POWER & IDENTITY

Researching

POWER & IDENTITY

in African state formation

Comparative perspectives

MARTIN DOORNBOS
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White), 2000; *Institutionalising development policies and resource strategies in Eastern Africa and India*, 2000; *The Ankole kingship controversy: Regalia galore revisited*, 2001; and *Global forces and state restructuring: Dynamics of state formation and collapse*, 2006.

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Provenance of chapters

Chapter 1. Martin Doornbos, 'Big-man and his big brother: Some notes on incorporation', in M.A. van Bakel, R. Hagesteijn and P. van de Velde (eds) *Pivot politics: A multidisciplinary approach to 'Big-Man' systems*, Leiden: Brill, 1986, pp. 281–295.

Chapter 2. Wim van Binsbergen, 'The post-colonial state, "state penetration" and the Nkoya experience in Central Western Zambia', in W.M.J. van Binsbergen, G. Hesseling and F. Reijntjens (eds) *State and local community in Africa/Etat et communauté locale en Afrique*, Brussels: Cahiers du CEDAF/ASDOC geschriften, 2/3/4, 1986, pp. 31–63.

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Chapter 5. Martin Doornbos, 'Some conceptual problems concerning ethnicity in integration analysis', *Civilisations*, 22(2), 1972.

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Chapter 7. Martin Doornbos, 'Kumanyana and Rwenzururu: Two responses to ethnic inequality in Uganda', in: R.I. Rotberg and A.A. Mazrui, *Protest and power in black Africa*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1970.

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Chapter 10. Wim van Binsbergen, 'Nkoya royal chiefs and the Kazanga Cultural Association in Western Central Zambia today: Resilience, decline, or folklorisation?', in E.A.B. van

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Wim van Binsbergen & Martin Doornbos

In contemplating Africa, and endeavouring to grasp the continent's highly variegated social and cultural fabric and chemistry, many avenues have been followed. More often than not the imagery Africa evokes has highlighted diversity and multi-layered realities, accentuating social dynamics different from those found elsewhere. Africa certainly has much to offer in these respects, yet the genuineness of what is presented has frequently been disputable. In the search for 'difference', exaggerated representations of one kind or another are easily made. Responding to such interests, Africa's myth makers have built up a well-stocked arsenal of archetypal features meant to give credence to the images sought. There have been several strands in this genre, often produced at considerable distance from the continent itself. In one, films and musicals highlighting spears and drums, sweating journeys through Conrad's Dark Continent, or tribal warfare and despotism in strange courts have catered massively to imageries with a bent for exoticism, and may be expected to do so for a long time to come. In another, entering the academic literature, the phenomena of warlordism (Reno 1998), criminalisation (Bayart, Ellis and Hibou 1999), and arbitrary rulers and corrupt politicians and bureaucrats (Blundo and Olivier de Sardan 2006) have at times been forcefully sketched into Africa's images and stereotypes. As a result, some glaring discrepancies have emerged between the idea of Africa in the popular Western imagination and reality.

In taking issue with such reified representations, we as authors of this book do not deny the prevalence of corruption, the machinations of warlords, or the arbitrariness of a number of Africa's power-holders. However, various kinds of images may too easily become projected onto a particular country, region or whole continent. Africa has been a recurrent target in this regard. We prefer to see any such manifestations as just mentioned, not in any essentialist terms, fit for generalisation, but rather as a kind of aberration, indicative perhaps of broader or 'deeper' structural features which it may be important to explore. We would not deny that our work, too, has been prompted by a certain fascination with the continent's evolving social and cultural forms. Still, our own conception of African social reality is not one in which warlords and the like take central place, but is instead one of a fragile and fragmented continent capable of bringing forth such characters as well as a whole range of other actors.

Whatever the truth of these matters, there is no doubt that questions about the exercise of power and manifestations of identity, ethnic or otherwise, are of vital importance in the African context. There is every reason to treat power and identity as key concepts

with which to conceptualise African realities, and in particular to try and understand their interconnectedness and interactions. It is important to ask what power may do to identity, and vice versa. The ramifications concerned are virtually infinite, as 67 900 000 Google entries (as at early September 2010) for 'power and identity' will testify. Power and hegemony – originating either externally or internally – as Gramsci and Foucault have taught us, are operative at many levels, and with potentially significant influences on the shape of things to come. Enjoying power may inflate people's self-identity, while powerlessness, too, may be reflected in identity terms, though negatively. Social and political power associated with a particular group, identified in terms of ethnicity, religion or class, potentially affects the identity of others. History has shown us many designs for hegemony with important implications for social identities, including the question of whether they allow themselves to be pliable and formative in respect of the – tricky – proposition of 'national identities'. Evidently, there is potentially a far-reaching identity dimension entailed in many new designs for reshaping the political order – with positive or negative implications, as the case may be, and generating either accommodation or resistance.

To be sure, we must be aware of the pitfalls one may encounter when trying to come to a more informed understanding of power relations and identity formation in the African context. Identity and power are key elements in the construction and understanding of cultural specificity anywhere, and as such they entail a prima facie analytical dilemma, namely that of trying to highlight what is different and specific about the cultural dynamics in an unfamiliar context while at the same time wanting to interrogate them in terms essentially similar to those one would employ at home (Nandy 1987). Too often, in our view, the first of these demands, accentuating difference, has tended to receive ample attention, while the second is by and large ignored. In the present context we have made an attempt to understand the examples of the articulation of power and identity we are discussing within the historical and political setting in which they have been construed, while also seeking to interpret them in terms that carry, in principle, world-wide applicability. Reflecting on our own engagements with African social and cultural realities, our aim in this study has been to understand and establish the logic and normalcy of the patterns of social interaction we have been encountering and participating in, rather than conceptualising them as in any way esoteric or 'deviant', as subscribing to more parochial, or exoticism-thirsty, perspectives might dictate.

On the power–identity nexus

In this book we are concerned with social, cultural and political diversity and the manifestation of multi-level realities. Our interest lies in the unfolding manifestations of power and identity in sub-Saharan Africa, two conceptual categories constituting signposts associated with a wide range of images, myths and realities in the African context. Identity and power represent key conceptual clusters that can help us explore important dimensions of Africa's social and political transformations, especially if we keep a close eye on their interactions. Notions of identity hint at the multiple ways in

which individuals and collectives in different parts of the continent perceive themselves, and may want to distinguish themselves from others – not only in terms of clan, village, religion, ethnicity and state, but also in terms of age, gender, education and a multitude of other descriptive characteristics (Englund and Nyamnjoh 2004). By implication, such notions refer to all the different ways in which groups and individuals search for means of association and recognition, equal opportunities, and meaningful expressions of selfhood and representation. As Manuel Castells puts it, 'identity is people's source of meaning and experience' (Castells 1997:6). As has been abundantly illustrated in the literature, many such claims and self-identifications have evolved rapidly in recent years, with significant shifts in various directions and competitive currents and counter-currents adding to the overall turmoil (Meyer and Geschiere 1999; Schech and Haggis 2000).

