

# Introduction



**W**ARS, LIKE EPOCHS OF PEACE, ARE CHAPTERS IN THE LIFE PROCESS of societies the world over. Modern warfare alters all social conditions of life not only in the countries where the fighting rages but also in those on the periphery that may be linked in some way to the belligerents. These wars have social and political topographies that are fluid and unstable, constantly changing in response to external and internal forces affected by state-level decisions and other actors involved.<sup>1</sup> In seventeenth-century wars ravaging Europe, for example, the civilian populations of countries such as Sweden and Danish Norway bore the brunt of war, whether economically or as refugees or indeed as fatalities. Thus, state development and warfare in ancient Europe were intimately linked, making it difficult to disregard the importance of war to peoples' lives and societies as new nation states arose.

In the centuries that followed, wars waged by state actors still affected ordinary people's ways of life. In order to fully understand a war, we must know the societies that wage it, as it affects each social institution—not only the state, the army, and business, but the churches, the schools, and ordinary families as well. However, it must be noted that the way in which wars have been fought in society has evolved over time, with respective accompanying consequences. The nature of war thus changes with the changing structure of society, and not all wars affect the social order in the same way and to the same extent.<sup>2</sup> Modern society has been transformed by technology, and so, too, has the state of warfare. War has become total war. Up to the end of the nineteenth century, no more than 3 to 5 percent of the population was economically dispensable for war.<sup>3</sup> During the First World War, however, the number of mobilized soldiers in relation to the total population fluctuated

from one belligerent nation to another between 10 and 20 percent, with the exception of the United States, at about 4 percent, because it participated in the war for a shorter period than the other countries.<sup>4</sup> This high rate of recruitment of military personnel is ascribed to the fact that these nations were hugely industrialized, thereby freeing manpower for war service.

This book offers a critical lens through which to analyze the military and warfare, and how a global violent conflict—a world war—affects societies on the periphery of the fighting at the epicenter. It gleans sociological insights about the nature of warfare and how it reflects and shapes social dynamics and institutions in colonial Zambia. In writing this book, I adopt a “war and society” approach to show that warfare always has serious ramifications—in this case, social, economic, and political. Bill Nasson’s *Abraham Esau’s War* offers an examination of the life of rural African and “Coloured” populations of the Cape during the South African War (1899–1902) to illuminate the demands that war places on labor, patriotism, identity, martyrdom, and resistance. Abraham Esau’s story is thus about how war shapes a community and how a community shapes a war.<sup>5</sup> Wars incur massive expense to make weapons, to send servicemen to the front, and to supply them with food and ammunition. In addition, wars stimulate economic growth as wartime mobilization leads to increased technological innovation. Wars, including the Second World War, produce an increase in the number of jobs available to groups such as women and youth in the United States, whose participation in the economy had been historically limited.<sup>6</sup>

On the home front, war hurts the well-being of citizens by disrupting the socioeconomic and political life of a given country. Marriages and family relationships, for instance, may get strained due to stress, anxiety, guilt, grief, and other such mental disorders. Women usually lead their households without their men, and some of them end up raising children on their own following the death of their husbands at the front. Food shortages created by a war directly influence the future state of children’s health. For instance, those who suffer a period of famine as children are at higher risk of a weakened immune system later in their life.<sup>7</sup> In addition, servicemen may return home with illnesses and physical handicaps that may not have been addressed by military authorities. Emotions that emerge from war experiences disrupt families and change social life. An armed conflict may cause the movement of a large refugee population to neighboring countries, which may not be

ready to accept them. Similarly, participation in peacekeeping or peace enforcement operations can cause physical and psychological wounds for soldiers and their families.<sup>8</sup> On a more positive note, a state of war can lead to the defeat of problematic regimes, the correction of injustices, advances in technology and medicines, industrial growth, and an increase in employment levels. At the governmental level, a large wartime mobilization can lead to an increase in governmental centralization as the state develops and maintains institutions specialized in the exercise of coercion.<sup>9</sup> In *War and Society in Colonial Zambia, 1939–1953*, I examine how the social, economic, and political processes set in motion by the Second World War led to the development of a new Zambian economy and state, even as African servicemen did not invest their political agency in the rise of nationalism in the country.

When asked at the occasion marking the fiftieth anniversary of the start of the Second World War how he had found himself fighting on behalf of Britain—an imperial country he had never been to before—veteran Chama Mutemi Kadansa remarked:

We had only a vague explanation of why and how the war started. They told us that fighting broke out between Britain and Germany, allied with Italy and Japan over their colonies. . . . The fighting that broke out spread to all colonies of the British, as well as our country, then called Northern Rhodesia. At once, all the chiefs were alerted about the raging war by the District Commissioner who requested them to contribute in form of personnel.<sup>10</sup>

In terms of lives lost and material destruction, the Second World War (1939–45) has been the most devastating conflict in human history. More than 21 million combatants and about 38 million civilians died.<sup>11</sup> Having started as a European conflict on 1 September 1939, when Nazi Germany attacked Poland, it soon turned into a global war. Two days after Germany launched its invasion of Poland, Britain declared war on Germany.<sup>12</sup> In this war against Germany, Britain enlisted the support of its closest ally, France. Due to Britain's declaration of war, up to one-fifth of the world's population found itself at war, owing to the mobilization of the far-flung empire Britain controlled.<sup>13</sup> Britain called on vast colonial resources to defend its global empire and trade. In addition to direct military participation, the British Empire provided financial and material resources for the Allied war effort.

