

Mozambique

From Mr Peter Hogg

Sir, If the site of the Wiriyamu massacre, as reported in *The Times*, is in fact only a few miles from Tete itself this puts the matter in a new light. Apart from disproving suggestions that the site was in a region "controlled" by Frelimo, it would also explain the point raised by Mr Faul in your correspondence columns on July 12, ie that some of the names on the list of people killed are not of local Nyungwe origin.

It now seems clear that Wiriyamu is in the territory of the old Portuguese estates (*prazos*) which existed along this part of the Zambesi valley for over 300 years. Until the late nineteenth century they were worked by slaves and protected by African slave troops (*chikunda*), who also dominated the free Africans in the surrounding country. Allen Isaacman, in a recent article on the origins of the Chikunda, analysed a list of 659 slaves freed near Tete in 1856. They belonged to at least 21 different ethnic groups, about 60 per cent of them Nyanja, Chewa and others from north of the Zambesi. Isaacman comments: "the ethnic heterogeneity of the Chikunda reflected the multiple patterns of recruitment used by the *prazeros* to meet their manpower needs."

The Nguni names are equally applicable. In the 1830s several Nguni armies crossed the river in the Tete region and for decades the Gaza Nguni to the south exercised de facto sovereignty there. When Livingstone visited Tete and Sena in 1856-58 "the Portuguese were treated as a conquered tribe and forced to pay a tribute which was collected every year by a party of armed warriors". Livingstone's Makololo followers, who were of Sotho origin, later established themselves to the north of Tete but were displaced in 1884 by the Maseko Nguni referred to by Dr Bernal in his letter of July 14, who still live there though they now speak Chinyanja.

In his recently published book *The Portuguese settlements on the Zambesi*, described by the author as a story of "bandits and mercenaries", M. D. D. Newitt has this to say about the demographic consequences: "As

son succeeded father and grandfather in the slave bands of the Portuguese, and as men of different nations were continually recruited into the company of the slaves, so a distinct language grew up—the prevalent River dialect mixed with Portuguese words and phrases—and the *chikunda* came to look upon themselves and their companions as a nation apart. Today there are tens of thousands of Africans in Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique who call themselves A-Chikunda and who trace their origin to the slave bands of the Portuguese *senhors*."

The Tete province became an ethnic mixing bowl as a result of centuries of Portuguese rule, and the upheaval continues now with the forced removal of people to "armed villages", another traditional feature of Portuguese colonial history on the Zambesi.

Yours faithfully,
PETER HOGG,
108 Clonmore Street,
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July 16.

22/7/75

From Mr Gerard Noel

Sir, Mr J. H. MacCallum's doubts (July 21) over Fr Hasting's credibility about Mozambique are based on the assumption that theological training is largely unscientific. Roman Catholic seminaries on the contrary stress—almost to a fault—the studies of "minor" and "major" logic, the highly scientific Thomist method of reasoning, a searchingly analytical approach to knowledge through cosmology, psychology, theodicy, metaphysics, etc.

Only after at least two years of this philosophic groundwork is a beginning made on theology as such. The data of the latter, eg, proofs for a divine existence, historicity of the gospels, historical evidence for dogmatic beliefs, and so on, are then subjected to systematic scrutiny.

Few judges, let alone journalists, receive such thorough basic training in "scientific method" and "inductive logic".

Yours truly,
GERARD NOEL, Editor,
The Catholic Herald,
63 Charterhouse Street, ECL
July 21.