At the same time, the idea and reality of power draws attention to many different aspects that we can conceive of as being involved in the exercise of rule and authority, statehood and 'governance': 'traditional', chiefly or otherwise, contemporary, arbitrary, despotic and so on. The notion of power at once conjures up a wealth of images and imageries relating to African politics and political processes, focusing, rightly or wrongly, on arbitrary rule, problematic efforts to make democratic processes work, discrepancies between constitutional frameworks and political realities, searches for alternative institutional formulas and frameworks, and so forth. Power, the capacity to influence others to act against their own interest, or even to accept a state of affairs without being aware that this may conflict with their own basic interest (Lukes 1974), is most effective when it is pervasive and invisible. And there is no gainsaying that, just as with regard to 'identity', the area of African power relations has over time shown itself to be extremely volatile and in a state of flux.

Together, power and identity refer to a whole range of processes and experiences going to the heart of political dynamics in the African context. Notions of power and identity are operative at many different levels of reality and analysis, and are therefore highly diffuse yet widely encompassing. There is an almost inevitable discrepancy between the two spheres concerned, and the relevance of one tends to be illuminated through juxtaposition with the other. Social institutions on which both are focused, as is often the case, may show them to be in a complex relationship, with a good deal of friction being generated. Power-holders may like to see themselves as representing and embodying collective identities, while popular identities generally seek accommodation within institutions with which they can identify. If we view power and identity as two salient features of a psycho-cultural-political landscape, sharing commonalities of sorts, we would find that in some situations the two are virtually fused, whereas in others they are poles apart. Frequent tensions between these conceptual landmarks point to situations in which aspirants to political power may sketch out new collective identities as a way of strengthening their claims, and conversely to popular challenges to power-holders in the name of identities felt to have been ignored or suppressed. These conflicts and contradictions have been very common in African colonial and post-colonial history, as is illustrated by several chapters in this book. In more than one sense,

therefore, the power–identity nexus is crucial to an understanding of political dynamics in contemporary Africa.

Historically, the fusion of power and identity is most clearly to be seen in the development of European nation-states, although even in that context this dynamic in no way evolved as a matter of course. The progressive homogenisation it presupposed took its toll in the forced accommodation by and peripheralisation of various cultural minorities (Gellner 1994), although clearly several of these have tenaciously held on to – or developed – their assumed cultural attributes. But in a number of cases, usually in opposition to rival powers as a strategy in the 'politics of survival' (Migdal 1988), successive ruling groups managed to create functioning state systems sustainable through the extraction of resources through taxation and other impositions on society at large. In the process, they often succeeded in forging a 'nation' as a collective identity focused on the state, which made it much easier to keep the political system together (Eriksen and Nordhaug 2006). The power–identity nexus was central in these processes, incidentally revealing that the emergence of 'national identity' involved several more dimensions than merely the spread of 'print languages', held to be basic to the emergence of 'imagined (national) communities' (Anderson 1983).

In recent years a further opposition relevant to the understanding of identity has increasingly drawn attention among anthropologists and others, surpassing and in fact deflating earlier pre-occupations with national identities. This is the apparent contradiction between notions of 'global flows' and 'cultural closures' as identified in the context of discussions of globalisation and identity (Meyer and Geschiere 1999). Here again the seeming paradox is between global flows tending towards new 'global' common grounds and uniformities in terms of consumer behaviour, technological transformations and a degree of cultural convergence, and the manifestation of forceful efforts to preserve cultural, religious or ethnic domains of autonomy and to safeguard these from obliteration by global forces. What should be noted, therefore, is the interesting parallel – in a sense amounting to an enlargement of scale – between the analyses of nationalism versus cultural minorities of earlier decades and current enquiries into the perceived tensions between homogenising global forces and the reassertion of cultural identity in various contexts. With its post-colonial state-building projects by and large failed or unfinished while nonetheless being subjected to various pervasive impacts from diverse global forces, the way Africa figures within this amalgam of currents and counter-currents, real and imagined, is inevitably complex. We will return to this particular configuration towards the end of this introduction.

Examining the power–identity nexus may prove to be illuminating in a number of instances, yet in others may serve only a comparative-taxonomic interest, leaving unanswered broader questions about the causation and implications of the phenomena at hand. But if one seeks a better understanding of the broader transitions that have been affecting African societies, then focusing on how power and identity manifest themselves in the interplay between contrasted socio-political forces can become very revealing. Hence we stress the importance of looking at things within a broader context of historical transitions.

The power–identity theme we want to highlight is closely related to ongoing academic

debates on the politics of identity, more specifically of ethnicity in the African context. These debates have been conducted for decades (Geertz, Smith, others) in an endeavour to determine the 'root' causes – and effects – of ethnic solidarities and identities, and to better understand the contextual parameters of their manifestation. In recent years there has been an unrelenting flow of studies on the appearances of ethnicity and other articulations of identity, including many specific case studies as well as more general reflections on the subject. It seems a safe bet to expect this interest – to some more of a concern – to continue commanding attention, the essential question being what novel perspectives will be offered and what different aspects illuminated.

Contrasted perspectives

As is revealed in this book, an interest in better comprehending various aspects of ethnicity and the power of identity has been a key factor shaping our own research agendas. While that interest is sustained, it is nevertheless important to get a sense of the direction in which debates on ethnicity and identity have been moving in recent years. In this respect, two publications provide a useful introduction to the current discourse on identity politics in Africa, namely that edited by Bruce Berman, Dickson Eyoh and Will Kymlicka, *Ethnicity and democracy in Africa* (2004) and that edited by Harri Englund and Francis B. Nyamnjoh, *Rights and the politics of recognition in Africa* (2004). Both are rich collections highlighting a range of issues in the politics of ethnicity, and identity politics more generally; in both, a concern with the connections between democratic forms and political processes relevant to our present focus has shaped the respective projects. It will be useful, therefore, to examine the approaches taken in these collections.

Berman et al (2004:xiii) start from the premise that 'democratic development in multi-ethnic Africa depends on the contingent interactions and adaptations of both indigenous and exogenous institutions and cultural elements'. They suggest that '[s]uccessful democracies in Africa will probably neither look like, nor function as facsimiles of, familiar forms of Western liberal democracy, but rather produce distinctive African variants as the fundamental issues are argued out and negotiated in each state' (Berman et al 2004:xiii–xiv). In similar vein, Englund (in Englund and Nyamnjoh 2004:24) argues for 'a certain flexibility in imagining the institutional forms that democracy may take in Africa', submitting that '[if] Africa, like any other part of the world, is to be understood not through analogies derived from other historical experiences but through its specific historical trajectories, the debate on appropriate forms of democratic institutions ought to be informed by close analysis of diverse circumstances'.

There are nevertheless interesting contrasts in the approaches and questions considered in these two collections, which also illuminate wider differences in the research perspectives from which issues of identity and ethnicity may be viewed. The differences are aptly captured in the respective titles of the two books. The title of the collection edited by Berman et al refers explicitly to ethnicity and democracy in Africa. This focus is taken very literally, starting from a perspective on the 'ethnic' and seeking to explore the implications of different ethnic configurations for processes of

and prospects for democratisation. By implication, resting on the foundation of a long-standing tradition of scholarship in this particular area, ethnicity comes to figure as the essential field of identity politics in Africa.