The empire's main contribution in the early months of war, however, was the deployment of its human assets. Initial assistance came from the dominions. Canada made the first contribution of soldiers on 10 December 1939, while Australasian troops reached the Middle East on 12 February 1940, and joined those from India.<sup>14</sup>

The British colonies in Africa were of strategic significance to the empire. The continent played a prominent part in the war as a battleground for its overland, sea, and air lines of communication. This was because of the demands of global resource mobilization by various colonial powers that sought either to extend or to protect their territorial possessions on the continent.<sup>15</sup> In addition, some 500,000 men and women from British African countries served in the Allied forces in campaigns in the Middle East, North Africa, and East Africa.<sup>16</sup>

The North African campaign consisted of a series of battles and actions involving the Axis and the Allied forces in Libya, Egypt, and Tunisia from 1940 up to 1943. The fascist leader of Italy, Benito Mussolini, had long harbored ambitions of domination over French and British colonies in the Mediterranean region and the Middle East. The opportunity came when France fell at the hands of Germany on 10 June 1940. Mussolini declared war and stepped into Britain's North African empire, thus ensuring that the Mediterranean became a major theater of conflict.<sup>17</sup> The fall of France shattered the balance of power in the Mediterranean, where the British had based their strategic calculations for the containment of Italy on the strength of the French army in North Africa and its Mediterranean fleet.<sup>18</sup> Mussolini's aim was to extend Italian control from Libya and Abyssinia to Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco, and Egypt. He felt that Italian greatness required domination of the Mediterranean and, therefore, British defeat.<sup>19</sup> At the same time, the main aim of the British in the region in the 1930s was to defend Egypt to ensure control of the strategic Suez Canal, thereby maintaining British influence throughout much of the Middle East and South Asia.<sup>20</sup>

Italy's declaration of war in the Mediterranean also prompted the commencement of fighting in East Africa.<sup>21</sup> From June 1940 to November 1941, forces from the British Empire and other Allies fought fascist troops from the colonies of Eritrea, Italian Somaliland, and Abyssinia in what became known as the East African campaign. This was after Mussolini's units from the Italian garrison in Ethiopia had occupied frontier towns in the Anglo-Egyptian

condominium of the Sudan on 4 July 1940. On 15 July they penetrated the British colony of Kenya, and between 5 and 19 August occupied the whole of British Somaliland, on the Gulf of Aden.<sup>22</sup>

Servicemen from British Africa were also utilized in the Middle East campaign to offset the labor shortages faced by the Allied nations in 1941. This campaign led directly to the recruitment of 40,000 men from the High Commission Territories of Bechuanaland, Basutoland, and Swaziland to serve there.<sup>23</sup> As the war progressed, the colonies in Africa became increasingly vital in supplying the Middle Eastern theater not only with labor but with food.<sup>24</sup>

Naturally, Northern Rhodesia (modern Zambia), as a British colony, joined the war on the side of its colonial master on 3 September 1939.<sup>25</sup> This followed the British War Cabinet's request that the Colonial Office and the War Office produce a report on the manpower resources of the entire colonial empire.<sup>26</sup> It was in this context that servicemen such as Chama Mutemi Kadansa were enrolled by colonial authorities in the Northern Rhodesia Regiment (NRR) to help imperial Britain defeat the Axis. The military restricted recruitment to African men for engagement in the Second World War. Gender and the military recruitment process were thus profoundly linked. Colonial military values associated macho virility with violence and martial gallantry—values which stay-at-home women could not be expected to personify. By excluding women from joining the Northern Rhodesia Regiment, the military and colonial authorities were reinforcing a heteronormative definition of masculinity, one that embraced ruggedness, virility, and strength.

As the outbreak of war loomed, officials in Europe anticipated that, except for Ethiopia, Africa would only be tangentially affected by the war; however, the fall of France in 1940 and the loss of Britain's Far Eastern colonies after 1942 transformed Africa's engagement in the conflict and brought changes to all levels of society.<sup>27</sup> Kadansa noted that "it was quite likely that German [*sic*] would have possibly captured Northern Rhodesia had it not been for the [A]frican contribution to the war."<sup>28</sup> In this regard, the colony raised eight battalions comprising about 15,000 African servicemen and between 700 to 800 Europeans.<sup>29</sup> Serving in Kenya, Somaliland, Madagascar, Ceylon, Burma, Palestine, and India, three of these battalions were infantry while the rest performed garrison duties. "From Lusaka we were taken by lorries to Nairobi in Kenya. We had to travel day and night because we were urgently required

there to help our exhausted colleagues,” recalled ex-serviceman Kadansa on how he found himself in the NRR 1st Battalion serving in East Africa.<sup>30</sup> After a stint of training in East Africa, the servicemen left for the various theaters of the war. For these men, as Rabson Chombola, another veteran, noted, “it was the first time to see the Indian Ocean and to board a ship.”<sup>31</sup> The war experience was “fearful” and “the thought of being far away from home [always] came to my mind.”<sup>32</sup>

In addition to providing servicemen, Northern Rhodesia was vital in the defense of British and Allied interests, as the colony was a major supplier of copper, the most crucial metal in the manufacture of munitions for the Allies. Mobilization for war brought about marked changes in African colonies. Almost everywhere intense pressure on the colonies to produce more goods to meet war needs led to increased imperial direction over colonial economies.<sup>33</sup> Additionally, the British African colonies’ overseas trade was regulated even more than before by the metropolitan government. Bulk purchase schemes in East and West Africa turned colonial governments into monopoly purchasers of local cash crops, sometimes paying only half the price fetched on the open world market.<sup>34</sup> Prices paid to producers of essential commodities were held down, and the ensuing profits temporarily appropriated by the British Treasury in the overriding cause of imperial survival.<sup>35</sup> The colonies also had to accept new conditions imposed by exchange controls, rising inflation, restrictions on trade with non-sterling countries, rationing, and labor conscription.

