Religious Innovation and Political Conflict in Zambia:

A Contribution to the Interpretation of the Lumpa Rising[1])

by Wim M. J. van Binsbergen

1. THE LUMPA PROBLEM

When in January 1976, in response to a complex national and international crisis, president Kaunda of Zambia announced a state of public emergency, he in fact merely re-activated the dormant state of emergency that had been declared in July 1964 by the then Governor of Northern Rhodesia, in connexion with the rising of Alice Lenshina's separatist church, commonly called 'Lumpa'. In the rural areas of N.E. Zambia the fighting between state troops and the church's members had ceased in October 1964, leaving an estimated death toll of about 1,500.[2]) But the state of emergency (implying increased powers for the government executive) was allowed to continue. It was renewed every six months and lived through both the attainment of territorial independence (October 1964) and the creation (December 1972) of the Second Republic under the exclusive leadership of Kaunda's United National Independence Party (UNIP). The Lumpa aftermath, including the continued presence of thousands of Lumpa refugees in Zaïre just across the Zambian border, was repeatedly cited as a reason for this continuation.[3])

It is not only in this respect that the Lumpa rising appears as a key episode in post-colonial Zambia. The event lives on as an important reference point in the idiom of the Zambian elite. Sometimes reference is made to it to express governmental and party assertiveness, as in Kaunda's remark at a mass rally in January 1965:

---

[2]) *Times of Zambia* 20/9/1969, as quoted in Gertzel n.d.:41.
[3]) Tordoff & Molteno 1974:12; Sklar 1974:359; Pettman 1974:95.

'...we have no intention whatsoever (...) of legislating against the formation of any other party, so long as their behaviour inside Parliament and outside is responsible. If they misbehave, in accordance with the law of the country we shall ban them. If they misbehave, I repeat misbehave, we shall ban them as we banned the Lumpa Church.' (Legum 1966:209).

More often, the Lumpa example is used to point out the dangers of religious sectarianism for national unity and stable government. This is most clear in the case of African Watchtower, one of Zambia's largest religious groupings, with a long history of clashes with the colonial government. Shortly after independence, Watchtower adherents incurred the wrath of government and the party for their refusal to register as voters, buy party cards or honour the Zambian flag and national anthem. In that context, comparisons with the Lumpa church were frequently made, partly in justification of the tough measures taken against Watchtower. [4] The use of Lumpa as a reference, and the comparison between Lumpa and Watchtower, have become so commonplace, that the Zambian historian Meebelo, himself a government official, adopts the somewhat ana-chronistic comparison between Lumpa in 1963-64 and early Watchtower in 1918 (Meebelo 1971:141). [5] Likewise, reference to the Lumpa events played an im-portant role in the discussion, within the Zambian government, that preluded the final banning of the Zambian wing of the Zaïre-founded 'Church on Earth through Simon Kimbangu'.

But the most typical attitude towards the Lumpa episode among the Zambian elite has been one of embarrassment and silence. One gets the impression of a home truth that one is not at all keen to share with outsiders. The rising was not only a national crisis but also a crisis in the home ties and kin relations of UNIP's top leadership. Chinsali district, where the conflict concentrated, was the home both of the nationalist leaders Kaunda and Kapwepwe, and of the Lumpa foundress, Lenshina. Kaunda and Lenshina had been at the same school. Robert Kaunda, the President's elder brother, was a top-ranking Lumpa leader, whilst their mother, the late Mrs. Helen Kaunda, was reported as having been 'close to the movement' (Hall 1968:229f). But it was not just childhood reminiscences and family ties that made Kaunda's decision, three months before independence, 'to use force against the Lumpas (...), as he told me at the time, the hardest decision he had ever taken in his life' (Legum 1966:xii).
The long and hard struggle for independence had seemed over with the January 1964 election, which gave the then Northern Rhodesia its first African party government under UNIP. [6] The world's eyes were on what was soon to be Zambia. After campaigning for Black government for years, UNIP, Kaunda and his Cabinet, however 'well-balanced and extremely capable' (Mulford 1967:330), now had to prove themselves. The country was ready to reap all the economic,

social and moral benefits that self-government was expected to entail. At this extremely inconvenient moment the Lumpa rising had to occur. It demanded a death toll far exceeding that of the general clashes (commonly called 'Chachacha') between the colonial government and the nationalists in 1961. [7] The rising manifested the existence of massive and intransigent opposition to UNIP and to an African government, in the part of Zambia that had been UNIP's main rural stronghold. For years the UNIP leadership, and foremost Kaunda, had through tremendous efforts but rather successfully attempted to keep the rank and file of their membership from violent anti-white agitation; but now the Lumpa rising for-ced an African government to direct a predominantly African military force against fellow-Africans. Kaunda was compelled to suspend his Ghandist principles of non-violence, which until then had been such an integral aspect of his identity as a nationalist leader, and of his splendid international image. Also, the rising could not fail to focus attention on such acts of violence by local UNIP mem-bers as were, from the beginning, recognized to constitute part of its causes [8]. An extensive process of attempted reconciliation, undertaken by Kaunda and other senior UNIP leaders in the months preceding the final conflict, had failed. Instead of the nationalists' promise of a new, proud African order, there was chaos and fratricide. White racialists and critics of nationalism could sit back and rejoice. The blow to nationalist self-confidence was almost fatal.

While the insurrection was effectively quashed, angry declarations of the obvious juridical justifications of this state action, as issued by Kaunda and his Cabinet, could barely hide the distress and embarrassment of the nationalist leaders. In the terrible dilemma, it was soon realized that reconciliation, not retaliation was the only way out. Whilst Lumpa's alleged fanaticism, criminality and heresies were vehemently condemned, measures were taken to limit the num-ber of casualties to an absolute minimum. Local people who were loyal to the state and the party were urged to refrain from all retaliation. Rehabilitation camps were erected and resettling campaigns were vigorously undertaken. When captured, the Lumpa church's senior leadership, including Lenshina, were treated respectfully. An amnesty for the Lumpa rank and file was declared in 1968. However, the ban on the Lumpa church imposed in August 1964 was not lifted, and Lenshina remained in custody. After the rising the Lumpa adherents found themselves dispersed all over N.E. Zambia. Experiencing difficulties in resettling in their home areas, amongst people with whom they had fought, a gradual exodus took place to Zaïre. In the years 1965-68 the number of Lumpa refugees in that country increased to about 19,000, and only about 3,000 returned to Zambia after concentrated governmental effort in 1968. [9] The Lumpas in exile have continued to form a reminder of what by now has taken the proportion of a major trauma of the Zambian nationalist dream. The main other reminder consists of the occasional trials of individuals who within Zambia were caught in the act of reviving the Lumpa church's organization and ritual (revolving particularly around Lenshina's talented hymns). Such trials, in which again a reconciliatory attitude prevails, have occurred in small numbers through-

---

[4] Mwanakatwe 1968:253f; Phiri 1975; Hodges 1976; Sklar 1974:359; Pettman 1974: 29, 96f; Assimeng 1971:110f.
[5] Interestingly, the comparison was suggested to Meebelo by the influential nestor of Zambian Protestant ministers of religion, the late Rev. Mushindo, whose re-fusal to accommodate Alice any longer within the Lubwa Mission congregation formed an occasion for the founding of Lumpa as an independent Church. On early Watchtower, cf. note 18.
[6] For detailed studies of Zambia's attainment of independence, see: Mulford 1967; Hall 1968; Krishnamurty 1972.

[7] Cf. Hall (1968:209) for some conservative figures on the death toll of 'Chachacha'. Macpherson (1974:340f) gives a more vivid, lengthy description suggestive of a large number of casualties, but does not actually provide an estimate.
[8] *Report ... 1965*, as quoted in Gertzel n.d.:40, and in *Times of Zambia* 22/9/1965; Kaunda in Legum 1966:108; Roberts 1972:39f.
[9] *Zambia Mail* 4, 21/6/1968.

out the 1960's and early 1970's. [10]) The final gesture of reconciliation was Lenshina's release in December 1975. [11])

The extent to which the Lumpa rising and its aftermath does constitute a collective trauma for the Zambian elite, can also be gauged from the silence surrounding it. The occasional vindications by the UNIP leadership at the time of the rising, and Meebelo's cursory reference as cited above, are virtually the only published statements on the subject by members of the Zambian elite. The 1965 official *Report of the Commission of Enquiry into the former Lumpa Church* is not easily available within Zambia. Expatriate writers who covered the details of the creation of independent Zambia, and who therefore for their data collection and publication were highly dependent on official introductions and clearances, are remarkably reticent on the subject. [12]) They have certainly not attempted any interpretation of the significance of the Lumpa rising. The final conflict, and the preceding rise and development of the Lumpa church, is still considered too sensitive a topic for resarch within Zambia.

Thus in this time of rapidly expanding insights into African religious innovation, our knowledge of and insight into the Lumpa episode remains rather stagnant. At present, the literature on the subject mainly consists of the following categories of publications [13]:

a Exploratory scholarly studies of the Lumpa church as an Independent Church in colonial Northern Rhodesia - written before the final conflict broke out. [14])

b A host of journalistic pieces covering the events of the 1964 rising.

c Scholarly articles and notes in which soon after the rising a considerable number of specialists on African religious innovation and Central-African society interpreted the conflict, thus providing often hurried attempts to add a scientific background to the journalistic accounts. Publications in this category mainly refer to the pre-conflict studies under (a). [15])

d A few scholarly publications in which the available material, including some unpublished data, is synthesized, and attempts are made at more comprehensive interpretation. [16])

The empirical basis is still rather scanty, and so far there is no accomplished full-size study [17]) interpreting the Lumpa episode within a widely acceptable theoretical framework. Yet the literature is sufficiently voluminous for the Lumpa church to become a standard reference in Africanist writing over the past two decades. Here, to give a few instances, Lumpa is cited as: an institutiona-

[10]) E.g. *Daily Mail* (Zambia) 2/6/1972, 17/7/1972; *Times of Zambia* 21/3/1972, 1, 5, 20, 25/4/1972, 14, 16, 20/5/1972.
[11]) *Mirror* (Zambia) 45, February 1976, p. 3.
[12]) Hall 1968; Mulford 1967; Macpherson 1974; Rotberg 1967; Krishnamurty 1972.
[13]) For fuller bibliographical references, particularly on more obscure publications and journalistic pieces, see: Roberts (1972); Calmettes (1970); Mitchell & Turner (1966).
[14]) Rotberg 1961; Taylor and Lehmann 1961; Macpherson 1958; Stone 1958; Oger 1960, 1962; Chéry 1959, 1961; Oosthuizen (1968:65) refers to an article by Audrey I. Richards on the subject, which however most probably does not exist.
[15]) Anonymous 1964; Emanuel 1964; Fernandez 1964; Martin 1964; Douglas 1964; Welbourn 1964; Heward 1964; Wilson 1964; Roberts 1964.
[16]) Lanternari 1965-66; Greschat 1968; Calmettes 1970, 1972; Roberts 1972.
[17]) J. L. Calmettes is presently working on a Ph. D. thesis on the subject for the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth.

lized witchcraft-eradication movement (Wilson 1973:94f; Greshat 1965:101f); as a case in point for the claim that Independent Churches re-enact traditional opportunties for female leadership (Shepperson 1970:48; Lehmann 1963:68); as an instance of the religious expression of nationalism (Banton 1970:225); as a

'stark corrective [of the view that] all anti-administration movements were fore-runners of mass nationalism' (Henderson 1970:591);

and, finally, as an example of the post-colonial rivalry between state and church (Barrett 1968:246f; Peel 1973:349).

As this selection of contradictory references makes clear, the relation between the Lumpa church and the power structure of Zambian society, both before and after Independence, constitutes a major interpretational difficulty. It is in this respect that Lumpa constitutes a key to the understanding of contemporary Zambia.

However, my claim of Lumpa's significance is somewhat at variance with the attention given to the rising in the two main recent studies of Zambian politics (Tordoff 1974; Pettman 1974). Both studies summarize the basic facts concerning the rising and its aftermath. However, in their interpretation they are rather reserved.