Ethnicity and democracy in Africa has been authored largely by historians and political scientists specialising in African studies. Reflecting on the issues and processes analysed at various levels, the editors summarise their conclusions in the following propositions: 1) contemporary African ethnicities are modern, not relics of some primitive tribal past; 2) contemporary ethnicities are intimately linked to the processes of colonial and post-colonial state formation and the development of capitalist market economies; 3) the distinction between the internal and external dimensions of ethnicity is critical for understanding the relationship between ethnic communities, capitalism and the state; 4) the internal contestations are also moral conflicts over fundamental issues of social responsibility, solidarity and the collective moral economy of ethnic communities; 5) the external confrontations between ethnic communities over access to and control of state institutions take place in an amoral free-for-all pervaded by ethnically based patron–client networks; 6) ethnic communities in Africa shape and are shaped by other bases of social differentiation and conflict; 7) these factors must also be considered within the particular national context of the widely varying total number and size of ethnic communities in African states.

These propositions are not exactly new, but together they offer a useful state of the art of ethnicity studies in relation to processes of democratisation. Those knowledgeable of the field (and readers of this book) will recognise the set as representing capsule formulations of particular theoretical positions which have emerged from ongoing discussions of ethnicity and the politics of identity in Africa. There are important areas of continuing debate with regard to several of these propositions, such as the idea of ethnicities representing more or less closed moral economies and engaging in a kind of amoral competition, which has found both challengers as well as adherents since it was first developed by John Lonsdale (1994). Nevertheless, the overall set reflects a dynamic field of interactions between ethnicity and politics, shaping the future political contours of African states and societies and presenting major challenges to institution-building on the continent.

The merit of the collection edited by Berman et al lies in the fact that it brings a wide range of connections between ethnic configurations and institutional dynamics influencing democratisation under a single lens. The flip side is that in doing so it runs the risk of being mistaken in that it sketches a picture of African politics and political change as being largely ethnicity-driven, thus reflecting or reinforcing recurrent popular conceptions. Such a focus may also result in insufficient recognition of the variability of ethnicity over time and space, including situations where ethnicity plays a lesser role in the shaping of political transformations. Berman et al end with a plea for the institutional recognition of ethnic diversity wherever appropriate. At the same time they favour the progressive extension of a broader spectrum of individual human rights and the generation of non-ethnic collective identities through processes of class and social differentiation. Within this, it is presumed, ethnicity may come to be embedded alongside other forms of solidarity and representation, thus losing some of its potentially adverse qualities.

Dynamic social processes extending the politics of identity beyond the ethnic domain may in fact have advanced a good deal further than is at times recognised. In the case of the collection edited by Englund and Nyamnjoh, it is striking to note how the phrase 'the politics of recognition', borrowed from the philosopher Charles Taylor (1994) and which the authors use as their point of departure, at once highlights other dimensions and different kinds of issues, though still basically revolving around identity politics. The book is authored largely by a group of Nordic and African scholars, most of them social anthropologists, whose case studies originate from a wide spectrum of African countries. Starting from a different set of questions relating to the implications of liberal individual rights frameworks for the (non-)recognition of distinctive social and cultural identities, rights and the politics of recognition are discussed with reference to such issues as deaf culture in Kenya, gender inequalities in Mauritius, positions adopted in constitutional-political manoeuvring in Uganda, voluntary associations standing in for ethnicities in Burkina Faso, competing claims for linguistic-religious representations in Eritrea, floods and elections in Mozambique, the politics of ecology, belonging and xenophobia in Cameroon, as well as critical discussions of the 'rhetoric of rights' in Botswana, Malawi and South Africa.

The collection edited by Englund and Nyamnjoh therefore in part draws interest on account of the variety of empirical domains from which its examples have been derived. Interestingly, however, this does not appear to have been the editors' sole or even primary purpose. The key concerns emphasised by most of the authors are twofold, with only a thin dividing line between them. One relates to the issue of unrecognised or 'denied' identities, whether ethnic or other, such as gender or deaf identities. Topics at issue include non-recognition, suppression or denial, and misrepresentation of social groups, either officially or in popular discourse. The other, closely related concern involves the politics of identity construction, focused on group conflicts and competition, which groups and categories are to be subsumed under what labels, and giving rise to winners and losers in various ongoing quests for social and symbolic recognition. Demands for recognition may be provoked by, though remaining at variance with, 'difference-blind' individual human rights regimes based on liberal constitution-making. Such regimes often do not have a way of recognising significant intermediate solidarities between the state and the abstract notion of the individual citizen. As Englund (in Englund and Nyamnjoh 2004:23) puts it, there are 'cogent historical reasons for questioning individualistic notions of citizenship that marginalize various intermediate solidarities'; he further warns that 'the prospect of anti-democratic processes can be mitigated only by resolute efforts to understand historical specificities, not by imposing models that are incompatible with realities on the ground'.

Perhaps the most striking contrast between the collections edited by Berman et al and Englund and Nyamnjoh of direct relevance to our present discussion lies in their respective points of departure and their identification of the 'problem'. For Berman et al the central problem relates to the political implications of ethnicity and Africa's evolving ethnic configurations. Taking the position that ethnic identities and configurations must be accepted as part of Africa's heritage and modernity, their objective is to seek an answer to the question, stated on the back cover of the book, of which institutional models offer

ways of ameliorating the challenge that ethnicity poses to democratic nation-building'. In a way, their position can be read as a caution that articulations of ethnicity should not come to command too much space and attention. In contrast, the key problem for Englund and Nyamnjoh lies with the institutional factor, Africa's ostensibly liberal rights frameworks. Derived from dominant liberal theories of democracy, in various cases these are felt to be unable to accommodate popular searches for recognition and representation being pursued on the continent. In this respect Englund and Nyamnjoh's concern is rather that ethnic and other identities at times may find too little space for expression within Africa's institutional state frameworks. Accordingly, the interest of these authors has been to 'describe and assess the various intermediate solidarities that complicate the liberal insistence on a dichotomy between individuals and society, citizens and the state' (Englund and Nyamnjoh 2004:3).Yet, though one may intuitively subscribe to this perspective with reference to various specific contexts, for a generalisation in this respect one wonders whether it has sufficiently taken into account the many fluid and informal ways of interest expression already present, and available even under liberal rights regimes.

The respective visions of future developments emanating from these two collections follow from these contrasted starting points. Berman et al tend to look for solutions to the predicaments they have identified in the extension of the realm of non-ethnic identities and individual human rights. Englund and Nyamnjoh take another path, drawing attention to the way in which difference-blind individual rights entail limitations and hidden inequities in terms of the politics of recognition, and should be overcome. It is noteworthy that the former position has been developed by a group consisting largely of political scientists and historians, while the latter has been put forward mainly by social anthropologists. It is intriguing to speculate about the extent to which different disciplinary backgrounds and orientations may have influenced such different ways of perceiving and defining the problem, leading to different perceptions of reality. If these two groups of scholars are taken as representative of their respective disciplines, then the political scientists' primary concern would appear to be with the adequacy of institutional arrangements, while the social anthropologists seem to identify themselves more readily with grassroots outlooks and experiences. This is not really surprising, though it underscores the limiting effects that distinct social science disciplines may have when it comes to problems that are essentially indivisible. Seemingly more paradoxical is that the historians, given their presumed advantage of hindsight, have come down on the side of the primacy of institutional variables – or is this in the end what history teaches us? Still, the implied message on which the two collections would concur is the need for adequate forms to accommodate ignored or misrepresented identities, ethnic or otherwise.