The war demanded a cooperative effort not only between Britain and its Allies, but also between Britain and its imperial subjects, be they members of the fighting forces or civilians engaged in war work, or factory workers in the metropole or African industries. The war’s major impact was economic, and most other changes emanated from this. The war transformed the world economy from one of excess commodity supply to one of raw material shortage, and it changed the role of government in mediating the market and organizing production.<sup>36</sup>

Historian Rosaleen Smyth once argued that “Africans in Northern Rhodesia experienced the Second World War vicariously through news and propaganda.”<sup>37</sup> My contention is that this view obfuscates more than it reveals, as there was scarcely an aspect of social life in Northern Rhodesia that was not affected by the war. As one veteran put it, “It was a painful

experience. . . . We had to sacrifice our lives to a war effort which was not of our own making.”<sup>38</sup> Although no military action took place in the colony, the temptation to view the war as external to the local people should be resisted, primarily because the effect of the war on Northern Rhodesia was not confined to the approximately fifteen thousand servicemen recruited in the territory.<sup>39</sup> As in Ashley Jackson’s Bechuanaland, the “concept of the ‘home front,’ so familiar in the historiography of wartime Britain and used as an umbrella for all of the war’s domestic manifestations,” applies to Northern Rhodesia as well, for even there “the war affected the social and economic lives of people in a direct way.”<sup>40</sup>

In comparison with the British home front, of course, the effects on Northern Rhodesia were on a relatively small scale.<sup>41</sup> Nonetheless, between 1939 and 1953, the colony endured commodity shortages, inflation, the black market, and the profiteering of traders that directly impinged on ordinary people’s livelihoods. As in Britain, moreover, the tasks facing African colonial governments because of the disruption of war and its production demands led to an increase in the size of the state’s apparatus and an unprecedented involvement in people’s daily lives.<sup>42</sup> The colonial state became more closely associated with the running of the economy through the adoption of austerity measures, such as rationing and price controls. Furthermore, import substitution industrialization, agricultural labor conscription, military labor enlistment, and the increased mining of base metals all meant that the war had a direct impact on the Northern Rhodesian home front. This impact, I contend, was greater and more far-reaching than has hitherto been acknowledged.

This book is the first comprehensive historical study to examine the ramifications of the war on colonial Zambia. My book is not primarily about the experiences of Zambian servicemen abroad, but rather about the home front. The task is all the more urgent since central Africa remains peripheral to the growing body of literature devoted to the relationship between the continent and the Second World War.<sup>43</sup> And yet—as Jackson has argued—it is only by means of in-depth case studies that a full appreciation of the lived experiences of Africans during the Second World War can be gained.<sup>44</sup> In Zambian historiography, in general, the theme of “war and society” remains relatively undeveloped. This book investigates one dimension of such history: the Second World War. By critically examining the nature of this war, I contend,

we can better begin to understand its influence on the colony's economy and society, particularly with regard to how traditional leaders, mining magnates, traders, and local producers responded to new imperial policies, and how the war affected production and labor relations.

The dearth of studies on the impact of the Second World War on Zambia's colonial history makes this book an original contribution to the country's historiography. This account begins in 1939, the year in which the war started, and ends in 1953, with the establishment of the Central African Federation (CAF). The decision to extend my investigation beyond 1945 has to do with the fact that the effects of the conflict continued to be felt for many years after its official ending. In particular, 1953 was also the year when the bulk purchasing of copper which Britain had initiated at the onset of the war came to an end and free trading in copper on the London Metal Exchange (LME) resumed.

#### AFRICA AND THE WAR

As the wartime shortage of consumer goods took its toll on the African colonies, many territories followed directives from London to introduce an array of austerity measures similar to those implemented in the United Kingdom. The inception of a centralized economic policy in British Africa was exemplified by the adoption of such measures as the rationing of commodities and price control in almost every colony. These issues have attracted the attention of scholars with an interest in the economic history of colonial Africa.<sup>45</sup> Michael Cowen and Nicholas Westcott, for instance, examined the extent to which the conflict reduced colonial autonomy and contributed to the centralization of imperial economic policy around the British national economy. On the other hand, John Lonsdale's study asserted that the combination of economic collapse and military conflict transformed Kenya from a segmentary to a centralized, but ungovernable, state.<sup>46</sup> Brian Mokokpagosi and Hoyini Bhila compared oral and archival material to determine the war's long-term effect on those left behind by the Bechuanaland servicemen who had enlisted.<sup>47</sup> Their conclusion is that the policies adopted in wartime "greatly underdeveloped peasant agriculture and exacerbated the existing social and economic imbalances in Tswana society."<sup>48</sup> I argue that to make sense of the war's varied economic impact on Northern Rhodesia, a deeper understanding of such issues as inflation, profiteering, shortages, hoarding, and the black market is required.

Another area of scholarly concern has been the recruitment and mobilization of military labor for the war effort. Several scholars have analyzed the manner in which African men were encouraged to enlist for war service and the different responses that the enlistment drive elicited.<sup>49</sup> In the High Commission territories of Swaziland, Bechuanaland (Botswana), and Lesotho, successive stages of recruitment for the war service were closely connected to events taking place at different times of the fighting. In South Africa, on the other hand, issues of race took center stage in determining the role that Black men were to play at the front, since the government worried about a possible backlash at the end of the war should local men be equipped with guns. In contributing to this discussion, this book demonstrates that while traditional authorities in Northern Rhodesia were utilized to recruit men, not all of them supported the imperial war effort. Furthermore, local people also had their own personal motives for enlisting in the colonial army. In this sense, my approach foregrounds African agency in this process.