Pettman writes (1974:94):

'Subnational threats to Zambia's unity and security are not only seen in tribalism, regionalism, and other sectional interests, but also in group loyalties like those of the Lumpas and the Watchtower Sect. These religious groups are held to differ from others in that their behaviour and beliefs are 'political', a perceived challenge to the existing or desired authority of the party and government.'

Correct as this assessment may be, as an analysis of a major episode in modern Zambian politics it remains on the surface. In what respect are such primarily religious phenomena as Lumpa and Watchtower, *political*? Why do they represent a threat to the political establishment, and why is the latter's perception of this threat sufficient reason for suppression and violence? These are some of the the questions Pettman ignores, and to which the present paper attempts to give an answer.

In Tordoff's book, Molteno's brief discussion of Lumpa and Watchtower (Molteno 1974:85f) revolves around the question: what cleavages exist in modern Zambian society that could be a mobilization basis for political conflict *within* the existing, formal party organization and the representative institutions of the Zambian political system? For Molteno, religious affiliation

'could form the social basis for political conflict, but (...) has not done so'

Within the context of his argument, Molteno's narrow conception of political conflict is justified; and it conveniently excludes Lumpa and Watchtower troubles from a discussion of political conflict. Yet conflict it remains, and with far-reaching implications for the distribution of power - the subject matter of

politics. Therefore, Molteno's explanation of why the unmistakable religious cleavage has failed to precipitate political conflict in the narrower sense of the word, does not convince:

'The reasons are that Watch Tower and Lumpa together form less than 5% of the population, and both movements in any case reject political participation' (Molteno 1974:86).

Are we made to understand that if there would have been more Lumpas, they would have challenged UNIP in the arena of Zambia's formal political institutions, instead of engaging in battle against government troops, brandishing their battle axes and spears and firing an occasional muzzle-loader?

What makes Molteno's approach unhelpful for an understanding of Lumpa, is that it takes the existing, formal political system such as defined by the political elite themselves, as its exclusive frame of reference. This would deny us the possibility to explore the limits of that system, and to identify such social groups and institutions as, peripheral to or outside the formal political system, may legitimate it, challenge it, or opt out of it entirely. If it is true that any political system can only be understood in its wider social context, this is particularly so in the case of a post-colonial state system that still has to consolidate itself through processes of incorporation and legitimation. The significance of Lumpa (and of Watchtower) is that it demonstrates the limits of these processes. Beyond these limits a considerable number of Zambians refuse to be drawn into the post-colonial state, and reject its claims of legitimate power. Studying the Zambian political system from this angle helps to reveal its dynamic, even precarious nature - instead of taking this system for granted as an established and self-contained fact.

The Zambian political system is of recent date. It is not yet so deeply rooted in every part of the Zambian soil and population that it can afford to ignore challenges from outside this political system, - challenges that undermine its legitimation and threaten its most fundamental assumptions. It is along such lines that I will attempt, in this paper, to interpret Lumpa's relations with nationalism and the state, against the background of the process of class formation. However, such an approach is only meaningful if the following related problems are discussed at the same time. Because of what structural conditions should the post-colonial state experience difficulties of incorporation and legitimation, particularly with regard to peasants in remote rural areas? For the rural adherents of Lumpa form only a small part of the large class of Zambian peasants; and similar difficulties exist elsewhere in rural Zambia - although without the specific Lumpa features of a large, rural-based independent church, and armed mass resistance. I have myself studied a similar peasant situation in Western Zambia (Van Binsbergen 1975, 1976b, 1977c, and forthcoming). Moreover, we shall have to identify Lumpa's specific dimensions of power, particularly in terms of class and class struggle. Thus we may begin to understand Lumpa's relations with nationalism and the state, including the final conflict. Finally, as a religious movement, Lumpa is only one in a long series of religious innovations that have occurred in Central Africa during the last centuries. The latest decade has seen considerable growth of our insight into these religious innovations, their interconnectedness, and their causes. What new light does

this emerging, comprehensive analysis of Central-African religious innovation, throw upon the Lumpa movement?

As my argument develops, it will become clear that these several problems are intimately related, mainly through the themes of urban-rural relations, incorporation processes, and class formation - which are in fact three different terms for the same phenomenon. Meanwhile, the relations between religion, politics, and the economic order, as exemplified by the Lumpa problem, constitute a core problem of society and history. The present argument, however ambitious, does not pretend to solve the problem. But perhaps it re-arranges the pieces in a way that may be helpful towards a future solution.

Reversing the order in which the specific problems raised by Lumpa were mentioned above, I shall now first discuss the background of religious innovation in Central Africa; then place Lumpa in this context; then, after a discussion of its confrontation with nationalism, I shall finally deal with the problems of incorporation and legitimation of the Zambian state from a more general point of view.

2. THE BACKGROUND OF RELIGIOUS INNOVATION IN ZAMBIA

2.1. Super-structural reconstruction

In every society, the members have explicit and mutually shared ideas concerning the universe, society, and themselves. These ideas are supported by implicit, often unconscious cognitive structures such as studied by structural and cognitive anthropology. The total arrangement of these elements can be called the symbolic order, or the super-structure. The super-structure defines a society's central concerns, major institutions, and basic norms and values. Against these, actual behaviour can be evaluated in terms of good and evil, status and success. The super-structure is the central repository of meaning for the members of society. It offers them an explanatory framework. While thus satisfying the participants' intellectual needs, the super-structure also, on the level of action, patterns behaviour in recognized, predictable units (roles), which the participants learn in the course of their socialization. Thus the super-structure provides the participants with a sense of meaningfulness and competence in their dealings with each other and with the non-human world. Ritual and ceremonies, as well as internalization in the personality structure of individual members of society, reinforce the super-structure and let it persist over time.

On the other hand, every society has what we can a call an infra-structure: the organization of the production upon which the participants' lives depend, and particularly such differential distribution of power and resources as dominate the relations of production.

There is no simple solution for the long-standing problem of the relation between super-structure and infra-structure. The problem is particularly manifest in the study of religious innovation, political ideology and mass mobilization. When studied in some concrete setting, it is often possible to determine the infra-structural conditions accompanying these phenomena; yet super-structural elements - the participants' explicit or implicit ideas - often appear as direct and major factors in these contexts. The problem becomes acute in situations of

rapid change. For in a relatively stable situation, infra-structure and super-structure are likely to be attuned to each other, the latter deriving the meaning-fulness and competence it conveys, from the infra-structure it expresses, rein-forces, and legitimates. But in situations of rapid change the relative autonomy of infra-structure and super-structure becomes more pronounced. As the infra-structure undergoes profound changes, the super-structure has no longer grip on, is no longer fundamentally relevant to, the practical experience of partici-pants in economic life. The super-structure therefore ceases to convey meaning-fulness and competence. This creates in the participants existential poblems: the subjective experience of alienation. For these problems two solutions exist. Upon the debris of an obsolete super-structure, the participants may try to construct a new super-structure that is more in line with the altered relations of production; I shall call this super-structural reconstruction. Alternatively, participants may at-tack the alienation problem on the infra-structural level: reversing or redefining, once more, the altered distribution of power and resources, and the production process as a whole, so as to bring it in line, again, with their super-structure that has remained virtually unaltered. A dialectical relation exists between such infra-structural reconstruction, and the super-structural solution. For infra-struc-tural reconstruction requires the coordinated action of a large number of indivi-duals; to enable this, new super-structural elements (ideology, new roles within new groups) have to be created. On the other hand, participants take to super-structural reconstruction in response, in the first instance, to their individual existential problems, and not on the basis of a detached scientific analysis of their society's changed infra-structure; in other words, the new ideas the partici-pants produce, derive at first from the symbolic order and do not necessarily correspond closely with the altered infra-structure. Therefore, their experiments with new ideas, even if ultimately called forth by infra-structural change, may often miss the mark and, failing to restore the correspondence between super-structure and infra-structure, may instead lead into a new symbolic order that is just as remote as their old super-structure, from current infra-structural con-ditions.

The emergence of a new super-structure is a highly creative process. It re-quires the efforts of visionary individuals who experiment with both old and new symbols (the latter invented, or introduced from elsewhere). The innovators generate new combinations and permutations of their symbolic material, and offer their tentative results to the surrounding population. This population shares with the innovators in their midst, problems of interpretation and competence, as caused by the divorce between infra-structure and super-structure. Therefore, an innovator's proposal of a new super-structure (as one individual's solution to his own problems) may yet appeal to the population at large as a likely solution of their own, similar problems of alienation. The visionary's proposal is there-fore likely to be adopted at first. On the subjective level, it may give psycho-logical relief, as long as the participants are confident that the longed-for solution has been found. But whether the proposed super-structural innovation actually does or does not correspond more closely than the old super-structure, with the altered infra-structure, will not be immediately clear. The participants will find this out gradually, by on the one hand living through their super-structural innovation, on the other hand continuing to participate in the altered relations of production. In most cases the super-structural reconstruction attempt will turn out to be off the mark. After initial success it will die down, as the people become increasingly aware that the new ideas do not fundamentally re-

late to the actually prevailing structure of production. Sometimes, however, super-structural innovation may tune in with the altered relations of production, and in this way the subjective experience of alienation may be dissolved. A truly revolutionary situation occurs when super-structural innovation at the same time stipulates such infra-structural changes as curb alienation at the infra-structural level, i.e. in terms of expropriation and control. Then a lasting change of the society becomes possible.

Meanwhile, in order to work at all if even during a short time, attempts at super-structural reconstruction apparently have to do three things. First, they have to propound a new arrangement of symbols. Thus they can restore the sense of meaningfulness, subjectively and temporarily, even if the infra-structure from which such meaningfulness ultimately derives is left unaffected. Such a new arrangement of symbols must then focus on symbols that are eminently effective and unassailable in the eyes of the participants. The new super-structural re-construction may be predominantly religious (e.g. Lumpa), political (e.g. Zam-bian nationalism), or presumably take some other course; essential is, in all these cases, that the central symbols appear *absolute* to the participants. Secondly, super-structural reconstruction must restore the sense of competence by stipulating new forms of action. This action may vary from collective ritual to campaigns to check party cards. Important is that participants are brought to look upon such action as bringing about the new, desired social order where their alienation problems will no longer exist. At the same time these actions translate the move-ment's central symbols into the context of tangible, lived-through reality, thus reinforcing them. Finally, attempts at super-structural reconstruction, in order to be at least initially successful, cannot stop at the level of merely individual interpretations and actions, but must create new group structures (e.g. restruc-tured rural communities, churches, political parties) within which the partici-pants can lead their new lives once their alienation problems will have been solved subjectively. Recruitment into these new groups must be presented as the solution to the problems of individual people. Expansion of the new group is often considered the main method to create a new society in which the alienation problem would no longer exist.

2.2. Religious innovation in Zambia as super-structural reconstruction

As Vansina pointed out (1966:19f), throughout Central Africa a rather similar super-structure prevailed before the recent processes of social change made their impact. On the infra-structural level, two major changes occurred since the 18th century. The first consisted in the increasing involvement of local farming, fishing and hunting communities (which until then had been largely self-con-tained), in a new mode of production that was dominated by long-distance trade and by the payment of tribute to the states that emerged in Central Africa largely as a result of such trade. The second major infra-structural change was the penetration of capitalism. Directly, capitalism induced the rural population to leave their villages and work as migrant labourers in the mines, farms and towns of Central and Southern Africa; to adapt their rural economy, and in-creasingly their total life, to the consumption of manufactured commodities; and, in selected areas, to embark on small-scale capitalist agricultural production. Indirectly, the infra-structural accommodation to capitalism was promoted by the colonial state, e.g. by the imposition of hut tax; the destruction of pre-existing networks of trade and tribute; the transformation of indigenous rulers

into petty administrators for the colonial state; the regulation of migration between the rural areas and the places of work; the provision of schools to serve the need for skilled workers and clerks; urban housing; medical services; the occasional promotion of African commercial farming, etc. Admittedly, the relations between the colonial state and capitalism are rather more complex than suggested here, and failure to work out these relations (even if such had been impossible within the scope of the present article) is one of the shortcomings of my argument.