The two collections reflect the current state of thinking about power and identity in African state formation, and thus the setting in which we seek through this book to make a difference. Obviously, something of that difference could be said to lie in the fact that we present here a *continuing dialogue*, evolving between not a dozen or more, but only two, intellectual producers, on the basis of their protracted struggle over more

than three decades with a few African empirical settings both have come to know fairly well, and in a constant moving to and fro between the evolving empirical data in the field and the evolving theoretical and methodological discussion within African studies, political science, political anthropology, and identity studies at large. However, we agree that such a claim to difference risks remaining merely cosmetic and accidental if not supported by a more substantial corpus of ideas, approaches and methods. We therefore suggest that the following points constitute important distinctive features of this book, corroborating and reinforcing approaches such as those adopted in the collections edited by Berman et al and Englund and Nyamnjoh, yet extending beyond them:

- In this book, greater insight is to be gained from a balance between general theoretical and conceptual discussion and specific, detailed local-level empirical data as it has evolved over time.

- The analyst is encouraged to adopt a transcultural perspective, realising that his/her own conceptual and theoretical toolkit largely derives from a specific position within the global constellation of power, which in a related manner has been producing specific socio-political responses on African soil; disentangling the theoretical impositions that this transcultural situation tends to entail, and avoiding the concomitant risk of ethnocentrism, is part and parcel of the insight that is to be sought.

- Issues of ethnicity and identity, while justifiably emphasised in the Africanist literature of the past few decades, should not be treated as sui generis, but must be offset against a sophisticated analysis of the local, regional, national and global trajectories of power within which issues of ethnicity and identity are situated.

- In this connection, the state may be seen not just as a constitutional and organisational given, but as a set of relationships, dynamic not only in its internal structuration and process, but also in its evolving expansion over and retreat from local and regional power arenas – an insight captured by the concept of state penetration, but also brought out strikingly when we analyse the interplay between state and religion in African history.

- The previous point particularly reminds us of the two extremes between which state formation in Africa is realised: on the one hand the formal structuration in terms of administrative and constitutional procedure, which, given the bureaucratic authority underpinning modern statehood, imposes constraints and creates political space in its own right; and on the other hand the inchoate socio-political process of concrete political actors in socio-political engagement, mobilising, utilising, stretching and bending such formal structures as are at their disposal, and shaping power and identity in the process.

Having thus characterised some of the main orientations of our approach in this book, let us now outline its organisation and content in greater detail.

Organisation

We have chosen a structure intended to allow a fresh focus on a number of main themes which over time have gained currency in African studies, and to which we have been making our own contributions. Following a general introduction to its main themes, the book is divided into four sections, each prefaced by a short thematic introduction and devoted respectively to colonial incorporation and political penetration; ethnicity, cultural protest and the role of traditional authorities; religion and state; and the construction of national politics. This is in no way meant to represent an exhaustive treatment of key aspects in the study of African transitions, but may allow a preliminary exploration of some of the key power and identity dimensions in African state formation and political change.

Part I, Incorporation and political penetration, is concerned with the ways in which processes of colonial incorporation established completely novel power relations in Uganda and Zambia as much as elsewhere in Africa, and also analyses the kinds of strategies by which various state systems have tried to extend their reach and presence within African local communities. These interventions were intended to fundamentally transform local patterns of authority and legitimacy and lead to drastic redefinition of community identities and relationships. This section comprises four chapters, the first focusing on the experiences relating to collaboration and resistance within the lacustrine kingdoms region in Uganda, and the second concerned with the Nkoya experience of external political incorporation in Western Central Zambia during the period 1860 to 1978. These are followed by two further chapters discussing recurring penetration strategies in East Africa and more general aspects of modern state penetration in Africa respectively, both highlighting the limits frequently encountered by state penetration strategies as well as the limitations of the concept itself. Deep schisms between state and society have come to be revealed through debates concerning the controversial metaphor of political penetration.

Part II, Ethnicity and identity: What is the problem? shifts the discussion to one of the time-honoured themes in African social research, that of how to come to grips with and conceptualise the phenomenon of plural ethnic solidarities and social identities within the African context. The debate continues, with occasional innovations, subtle shifts in emphasis and at times a virtual return to previous positions. We have taken the liberty of including two chapters that first appeared long before the debates on the nature of ethnicity, understood as either a deeply rooted or constructed phenomenon, began to gain momentum, and which may still merit attention. One is an early fundamental critique of the concept of primordialism by Martin Doornbos, the other a discussion of ethnicity and the unit of study as an ideological problem by Wim van Binsbergen; both remain relevant in the present era. These are followed by three extensive case studies of ethnic protest and cultural expressions drawn from Uganda and Zambia. The first is a comparative study of the way in which two different ethnic protest movements in Western Uganda developed highly contrasted strategies in the light of the different demographic and power constellations they were confronted with. In one case (Ankole) this entailed a (majoritarian-inspired) option for inclusion and equality, in the other

(Rwenzururu) a choice for 'exclusion' and outright secession. The second is an analysis of the emergence of a distinct ethnic identity in Western Central Zambia, that of the Nkoya, and the development of new forms of cultural expression to give this voice in the Kazanga festival. The third returns to the Rwenzururu movement, analysing the nature, purposes and varied content of a repertoire of protest songs that originated within it. The next two chapters seek to contribute to the ongoing interest in and debate concerning the role of chiefs in the processes of post-colonial state formation. The two case studies presented relate to the changing roles of Nkoya royal chiefs in Zambia, inviting discussion as to whether these should be regarded as an instance of resilience, decline or folklorisation, and to the ongoing dispute concerning the possible restoration of Ankole kingship in Uganda, which is vehemently opposed by the majority of the population in view of the ethnic inequality it symbolised. Together, these chapters may provide a timely antidote to too ready assumptions of the relevance of the resurrection of traditional chiefs for contemporary issues of governance in Africa.