The early successes of Germany in the war and Japan's conquest of Southeast Asia cut off Allied supplies from many sources of tropical raw materials in 1942. This made Britain increasingly dependent on its African colonies for primary products and food supplies. In this way, the war boosted crop production in some African countries to meet the high demand emanating from the metropole. This demand and its consequences have been examined by several scholars.<sup>50</sup> Their works have a direct bearing on the case of Northern Rhodesia, where the production of such commodities as rubber and beeswax was revived following the fall of Allied-controlled colonies in Southeast Asia.

If metropolitan demand called for the extraction of minerals on an unprecedented scale from African colonies,<sup>51</sup> it also brought changes to the way African agricultural produce was marketed, especially after the loss of Britain's Southeast Asian colonies in 1942. This resulted in the creation of agricultural marketing boards in Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone, and the Gambia run directly by the colonial governments.<sup>52</sup> The boards took over marketing activities from trading companies and were granted monopolies over the sale of cocoa, groundnuts, palm oil, palm kernel, and several other minor crops. This change in policy led colonial states to participate directly in running the economy, buying commodities from African peasant farmers at low prices on behalf of the British government. This helps contextualize the role played by imperial institutions, such as the Ministry of Supply, in the production

and marketing of wartime Northern Rhodesia's natural resources, which this book investigates.

Another popular theme among Africanists is the extent to which the events of 1939–45 contributed to the decolonization process on the continent. To some, the war represented a watershed, setting in motion the rapid withdrawal of European powers from the continent. These scholars argue that African opposition to the indicators of imperial socioeconomic development programs, as well as general political tension, led to demands for greater independence in the period after the war. It was these problems which worked toward hastening decolonization.<sup>53</sup> Similar arguments have been advanced by David Throup and David Anderson in their studies of the rise of the Mau Mau movement and its role in the struggle for independence in Kenya.<sup>54</sup> Conversely, other scholars have argued that the war merely accelerated a process that had already started during the Great Depression of the early 1930s and the adverse colonial conditions it generated.<sup>55</sup> In this book I demonstrate that the end of the war brought colonial Zambia even closer to Britain than was the case during the war. Rather than letting go of the colony after the war, Britain drew it closer so as to benefit from Zambia's copper, which fetched high prices on the dollar market.

One of the most hotly debated aspects of the relationship between the Second World War and Africa has been the political impact of military service on African colonial soldiers. It has usually been assumed that the men who were recruited and participated in the war came back with new ideas, wider experiences, and broader horizons that made them fight for the independence of their countries. Early works on this theme claimed that soldiers returned home politicized by their wartime experiences and eager to put into practice the new ideas they had acquired through contacts with nationalists in Asia.<sup>56</sup> Ex-servicemen's participation in the Gold Coast riots of 1948 seemed to offer the ultimate proof of the role of demobilized soldiers in postwar nationalist politics. Such views are shared by Michael Crowder. In his interrogation of the effects of the war on West Africa, Crowder concluded that "some returning soldiers were to play a vital role in the formation of the political parties that gained independence in the fifteen years that followed the war. Many were no longer content with the colonial situation as they left it."<sup>57</sup>

Subsequent studies of the impact of servicemen on the societies to which they returned took a different tack. Some scholars even dismissed the

ostensible rise of nationalist feelings among ex-combatants as a mere myth.<sup>58</sup> They argued that ex-servicemen in colonial Ghana did not constitute a coherent activist group within the nationalist movement and that the view that African servicemen were directly influenced by personal contact with Indian nationalists “stretche[d] the imagination.”<sup>59</sup> A more nuanced approach to this theme was adopted by Adrienne Israel, who, unlike Richard Rathbone and Simon Baynham, suggested that the contribution of ex-soldiers to the politics of independence depended on local conditions, ethnicity, educational levels, military occupations, and class origins.<sup>60</sup> In a 1978 article, Rita Headrick suggested that more important than political awakening *sensu stricto* was the social transformation experienced by African soldiers.<sup>61</sup>

Many recent studies contend that the return of ex-servicemen to their home areas after the war had little impact on the rise of African nationalism.<sup>62</sup> Yet, some of these same studies have also shown that the return of demobilized soldiers was characterized by dissatisfaction where and when men did not obtain what had been “promised” to them during the recruitment process.<sup>63</sup> In general, however, the consensus is that ex-servicemen made a less significant contribution to nationalist politics than was once thought. In this book, I argue that the case of colonial Zambia is consistent with the above findings: insofar as African servicemen are concerned, the war was more remarkable for its social—as opposed to directly political—effects.

