dominance of Gwembe life by drinking patterns associated with the commodification of beer (Colson and Scudder 1988). Articles, or chapters in books, have dealt with such topics as Gwembe economic history, the Kariba Lake fishery, relationships between Gwembe and the line of rail, land tenure, changes in adjudication patterns, the growth of ethnic politics, the resilience of matriliney, gendered responses to change, aging, the adaptive role of possession cults as people encounter new threats to their sense of identity, witchcraft, and more. We plan two further major full-length studies. One will deal with how Tonga religious concepts and ritual practices changed throughout the twentieth century as society diversified and old certainties were undermined. The other will deal with the socioeconomic history of the Gwembe Tonga from 1900 to 2000. While Colson will be the principal author of the first study and Scudder of the second, both monographs will be collaborative efforts.

Integrating New Colleagues

It is difficult to maintain a longitudinal study of this scope with a team of only two anthropologists, a fact we recognized long ago.

Since the 1960s, we have tried to enlist others in the study. Chet S. Lancaster was persuaded to work among the Goba, a Gwembe North chieftainty that we had been unable to study (Lancaster 1966, 1971, 1974a, 1974b, 1977, 1981, 1987). In 1969, we solicited social scientists at the University of Zambia to use our core database in their own research and, during 1972–1973, included funds for Zambian consultants in our NSF grant. While Zambian colleagues were too involved in other commitments to take up the challenge, during the 1980s a number of them used some of our material in doctoral dissertations (Banda 1985; Mukwena 1998); and John Milimo, director of the Rural Development Studies Bureau in the University of Zambia, consulted with us in writing several reports on Gwembe (Milimo 1988).

During 1987–1988 Jonathan Habarad, a recent Berkeley Ph.D., spent fifteen months in Gwembe with NSF funding. Later, for personal reasons, partially stemming from the difficulties of taking over an ongoing study as complex as the Gwembe study in an area where living conditions were difficult, he decided not to return to Gwembe. In 1991 Michael Bollig of the University of Cologne, Carlos and Sarah Madrid (then students at Johns Hopkins), and Sam Clark (a student at the California Institute of Technology) visited Gwembe, but only Clark was able to make a commitment to the area and the study. He, Lisa Cliggett, and Rhonda Gillett-Netting were associated with us in what we saw as a “gradual handing over of field work” grant—a three-year NSF grant ending in July 1998. Clark recently completed a Ph.D. in demography at the University of Pennsylvania (2001) based on his own research within Gwembe (forthcoming) and the demographic data we have been able to supply him. Gillett-Netting, now on the faculty at the University of Arizona, was in Gwembe in 1993 for Ph.D. dissertation research in biological anthropology, on nutrition and growth (Gillett 1995b), for Indiana University. She included two of the Gwembe villages in her study and has revisited Gwembe for further work (Gillett 1995a, 1995b, 1996, 1997, 1998; Gillett and Tobias, in press). Cliggett’s 1994–1995 research on changing family support systems for the elderly, based on one of our four sample villages, led to her dissertation (Cliggett 1997b) and several articles on their way to being published (2002, n.d.-a, n.d.-b, n.d.-c). Currently a member of the anthropology department at the University of Kentucky, she too has revisited Gwembe and is now concentrating on migrants and their continued relationship to Gwembe (1997a, 2000). All three have access to our field notes. We are experimenting with computer scanning of field notes so that they will be more easily accessible. This, however, is a mammoth task. Although we all still need to work out how to handle collaboration over time, it may well be that the problem of continuity is at last solved.

We are also exploring the archiving of field notes and associated materials in the Bancroft Library at the University of California, Berkeley, and at the California Institute of Technology. We also continue hoping to integrate Zambian colleagues into the study (Scudder and Colson 1968), with a serious possibility being Bennett Stannwiza, himself a member of a relocated Gwembe family and now a lecturer in history at the University of Zambia with a Ph.D. in history from Cambridge University.

Some Meanings to the Anthropologist of Long-Term Involvement

Long-term research has personal costs. We have already mentioned the possibility of developing tunnel vision.

