

TOPIC : EARLY EUROPEAN CONTACTS WITH ZIMBABWE

SUBTOPIC: EUROPEAN AGENTS OF COLONISATION

OBJECTIVES

BY THE END OF THE SUBTOPIC LEARNERS SHOULD BE ABLE TO:

- ✓ Identify European agents of colonisation.
- ✓ Describe the activities of hunters, traders and concession seekers in Zimbabwe.
- ✓ Evaluate the role played these agents in the colonisation of Zimbabwe.

Background

- Agents of colonisation were approved representatives of one of the thirteen American countries in Europe.
- These were authorised individuals in London representing the interests of North America.
- They conducted business for their colonial governments and passed vital information.
- The European agents of colonisation entered Zimbabwe from South Africa using the missionary road to the North.
- When they reached Zimbabwe, they met Africans such as the Ndebele people.
- These agents enclosed
 1. The hunters.
 2. The traders.
 3. Concession seekers.

1. The hunters



European hunter

- European hunters came to Zimbabwe in 1850 and 1890.
- These hunters included Henry Hartley, John Lee, Jan Viljoen, Piet Jacobs and Frederick Selous.
- They hunted game such as elephants for ivory.
- Hunters were only interested in ivory due to its high demands in Europe.
- They used horses and firearms to hunt for elephants and hunters were interested in trophy hunting.



Trophy hunting

- Trophy hunting is the selective hunting of untamed game for human recreation. European hunters hunted wild animals like elephants and rhinos for their body parts for exhibition.
- When elephants became scarce in the Highveld, hunters moved to other areas on foot.
- They established good relations with the Ndebele kings, for example, John Lee.
- The early hunters were also engaged in writing books, for example, Frederick Selous wrote a book about his experiences in Mashonaland after his visit to Mount Darwin.

Roles played by hunters in the colonisation of Zimbabwe

- Hunters played a significant role in the colonisation of Zimbabwe.
- Henry Hartley played his part by arousing the interest of the British government towards Zimbabwe.
- He sent exaggerated reports of the country's wealth after discovering gold in South West of Zimbabwe.
- Some of the hunters took pictures of Africa and encouraged their Governments to colonise Africa, for example, Fredrick Courtney Selous and Henry Hartley.
- These white hunters paved the way for their mother countries.
- Hunters also wrote books and drew maps that made it easy for European countries to occupy Africa.
- They also befriended African chiefs.



Frederick C Selous

- Frederick was a British explorer and hunter.
- He was a big game hunter who earned Lobengula's permission to cut the road linking Mashonaland and Matabeleland to facilitate the transportation of ivory.

2. Traders

- The earliest known traders to arrive in Zimbabwe were the British and the Portuguese.
- These traders included George West beech, Karl Mauch, Sam Edward, Joseph Maccabe and George Philips
- Collard and Selous assisted the traders.



Karl Mauch

- They made use of waggons to bring their trading items from South Africa and other coastal areas.
- Early European traders came from South Africa; they travelled along missionary routes and created trading posts, which were along the coastal areas.
- Traders also did barter trade, which is an exchange of goods for goods with the Africans.

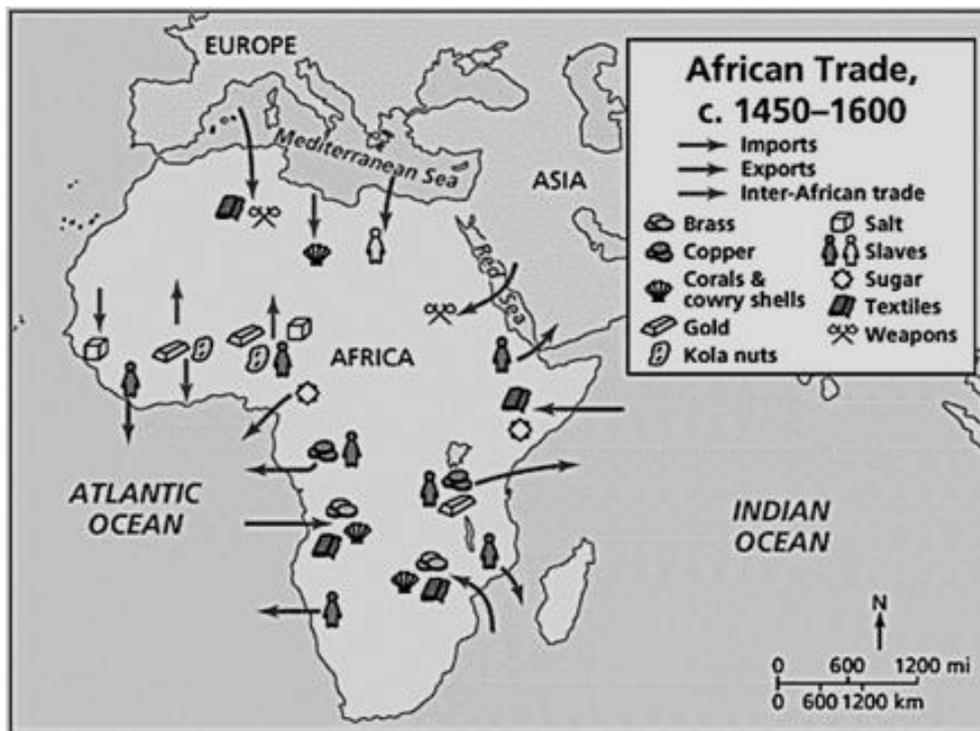
- They traded guns, ammunition, cloth and alcohol in exchange for palm oil, ivory and gold which were in high demand in Britain.