In the years that followed the Second World War, rapid changes in the political framework of the French empire forced the issue of veterans’ loyalties to the forefront of politics. Rather than adopting the anticolonial cause and demanding independence, many veterans defended their own material interests.<sup>64</sup> Some, especially former career servicemen, even desired a continuing French presence in West Africa, even if such a presence was vaguely articulated. The complexity of the veterans’ social positions and their mixed political allegiances stemmed partly from their experiences abroad and their ability to play a role in their communities while they were away.<sup>65</sup> To the contrary, Nancy Lawler has made a strong argument for veterans’ participation in the anticolonial political movement in French West Africa led by Felix Houphouët-Boigny in the Ivory Coast.<sup>66</sup> At the center of this thesis is the preeminent influence of the *chef de province* (provincial chief) of Korhogo, who threw his weight behind Houphouët-Boigny’s nationalist movement early on and persuaded local veterans to do the same. Gregory Mann’s

context and argument differs from this. To him, a crucial cleavage emerged among Malian veterans and is representative of divisions between veterans across that territory and the rest of L’Afrique Occidentale Française (French West Africa). The climax to these divisions occurred in November and December 1944, in the form of mutinies by ex-servicemen at Thiaroye, outside Dakar, in which thirty-five of them died. To Mann, these were not “planned and premeditated” mutinies, as Myron Echenberg has argued.<sup>67</sup> They were motivated not by politics, but by money, honor, and an array of acute grievances faced by veterans. Veterans made no larger demands, but in the immediate aftermath of the rebellion, Senegalese politicians, particularly Lamine Guèye, adopted their cause.<sup>68</sup> In the long run, veterans mobilized collectively to address a more complex set of demands to the colonial state rather than to the military. An especially clear example is provided by Guèye, who appealed to veterans’ grievances and won their loyalty in his struggle against the French administration and certain *chefs de canton* (district chiefs). However, it must be noted that although politically they were a force to reckon with, veterans were not necessarily nationalists.<sup>69</sup>

In the case of Zambia, the social and political processes set in motion by the war, the growth of the copper mining industry, the new state-controlled economy, and even the distinctive approach to Polish refugees all actually set the country on a path to independence—even though African servicemen did not become the central agents for this movement. In this book, therefore, I nuance the idea that the mobilization and demobilization of African servicemen contributed to nationalist, pro-independence sentiment and organization. This brings into sharp relief the contradictoriness of political processes on the eve of decolonization on the continent: on the one hand, servicemen took part in the Second World War as imperial subjects; on the other, the momentous socioeconomic changes occasioned by the same conflict set Zambia on the path to autonomy and ultimately independence.

The Second World War period witnessed the emergence of new pressure groups as a result of the economic stringencies faced by the continent. Among the most critical of these were African-run trade unions. The rise of these trade unions came about as African workers received less and less remuneration for their labor owing to war conditions. The result was a strike wave in the most commercially active centers on the continent: ports in Mombasa, Dakar and Dar-es-Salaam; railways in the Gold Coast; and, indeed, the

copper mines of Northern Rhodesia.<sup>70</sup> Inadvertently, African trade unions contributed to the rise of nationalist feelings in respective countries. By the 1950s, trade unions were adding their voice to the challenge to paternalistic authority in Africa. They joined the ranks of emerging political leaders in seizing the openings of the postwar moment by making a variety of claims: for access to material resources, for their voices to be heard, and for the exercise of power.<sup>71</sup>

African colonies mobilized civilian labor for war production on a large scale. Increased wartime demands, however, led to labor and food shortages, which induced Britain to authorize the use of conscripted labor with a view to securing adequate supplies of either food or minerals, or both. The resurgence of conscripted labor in British colonial Africa during the Second World War was an imperial initiative rooted in war and crisis. It was introduced in early 1942 following Axis victories in Southeast Asia, which curtailed the supply of raw materials to the Allies. Ian Spencer notes that Kenya was the first British African colony to use forced labor for agricultural purposes.<sup>72</sup> In Southern Rhodesia, forced labor was drawn upon to construct the airfields used by the Empire Air Training Scheme (EATS) and to produce more food in response to increased wartime demand.<sup>73</sup> Tanganyika, meanwhile, initiated labor conscription for European plantations with a view to increasing the production of sisal and rubber.<sup>74</sup> The most notorious form of labor conscription in wartime Africa took place on the tin mines of the Jos Plateau in northern Nigeria, where 100,000 Africans were recruited, resulting in the deaths of hundreds of them due to poor sanitary conditions.<sup>75</sup> What can be deduced from these instances is that, in times of war, Britain was desperate to attain victory at whatever cost. Labor conscription thus became an important strategy of survival—one to which, as will be seen, the Northern Rhodesian administration also proved ready to resort.

The most comprehensive analysis of a specific British colony during the Second World War has focused on Bechuanaland.<sup>76</sup> In this study, Ashley Jackson explores the social, economic, political, agricultural, and military histories of colonial Botswana. He examines the country's military contribution to the war effort and what impact that participation had on its own home front. The book also considers wartime colonial Botswana's interaction with, and impact on, events and personalities in distant imperial centers, such as Whitehall. Jackson's work amounts to a unique and "total" history of

an African country—one which draws much of its strength from the author’s reliance on oral sources alongside archival material.<sup>77</sup> Using a similar approach, this book builds upon the foundation laid by Jackson by examining, for the first time, the major facets of the war’s impact on Northern Rhodesia.

The flurry of focused, subject-specific studies discussed above has lately paved the way for the compilation of more comprehensive overviews of the relationship between Africa and the Second World War. David Killingray’s *Fighting for Britain* is to date the most comprehensive single-authored study of the relationship between British colonial Africa and the Second World War.<sup>78</sup> Paying special attention to the experiences of the African rank and file, Killingray aims to “tell in their own words the story of African soldiers who fought for Britain and Africa.”<sup>79</sup> Taking a different approach, Ashley Jackson’s *The British Empire and the Second World War* is the first publication to set Britain’s war effort in its imperial context. Jackson’s study is especially commendable for demonstrating that even small colonies contributed to the imperial war effort. Jackson’s insight shapes the present work, which is primarily about reverberations—about how war events in the major theaters of the war affected a distant colonial backwater.