The emergence of the trade-tribute mode of production, and the expansion of capitalism, both constituted infra-structural changes of sufficient scope to provide test cases for my provisional theory of super-structural reconstruction. There is no *a priori* reason why disjunction between an altered infra-structure and an old super-structure should lead to predominantly *religious* super-structural reconstruction. Historical evidence on Central Africa is still rather scanty for the pre-colonial period, but rather abundant for the colonial era. From this evidence one gets the impression that religious innovation has for long constituted the main response to recent infra-structural change. Only after World War II mass nationalism appeared as a political form of super-structural reconstruction, in addition to ongoing religious innovation. Probably this preponderance of religious super-structural reconstruction has systematic reasons which a more developed theory may identify in future. An important *ad hoc* explanation seems to lie in the fact that among twentieth-century Zambians the concept of politics as a distinct sector of society is a recent innovation. The modern concept of politics, just like that of religion, can only be meaningful among the members of a highly differentiated, complex society, where institutional spheres have acquired considerable autonomy vis-à-vis one another. Contemporary Zambia has become such a society. But sections of the rural population continue to reject this differentiated view of politics. Instead they have a rather holistic conception of society, in which religious, political and economic power merge to a considerable extent (e.g. Van Binsbergen, forthcoming). In this respect many peasants have retained the basic outlook of the old super-structure, in which religious and non-religious aspects appear to have merged almost entirely.

In the old super-structure, the link with the local dead was the main legitimation for residence, political office, and for such a variety of specialist roles as divining, healing, hunting, ironworking, musical crafts. Through residence, veneration of the local dead, and ritual focussing directly on land spirits, a special ritual link with the land was established. Without such a link no success could be expected in economically vital undertakings as agriculture, fishing, hunting and collecting. The participants' view of the society and of an individual's career, arranged village life, the economic process, politics and ritual in one comprehensive framework, where each part has meaning by reference to all others. This view was, therefore, religious as much as it was political or economic.

When the trade-tribute mode of production expanded, the emergent major chiefs initially had to legitimize their political and economic power in terms of this same view of society. Chiefly cults came up which enabled the chiefs to claim ritual power over the land's fertility, either through ritual links with deceased predecessors, or through non-royal priests or councillors representing the original 'owners of the land' (Van Binsbergen 1977b). Thus, as a result of infra-structural change, symbolic themes already present in the super-structure were redefined; a new power distribution was acknowledged in the super-structure; and a pattern that in the old super-structure referred to merely local conditions was now applied to extensive regional political structures which often comprised more than one ethnic group. However, in this altered super-structure the merging between religious and political aspects was still largely retained.

Along with these chiefly cults, two other types of religious innovation can be traced back to the late pre-colonial period and to the infra-structural changes then occurring: the appearance of prophets, and the emergences of cults of affliction. Cults of affliction concentrate on the individual, whose physical and/or mental suffering they interpret in terms of possession by a spirit, whilst treatment mainly consists of initiation as a member of the cult. Central-African prophets and the movements they trigger fall into three sub-types: the ecological prophet whose main concern is with fertility and the land; the eschatological prophet who predicts the imminent end of the world such as it is known to his audience; and the affliction prophet who establishes a new, regionally-organized cult of affliction, which in many respects resembles an independent church. For an initial treatment of these main types, and references, I refer to Carter (1972) and my own work (1976a, 1977a). Prophetic cults of these subtypes, and cults of affliction, have continued to appear in Central Africa during the colonial period, and still represent major forms of religion among the Central-African peasants. But in addition, the colonial era saw new types of religious innovation. Preachers and dippers (advocating baptism through immersion) appeared. They were connected, some more closely than others, with the African Watchtower movement, which in itself derived indirectly from the North-American Jehovah's Witnesses. There were other independent churches which pursued more or less clearly a Christian idiom. Finally, mission Christianity had in fact penetrated before the imposition of colonial rule (1900), but started to gain momentum much later.

Let us first consider all these cases of religious innovation as super-structural experiments, which propounded a new symbolic order. Despite their differences in idiom, ritual and organizational structure, it is amazing to see how the same few trends in symbolic development dominate them all (Van Binsbergen 1976a). All struggle with the conception of time. The cyclical present implicit in the old super-structure (highlighting agriculture, hunting, and gathering at the village scale) becomes obsolete. In the course of these religious innovations, it gives way to a linear time perspective that emphasizes personal career and historical development, even to the extent of interpreting history as a process of salvation in the Christian sense (cf. Eliade 1949). In some of these religious innovations, the linear perspective is again supplanted by the eschatological: the acute sense of time drawing to an end. Almost all these innovations try to move away from the concern for the land and fertility that dominated the old super-structure. The village dead as major supernatural entities venerated in ritual give way to other, less particularistic entities, especially the High God. In line with this, all these innovations tend to move away from taking the old village community, in its original form, as their basic concept of society. In the cults of affliction this process manifests itself in their extreme emphasis on the suffering individual and their underplaying of morality and social obligations. In some of the other religious innovations the same process reaches further: they

explicitly strive towards the creation of a new and fundamentally different community, a new society to be brought about by the new religious inspiration and new ritual. Finally, in so far as in the old super-structure sorcery was considered the main threat to human society, these religious innovations each try to formulate alternatives to sorcery. The cults of affliction and the mission churches attribute misfortune and suffering to causes altogether different from sorcery. Most of the other innovations continue to accept the reality of sorcery but try to eradicate it once for all so as to make the new, transformed community possible. The constant occurrence of these themes throughout recent religious innovation in Central Africa suggests that underneath the several types, each representing scores of individual religious movements, one overall and persistent process of super-structural change took place, in which the same symbolic material was manipulated within rather narrow limits.

However, when we try to relate these super-structural experiments to infra-structural change, it becomes necessary to distinguish between two main streams of super-structural reconstruction. One stream is of exclusively rural origin; the religious innovators and their followers are peasants. This applies to cults of affliction, and to the cults created by ecological, eschatological and affliction prophets. The other stream springs from what we can provisionally call the 'intensive contact situation'.
This comprises the places of work which attracted labour migrants from throughout Central Africa (mines, farms, towns), and moreover the rural extensions of these centres: district administrative centres (bomas); rural Christian missions; and military campaigns involving thousands of African carriers, and fewer soldiers, near the Zambian-Tanzanian border in World War I. Watchtower dippers and preachers, other independent churches, and mission Christianity are the religious innovations belonging to this second stream. The two streams roughly coincide with the division rural-urban. But the following argument will make clear that much more is involved than a purely geographical or demographic criterium. This justifies my classifying of such country-side phenomena as bomas, missions, farms and military campaigns in the second stream.

Typical of the first, truly rural stream is that it comprises people still largely involved in a pre-capitalist mode of production: shifting cultivation, hunting and gathering. However, state expansion (before and after the imposition of colonial rule), and the impact of capitalism, have infringed on their local autonomy, draining their products and labour force (through slave-raiding, tribute, forced labour, migrant labour and urbanization), and encroaching on their rights on local land, hunting and fishing (e.g. by the creation of chiefs' hunting reserves, and later by the founding of commercial farms, towns, mines, native reserves, and forest reserves). The infra-structure of their local society has been deeply affected by these development. From free, autonomous farmers whose system of production was effectively contained within their social horizon and subject to their own control, they became a peasant class in a world-wide society. But while the facts of this process of incorporation and expropriation are unmistakable and have come to affect every aspect of village life, the agents of control in their new situation have largely remained invisible at the village level. The psysical outlets of the state and of the capitalist economy were confined to the district centres and the towns along the line of rail, outside the everyday experience of the peasants. Particularly after the creation of indirect rule (around 1930), administrators and peasants alike could foster the illusion of an essentially intact traditional society whose time-honoured social institutions, though heavily assailed (after all, there *was* the reality of incorporation and alienation), were still functioning. Under these circumstances, the rural population's reaction against being forced into a peasant class position could hardly be expected to confront, immediately, the outside forces responsible for their expropriation. One does not expect anti-colonial responses in this context. A precondition for such responses would have been that the peasants had acquired some explicit assessment of the power situation in the wider society in so far as this affected their situation - and were prepared to challenge these structures. But as Gluckman pointed out in one of his most comprehensive analyses of political change in Southern and Central Africa,

'there were plenty of hostilities [between Black and White]; but they did not continually affect the daily life of Africans; and the picture of Africans in constant and unceasing antagonism to whites is false for the rural areas' (Gluckman 1971:15).

Instead, the peasants sought a solution for their predicament of alienation entirely at the local level; and not primarily through the creation of new relations of production, but mainly through the formulation of a new super-structure. The innovators' messages and their ritual, though explicable from the predicament of 'peasantization', in nearly all cases remained without overt references to this predicament. The various rural-based religious innovations were attempts to render, on a local scale, village life once again meaningful by new symbols, restoring the sense of competence by new ritual. Whereas the cults of affliction attempted to do this on the exclusively individual level (and thus dealt with only part of the problem, even at the mere super-structural level), the various prophetic cults went further. The latter aimed at ushering the local population into a radically new community. However, usually this community was entirely conceived in ritual terms. Most prophetic cults did not attempt to work out the infra-structural requirements, in terms of relations of production, by which such a new community might really have formed a lasting answer to the predicament of peasantization; Lumpa was an important exception to this. Divorced from a production basis, in other words entirely based on an illusion, most cults of affliction and prophetic cults soon lost their vigour. But their idiom remained attractive: in many regions we see a succession of such cults, at intervals of a few years or decades.

The second stream of super-structural reconstruction sprang from a quite different social situation. In the places of migrant work, the bomas, the missions, and while involved in a military campaign, the Africans not just experienced the distant effects of the expansion of state systems and capitalism. In general, they were born and raised within the peasant context indicated above, retaining more of less close links with their village kin. Yet they had entered into a different class position, or were on their way of doing so. They lived outside their villages, in a social setting dominated not by the inclusive, reciprocal social relationships typical of the village, but by formal organizations, patterned after those of modern North-Atlantic society. Their daily working experience was determined by forms of control characteristic of capitalist relations of production. In this situation, their livelihood was entirely dependent upon their taking part in the

production process as wage-labourers. Therefore their class position was largely that of proletarians, even though the majority attempted to keep open the lines back into the village, and had still rights to rural land should they return home. The forces of the state and capitalism that in the villages remained distant, anonymous, and often below the threshold of explicit awareness, were in this proletarian situation blatantly manifest. These forces pervaded every aspect of the worker's social experience, and were personified in concrete people: white employers, foremen, administrative officers and missionaries. Exploitation, economic insecurity, humiliation and racial intimidation were the specific forms in which these more immediate causes of the African predicament were driven home in this situation. Essentially all this applies equally to the rural Christian missions. I am not denying that the flavour of human relations in the missions may have been somewhat more humanitarian than in the migrants' places of work. But infra-structurally the missions represented a social setting very similar to the latter, in such terms as: formal, bureaucratic forms of organization and control; race relations; predominance of capitalism, as manifested in exclusive land rights, wage labour, and distribution of manufactured commodities (cf. Rotberg 1965).

Africans in the intensive contact situation were experiencing problems of alienation rather similar to those of their kinsmen in the village. But their response had to be different. Well advanced in the process of proletarization, they had acquired a working knowledge and understanding of capitalist structures. They could no longer take the strictly local, rural scene as their exclusive frame of reference. Like the peasants, they felt the existential need for reconstruction, but then reconstruction of the wider society and particularly of those manifest (and often superficial) aspects of the power distribution therein that had caused their most bitter experiences.

For many thousands of people, mission-propagated Christianity seemed to provide the solution they were looking for. This religious innovation promised a new life and a new society. Its organizational structure as well as its moral and ethical codes were, not surprisingly, well attuned to colonial society and capitalism. However, for this very reason conversion did not solve the predicament of alienation; it added but a new dimension to it.