Part III, Religion and state: Ambiguous relationships shifts the focus to another set of complex relationships, namely those inherent in the reciprocal sensitive appreciations between religious bodies or movements and the state, often also expressed or perceived in terms of power and identity. These connections vary enormously, and there is no point in trying to generalise in this regard. Nonetheless, the questions raised pertain to Christianity as well as Islam and have frequently revealed particular vulnerabilities on the part of the state in defining its position vis-à-vis religious complexes. Thus, the first chapter in this section, dealing with fortunes and failures in state formation, suggests on the basis of a comparison of the *jihads* of Usman dan Fodio and Mohammed Abdulle Hassan that structurally it appears infinitely easier for a religiously inspired movement to assume control over existing state institutions, as happened in northern Nigeria in the early nineteenth century, than it is to create state structures where there were none before, as was the case in northern Somalia in the early twentieth century. The second chapter, on religious innovation and political conflict in Zambia, analyses the background of religious innovation and the Lumpa rising in north-east Zambia, leading to a discussion of the problem of legitimacy in the relations between religion and the state in modern Zambia. In the third chapter some of these issues are echoed in a different context on the basis of some introspective questioning regarding the role of the Roman Catholic church vis-à-vis the state and 'development' in a remote Ugandan parish. The last chapter in this part offers a discussion of African Independent churches and the state in Botswana against the background of the dilemma experienced by the Botswana post-colonial state relating to resorting to coercion and seeking consensus; this chapter focuses on the interactions between pastors and bureaucrats in the context of the Botswana Societies Act.

In *Part IV, Constructing national politics*, our focus is on different national-level dynamics shaping and shaped through the interplay of the realities and perceptions of power and identity. We pursue this topic at a number of distinct levels: that of the construction of formal constitutional provisions, that of the realities and contradictions of 'democratisation' on the ground, and that of the broader historical sweeps that have

manifested themselves with regard to the gaining and loss of popular legitimacy by power-holders in specific countries.

Symbolically, the nexus between power and identity is very close in the case of the constitutional preambles we review in the lengthy first chapter in this part of the book. More than virtually any other official document, such preambles are expected to embody an expression of collective 'national' identity while at the same time – again, symbolically – laying down ultimate sources of power. However, as the chapter reveals, while several such preambles have indeed extolled national virtues and identities, in other instances the (francophone) independence constitutions concerned appeared rather to avoid their mission of trying to define national identity, referring instead to universal declarations as their source of inspiration. The second chapter in this section examines aspects of democracy and democratisation in Zambia and Botswana, exploring political culture at the grassroots level. The chapter problematises the notion of democracy as it has been introduced in various African countries, and in particular examines the problem of popular perceptions torn between the demands of democratisation and ethnicity. The final chapter in part IV considers the changing political fortunes of various power-holders in Eastern Africa (Uganda, Tanzania, Somalia and Eritrea specifically) in the post-colonial period, and seeks to explain the frequently meteoric rises in popularity and 'power' they came to enjoy as well as the equally abrupt losses of legitimacy they often subsequently incurred. These various experiences, by no means uncommon in other African state systems, raise complex questions about the nature of evolving state–society relations, about the prospects for democratisation consistent with popular aspirations, and about the construction of viable political domains.

PART I

INCORPORATION AND POLITICAL PENETRATION

A common perspective from which we tend to view longer-term social transitions in Africa starts from the impacts of the colonial period and then seeks to understand contemporary trends and issues in light of these. Such a point of departure has its own logic, and there is nothing particularly wrong with it. Yet, with a progressively increasing distance, time-wise, from the period of decolonisation and independence – for most African states around 1960 – to the present, one is struck by how relatively short the colonial period actually was. While the formal carving up of the African continent took place in the late nineteenth century, in many regions actual incorporation into colonial empires was not effected until much later. In various parts of East and Central Africa, for instance, implementation was not taken up before the 1920s, and then only incrementally. In a number of regions a point will soon be reached where the post-colonial experience will have lasted longer than the effective colonial period.

Nonetheless, the transitions brought about have been recognised as entailing momentous changes, as no doubt they did: drawing arbitrary boundary lines around an amalgam of socio-political universes of various descriptions, the colonial intervention superimposed new political-administrative grids generating new streams of activity, economically, socially and politically. Cash crops, a money economy, Western education, religion and rules of justice, among other matters, initiated significant social transformations. In the end, for all the distortions and arbitrariness they also entailed, the new socio-political entities thus put in place were presumed to have gained sufficient coherence to be internationally launched as independent, sovereign state bodies.

However, the extent of transformations that had taken place could be likened to the proverbial glass of water that is described as being either half full or half empty. By and large, whatever institutional coherence emerged had been the product of strategies and instruments of incorporation and penetration – picked up and continued by post-colonial state governments as a kind of 'unfinished business'. From the outset, it appears that the challenges posed by such agendas were grossly underestimated, or else that expectations about available social engineering capacities which would need to be called upon may have been grossly exaggerated. Unsurprisingly, in any case, gaps in various respects soon appeared to persist, and at times to be widening, between the political-administrative arrangements exemplary for the post-colonial African state and various kinds of social structures and strata not so fully 'incorporated' as may have been envisaged. In due course part of that legacy would assert itself through numerous unresolved social issues, contradictions and conflicts, not least at the micro-level. Incorporation strategies had both brought together and fragmented new constituent elements of African colonial states in

one and the same stroke. One aspect of this legacy was highlighted by the ambiguous roles of 'traditional' authorities left in uneasy relationships vis-à-vis new state frameworks as well as their presumed clientele, though also by some situations where popular uneasiness with the new settings in which people found themselves would call precisely for the maintenance or installation of such 'protective' roles.

Notwithstanding the evident discontinuities marked by independence, from a perspective on evolving state–society relationships the period comprising both colonial and post-colonial rule in a number of respects could – and can – be viewed as constituting a continuum of sorts. Distinct continuities suggested themselves in terms of the grand tasks theoretically taken on, wittingly or by implication, as part of 'state-building' agendas and actions. In a whole range of 'development' fields as well as within the realm of bureaucracy and politics per se an endless series of institutional initiatives and social responses, the latter accommodating or resisting, ensued in the pursuit of incorporation and state penetration. Indicative of thinking in terms of 'gaps', this at one time generated a stream of academic literature on 'receptivity to change'. And clearly, there were marked 'continuities' in terms of numerous contradictions created and left to linger on from one period to the next as unresolved issues.

In the light of such continuities, three themes evidently suggest themselves for discussion under a general heading of 'incorporation and state penetration'. One is 'incorporation' proper, referring to colonial incorporation and state incorporation more generally, and with an emphasis on the nature of political institutions – of both incorporating bodies and those being incorporated. A second is that which has come to be formulated through reference to the controversial metaphor of 'state penetration', constituting another entry in visualising state efforts to overcome institutional gaps. A third, related theme is that of the role of 'traditional authorities' in the contemporary context. In several cases the role of such chiefs or kings has recently been rediscovered and has been receiving some scholarly appreciation, yet raises profound questions as to whether the incumbents concerned figure as 'fits' or 'misfits' in newly evolving systems of governance and culture.

The chapters in this section deal with these issues, approached from different angles and experiences. They are concerned with the ways in which processes of colonial incorporation laid down completely novel power relations in Uganda and Zambia as much as elsewhere in Africa, and analyse the kind of strategies by which various state systems have tried to extend their reach and presence within African local communities. These interventions fundamentally transformed local patterns of authority and legitimacy and led to drastic redefinitions of community identities and relationships. Part I comprises four chapters, the first focusing on the contrasted experiences with collaboration and resistance within the lacustrine kingdoms region in Uganda, the second concerned with the Nkoya experience of external political incorporation in Western Central Zambia over the period 1860–1978. These are followed by two further chapters, discussing recurring penetration strategies in East Africa and more general aspects of modern state penetration in Africa respectively, both highlighting the limits frequently encountered by state penetration strategies as well as the limitations of the concept itself. Deep schisms between state and society have come to be revealed through debates concerning the metaphor of political penetration.