Issues of race, gender, and labor during the Second World War feature prominently in recent scholarship on the impact of the war on Africa. These *problématiques* lie at the heart of *Africa and World War II*, a collection of essays.<sup>80</sup> Taken together, the essays included in this important work grapple with critical issues of periodization, with contradictions in colonial policy, and with the impact of war on ordinary African livelihoods. Contributors to the volume identify signal events that had the most sustained impact on Africa’s communities, such as the fall of France and Japan’s conquest of Southeast Asia.<sup>81</sup> They illustrate the continent’s critical role in sustaining the Allied war effort, particularly after early 1942, when British colonies in the Far East were overrun by the Japanese.

For Northern Rhodesia, I demonstrate that events taking place in Europe had a direct bearing on the recruitment of servicemen for the Allied war effort. Following France’s defeat in 1940, Britain was under pressure to fight a war without the assistance of its closest ally. It thus began to rely more and more on its African colonies for the human resources needed at the front. From that point onward, an intensified drive recruited more African servicemen to join the Northern Rhodesia Regiment than before. Additionally, beginning in early

1942, the colony came under intense pressure from imperial authorities to revive the production of such commodities as rubber, beeswax, rope, leather, and iron. This was a direct result of the Japanese takeover of Allied-owned colonies in Southeast Asia, which were traditional sources of these commodities. As Judith Byfield observes, in many ways, especially after 1942, African resources sustained the Allied effort. This support, however, entailed high social costs.<sup>82</sup>

Another critical point of discussion in *Africa and World War II* is how the mobilization of communities to provide labor, food, and other resources for the war exacerbated some of the contradictions of colonialism, thus making the war an equally significant watershed in African history.<sup>83</sup> The productivist drive of colonial governments encountered increasing obstacles, as some communities experienced food shortages in the wake of the relocation of agricultural labor or the redeployment of food to troops instead of to ordinary citizens. In Northern Rhodesia, I argue in the present study, the most critical point of contradiction had to do with the price structure of the commodities needed in the metropole. While authorities in London wanted materials such as rubber and beeswax to be supplied from Northern Rhodesia, they were reluctant to pay fair prices for the same commodities. It was the colonial authorities on the ground in Northern Rhodesia who had to contend with protestations from local peasant producers over the low prices offered by the British Ministry of Supply.

The last theme addressed by *Africa and World War II* is the varied impact of the war on ordinary Africans and their communities. Despite the hardships, many African men and women took to heart the stated aims of the Allied forces and volunteered to support the war in numerous ways to demonstrate their commitment to the shared ideals of the cause.<sup>84</sup> Africans made financial contributions by supporting war charities and paying taxes. The war affected the African home front in such ways as commodity shortages, profiteering, and forced labor, which I discuss in chapter 4. While the Northern Rhodesian home front was very far away from the battlefronts of wartime Europe, the war's effects did not spare the territory. Its citizens experienced commodity shortages and hoarding, hyperinflation, and the black market for much of the war period.

The Second World War was in many ways a refugee crisis. A faint echo of the massive population displacements taking place in Europe was provided by the resettlement of Polish refugees in Africa. Inspired by a pioneering

study by Samwiri Lwanga-Lunyiigo,<sup>85</sup> David Kiyaga-Mulindwa explored the trajectory of Polish wartime refugees in Uganda, arguing that the colonial government's hostility to non-British settlement led to the isolation of the Poles; this isolation, in turn, accounts for their lack of impact on the hosting territory.<sup>86</sup> Recently, there has also been an examination of the discriminatory nature of the Rhodesian immigration policy toward Poles during and after the Second World War.<sup>87</sup> While noting the relevance of economic and political considerations, the authors of this last study foreground the central role of ethnic prejudice against Central Europeans in accounting for the way British Rhodesians treated Second World War evacuees. Such an attitude, however, was not peculiar to Polish citizens, as it was well entrenched in the region against all non-British Whites.<sup>88</sup> A recent and comprehensive discussion of the experience of Polish refugees in Africa, however, is to be found in Jochen Lingelbach's doctoral thesis.<sup>89</sup> Overcoming colonial borders, and focusing on east-central Africa as a whole, this fresh study tackles the interactions between Polish refugees and different actors of the hosting populations—their conflicts, mutual perceptions, and influences—from a wider perspective than country-specific studies permit.

#### NORTHERN RHODESIA AND THE WAR

A general and small corpus of literature does exist profiling the experiences of Northern Rhodesians during the war, but it is largely focused on copper mining and the fractious labor relationship that existed between European settler farmers and the local African population.<sup>90</sup> Not even L. F. G. Anthony's chapter in *The Story of the Northern Rhodesia Regiment* is concerned with the specificity of the impact of the war on the servicemen whose expeditions were the focus of the study.<sup>91</sup> The present book is the first comprehensive academic study of the ramifications of the war on colonial Zambia. It builds upon the foundation laid in 1954 by the colony's "official" war historian.<sup>92</sup> William V. Brelsford's edited collection consists of a definitive survey of the movements and tasks of Northern Rhodesian servicemen during the war. The present book attempts to broaden and deepen Brelsford's focus by examining other aspects of the war's impact on the colony's agricultural, political, economic, and social sectors.