In the intensive contact situation a general and explicit reaction was generated against white domination in both the political and the religious field. Springing from the same setting, the political and religious responses were rather parallel and initially merged to a considerable degree. African Watchtower and other independent churches (including the African Methodist Episcopal Church), are the more predominantly religious manifestations of the second, non-rural stream of super-structural reconstruction. The political manifestations led through Welfare Societies and labour agitation at the Copperbelt, to the nationalist movement which took a concrete form after World War II.

Given the fact of circulatory labour migration, in which a large proportion of the Central-African male population was involved, the two streams of super-structural reconstruction could not remain entirely screened off from each other. Significant exchanges took place between the super-structural responses of peasantization and those of proletarization. The introduction of peasant cults of affliction into the intensive contact situation is a common phenomenon in Central Africa. Alternatively, the 'proletarian' super-structural responses were soon propagated in the rural areas as well. As the social settings of proletarization and peasantization were very different, the innovations had to undergo substantial transformations as they crossed from one setting to the other. The case of the Zambia Nzila Sect shows how a cult of affliction, when introduced into the setting of proletarization, could take on a formal organizational structure and develop into a fully-fledged and exceptionally successful independent church (Mutemba 1972; Van Binsbergen 1977a).

African Watchtower shows the opposite process, by which a religious innovation properly belonging to the proletarian context, is greatly transformed so as to fit the context of peasantization. In the late 1920's and the 1930's Watchtower [18] was propagated in the rural areas of Central Africa at a very large scale. The proletarian preachers and dippers expressed anti-colonial attitudes, and attracted state persecution on this basis. However, the massive peasant audiences they inspired and brought to baptism, seemed to respond less to their anti-colonialism and their analysis of the wider society. Instead, the peasants were looking for reconstruction of just the local, rural society, by ritual means, and therefore chose to emphasize selectively the eschatological and witchcleansing elements in the preachers' messages. And the latter were not hesitant to oblige. A case in point is the rapid transformation of Tomo Nyirenda ('Mwana Lesa') from an orthodox Watchtower in the typical intensive contact situation, to a self-styled rural witchfinder whose lethal efficiency cost scores of lives (and finally his own) (Rotberg 1967:142f; Ranger 1975). Nyirenda's case appears to have been only an extreme example of what seems to have happened to many Watchtower preachers. Their messages, deriving from a different class situation, were rapidly attuned to the idiom in which the peasants were phrasing their own attempts at super-structural reconstruction. The specific Watchtower message, including its anti-colonial overtones, got lost behind the peasants' perception of the preachers as predominantly engaged in the eradication of sorcery. They were supposed to usher the local society into a radically new state, but on a strictly local scale and ignoring the wider colonial and capitalist conditions which had both intensified the predicament of peasantization, and had triggered originally the proletarian Watchtower response.

By no means all religious innovators who exhorted local rural communities to cleanse themselves from sorcery had Watchtower connotations. Some were channelled into other independent church movements. Others were individual innovators who adopted elements from the current idiom (dipping, hymn-

[18] On Watchtower in the period indicated, see e.g. Hooker 1965; Assimeng 1971; Rotberg 1967:136f; Greschat 1967; Cross 1970, 1973, and by that same author a number of unpublished papers which however I have no authority to cite. Hooker's reference (1965:99) to Watchtower in Kasempa district, N.W. Zambia, as early as 1913 (instead of the correct date of the 1930's) is based on a misreading of Chibanza (1961:81). In the 1910's, African Watchtower in Zambia was confined to the extreme north-east, where it was closely connected with the military campaign against the Germans in Tanzania, in World War I (Meebelo 1971:133f; Rotberg 1967:136f). Much of African Watchtower in Zambia indirectly derived from the movement of John Chilembwe in Malawi, which ended in the 1915 rising (Shepperson Price 1958; for a recent reinterpretation cf. Linden & Linden 1971). My views on the rural adaptation process in Watchtower are based not only on secondary literature, but also on the events in rural Western Zambia in the 1920's-30's, as documented in Zambia National Archives files: KDD 1/4/1; ZA 1/9/181/(3); KDD 1/2/1; KDE 8/1/18; ZA 7/1/16/3; KSX 1/1/1; ZA 7/1/17/5; SEC/NAT/66A; ZA 1/15/M/1.

singing, the use of a Bible copy and other material paraphernalia for the identification and cleansing of sorcerers) without identifying themselves as belonging to any specific movement. Many claimed or were regarded to belong to the *Mcape* movement, which from Malawi spread over Central Africa from the 1920's onwards. Several other such movements have been described for Zambia and the surrounding areas. [19])

Willis (1970) has aptly characterized the common purpose of all these rural movements with the phrase 'instant millennium'. Unlike cargo cults and many other millennarian movements, these Central-African witchcleansing cults not only contained the expectation of a radically different new society: they actually claimed to provide the apparatus and ritual that was to bring about this new society. Despite waves of religious innovation that had temporarily superimposed alternative interpretations, sorcery had remained the standard explanation for misfortune. In such a context the claim to remove all sorcery from the community, inevitably amounts to nothing less than the creation of a realm of eternal bliss, of a community that belongs to a totally different order of existence. Mary Douglas (1963) suggested that recurrent witchcleansing cults form part and parcel of the 'traditional' set-up of Central-African rural society. My interpretation would be rather different. Admittedly, the well-known debate (summarized in Wilson 1973:56) on the methodological difficulties involved in the hypothesis that modern social change had lead to an increase of sorcery and sorcery accusation, discourages any further argument along that line. However, instead of a change in the incidence of sorcery or alleged sorcery, I would suggest that the significant element of change lay in the personnel and the idiom of witchcleansing. This is again not something that is easily assessed for an illiterate past, but at least it is a qualitative instead of an unsolvable quantitative problem. In the old super-structure, sorcery formed the central moral issue. The necessity to control sorcery and to expose and eliminate sorcerers, was fully acknowledged. These functions were the prerogatives of those exercising political and religious authority, or were largely controlled by the latter. The battle against sorcery was waged *continually*, and formed a major test for the amount of protection and well-being those in authority could offer their followers. The removal overnight of all sorcerers as in eradication movements, does not by any means fit into this pattern. The cyclical time perception characteristic of the old super-structure is likewise incompatible with the idea of 'instant millennium'. These millennarian expectations, the recruitment of witchcleansing agents from amongst outsiders divorced from local foci of authority (even if often invited and protected by chiefs), the new symbols (dipping, the High God, hymns and sermons), the massive response which made whole villages and regions step forward, hand in their sorcery apparatus, and get cleansed - all this suggest not a recurrent 'traditional' phenomenon, but a dramatic attempt at super-structural reconstruction, that properly belongs to the chapter of religious innovation in Central Africa.

2.3. *Super-structural reconstruction, class struggle and the state*

On the descriptive level, I have now prepared the ground for an interpretation of Lumpa against the total background of recent religious and political move-

[19]) Ranger 1972; Willis provides a lengthy bibliography (1970), including all the classic references; specifically for N.E. Zambia - the area of the Lumpa church - cf. Roberts 1972:4f, 8f.

ments in Central Africa. However, for a fuller understanding it is necessary to examine this material in the light of two fundamental issues: class struggle and the overall distribution of power. We touch here on basic problems of both modern African society and social theory. Therefore, rushing in where angels fear to tread, the following ideas are offered as extremely tentative.

I have argued that the various super-structural reconstruction movements were peculiar to the two specific class situations of peasantization and proletarization. However, they were much more than mere sub-cultural traits contributing to the life-style of a social class (such as diet, fashion in clothing, patterns of recreation etc.) Directly springing from the predicament of alienation, and trying to solve it, these movements should be recognized as manifestations of class struggle.

Here the broad distinction between the peasant stream and the proletarian stream is relevant, again. The various peasant responses reveal the attempt to reconstruct a whole, self-supporting, autonomous rural community. Trapped as they usually were in super-structural illusions, ignoring the infra-structural requirements (in terms of relations of production) for such a reconstruction, most of these attempts were unrealistic and failed entirely. Yet in essence they are extremely radical in that they attempt to reverse the process of peasantization, by denying the rural community's incapsulation in a wider colonial and capitalist system. By contrast, the 'urban' responses were decidedly less radical. For they took for granted the fundamental structure of capitalism, and aimed not at an overthrow of capitalist relations of production, but at material and psychological improvement of the proletarian experience within this overall structure. Thus in Zambia the proletarian class struggle was fought within the terms of the very structure that had brought about the process of proletarization; it was reformist, not revolutionary. This explains why Zambian nationalism, which ultimately emerged as the main response to proletarization (Henderson 1970), entirely lost its aspect of class struggle. After UNIP realized territorial independence, this nationalist party and its leaders have instead greatly enhanced state control as a means to consolidate the capitalist structure of Zambian society. The infra-structure was left intact, and after the replacement of this structure's white executive personnel by Africans, its further expansion was stimulated. The growth of UNIP in the rural areas, where the party increasingly implements and controls state-promoted projects of 'rural development', represents a further phase in the domination of rural communities by the state and capitalism.

Within the proletarian response Watchtower came closest to radical class struggle. It did not analyse and counteract the capitalist relations. On the contrary, Watchtower adherents have been described as quite successfully adapted to capitalist production. This was particularly the case when the movement, introduced into the rural areas, could resist the peasants' redefinition of its idiom in terms of witchcleasing, and enduring Watchtower communities emerged [20]). However, Watchtower radicalism did show in its theocratic rejection of the authority of the state - both colonial and post-colonial. Watchtower has thus opposed a structure of domination that, as I indicated above, was closely linked to capitalist structures.

[20]) Examples of such successful latterday Watchtower communities are described by Long (1968) and Cross (e.g. 1970).

This rejection of the state also brought Watchtower close to the peasants' reconstruction attempts. For although the latter were not explicitly anti-state or anti-colonial, their insistence on a strictly local rural society left no room whatever for structures of control beyond the local level. Most Central-African peasant reconstruction movements were of limited scope, organizationally weak, and lacked infra-structural initiatives. This caused them, in general, to yield and die down as soon as effectively confronted with the power of the state. Lumpa, however, shows the great potential of these movements, once they comprise a sufficient number of people and explore, in addition to super-structural reconstruction, the possibility of infra-structural reconstruction.

However, incorporation of rural communities in a system of state control under capitalist conditions is not only an infra-structural problem. The super-structural innovations discussed here emphasize the importance of people's conceptualization of their society, and of their own place therein. It is impossible to build a state on sheer coercion alone, and anyway the Zambian leaders would abhor the very idea. In addition to actual control through effective structures, the Zambian state seeks legitimacy in the eyes of its subjects. In the present-day context it is therefore of great importance that the state, as the culmination of supra-local control, has remained a distant and alien element in the social perception of many Zambian peasants, also after independence. The colonial state, for various reasons, was contented to have only a distant grip on rural villages, and concentrated its efforts in the bomas and in the urban centres. The post-colonial state however is now struggling for both effective domination and acceptance right down to the grass-roots level of the remotest villages. Expansion of the party and of other rural foci of state control (schools, clinics, agricultural extensions, courts) in itself cannot take away the fact that the state still has not legitimated itself entirely in the eyes of a considerable portion of the Zambian peasantry. This situation causes strain and insecurity among the Zambian leaders, and they tend to react forcibly against rural (or whatever other) challenges of their legitimacy. Of this Lumpa, again, offers an example.

3. LUMPA AND ITS DEVELOPMENT IN RURAL NORTH-EAST ZAMBIA

We have now reached a stage where we can assess the position of the Lumpa church as a case of religious innovation, against the general background of super-structural reconstruction in Central-Africa - and where we can begin to analyse the conflicts this church gave rise to.