'Big Man' and his big brother: Some notes on incorporation

Martin Doornbos

'Big Man', chief and state formation

The concepts of 'Big Man', chief and state formation have provided key terms and ingredients for a good many discussions on the origins and evolution of statehood (Sahlins 1963; Allen 1984). State formation in this fascinating field of 'early state' theorising essentially refers to those social, economic and political processes that gave rise to the first ancient state forms. State formation, however, also denotes continuous processes of institutional regeneration, in which 'Big Men' and chiefs may again play important, though quite different roles. What is more, their respective roles would seem possibly to contain different mixes of mobilising and symbolic dimensions. This chapter will explore the qualitative differences between the relationships concerned.

Incorporation

Almost inevitably in enquiries into the origins of states, a fair amount of speculation is devoted to the question of whether and under what conditions 'Big Men', as the 'grassroots' leaders of kinship or small-scale local networks, might have evolved into more regularised or institutionalised forms of headmen and chieftains, and eventually, to embody incipient state forms (Claessen and Skalník 1978). Wherever states have come into existence, even if only in a most incoherent form, a qualitative difference immediately suggests itself. The evolution of earlier forms *to* statehood will tend to be precluded and replaced by their absorption or incorporation *into* statehood. The reason for this is both basic and simple. Once state forms have been 'invented', there is no way to erase their conception from the collective consciousness. Actual states may be

dismantled or collapse, but not their blueprints, that is, the abstract idea of the state. Once in existence either the concept or the reality of the state may figure as a model, possibly to be emulated in other nonstate networks if it appeals to their membership.

Except for the origins of pristine statehood, state formation as a concept necessarily refers to processes that generate or regenerate state forms within contexts in which statehood is not unknown or may even be very much present. Different conceptions of state formation may nevertheless denote or emphasise different aspects or manifestations of this general cluster of processes. Thus, state formation may refer to the historical emergence of European and subsequently of other national states; to the creation of new Third World states as political entities; to the establishment, growth and differentiation of their state structures; to the crystallisation and articulation of the role of the state and the concomitant manifestation of state power; and last but not least, to the progressive incorporation of various societal and political forms, groups and organisational networks into the general state structure. State formation in this latter sense focuses on the dynamic aspects of state–society relationships, in which the state may be conceived as 'penetrating' or even as 'swallowing up' society.

For all their varying emphases and analytic interests, these different notions of state formation refer to processes occurring in contexts in which state forms and institutions have become an intrinsic part of the scene. In turn, this implies that state formation can only denote a continuous and recurrent process in which state formation and integration per se are matched by the deformation and disintegration of pre-existing forms, and in which incorporation and penetration are manifested through confrontation, adjustment and conflict, and through potential collaboration or resistance, as the case may be. Today's version of these processes in many African and Asian contexts is a steady bureaucratic encroachment upon forms of local autonomy and grassroots representation, which, in consequence, are subject to erosion and potential eclipse. It is in such settings, characterised by institutional juxtaposition, substitution or confrontation as key features of state formation processes, that the 'Big Men' and chiefs may again be found among the main actors, though now quite clearly in different roles. There is now no question of 'Big Men' gradually evolving into chiefly roles and positions, nor of chieftaincy or kingship figuring as the final culmination of such transitions. Rather, it is more likely that both 'Big Men' and chiefs are confronted with expanding and imposing state systems which search for organisational connections with, and controls over, local and peripheral networks and communities. Frequently, indeed, it is precisely at that level that such connections and confrontations are most clearly articulated. In various African and Asian countries it is evident that 'Big Man's' big brother is watching, and will take his chance whenever he sees it.

Collaboration and resistance

How do 'Big Men' and chiefs react to these supra-level developments and challenges, and can any discernible patterns to their responses and counter-strategies be identified? This question relates to several debates that have played a role in anthropology and colonial

administration, and the answers have varied depending on researchers' perspectives on the role of the state. If a primary role in development strategies is assigned or attributed to the state and its machinery, then its client chiefs and other contact agents at the end of the line who are closest to the 'field' are likely to be regarded as a kind of frontline force of modernisation and development in backward areas. On the other hand, if the role of government is viewed in a less innovative and benevolent manner, stressing instead its extractive and exploitative aspects vis-à-vis peripheral communities, then the chiefs, 'Big Men' and other agents who act as its allies within the state's territory are more likely to be viewed as part of an oppressive apparatus, engaged in unwanted interference in local social and production relationships.

These two positions can be discerned in much of the literature on rural development and rural administration in Africa and Asia (Cliffe, Coleman and Doornbos 1977). There is a shared appreciation of the strategic position of local-level leadership, whether of a chiefly or of a 'BigMan' type. Indirectly, they also reflect the implicit competition for this leadership's loyalty between the organising states interested in their alliance in reaching out to and seeking to control local communities, and these local groups themselves, who will be keen to have their protective support vis-à-vis the state. It is important to bear in mind, of course, that the incorporation of chiefs or 'Big Men' almost invariably represents only the institutional dimension of more embracing strategies, aimed at gaining control over production processes. The institutional dimension is of key importance, though, because local chiefs and power-holders are likely to be assigned new but vital roles in any such redirected production relationships.

One past debate on colonial administration raised issues that seemed to be related more closely to the question of differential roles and dispositions of chiefs and 'Big Men' as such. With reference to the colonial African experience, it has sometimes been asked whether Western bureaucratic procedures could more readily be introduced into societies with hierarchical socio-political structures, that is with centralised institutions and with a key role reserved for kingship and/or institutionalised chieftaincy, or into the socalled stateless societies, that is smaller-scale and rather dispersed socio-economic groupings and networks with the kind of structural features within which a more dominant role might be expected for entrepreneurial 'Big Men'. Arguments have been advanced in favour of both viewpoints. Fallers, for example, formulated the general hypothesis that 'societies with hierarchical, centralised political systems incorporate the Western type of civil service structure with less strain and instability than do societies having other types of political systems – e.g. segmentary ones' (Fallers 1956:242), while Apthorpe took the position that 'it is in societies which are not hierarchically centralised that Western ideas of bureaucracy can be more speedily adopted' (Apthorpe 1960:131).

These debates were not particularly fruitful, largely because the proponents of both positions failed to look into the nature, dynamics and impositions of the colonial frameworks and their effects on centralised and noncentralised structures respectively. This blind spot meant that a crucial element of the total situation tended to be overlooked in the analysis, which in turn made generalisations, let alone predictive efforts, of very limited value. Chiefs and 'Big Men' have both been known to resist or to collaborate with colonial (or post-colonial) regimes in various contexts, and it is difficult to

discern any general patterns, whether pro or contra, to their respective dispositions and reactions on this score. Besides, it should be recognised that their choices and room for manoeuvre vis-à-vis powerful imperial forces were often extremely limited, so that at times reluctance or even basic resistance had to be translated into involuntary collaboration. This caused a whole range of complex reactions to be manifested, from outright resistance to active support, and often with considerable ambivalence as to the chosen position.