There are only a few article-length studies of the role of the Second World War in the life of colonial Zambia. Rosaleen Smyth's 1984 article

brought Northern Rhodesia historiographically into line with other former colonial territories during the war period.<sup>93</sup> Smyth analyzed the effect of war propaganda in hastening the rise of an African political voice. This book has profitably built upon Smyth's foundations through an examination of the government's desperate propaganda activities in the colony in its quest to recruit military personnel for the war effort. In this study, however, I demonstrate that, aside from the use of propaganda, there was also African agency in the recruitment drive for servicemen. Moreover, I argue that while there was a general rise in African political thought in the country during the war—as Smyth observed—this movement was led by ordinary citizens, and not by ex-servicemen.

Other studies, by Kusum Datta and Kenneth Vickery, have focused on White-Black labor relations and copper mining during the war.<sup>94</sup> They argue that the Second World War presented an opportunity for undercapitalized European farmers to enlist state support in securing African labor that could not be obtained on the free market. As a result of war imperatives, a wartime agricultural crisis, and a diminished supply of labor, settler farmers pressured the colonial government and London to introduce labor conscription on their farms in 1942. This was similar to measures adopted in Kenya, Nigeria, and Southern Rhodesia during the same period. This study shows how this policy was replicated in Northern Rhodesia.

Both Andrew Roberts and Lewis Gann have examined the prosperity of the Northern Rhodesian copper industry both during and after the war period, and the impact that the growth of the mining sector came to have on the political economy of the territory and the region at large.<sup>95</sup> Lawrence Butler has provided a recent study of business-government relations under colonial rule and the decolonization period in Northern Rhodesia.<sup>96</sup> According to him, the copper mining industry in the country was affected by three central issues since its founding in the late 1920s: overproduction, the introduction of government monopoly purchase schemes during the Second World War, and the threat of nationalization. As the copper mining industry was completely reliant on external demand for its product, events beyond the industry's control underscored the cyclical nature of the Copperbelt's fortunes. By the end of the war, Britain needed Northern Rhodesia more than ever before because of the importance of dollar earnings from copper. Thus, the present study charts the ways in which Northern Rhodesia was

transformed from a neglected to a highly strategic possession in the late colonial period due to the Empire's shifting financial and monetary priorities.

In his examination of tariff and railway freight rates, Ackson Kanduza posits that Northern Rhodesian capital continued to face stiff resistance from the state in its quest to industrialize the country both during and after the war.<sup>97</sup> Due to this state laxity in protecting local industries, Northern Rhodesia was slow to accumulate capital in comparison to its southern neighbors. Northern Rhodesia was found unprepared to take advantage of that wartime scarcity which favored local manufacturing in Southern Rhodesia and South Africa. This book demonstrates that there were also factors other than tariff policy that hindered the attainment of import substitution industrialization in wartime Northern Rhodesia.

Samuel Chipungu's analysis of the relationship between peasant farmers, the state, and technological development notes that the Second World War acted as a catalyst for agricultural change in the Southern Province of Northern Rhodesia.<sup>98</sup> The war forced the colonial government to review the condition of African peasant agriculture to meet increased food requirements on the Copperbelt, whose labor force had expanded. Although Chipungu's study is not free from statistical errors, it has been used as the basis for my examination of the impact of the war on the agricultural sector in chapter 5.

Aside from scattered references in general histories, European refugees in wartime Northern Rhodesia have not received dedicated attention in historical studies.<sup>99</sup> This book addresses this little-known aspect of Zambian history.

#### A NOTE ON METHODOLOGY AND STRUCTURE

This monograph draws on a variety of primary sources. The archives at the Livingstone Museum, in Livingstone, provided previously untouched materials on the history of the Northern Rhodesia Regiment that have only recently been made available to the public. These include war diaries, recruitment posters, magazines, and photographs pertaining to the war period. I also used the Mining Industry Archives (formerly the Zambia Consolidated Copper Mines Archives), in Ndola, which contain data pertaining to mining operations and associated aspects. I relied as well on the extensive press coverage of the country's mining companies in international finance and mining publications during the period under study.

However, I sourced the bulk of the archival materials from the Secretariat and Provincial Series of the National Archives of Zambia (NAZ), in Lusaka. The merit of using this archive is that it provides seamless linkages between the grand political levels informing the “on the ground” participation in the conflict in colonial Zambia; London is connected to Lusaka, and Lusaka to the territory’s outlying districts and villages. The records in question consist of tour reports, annual reports of various government departments, newsletters, and correspondence between colonial and imperial government officials. Various newspapers and Legislative Council debates also provided much relevant information. Although the government-run *Mutende* newspaper was mainly used for propaganda purposes intended for the local reader, it also proved a useful source of evidence on Africans’ perspectives on the war. The postwar economic and social ambitions and expectations of Northern Rhodesian ex-servicemen are richly set out in the letters they wrote, some of which were intercepted by military and civilian officials. Absent from this monograph are sources from British archives such as the National Archives at Kew owing to logistical challenges I encountered in trying to access these.

While I did not personally conduct oral interviews with any ex-servicemen, this book still makes room for the voices of the men who fought in the war. For this, I relied on twelve transcripts of interviews with Zambian ex-servicemen that were conducted by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) in 1989 to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the outbreak of the war. These transcripts are lodged at the Imperial War Museum in London. These oral sources contain rich information concerning the experiences of African servicemen in the various theaters of the war: East Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. The African veterans’ experiences provided a useful supplement, and sometimes a corrective, to what could be gleaned from official documents and secondary sources. Importantly, these interviews made it possible to hear the voices of Africans actively involved in the recruitment and demobilization processes— aspects generally missing in official records.