Ivory exhibition

Activities of the traders

- The traders took part in a variety of activities.
- They hired Africans who assisted them by acting as guides as they travelled into the unknown areas.
- Trading made Africans to be more interested on European goods and this increased the number of European Traders in Africa.
- As more traders came to the African interior, larger trading companies bought smaller companies such as the Dutch East Indian company.
- They also wrote books on their African experiences and interesting places they visited for instance, Karl Mauch wrote about the Great Zimbabwe State.
- These reports, books and journals gave detailed information on the African interior.



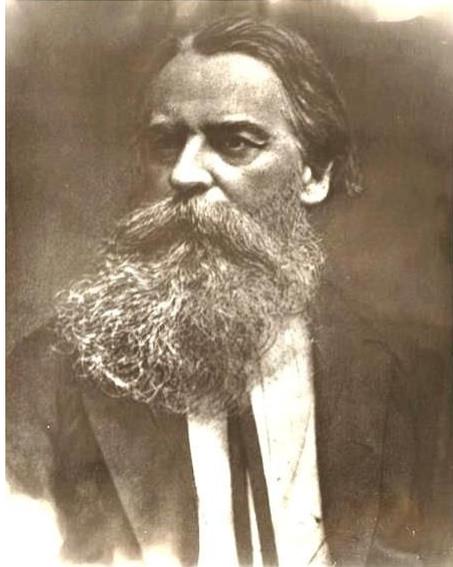
Map showing goods used in trade

[Role of traders in the colonisation of Zimbabwe](#)

- The traders played a key role of introducing Africans to European systems of commercial and cultural exchange.
- Traders advised and acted as interpreters to the African chiefs for instance, traders were present at Lobengula's court.
- They also wrote well-documented articles and created charts of areas they visited.
- This information provided details of the African interior.

3. Concession seekers

- Concession seeker is a person involved in a grant of land or property especially by a government in return for services.
- The concession seekers who came in Zimbabwe includes John Swinburne, Thomas Baines, Piet Grobber, John Smith Moffat, Charles Rudd and Edward Lippert.



Thomas Baines

- Concession seekers came into Zimbabwe after hearing of the exaggerated versions of explorers on gold deposits.
- They had to seek out permission to carry out their activities from the Chiefs in respective areas.
- The Ndebele king was powerful at that time, thus the concession seekers converged at the Ndebele capital in Bulawayo.
- The concession seekers signed treaties with the Ndebele people were the British, Portuguese and the Boers.

Activities of concession seekers in Zimbabwe

- The discovery of natural resources such as gold led to a rush by concession seekers to sign treaties with African leaders.
- Treaties such as the Tati, Grobber, Moffat, Rudd Concession and the Lippert were some of the treaties signed between Europeans and King Lobengula.
- The main aim of these concessions was exploit minerals and to occupy the country.

Tati Concession (1870)

- The Tati concession is a treaty signed between king Lobengula and Sir Joh Swinburne after the discovery of gold in Tati River in 1864.
- The Concession gave gold mining rights to the British and Limpopo Company represented by John Swinburne.
- Most Swinburne miners were later disappointed in not finding plenty of gold and later departed for diamond diggings to the South.
- Swinburne was unable to get enough financial support to work the mines and to pay annual settlements to Lobengula.

Grobbler Treaty (1887)

- This agreement was between Piet Grobbler and king Lobengula.
- There was to be eternal peace between the Boers in South Africa and Lobengula.
- The Boers aimed at using the Ndebele kingdom as a foundation for expanding northwards.
- The treaty served as a base for the events that followed.

Moffat Treaty (1888)

- This treaty was an agreement between John Smith Moffat a missionary and king Lobengula.
- The main aim of treaty was to nullify the Grobbler treaty.
- Lobengula was not to sign any treaty with any foreign nations without the approval British Queen.
- Moffat misused old family ties with Lobengula and persuaded Lobengula to sign the treaty.

The Rudd Concession (1888)

- This was a written concession between king Lobengula and Cecil John Rhodes.
- Cecil John Rhodes made use of his three agents Charles Rudd, James Rochfort Maguire and Francis Thompson to sign a concession with king Lobengula.



Charles Rudd

- The concession gave exclusive mining rights to Rhodes.
- The Rudd Concession turned out to be a serious legal document.
- When Lobengula realised the implications of the Rudd Concession, he went on to sign the Lippert Concession to frustrate Rhodes but it was to no avail as Rhodes later bought the Lippert Concession.
- The Rudd concession was influential in the colonisation of Zimbabwe.

Lippert Concession (1891)

- The treaty was between king Lobengula and Edward Lippert.
- In desperation, king Lobengula granted land and mineral rights to the Boers through the Lippert Concession.
- Lippert turned around and sold the concession to Rhodes and this marked the final colonisation of Zimbabwe.

Roles played by the concession seekers in colonisation

- Some of the concession seekers interpreted wrong information to Lobengula such as Charles Helm.
- This resulted in Lobengula having difficulties in judging the best group to deal with.
- They also pretended to be working against each other to influence Lobengula's decision, for example, Lippert who sold his concession to Rhodes.

- Lobengula was not educated enough to fully understand the implications of signing the concessions.
- Concession seekers worked hand in hand with missionaries who later encourage Lobengula to sign the Concession, for example, Rev Charles Helm.
- They bribed local indunas to encourage the king to sign concessions such as Lotshe who advised king Lobengula to sign the Rudd concession.