Mobilising and symbolic roles

If 'Big Men' and chiefs can either collaborate with or resist the encapsulating contexts of their bigger brothers, is there no way in which at least the manner or mode of their reaction might vary? There may be scope here for a very tentative hypothesis, for prima facie evidence suggests that certain positions and roles would fit more closely with either of the respective types. Let us explore this more closely.First, if 'Big Men' stand out, this will be due largely to their mobilising and entrepreneurial role in contexts that somehow allow them room for manoeuvre. 'Big Men' are likely to be of larger than average size in terms of power, wealth or prestige, or sheer personality. Typically, they will be seen to manipulate and exploit connections and resources so as to arrange things for their own benefit and also, though for a price, for their followers, whether on a factional, clan or other basis. At least, this is what they are expected to do. 'Big Manship' must in fact be proven and reproven almost daily, the key difference in relation to institutionalised rulership being that there is nothing 'given' about it.

Invested with these almost intrinsic structural characteristics, 'Big Men' would seem likely to respond to incorporation strategies in one of two ways: they may either collaborate or resist, depending on circumstances and particularly on the nature of the central state system and its policies. If they do collaborate, however, 'Big Men' are likely to try and exploit the new resources and possibilities offered by the larger context, flirting in middleman fashion with their connections and influence vis-à-vis the new overlords and seeking to gain political space within the new institutional framework. 'Big Men', it should be realised, are not without some opportunism, though this may be displayed either within the structural conditions of an acephalous, more or less egalitarian social framework, or within the scope for manoeuvre that is left within, or unoccupied by, bureaucratic organisations.

On the other hand, if and when 'Big Men' have chosen to resist the incorporating state, they are likely to operate as leaders of resistance movements, playing their 'Big Man' role by seeking to mobilise grassroots support and to exploit or create alternative resources in an effort to substantiate counter-strategies and local power. Sometimes 'Big Men' may be expected to do this when their own position and prestige are threatened by the demands of the incorporating state, but they may also emerge as 'Big Men' in the course of, and thus as a product of, the resistance struggle.

In contrast, chiefs are likely to perform rather different roles in collaboration or resistance, particularly if their position is more fully institutionalised and ceremonialised;

institutionalisation makes their role and position less flexible than that of 'Big Men'. Moreover, traditional rulership has important symbolic dimensions, and these qualities will be particularly significant in situations of confrontation and crisis. The central organising state will naturally be keen to have the accommodation and support of established chiefs because of their symbolic and legitimising functions. Ironically, however, if chiefs are accommodating and become government chiefs operating within a colonial or post-colonial framework, the chances are that their role and authority within the community will erode and dwindle. Ultimately, in fact, they may become devoid of the very symbolic value that was the initial cause of their interest to the central state authorities. On the other hand, if a traditional ruler joins or appears to support any emergent forces of popular opposition, his symbolic role will again be of key importance. Unlike his accommodative counterpart, a resistant ruler may gain in local prestige and authority; he may even become the symbol, rationale and focal point of a grassroots movement of opposition without necessarily leading it himself.

The complexity and lack of predictability of both strategies and responses is, however, conditioned largely by contextual variables. These will require closer inspection for fuller appreciation of the motives for accommodation or resistance and, in turn, of the extent of popular support for the rulers' strategies. For example, new alliances between regional chiefs and an imperial power may be concluded with a view to the power balance with competitive groups. Such a strategy, perhaps granting regional rulers a subimperialist role and enhanced powers over their rivals, may meet with the implicit or explicit consent of many of their followers, who in turn would expect to benefit. Therefore, such an alliance will reflect differently on the ruler's position than in the case in which the chief or ruler group comes to confront the population at large.

The lacustrine kingdoms

Some examples from the Ugandan experience of incorporative policies – of which there have been several waves – may illustrate these divergent trends. Among the four lacustrine kingdoms, the Ankole kingship clearly illustrates the loss of symbolic relevance and the decline of a once central institution owing to its accommodative stance in the process of incorporation. A fuller understanding of this would need to take into account various concomitant factors that cannot be detailed here (Doornbos 1975a; 2001). Salient among them, however, was the willingness of successive *Abagabe* (kings) and senior chiefs to comply with British prescriptions for their role in the colonial framework in return for seemingly strengthened and enlarged powers over the peasant classes. However, the uses made of traditional authority in order to legitimise colonial policy and practice caused its symbolic role to fade and even to become a negative value.

In contrast to the Ankole case, kingship and chieftaincy in Buganda retained (and generated) a greater degree of lustre, which was apparently not unconnected with Buganda's subimperialist role under the British umbrella, combined nonetheless with several major confrontations with the colonial power. During the nineteenth century, Buganda's ruling group was stronger and had had closer ties to the peasantry than

that of Ankole, yet the particular position and powers maintained by Buganda's neo-traditional elite must not least be understood in the context of its strategic role during colonial transformation (Apter 1967).

Yet a different experience and position was that of the Bunyoro monarchy in the context of incorporation. The most explicitly resistant of the lacustrine kingdoms, this formerly extensive empire suffered the greatest loss, yet showed the most unified opposition to British cum Buganda strategies. Bunyoro kingship articulated this protonationalist sentiment from within its restricted scope for manoeuvre, and in turn could count on a fair measure of grassroots support (Steinhart 1977).

Finally, the Toro case was another example of unreserved collaboration between the king and senior chiefs with the British colonial powers. Toro was a typical client state. A nineteenth-century offshoot of Bunyoro, its separate status would hardly have been possible other than as a deliberate act of British policy. The special bait held out to the Toro ruling elite, similar to the Ankole case, was the promise of vastly enlarged powers over people and land. In the case of Toro, however, this implied and sanctioned control over the Bakonzo and Baamba peasantries living in the Ruwenzori area near the Congo border. Their incorporation into the Toro kingdom and through this into the Ugandan colonial framework remained one of the most conflict-ridden issues until well after Ugandan independence. In turn, the role and position of the kingship became a highly controversial one throughout much of Toro's official territory. Not quite without symbolic significance, therefore, one of the incidents that marked the birth of the Rwenzururu movement in 1961 to 1962 was the arrest of Bakonzo and Baamba leaders for having called the Toro *Omukama* 'a fool' (Doornbos 1970).

The Rwenzururu case

If these four examples seem to illustrate different modes and degrees of predictable chiefly behaviour and accommodation in political incorporation, there is yet a fifth which prima facie contradicts our most tentative presuppositions so far. This is the case of the Rwenzururu kingship, installed in 1963 in the person of Isaya Mukirane, leader of the secessionist Bakonzo wing of the Rwenzururu movement, which had first demanded separate district status from Toro. The Bakonzo, it should be noted, have no tradition of centralised political institutions. Mukirane's role was by and large that of a 'Big Man': entrepreneurial, mobilising, and resourceful. Following the escalation of the conflict and the move to secede, the leadership was soon transformed and institutionalised, first through a kind of interim presidential arrangement, then into fully fledged kingship.