The story of Lenshina's first appearance as a prophet and of the founding years of her church has been told often enough (see the literature cited above). We can confine ourselves here to a broad outline. Lenshina was born around 1920, as the daughter of a Bemba villager who had fought against the Germans near the Tanzanian border, and who had later been a boma messenger. Though growing up near Lubwa mission, Lenshina was not a baptized Christian when she received her first visions in 1953. Her husband had been a carpenter with Lubwa mission but by that time was no longer employed there. Lenshina referred to the mission with an account of her spiritual experiences. The white missionary-in-charge took her seriously, saw her through Bible lessons and baptism (when she received the name of Alice), and encouraged her to give testimony of her experiences at church gatherings. However, when this missionary went on leave abroad, and Alice began to develop ritual initiatives on her own, receiving

even money for them, the African minister-in-charge felt that she could no longer be contained within the mission church. From 1955 onwards Lenshina propagated her message on her own behalf, thus founding an independent church. She collected a phenomenal following around her, which by 1958 was estimated at about 65,000 (Rotberg 1961:63). Many of these were former converts of Lubwa mission and of the neighbouring Roman Catholic missions. In Chinsali district and adjacent areas, the great majority of the population turned to Lenshina's church, which was soon known as Lumpa ('excelling all others'). An organizational framework was set up in which Lenshina's husband Petros Chitankwa, and other male senior deacons, held the topmost positions. Many thousands of pilgrims flocked to Lenshina's village Kasomo, which was renamed Sioni (Zion); many settled there permanently. In 1958 the Lumpa cathedral was completed to be one of the greatest church buildings of Central Africa. Scores of Lumpa branches were created throughout Zambia's Northern Province. In addition, some appeared along the line of rail, and even in Zimbabwe. However, the rural membership of the church began to drop in the late 1950's, from about 70% to about 10% of the local population (Information... 1964: 941; as e.g. the number of emigrant Lumpa-adherents in Zaïre demonstrates, these are very conservative estimates). After various clashes with the chiefs, local missions, the colonial state, and the anti-colonial nationalist movement, armed resistance against the state precipitated the 1964 final conflict which meant the end of the overt existence of Lumpa in Zambia.

Against the background of previous religious innovations in Central Africa, Lumpa offered a not very original combination of recurrent symbolic themes. Lumpa laid strong emphasis on the eradication of sorcery mainly through baptism and the surrender of sorcery apparatus. It displayed the linear time perspective implicit in the notion of salvation, while eschatological overtones only became very dominant in the few months preceding the final conflict. Lenshina assumed ritual ecological functions such as distributing blessed seeds and calling rain, but on the other hand imposed taboos on common foods such as beer. The church's idiom highlighted God and Jezus, while denouncing ancestors, deceased chiefs and affliction-causing spirits as objects of veneration. Finally, the church aimed at the creation of a new, predominantly rural society - but this time not only by the ritual means of witchcleansing but also by experiments with new patterns of social relations and even with new relations of production and control which at least went some way towards infra-structural change. In this last respect lies the uniqueness of Lumpa - as well as its undoing.

But before we discuss this aspect, let us try to identify the position of Lumpa within either the 'urban' of the 'rural' stream of super-structural reconstruction. The class position of the Lumpa foundress and of the great majority of Lenshina's adherents was that of the peasantry. Yet Lenshina's background (particularly the labour history of her father and of her husband), and Lumpa's period of 'incubation' at Lubwa mission (1953-54), suggest the importance of elements deriving from the 'intensive contact situation'. Negative views concerning the missionaries, the whites, colonialism were initially quite strong in Lumpa. Lenshina first visions occurred around the time that the Central-African Federation was created - a controversial issue that had greatly enhanced the political awareness of the African population, representing the first major defeat of Zambian nationalism. There is, moreover, specific evidence of the nationalist element in Lumpa in the early years (mid-1950's). Many of the early senior leaders of Lumpa were natio-

nalists who for that reason had left the Lubwa Mission establishment. Lumpa gatherings were used for nationalist propaganda. In 1954, even the then leader of Zambian nationalism, Harry Nkumbula, had a meeting with Alice to enlist her support for the nationalist cause.[21]) Lumpa seemed to develop into a textbook demonstration of Balandier's well-known view that independent churches are

'at the origin of nationalism which are still unsophisticated but unequivocal in their expression' (Balandier 1965:443).

Lumpa's closeness to the nationalist movement was emphasized by the most authoritative early studies of Lumpa (Rotberg 1961; Taylor & Lehmann 1961). These authors, whose fieldwork took place in the late 1950's, were entirely unable to predict Lumpa's clash with UNIP in the early 1960's.

From the very beginning, however, the symbolic idiom in which Lenshina' expressed her message belonged not to the stream of proletarization, but to that of peasantization. This is clear from Lenshina's emphasis on ecological ritual (almost an anachronism within the development of Central-African religious innovation), sorcery-eradication, and the construction of a new, exclusively local, rural society. As the movement spread over N.E. Zambia, these peasant elements became more and more dominant. Lumpa became primarily a means to overcome the predicament of peasantization. In its emphasis on the creation of a new, local society, the incorporation of that society in the wider structures of capitalism and the colonial state (the frame of reference of the proletarization response, including nationalism), became increasingly irrelevant. Whereas it could be maintained that Lumpa initially straddled both the urban and the rural stream of super-structural reconstruction, it gradually went through a process of accommodation to the peasant outlook. This was rather analogous to the rural transformation of Watchtower a quarter of a century earlier. The constitution of the Lumpa church, drawn up in 1957, preludes on the outcome of this process: the church is there presented as non-racial, not a political party, and not opposed to the laws of the country - thus opting out of the nationalist position. [22])

By becoming more and more specifically a peasant movement, Lumpa could no longer accomodate those of its members whose experiences at rural missions, bomas, and in town were more deeply rooted in the proletarization process. This partly explains the decline of Lumpa in N.E. Zambia since the late 1950's. By that time many of the Lumpa adherents returned to their mission churches. Others heeded the call of the rapidly expanding rural branches of UNIP. Entrenched in its exclusively rural and local outlook, Lumpa was working out a form of peasant class struggle quite incompatible with the nationalist emphasis on wider incorporation and on the state. By the same token, the urban branches of Lumpa became increasingly divorced from the rural developments in the church. While their relation to nationalism remains a subject for further study, it is clear that they did dissociate themselves from rural Lumpa in the latter's final conflict with the state (Roberts 1972:43,47).

[21]) Rotberg 1961:75f; Macpherson 1974:238, however cf. p. 180; Mulford 1967:40; Kaunda as quoted in Emanuel 1964:198; *Northern News* (Zambia) 19/6/1965, which contains Nkumbula's statement.
[22]) Rotberg 1961:71; Taylor and Lehmann 1961:253; Gertzel n.d.:36; Warren, as quoted in *Information . . .* 1964:940.

If Lumpa gradually defined itself as a peasant movement aiming at a radical reversion of the process of peasantization, let us now consider the non-ritual ways by which Lumpa attempted to achieve this.

On the level of social relations, the belief in the eradication of sorcery created a new social climate where the very strict moral rulings of the Lumpa church were observed to an amazing extent. This was for instance noticeable in the field of sexual and marital relations (Taylor & Lehmann 1961:266). In many respects, moreover, Lumpa tried to revive the old super-structure, in which concern for the land and fertility, protection against sorcery, general morality, and political and economic power had all combined in one holistic conception of the rural society. However, the new society was to be a theocratic one, in which all autority had to derive from God and his prophetess, Lenshina. The boma, chiefs, Local Courts, as they had no access to this authority, were denounced and ignored. In the judicial sphere, cases would be taken to Lenshina and her senior church leaders, who tried them to the satisfaction of the Lumpa adherents involved. For some years Chinsali district was in fact predominantly Lumpa. Very frequent communication was maintained between the various branches and headquarters, e.g. by means of pilgrimage and the continuous circulation of church choirs through the countryside. Under these conditions the creation of an alternative, church-administered authority structure was no illusion, but a workable reality. Two recent comprehensive studies of Lumpa (Calmettes 1970; Roberts 1972) emphasize this aspect of the effective reconstruction of the rural society.

These indications are already highly significant, as they demonstrate Lumpa's temporary success in functioning as a focus of control independently from the state. The nationalist leaders were not so far off the mark when they denounced Lumpa for attempting to form 'a state within the state'. For while Lumpa implicitly denied the legitimacy of the colonial state and its post-colonial successor, it attempted to create a structure of control comparable to the state, if at a much smaller scale geographically.

However, the super-structural achievements would have been meaningless, even impossible, without some infra-structural basis. Did Lumpa actually experiment with new relations of production which counteracted incorporation of the local community into capitalism and the state? As no primary data on Lumpa have been collected with this specific question in mind, the evidence is scanty, but does contain some interesting points. The very substantial donations from Lumpa church branches, individual members, and pilgrims, accumulated at Sioni. They were used not only for Lenshina's household and retinue, but also towards the creation of a chain of rural stores. Trucks were purchased both to stock the stores and to transport church choirs between the branches and headquarters. Without further information it is difficult to say whether this represents merely the attempt of Lumpa leaders to launch themselves as entrepreneurs, or rather a move to create a self-sufficient distribution system as independent as possible from outside control. However, further examples do bear out Lumpa's experiments with economic relations that were widely at variance with capitalism and that remind much more of the economic ideals of the old village society. The huge Lumpa cathedral was built in 1956-58 by the various church branches in a form of tribute labour, with no outside assistance. The continuous circulation of pilgrims and choir-members through the countryside of N.E.

Zambia represented another interesting economic feature. These Lumpa adherents had to be fed gratis by the local villagers, to whom they were often strangers. They were not always welcome and were likened to locusts. Yet this institution suggests the potential of the economic network created by Lumpa.

The most significant move towards a new infra-structure revolved on land and land rights - as befits a peasant movement. In this context it is important to note that for the population of N.E. Zambia the process of peasantization started not with the imposition of colonial rule, but with the formation of the Bemba state, about the 18th century (Roberts 1973). Chiefs at various positions in the Bemba chiefly hierarchy had assumed rights over the allocation of land. The colonial state had largely reinforced these rights, while claiming for itself the power to acknowledge or demote the chiefs. Lumpa's attempt to create a new rural society and (to some extent) new relations of production, inevitably called for a territorial basis on which a contiguous, exclusively Lumpa population could pursue their new social, economic and religious life. Lumpa adherents began to resettle, primarily around Sioni, where apparently hundreds of them concentrated. Accepting only theocratic authority, they did not ask permission from the chiefs. In this way they challenged the fundamental property rights on which their rural production system had been based for two centuries or more. That the issue was indeed vital not only in terms of my theory but also for the Lumpa adherents, the chiefs, and the state, is clear from the fact that this conflict of 'unauthorized' settlement led to the first violent clashes between Lumpa ant and the police, in 1959 (Rotberg 1961:76f; Roberts 1972:32). In the years that followed, land as a key issue in rural relations of production continued to play the role one would expect it to play in a peasant movement struggling to create a new infra-structure. Soon, Lenshina tried to purchase land, which was greatly opposed, and resented, by the chiefs and by the increasingly non-Lumpa population. As UNIP/Lumpa tensions mounted (see below), Lumpa adherents withdrew into a number of exclusively Lumpa villages, which were again 'unauthorized' from the point of view of the chiefs and the state. In July 1964 Kaunda's ultimatum to abandon these villages expired. Two police officers on patrol visited one such village; the inhabitants allegedly understood that they came to demolish the village, and killed them. This started the final conflict, whose outcome was, *inter alia,* the demolition of all Lumpa villages and of the Lumpa cathedral.

The conflict with the chiefs over land showed how Lumpa, in its creation of a new rural society, clashed with individuals and groups who opted out of the Lumpa order and who, at the same time, were in a position to mobilize the forces of the state against Lumpa. Mere ordinary villagers who were opposed to Lumpa were not in such a position. If they did not want to join Lumpa, social pressure was brought to bear on them: formost the allegation that they were sorcerers and for that reason shunned a church concentrating on sorcery eradication; also, occasinally, they were exposed to downright violence from Lumpa side (Clairmonte 1964). Among many joiners, the obligations (in terms of time, money and commitment) imposed by the church were increasingly felt as a burden; but particularly while Lumpa was still strong these dissenters risked serious conflicts and ostracism if they defected to the mission churches or the nationalist party.