Again, while much of the Middle Zambezi Valley is beautiful, living conditions for an anthropologist are arduous, especially since the mid-1970s and especially in the densely settled Lusitu where the carrying capacity of the land under existing systems of land use was exceeded as soon as it received six thousand re-located Gwembe Central people in 1958. Today, much of Lusitu, where two of the sample villages are located, is a dust bowl during the dry season, with cattle dying in low rainfall years. Many families are now desperately poor by our standards and, increasingly, their own. The 1990s were hard, with the gap between aspiration and achievement widening, especially for the majority of primary and
secondary school leavers. This hurts: these are long-term friends who suffer and we can do little or nothing to prevent it. We are also watching the aging of old friends who are passing from vigorous maturity into old age and sometimes senility. As we too are growing older, our new age status offers new information and new insights, while closing off other avenues. We will never have the same friendships with the young now moving into positions of authority that we did with those they replace. There are costs in all this to anthropologists that should not be minimized.

On the other hand, we have gained new respect for Gwembe men and women because we have watched them contend over many years with good times and bad. Children have grown to maturity, flirted through early love affairs, married, and accepted responsibility. Some have faced the tragedies of barrenness, the death of children, the desertion or death of a spouse. Some friendly, outgoing young men have become grasping homestead heads and the focus of witchcraft suspicions. On the other hand, harassed young wives, beset by many children and with none old enough to be efficient helpers, have later emerged as happy middle-aged women, finally in charge of their world.

Predictably, a long-term study is likely to diminish the rosaceate hues in which so much of ethnographic description is couched. At the same time, the people who are the focus of the study become more the product of their own history and less the exemplars of universal cultural patterns. We have lived too long with the realities that the Gwembe people face daily not to be concerned about what happens to them. It is impossible to go away and forget that their lives go on.

It is this that pulls us back. We want to know what happens next and this means much more than just checking on various hypotheses. We also think that we are of some importance to those we have followed through the years. Even those who do not like us still see us as known entities—as people with whom they have shared past experiences, both pleasant and unpleasant. We are a continuity in their lives in a world of increasing discontinuities, as they are a continuity and help give meaning to ours.

Note

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Reynolds, Barrie

Reynolds, Pamela

Reynolds, Pamela and Colleen Cousins

Schuthof, Arjan and Moniek Boerenkamp

Scudder, Thayer


Scudder, Thayer and Elizabeth Colson


Scudder, Thayer and Jonathan Habarad


Seidman, Ann


Siamwiza, Bennett


Simwewamba, M.


Soils Incorporated in association with Chalo Environmental & Sustainable Development Consultants


Tremmel, Michael and the River Tonga People

Introduction

In March 1994, a month before leaving to begin eighteen months of dissertation research in Zambia, I made a decision to shift my field site from Zambia's Eastern Province to the Gwembe Valley in the Southern Province. Ted Scudder, crawling on his hands and knees around a ten-foot-square lab table covered with detailed maps of the Gwembe Valley, acted as the catalyst in my decision. It remains unclear whether it was Ted's show alone or the combination of his animated persuasion, his description of the Gwembe project history, and the opportunity to "jump-start" my research with forty years of data on the village where I would work that led to my decision. The specific reasons for turning my research gaze to the southern border of Zambia no longer seem important; the outcome of that decision, however, remains one of the most important forces in both my professional and personal life.

That decision of March 1994 was only one of many twists on my long and circuitous path toward establishing a research focus and site for my dissertation, which is not such a new story for many anthropologists. Tales abound in the discipline of doctoral research plans gone awry, and of chance happenings and resulting transformations in focus, region, and scholarship. In my case, the meandering path included initial graduate training focused on Caribbean anthropology, including religion and ethnomusicology, but eventually crystallized around household economy and social organization in Haiti. Political upheavals in 1991, which reached a peak within a month of my return from preliminary research, made it clear that I needed to reframe my research plans to accommodate an alternate research site. At about the same time, one of my graduate advisors became involved in a collaborative research project on aging in Zambia. Since he was a demographer familiar with highly quantitative data, and his Zambian colleague was a sociologist specializing in public health, and they knew my anthropological research interests centered on aging and household economics, they asked if I would consider joining their project as an ethnographer, to provide the ethnographic context and qualitative data that would complement the survey research they were proposing.