While using oral sources, I was also mindful of the drawbacks of relying too much on this type of data. A good deal has been written on the pitfalls of collecting and using oral evidence. A major problem, of course, is the reliability of the memories of aging informants about the events of a war in which they fought many years earlier.<sup>100</sup> Reliance on personal narratives also raises questions of representativeness, and the extent to which generalizations

may validly be drawn from a limited number of interviews. The task of the historian dealing with oral evidence, however, is to take particular phenomena and elucidate their more general meanings. As Claude Lévi-Strauss observed, all the historian and ethnographer can do, and all we can expect of them, is to enlarge a specific experience to the dimensions of a more general one.<sup>101</sup> Gayatri Spivak further argued that it is impossible to “capture” the full reality of subaltern consciousness and memory across barriers of class and colonialism.<sup>102</sup> So, too, this book cannot imaginatively capture the full reality of Northern Rhodesia’s servicemen who participated in the Second World War. More modestly, it has drawn upon a disparate group of servicemen’s experiences to speak about their history. At best, oral evidence has been illuminating, detailed in recall, and powerfully descriptive. The voices of African veterans offer a rich and valid contribution to the history of the Second World War—important and decisive years in modern Africa’s recent past.<sup>103</sup>

This book consists of six thematic chapters. In chapter 1, I address the recruitment of servicemen for the NRR. After showing how the British monarch took the lead in calling upon colonial subjects in Northern Rhodesia to support the imperial power as soon as the war broke out in Europe, I demonstrate that the government drew on both chiefly institutions and propaganda to recruit personnel for the army. I also argue that there were both pull and push factors behind the participation of Africans in the war and that, throughout the process, Africans were not deprived of agency. Lastly, I explain that the country’s participation in the war was not without resistance from certain sections of the populace, primarily from African and European members of the Jehovah’s Witnesses and the Afrikaner settler community.

In chapter 2, I explore the Northern Rhodesian reverberations of the defeat of the Allied-controlled colonies in Southeast Asia, which were major sources of raw materials needed for the war effort. To fill the void in the supply chain created by Japanese victories in early 1942, London instructed Lusaka to revive the age-old rubber and beeswax industries as alternative sources of raw materials for Allied use. The country also rejuvenated the production of iron tools, rope, and string to meet the demand for home consumption as these commodities could no longer be easily imported from overseas due to war conditions. The imperial government hoped this measure could lift the burden placed on it by providing scarce consumables for its colonies. I demonstrate that the prices paid to local producers of these

commodities were lower than British propaganda had predicted at the start of the war and that this discrepancy led to a degree of tension between colonial officials on the ground and their superiors in London.

Next, I focus on the wartime economic challenges faced by the Northern Rhodesian home front. I investigate how the shortage of consumer goods, inflation, the black market, profiteering, and hoarding impacted the lives of ordinary people. Due to these challenges, the government abandoned its *laissez-faire* policy by taking a more active role in the running of the colony's economic affairs than it had in the past. Colonial administrators tried to solve some of these economic woes through rationing schemes, price control, and import substitution industrialization, and by curbing a rise in the levels of inflation. The chapter also shows that this trend continued in the postwar period, due to persistent commodity shortages resulting from convertibility challenges in the sterling area.

In chapter 4, I deal with issues pertaining to how Northern Rhodesia hosted Polish refugees on behalf of Britain. I examine the rationale, course of the migration, and eventual settlement of the Poles in various parts of the colony. In reconstructing the wartime history of Polish settlement in Northern Rhodesia, I repeatedly note the interconnectedness of events in the broader empire and in local society. A recurring point of discussion is that of racial hierarchy based on colonial pseudoscientific theories that influenced the relationship between the "aliens" and local British settlers. I argue that British colonial racial attitudes to a large extent determined how the Poles were treated in Northern Rhodesia. Local colonial authorities encountered numerous problems in the process of safeguarding the lives of these hapless souls. Although many of these problems were brought to the attention of Whitehall, no easy solution was forthcoming.

In the fifth chapter, I investigate the impact of the war on the colony's economic mainstay—copper mining. The scheme for bulk purchasing of copper developed by the British Ministry of Supply ensured that the commodity was bought at a uniform price throughout the war period and supplied only to Britain and its allies. Following the devaluation of sterling in 1949, the British government put pressure on the colony's copper mining industry to produce more copper for sale to dollar-earning countries. This state of affairs accounts for Britain's continued hold on the colony in the postwar period. Free-market conditions in the copper trade were restored only in

April 1953, following the reopening of the LME, which had been closed at the start of the hostilities.

Chapter 6 outlines the demobilization exercise undertaken at the end of the war. Many African servicemen felt cheated by a racialized process according to which European ex-servicemen received more favorable rewards than they did. I argue that the dissatisfaction of African ex-servicemen over perceived broken promises, however, was a universal phenomenon that also affected colonial personnel in other parts of Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean. In fact, complaints about conditions of service in colonial armies occurred even before the end of the war, as protests and mutinies over differential treatment based on race occurred in many theaters before 1945. Contrary to older academic opinions, I argue that African ex-servicemen did not collectively participate in nationalist politics but remained predominantly concerned with personal and domestic matters.

In conclusion, I draw out common and contrasting themes to demonstrate the wider economic, social, and political significance of the Second World War for colonial Zambia during the last phase of British imperialism. Although important aspects of the conventional view on Africa and the war have already been revised, more study is required to showcase national experiences and, by so doing, attain a more complete picture of the war. By making a case for the relevance of in-depth, country-specific case studies, this book adds to the historiography of the Second World War in Africa as a whole. I suggest that we still have much to learn about and from the war, which has mainly been studied from the global or continental perspective rather than by focusing on country-specific societal effects.