A group which, besides the chiefs, succesfully mobilized the state against Lumpa was the Roman Catholic church. This church had been the first to esta-

blish missions in the area, and was by far the greatest Christian denomination in N.E. Zambia at the eve of Lenshina's appearance as a prophet. Lenshina came from a Protestant background, where at the time strong anti-Catholic feelings had not yet given way to the ecumenism of the latest decade. Moreover, Lumpa was opposed to sorcery and to all ritual objects that could be considered sorcery apparatus; therefore it found much more fault with the very elaborate Roman Catholic devotional paraphernalia than with the austere, mainly verbal Protestant worship (Chéry 1959; Calmettes 1970, 1972). These two factors made Lumpa particularly inimical to local Catholic missions and their senior personnel. The rapid spread of Lumpa virtually exterminated a major Catholic stronghold in Central Africa, and so caused bitter animosity among the Catholic leaders. Catholic mission-workers on tour were increasingly harassed. In 1956 an African Catholic priest, when visiting a village, was called a sorcerer. He set in motion the judicial machinery (accusation of sorcery is a criminal offence under the Witchcraft Ordinance). The offending party was detained at the district head-quarters. A crowd of Lumpa adherents headed by Lenshina's husband protested against this, and a confrontation with the administration ensued which eventually led to Petros Chitankwa being sentenced to two years of hard labour (Rotberg 1961:76; Roberts 1972:22).

The last and most important conflict between Lumpa and a local group was with UNIP. After Lenshina had been away for over a year, visiting the urban Lumpa churches, she returned to find her church declining and UNIP increasingly controlling the countryside. She reacted very strongly to this state of affairs. In 1962 she forbade Lumpa adherents to join UNIP, publicly burned party cards, and instead issued Lumpa membership tickets which may well have been regarded as the counterpart of party cards. She was even reported to say that the nationalist activists killed during 'Chachacha' would not go to heaven. From the time of preparation for the 1962 general election, bitter feuding between UNIP and Lumpa took place, resulting in the sad official statistics contained in table 1. [23])

	UNIP attacks on Lumpa adherents	Lumpa attacks on UNIP members
murders	14	7
houses destroyed by arson	121	2
churches destroyed by arson	28	no information
grain bins destroyed by arson	28	2
assaults	66	10
of which serious	22	no information
intimidation cases	22	no information
cattle kraals destroyed by arson	1	no information
goats burned	18	no information

Table 1. Official figures concerning UNIP/Lumpa feuding in N.E. Zambia prior to the final conflict

[23]) Source: *Report* ... 1965, as quoted in *Times of Zambia* 22/9/1965.

The resettling in exclusively Lumpa villages was no longer, positively, the creation of a visible territorial basis for the new society. In stead, it had become a retreat from an increasingly hostile environment. There are indications that in the year preceding the final conflict eschatological expectations gained momentum among the Lumpa. They prepared to defend whatever was left of their shortlived new world. They surrounded their villages by stockades, manufactured simple weapons, and prepared magical substances intended to make them invulnerable. There were repeated attempts by the UNIP top leadership to bring about a reconciliation between their local rank and file, and Lumpa. These proved unsuccessful. When new fighting between a UNIP and a Lumpa village broke out, as a result of a quarrel over school attendance (in 1964 Lenshina had forbidden her followers to send their children to school), government decided that Lumpa villages could no longer be tolerated, and issued the ultimatum leading to the final conflict.

Why did Lumpa at first accommodate nationalism, to reject it later on, engaging in bitter feuding with local nationalists, which eventually lead to Lumpa's virtual extermination? The answer Roberts gives (1972:55), and which Ranger cites approvingly [24]), is that

'Both Church and Party were competing for total allegiance. As I have argued, it was their similarities as much as their differences, which brought them into conflict.'

In the light of the tentative theoretical position I have developed here, a detailed assessment of the validity of this answer has become possible.

In defining itself more and more as an exclusive peasant movement, Lumpa had to shed gradually such traits as it had initially shared with the nationalist movement and with the proletarian response in general. These traits were without solid roots in the peasant experience. Lumpa had subsequently struggled to regain local, rural control and to create new relations of production not dominated by the rural community's wider incorporation in capitalism and the state. Once Lumpa had taken this road, the (secular) state, and nationalism (as a set of political ideas on the nature and the personnel of the state), were out of the question. Alternatively, nationalism, as a response to the proletarian situation, had found a final outcome in UNIP in 1959. UNIP accepted the basic infrastructural of modern Central-African society, including the incorporation of rural areas by the state and by capitalism. Less radical than Lumpa, therefore, UNIP's blueprint of the future society was almost diametrically opposed to Lumpa's. But if the incompatibility between UNIP and Lumpa derived from a difference in class situation and from a difference in degree of radicalism in the context of class struggle, we still have to explain why these two different movements confronted each other with deadly hostility among the *same* rural population of N.E. Zambia.

[24]) Ranger 1968:639; Ranger quoted from an earlier version of Roberts' analysis than the 1972 one used for the present study.

I have argued that the proletarian response is not confined to places of migrant work, but may also found in specific rural settings: missions, bomas, military campaigns. Could the UNIP/Lumpa opposition reflect a class difference within the rural population of Chinsali district, in such a way that the persistent Lumpa adherents were more truly peasants, whereas those who filled the ranks of the rural UNIP branches were more involved in the process of proletarization? Again, the evidence is scanty, but this time it seems not to support the hypothesis. Lumpa and UNIP villages were often adjacent. The UNIP/Lumpa division often ran across close kinship ties, as in the school conflict referred to above (Roberts 1972:45). We must conclude that in the early 1960's Lumpa and UNIP represented rival options for social reconstruction amongst members of the same peasant class in Chinsali district.

Perhaps we come closer to an answer when we try to understand the position of UNIP as a proletarian response among a peasant population. Let us recall the process of accommodation to the peasant class situation, such as happened with Watchtower and, to a lesser extent, with Lumpa itself. Did not UNIP, too, undergo a transformation before it could make an impact among the peasants? Superficially, there are indications in that direction. At the village level, UNIP was much more than a strictly political movement aiming at territorial independence. It became a way of life. It created, apparently, a state of millennarian effervescence similar to that of more specifically peasant responses such as sorcery-eradication and Lumpa. Already years before the new nationalist order was realized at a national scale (with the attainment of independence), UNIP produced what Roberts called a 'cultural revival' in the villages (1972:35). Thus, like Watchtower and Lumpa, UNIP seems to have yielded to the model, so persistent among Central-African peasants, of super-structural reconstruction at the local scale of the rural community. If this were a correct assessment, the peasants siding with Lumpa would have had very much in common with those siding with UNIP, they would have acted on the basis of the same inspiration of rural reconstruction, and Roberts' explanation would be basically correct. In this line of argument, the explanation of UNIP/Lumpa feuding would lie in the alleged fact that both were rival attempts at rural super-structural reconstruction. The ultimate drive behind both movements, at the village level, would then have been against peasant alienation, and towards the primarily local restoration of meaningfulness and competence. The solution that each of the feudings groups was propounding, would only have the power to convince its adherents as long as it remained, in the latter's eyes, absolute and without alternatives. People on neither side could afford to yield - as they would be asserting, and defending, the very meaning they were giving to their lives. [25])

However, this approach to UNIP-Lumpa feuding has three implications which make us seriously doubt its validity. First, the different class references of Lumpa and of UNIP, as peasant respectively proletarian responses, would have to be immaterial: both would have to be transformed to serve a strictly local peasant response. Secondly, UNIP in Chinsali district in the early 1960's would not have functioned primarily as a nationalist movement aiming at territorial independence; rather, it would have adopted the nationalist symbolism and idiom

[25]) Such an explanation would come close to the views of those writers who have interpreted UNIP/Lumpa feuding as a clash between rival religions: Anonymous 1964; Franklin 1964. A similar suggestion in relation to the clashes between Zambian Watchtower and UNIP in Assimeng 1971:112.

merely to serve some peasant movement of local scope. Thirdly, equally immaterial would have to be the fact that UNIP's solution to the peasants' predicament was no solution at all, as its insistence on the state and its acceptance of capitalism could only lead to a further incorporation and dependence of the rural community.

Although class formation in modern Africa follows notoriously devious dialectics, these implications do appear too preposterous than that we could maintain Roberts' explanation wholesale. The crucial issue is the mobilization process by which UNIP established itself among the peasants of Chinsali district. But as long as no new, detailed material is available on this point, let us try to modify Roberts' solution in a way that takes the above implications into account.

Let us grant that UNIP in Chinsali district initially contained an element of super-structural reconstruction at the purely local level - thus somewhat accommodating to the typical peasant response. However, this element may soon have worn out, as it became clear that UNIP aimed at intensifying, rather than counteracting, wider incorporation, and that therefore UNIP was a powerful mechanism in the very process of peasantization which the peasants were anxious to reverse. Is it then not more realistic to explain UNIP/Lumpa feuding from the fact that Lumpa, as rather successfully realizing a local, rural reconstruction of both super-structure and infra-structure, represented in N.E. Zambia the main obstacle to UNIP's striving towards wider incorporation? Those peasants siding with UNIP would then be the instruments to curb the class struggle of the Lumpa peasants. In that case not only the final Lumpa/state conflict, but also the preceding Lumpa/UNIP feuding at the local level, would revolve around wider incorporation, much more than around 'total commitment' (Roberts) at the village level. There are indications that the local feuding, and the final clash between Lumpa and the state, were two stages of the same overall conflict. Not only was Lumpa in both cases confronted with UNIP, first in the form of rural branches, finally in the form of a UNIP-dominated transition government. There is also the suggestion that the rural feuding was accepted by the UNIP top leadership as rather compatible with UNIP's basic orientation. With UNIP rural aggression heavily outweighing Lumpa's (table 1, based on a state-commissioned enquiry), is it not significant that no extensive records seem to exist of UNIP members in Chinsali district having been tried, after independence, for offences just as criminal as those so loudly decried when committed by Lumpa? Let me emphasize that there is not the slightest indication whatsoever that rural UNIP aggression was instigated by the national UNIP leaders; in fact, the latter tried repeatedly to stop the feuding - *if only Lumpa was prepared to accept UNIP control.* However, the necessity to exterminate Lumpa, and movements like it, is at the root of UNIP and similar reformist nationalist movements, irrespective of the high personal standards of integrity and non-violence of the leaders involved. Far from transforming UNIP into a peasant movement of purely local scope, UNIP adherents in Chinsali district attacked Lumpa on the basis of a consistent application of the logic of UNIP nationalism. However regrettable, and however deeply regretted by Kaunda and his colleagues, the feuding was rather inevitable.

4. RELIGION AND THE STATE IN MODERN ZAMBIA: THE PROBLEM OF LEGITIMATION

Having attempted to explain the reasons of the conflict between Lumpa and various other groups in rural N.E. Zambia, my argument already contains the elements on the basis of which the final conflict between Lumpa and the state can be understood. However, it is useful to discuss this issue *in extenso,* as such a discussion may also throw light upon the relations between the Zambian state and contemporary churches in general.

In my introduction I have pointed out that the Lumpa rising was a bitter disappointment for the Zambian nationalists, and a threat to their international public image. However, meanwhile we have identified more profound reasons for the state's stern reaction to Lumpa.

The primary reason was, of course, that Lumpa did represent a very real threat to the state. Although declining, and greatly harassed by conflicts with other groups in N.E. Zambia, Lumpa represented to the end a successful peasant movement, comprising many thousands of people, and binding these people in an effective organization that radically rejected state control and that was beginning to define its own infra-structure. With the years rural Lumpa did not settle down as a tolerant denomination attuned to the institutions of the wider society, but instead became increasingly intransigent vis-a-vis the outside world. Short of giving up the modern conception of the national state, or at least embarking upon a fundamental discussion of this conception, the logic of the state left no option but breaking the power of Lumpa once for all. And this is what happened.

Additional reasons helped to shape the course of events. Taking the fundamental assumptions of the modern state for granted, the nationalists, once in power, proved as staunch supporters of state-enforced law and order as their colonial predecessors had ever been. A major justification for the sending of government troops was that the Lumpa adherents, in trying to create 'a state within the state', had become criminals. [26] Moreover, there were tenacious rumours as to Lumpa's links with Welensky's United Federal Party (the nationalists' main opponent), and with Tshombe's secessionist movement in Zaïre. So far the evidence for this allegation has been scanty (Roberts 1972:35f; Macpherson 1974:410). It seems difficult to bring in line such political manoeuvering with the situation of the Lumpa church, which in 1963-64 increasingly entrenched itself in a retreatist and eschatological attitude. But whatever the facts, belief in these links with UNIP's enemies appears to have influenced the UNIP-dominated government at the eve of independence.

A third complex of reasons revolves around the problem of legitimation of the modern state. The following extracts from a speech of Kaunda show that the UNIP government was not merely trying to enforce its monopoly of power, but also tried to underpin its own legitimacy in the eyes of the Zambian population by presenting itself as the supreme guardian of religion and morality. Speaking about Lumpa, Kaunda says

[26] E. g. M. Chona, the later Vice-President, as quoted in *Information . . .* 1964:940f; Charlton 1969:140 quotes almost identical statements by Rev. Colin Morris. Morris has been one of Kaunda's main advisers. In 1964, as president of the United Church of Zambia (U.C.Z.), he organized the churches' rehabilitation mission to the area where the final conflict was fought. In 1965 he campaigned to draw Lenshina into the U.C.Z. fold - which failed.

'They have become anti-society. They have been known, husband and wife, to plan to kill their own parents because they were non-Lumpa Church members and this they have done. (...)

'Innocent villagers and children trying to escape from their burning homes have been captured by the followers of Lenshina and thrown back alive into the flames. Senior men in the country's security services have reported that the Lumpa followers have no human feelings and their ferocious attacks on security forces bear out the fanatical nature of what I can only describe again as lunatics. (...)

'I have no intention whatsoever of again unleashing such evil forces. Let me end by reiterating that my Government has no desire whatsoever to interfere with any individual's religious beliefs but (...) such a noble principle can only be respected where those charged with the spiritual, and I believe moral side of life, are sufficiently responsible to realize that freedom of worship becomes a menace and not a value when their sect commits murder and arson in the name of religion.

'No clean-living and thinking man can accept the Lenshina 'Passports to Heaven' as anything more than worthless pieces of paper - a usurping by an imposter of the majesty of God Almighty. Such teaching cannot be allowed to continue to corrupt our people and cannot and would not be tolerated by any responsible government' (Legum 1966:109).

In the context of modern Zambian society there can be little misunderstanding that here Kaunda is describing the Lumpas as sorcerers, and tries to mobilize all the abhorrence that the general population feels with regard to sorcerers. Kaunda even points out, in the same passage, the need for the Lumpa to be cleansed before they can return to human society:

'When they have surrendered and look back at their actions, some of these people realize the horror, damage and sadness they have brought to this young nation and say plainly that they require some treatment to bring them back to sanity. They just cannot understand why they acted as they did' (Legum, 1966: 109).

Kaunda presents and justifies state action in terms of religious and moral beliefs: the anti-social nature of sorcerers, and the 'majesty of God Almighty'. These beliefs have a very strong appeal among the great majority of the modern Zambian population. By invoking them, Kaunda is in fact claiming, implicitly, a supreme moral and religious legitimation for his government. Yet his government has already, secularly, the fullest possible legitimacy in terms of the constitutional and democratic procedures from which its mandate derived. Why, then, this need to appeal to a religious basis for the legitimation of the Zambian state?

Here we have reached the point where Lumpa illustrates the precarious situation of the modern, post-colonial state in Zambia, due to the latter's incomplete legitimation in the eyes of a significant portion of the Zambian population.

Whatever its access to means of physical coercion, the ultimate legitimation of a bureaucratic system like the state lies, in Weber's terms, in

'a belief in the "legality" of patterns of normative rules and the right of those elevated to authority under such rules to issue commands (legal authority)' (Weber 1964:328).

Now how does one establish, and maintain, such a legitimation if part of the state's subjects are peasants for whom such an abstract, universalist 'legal authority', and the formal bureaucratic organizations based upon it, virtually have no meaning - in whose social experience at any rate they play no dominant part?

In Zambia, this problem has been duly acknowledged, if in different terms. Under the heading of 'nation-building', a tremendous effort has been launched along such lines as political mobilization; youth movement; women's movement; specific school curricula incorporating training for citizenship; rural development, etc. Populism, here in the form of the ideology of Zambian Humanism, emerged as an attempt to overcome, if not to ignore, the fundamental problems inherent in the situation. The careful management of relations with the chiefs is part of the same effort. At the district level chiefs have retained considerable authority and state stipends, and nationally they are represented in the House of Chiefs. These arrangements (which, incidentally, strikingly contrast with the position assigned to chiefs in the Lumpa blueprint of society) constitute an attempt to incorporate rural, local foci of authority into the central government structure - so as to let the latter benefit from the additional legitimation which this link with traditional authority may offer. Where this attempt fails, the state curtails the chief's privileges (e.g. Caplan 1970:191f), but such moves do not necessarily reduce the chiefs' actual authority among the rural population. Ethnic and regional allegiances, as threats to 'nation-building' and as challenges, either implicit of explicit, of the supremacy of the state, are likewise denounced by the elite.

Lumpa, as the largest and most powerful peasant movement Zambia has yet seen, drove home the fact that large sections of the Zambian peasantry still opt out of the national state. Lumpa antagonized precisely the grass-roots processes by which the post-colonial state expects to solve its problem of incomplete legitimation. For a national elite who find, to a great extent, in the state not only their livelihood but also the anchorage of their identity, this is a disconcerting fact, which hushing-up and ostentatious reconciliation may help to repress from consciousness. For the elite the situation is unconfortable indeed, for the extermination of Lumpa has by no means solved the much wider problem of the incorporation of peasants into the Zambian state. New peasant movements are likely to emerge which, like Lumpa, may employ a religious idiom in an attempt to regain local control and to challenge wider incorporation. [27]

[27] Lanternari made an interesting attempt to interpret Lumpa, along with similar movements, in terms of urban-rural relations. In his view, '...les villages (...) représentent des 'groupes de pression' contra la politique de déculturation et de dépersonalisation de certaines élites dirigeantes. (...) ...les mouvements religieux a tendance néo-traditionaliste de la période post-coloniale renferment un avertissement à l'adresse des élites insuffisamment 'décolonisées'. Ils sont la manifestation d'un besoin pressant d'intégration des valeurs que la civilisation occidentale a exportées en Afrique Noire, sans réussir à les intégrer dans l'arrière-plan culturel des sociétés indigènes' (1966:110). While thus recognizing that incorporation processes lie at the root of such conflicts as between Lumpa and the state, Lanternari only stresses super-structural elements and ignores the fundamental issues of class and the distribution of power.

Meanwhile, given the general problem of legitimation, it is obvious that religion has a very significant role to play in Zambia and other Central-African states. On the basis of a rather widespread and homogeneous cultural substratum, similar religious innovations (of the kinds I have discussed in section 2) occurred throughout Central Africa. Sorcery beliefs and the prominence of the High God form the two main constants in the emerging religious system of modern Zambia. This system is adhered to among virtually the entire African population of the country, no matter what various specific religious forms the people pursue. The process of secularization, so marked in North-Atlantic society, has not replicated itself in Central Africa - yet. Therefore, some form of appeal to this shared religious system could provide extensive legitimation for contemporary authority structures (cf. Kuper 1976), albeit along lines rather different from those stipulated by Weber under the heading of legal authority. For the result would be neither legal nor traditional authority, but charismatic authority.

In the speech cited above, and in numerous other instances, Kaunda and other Zambian political leaders have employed a religious idiom to underpin the authority of themselves and of the state bureaucracy they represent. The situation is however complicated by the existence of religious organizations, mainly in the form of Christian churches. These churches, having reached various stages in the process of the routinization of charisma (Weber 1964:363f), have a rather direct access to religious legitimation. They generate a considerable social power, through their large number of adherents, the latter's effective organization, their loyalty, and often also through their above-average standards of education and income. Of course, the churches use their legitimating potential in the first instance for their own benefit. Therefore their social power is, at least latently, rival to that of the state and the party.

Between the established Christian churches (Roman Catholic Church, United Church of Zambia, Reformed Church in Zambia, Anglican Church, etc.), and the Zambian state, a not always easy, but on the whole productive symbiosis has developed. [28] The churches lend both their expertise and their legitimating potential to the government, in exchange for very considerable autonomy in the religious field. The settings in which this interaction takes shape include public ceremonies in which political and religious leaders partake side by side; the implementation of 'development'; the participation of religious leaders in governmental and party committees; and informal consultations between top-ranking political and religious leaders. An important factor in this pattern seems to be the fact that the established Zambian churches derive from North-Atlantic ones that, in their countries of origin, had already solved the problem of the relation between church and state prior to missionary expansion in Africa. Even so, there have been minor clashes, and more serious ones may follow in the future. For state-church symbiosis cannot really solve the problem of the state's incomplete legitimation in terms of legal authority. A religious underpinning of the state's authority automatically implies enhancing the authority of the religious organizations, which may thus come to represent, through a feed-back, an even greater challenge to the state's authority. Ultimately, a shift towards purely legal authority for the state may require a process of 'disenchantment' (already noticeble in the Zambian political, and especially the educational, elite). Such a process would undermine the churches' authority and would be likely to bring the latter to concerted remonstrance in one form or another.

For the independent churches the situation tends to be more acutely difficult. Although it is still far too early to generalize, these independent churches seem to cater typically for Zambians in the early stages of proletarization. The independent churches are most in evidence at the local level: the bomas and the urban compounds. The super-structural reconstruction they offer their adherents, and the extensive extra-religious impact they make on the latter's lives (e.g. in the sphere of recreation, marriage, domestic conflict, illness, death, burial), not infrequently clash with the local party organization which often works along similar lines. Despite instances of felicitous co-operation between independent church and party at the local level [29]), conflict reminiscent of the UNIP/Lumpa feuding seems more frequent. Among the Zambian elite there is little knowledge of and less sympathy for the independent churches. Not only the party, but also the established churches tend to see them as a threat. It is therefore unlikely that the independent churches will ever be called upon, to any significant extent, to play the religiously legitimizing role which the established churches now regularly perform for the state. The Lumpa rising provides an extreme example of what form church/state interaction can take in the context of independent churches. On the other hand, the organizational and interpretative experiments still going on in the Zambian independent churches may represent a major mode of super-structural reconstruction in the decades to come - with presumably profound repercussions for the state and the nationalist movement.

5. CONCLUSION

This article represents an attempt to explore the deeper structural implications of the Lumpa rising, in the context of religious innovation, class formation, and the state in Zambia. In presenting a tentative interpretation, my main ambition has been to highlight a number of problems, and to indicate a direction in which some answers may be found in the future.

Meanwhile, many important problems have not even been mentioned in the present argument. If Lumpa was essentially a peasant movement, pursuing an idiom of religious innovation that was far from unique in the Central-African context, why was it yet unique in its scope and historical development, and why did it occur precisely among the Bemba of N.E. Zambia? Another important problem, that can throw light both on Lumpa and on the relations between the state and the established churches, is the development of relations between the established churches and Lumpa during and after the rising. The churches organized a rehabilitation mission right into the areas of combat, and afterwards the United Church of Zambia (in which Lubwa's Church of Scotland had merged) even tried to win Lenshina back into its fold. As more data become available, these issues may be tackled successfully.

At the moment, many essential data on the Lumpa episode are still lacking. The sociology of contemporary Zambian religion still largely remains to be

---

[28]) A recent example that shows that the established churches do occasionally antagonize, rather than legitimize, the Zambian state, is the protest by the Zambia Council of Churches against the banning of the Kimbanguist Church (*Mirror*, Zambia, 50, July 1976, p. 1).

[29]) E.g. in the Gondwe Watchtower community, Cross 1970.

written. And the whole Lumpa tragedy and its aftermath is still cause of grief for thousands of Zambians from all walks of life. Under these circumstances, nothing but the most preliminary analysis is possible; but even such an analysis may be helpful in defining tasks, and not just academic ones, for the future.

REFERENCES

Anonymous, Postcript to the Lumpa Movement, *Newsletter* (London: Institute of Race Relations) Sept. 1964, p. 25-28.
Assimeng, J. M., Sectarian Allegiance and Political Authority: The Watch Tower Society in Zambia 1907-35, *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 8, 1, 1970, p. 97-112.
Balandier, G., Messianism and Nationalism in Black Africa, in: Van den Berghe, P., ed., *Africa: Problems of Change and Conflict*, San Francisco, 1965, p. 443-60.
Banton, M., African Prophets, in: Middleton, J., ed., *Black Africa*, London, 1970, p. 222-233.
Barrett, D. B., *Schism and Renewal in Africa*, Nairobi, 1968.
Calmettes, J. L., *Lumpa Church: I. The Genesis and Development 1953-1964*, Ilondola, Chinsali (Zambia), 1970.
Calmettes, J. L., The Lumpa Church and Witchcraft Eradication, paper read at the Conference on the History of Central-African Religious Systems, University of Zambia (Institute for African Studies)/University of California Los Angeles, Lusaka, 1972.
Caplan, G. L., *The Elites of Barotseland*, London, 1970.
Carter, M., Origin and Diffusion of Central-African Cults of Affliction, paper read at the Conference on the History of Central-African Religious Systems, University of Zambia (Institute for African Studies)/University of California Los Angeles, Lusaka, 1972.
Charlton, L., *Spark in the Stubble*, London, 1969.
Chéry, H. C., Les Sectes en Rhodésie du Nord, *Parole et Mission* (Paris), 2, 7, 1959, p. 578-94.
Chéry, H. C., Visage des Sectes et Motifs de Dissidence, in: Masson, J., ed., *Devant les Sectes Non-Chrétiennes*, Louvain, 1961, p. 28-51.
Chibanza, S. J., Kaonde History, in: Apthorpe, R., ed., *Central Bantu Historical Texts I*, Lusaka, 1961, p. 41-114.
Clairmonte, P., Lumpa Church Based on Fear, *The Times*, 6/8/1964.
Cross, S., A Prophet Not Without Honour: Jeremiah Gondwe, in: Allan, C. H., & Johnson, R. W., eds., *African perspectives*, Cambridge, 1970.
Cross, S., The Watch Tower Movement in S. Central Africa 1908-1945, unpublished Ph. D. thesis, Oxford, 1973.
Douglas, M., Techniques of Sorcery Control in Central Africa, in: Middleton, J., & Winter, E. H., eds., *Witchcraft and Sorcery in East Africa*, London, 1963, p. 123-41.
Douglas, M., Against Witchcraft, *New Society*, 4, 4, 1964.
Eliade, M., *Le Mythe de l'Eternel Retour*, Paris, 1949.
Emanuel, P. A., De Zwarte Hemel, *Kroniek van Afrika*, 4, 3, 1964, p. 196-9.
Fernandez, J. W., The Lumpa Uprising: Why?, *Africa Report*, 9, 1964, p. 30-2.
Franklin, H., Zambia's Holy War, *Spectator* (London), 213, August 7, 1964, p. 173.
Gertzel, C., ed., *The Political Process in Zambia: Documents and Readings: Part I: The Socio-Economic Background*, University of Zambia, Lusaka, n.d. (ca. 1972).
Gluchman, M., Tribalism, Ruralism and Urbanism in South and Central Africa, in: Turner, V.W., ed., *Profiles of Change: African Society and Colonial Rule (Colonialism in Africa 1870-1960, part III)*, Cambridge, 1971, p. 127-66.
Greschat, H. J., 'Witchcraft' und Kirchlicher Separatismus in Zentral-Africa, in: Benz, E., ed., *Messianische Kirchen, Sekten und Bewegungen im Heutigen Afrika*, Leiden, 1965, p. 89-104.
Greschat, H. J., *Kitawala*, Marburg, 1967.
Greschat, H. J., Legend? Fraud? Reality? Alice Lenshina's Prophetic Experience: Notes from Some Sources, *Africana Marburgensia*, 1, 1, 1968, p. 8-13.
Hall, R., *Zambia*, London, 1968 (1st edition 1965).
Henderson, I., The Origins of Nationalism in East and Central Africa: the Zambian Case, *Journal of African History*, 11, 4, 1970, p. 591-603.
Heward, C., The Rise of Alice Lenshina, *New Society*, 4, 98, 13th August, 1964, p. 6-8.
Hodges, T., *Jehova's Witnesses in Central Africa*, London, n.d. (1976).
Hooker, J. R., Witnesses and Watchtower in the Rhodesias and Nyasaland, *Journal of African History*, 6, 1, 1965, p. 91-106.
Information Department of the Government of Northern Rhodesia, Official Description of the Development of Lumpa Church, etc., *East Africa and Rhodesia*, 40,

(2080), 20th August 1964, p. 940f.

Krishnamurty, B. S., *Chachacha*, Lusaka, 1972.

Kuper, A., The Magician and the Missionary, paper read at the Africanists' Seminar, University of Leiden/Afrika-Studiecentrum, Leiden, 1976; forthcoming in a *Festschrift* for Leo Kuper.

Lanternari, V., Syncrétismes, Messianismes, Néo-Traditionalismes: Postface à une Etude des Mouvements Religieux de l'Afrique Noire, *Archives de Sociologie des Religions*, 19, 1965, p. 99-116; and (II: La Situation Post-Coloniale) 20, 1966, p. 101-110.

Legum, C., *Zambia: Independence and Beyond*, London, 1966.

Lehmann, D., Women in the Independent African Churches, in: Hayward, V. E. W., ed., *African Independent Church Movements*, London, 1963.

Linden, J., & Linden, I., John Chilembwe and the New Jerusalem, *Journal of African History*, 12, 4, 1971, p. 629-51.

Long, N., *Social Change and the Individual*, Manchester, 1968.

Macpherson, F., Notes on the Beginning of the Movement, *Occasional Papers* (London, International Missionary Council), 1, 1958, p. 2-5.

Macpherson, F., *Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia: The Times and the Man*, Lusaka, 1974.

Martin, M. L., The Conflict between the Lumpa Church and the Government in Zambia (Northern Rhodesia), *Ministry* (Morija), 5, 1, Oct. 1964, p. 46-8.

Meebelo, H. S., *Reaction to Colonialism: A Prelude to the Politics of Independence Northern Zambia, 1893-1939*, Manchester, 1971.

Mitchell, R. C., & Turner, H. W., *A Comprehensive Bibliography of Modern African Religious Movements*, Evanston, 1966.

Molteno, R., Cleavage and Conflict in Zambian Politics: A Study in Sectionalism, in: Tordoff, 1974, p. 62-106.

Mulford, D. C., *Zambia: The Politics of Independence 1957-1964*, London, 1967.

Muntemba, M., Zambia Nzila Sect and Christian Churches in the Livingstone Area, paper read at the Conference on the History of Central-African Religious Systems, University of Zambia (Institute for African Studies)/University of California Los Angeles, Lusaka, 1972.

Mwanakatwe, J. M., *The Growth of Education in Zambia Since Independence*, Lusaka, 1968.

Oger, L., Lumpa Church: The Lenshina Movement in Northern Rhodesia, n.p. (Serenje), 1960, typescript available in the University of Zambia Library.

Oger, L., Le Mouvement Lenshina en Rhodésie du Nord, *Eglise Vivante* (Paris), 14, 2, 1962, p. 128-38.

Oosthuizen, G. C., *Post-Christianity in Africa*, London, 1968.

Peel, J. D. Y., The Religious Transformation in Africa in a Weberian Perspectives, in: CNRS/CISR, *The Contemporary Metamorphosis of Religion?*, Lille, 1973, p. 337-52.

Pettman, J., *Zambia: Security and Conflict*, Lewes, 1974.

Phiri, A., No Salute No School, *Target*, 1975, 147, p. 4, 10.

Ranger, T. O., Connexions between 'Primary Resistance Movements' and Modern Mass Nationalism in East and Central Africa, I & II, *Journal of African History*, 9, 1968, p. 437-53 and 631-41.

Ranger, T. O., Mcape, paper read at the Conference on the History of Central-African Religious Systems, University of Zambia (Institute for African Studies)/University of California Los Angeles, Lusaka, 1972.

Ranger, T. O., The Mwana Lesa Movement of 1925, in: Ranger T. O., & Weller, J., eds., *Themes in the Christian History of Central Africa*, London, 1975, p. 45-75.

Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Former Lumpa Church, Lusaka, 1965.

Roberts, A., The Lumpa Tragedy, *Peace News*, 1964.

Roberts, A., *The Lumpa Church of Alice Lenshina*, Lusaka, 1972; originally published in Rotberg, R. I., & Mazrui, A., eds., *Protest and Power in Black Africa*, New York, 1970.

Roberts, A., *A History of the Bemba*, London, 1973.

Rotberg, R. I., The Lenshina Movement of Northern Rhodesia, *Rhodes-Livingstone Journal (Human Problems)*, 29, June 1961, p. 63-78.

Rotberg, R. I., *Christian Missionaries and the Creation of Northern Rhodesia, 1880-1924*, Princeton, 1965.

Rotberg, R. I., *The Rise of Nationalism in Central Africa*, Cambridge (Mass.), 1967.

Shepperson, G., & Price, T., *Independent African*, Edinburgh, 1958.

Sklar, R., Zambia's Response to the Rhodesian Unilateral Declaration of Independence, in: Tordoff, 1974, p. 320-62.

Stone, W. V., The 'Alice Movement' in 1958, *Occasional Papers* (London: International Missionary Council), 1, 1958, p. 5-10.

Taylor, J. V., & Lehmann, D., *Christians of the Copperbelt*, London, 1961.

Tordoff, W., ed., *Politics in Zambia*, Manchester, 1974.

Tordoff, W., & Molteno, R., Introduction, in: Tordoff, 1974, p. 1-39.

Van Binsbergen, W. M. J., Labour Migration and the Generation Conflict: An Essay on Social Change in Central Western Zambia, paper read at the 34th Annual Meeting, Society for Applied Anthropology, Amsterdam, 1975; forthcoming in: *Cultures et Développement*, 9, 1977.

Van Binsbergen, W. M. J., The Dynamics of Religious Change in Western Zambia, *Ufahamu*, 6, 3, 1976(a), p. 69-87.

Van Binsbergen, W. M. J., Ritual, Class and Urban-Rural Relations: Elements for a Zambian Case Study, *Cultures et Développement*, 8, 2, 1976(b), p. 195-218.

Van Binsbergen, W. M. J., Regional and Non-Regional Cults of Affliction in Western Zambia, in: Werbner, R. P., ed., *Regional Cults*, London, 1977(a).

Van Binsbergen, W. M. J. Explorations into the History and Sociology of Territorial Cults in Zambia, in: Schoffeleers, J. M., ed., *Guardians of the Land: Essays on Central-African Territorial Cults*, Gwelo, 1977(b).

Van Binsbergen, W. M. J., Law in the Context of Nkoya Society, in: Roberts, S. A., ed., *Law and the Family in Modern Africa*, The Hague/Paris, 1977(c).

Van Binsbergen, W. M. J., forthcoming, *Ritual, Class and Urban-Rural Relations: The Nkoya of Zambia*.

Vansina, J., *Kingdoms of the Savanna*, Madison, 1966.

Weber, M., *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, Glencoe, 1964.

Welbourn, F. B., Lumpa and Zambia, *Venture* (London), 16, 9-10, Sept. 1964, 41.

Willis, R. G., Instant Millenium: The Sociology of African Witchcleansing Cults, in: Douglas, M., ed., *Witchcraft Confessions and Accusations*, London, 1970, p. 129-39.

Wilson, B., Peril in Martyrdom, *Observer*, 16/8/1964.

Wilson, B., *Magic and the Millennium*, London, 1973.