Did this represent a belated case of evolution from 'Big Manship' into chieftaincy and kingship, perhaps also a negation of the logic of 'Big Man' and chief as distinct and generally immutable structural types? At a direct empirical level this might well appear to have been the case. Rwenzururu kingship was institutionalised, albeit in 'pressure cooker' style, and the institution maintained itself for nearly two decades, surviving several serious challenges and crises, including that of succession: on the death of Mukirane in 1966 his son, Charles Irema-Ngoma, then still a minor, took over, thus

turning the new monarchy into a hereditary institution. Considerable attention also seems to have been given to the elaboration of royal forms and styles in keeping with lacustrine culture and precedent.

Until 1982 the dual hypotheses underlying the notions of 'Big Man' and chief as relatively immutable types tending to perform different roles in either collaboration or resistance would seem to have been invalidated by the Rwenzururu case. But beyond? In August 1982 the king of Rwenzururu concluded an agreement with the Uganda government to surrender and abolish the movement in exchange for the rewards of 'a bus, a personal car, a shop and money to start a new life' (*Rwenzururu surrender* 1982). His followers were likewise to receive appropriate compensation. These tangible returns, then, might be regarded either as an index of the price of kingship in 1982, or as so many tokens of entrepreneurship, confirming once again that 'Big Manship' cannot so easily transmute itself into kingship.

Postscript

As if to underline the complexity of these questions as they unfold in reality, a resurgence of the Rwenzururu kingship issue manifested itself subsequently. In 1993, proposals were launched in Uganda for the reinstatement of kingship in the four former monarchies of Buganda, Ankole, Toro and Bunyoro. These kingships had been abolished in 1967 by the Obote government, a move which at the time had been received enthusiastically in the Bakonzo and Baamba areas of Toro. In Toro, as in Buganda and Bunyoro – but not in Ankole – symbolic kingship (termed 'cultural leadership') was indeed restored in 1993. Following this, the Bakonzo too expressed a wish to restore their own, then newly created monarchy and pleaded with the Uganda government for its recognition (*The Monitor* 1993), which was to lead to many years of negotiation towards its accomplishment.

CHAPTER 2

The post-colonial state, 'state penetration' and the Nkoya experience in Western Central Zambia

Wim van Binsbergen

Statehood, deriving from either the endogenous dynamics of local political processes, the incorporation of local communities in expanding state systems originating elsewhere, or a combination of both, is a much more common and much older phenomenon on the African scene than would be suggested by the application of the 'state penetration' metaphor to political processes at the local level on that continent today. In this chapter I shall contrast two phases in Zambian peasants' attitudes towards the post-colonial Zambian state. The first phase, of aloofness and apparent 'non-penetration', is associated with the early 1970s; the second phase, of much greater ideological and active support for the state among the same people, was entered less than a decade later. At first glance, one may be inclined to interpret the phase of aloofness as a base-line of a process of political incorporation; the changes leading to the next phase would then appear to amount to some sort of increased state penetration. A historical analysis of political structures in Western Central Zambia over a much longer period will reveal the spuriousness of such a view, and illuminate contemporary options in the light of collective political experiences that, in this case, have merged with pre-state notions of sacred kingship to articulate a contemporary ethnic identity.

State and local community in Western Central Zambia in the early 1970s[1]

Western Central Zambia, roughly corresponding to the present-day Kaoma (formerly Mankoya) district, is a region the size of Belgium or the Netherlands, and characterised by extensive ecological, socio-economic and social diversity, as it ranges from the well-watered, wooded and fertile Kafue–Zambezi watershed in the East to the fringes of the

Figure 2.1: The Nkoya in Western Zambia
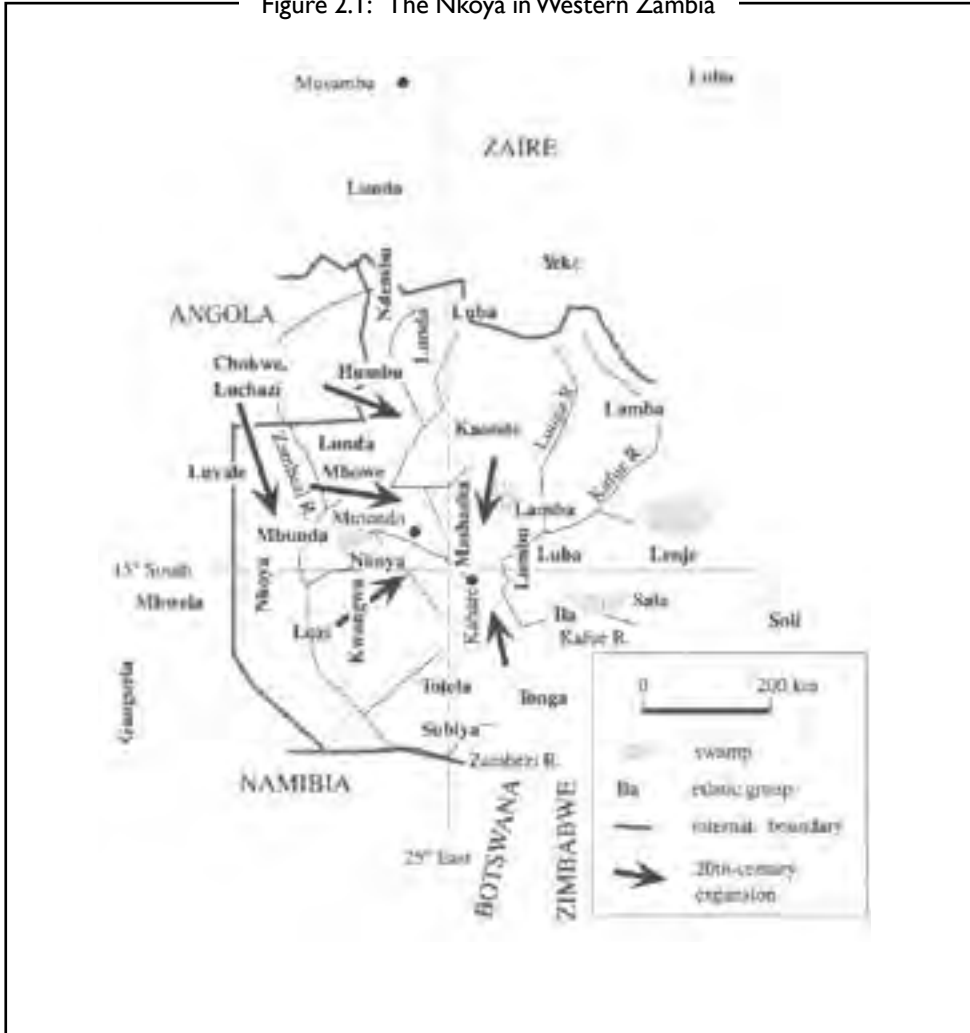
Kalahari sands in the West; from illiterate fishermen, hunters and subsistence farmers in remote villages to sophisticated managers and civil servants in the district capital and the state-initiated agricultural schemes; and from the Nkoya-speakers (with various constituent groups such as the Mashasha, Mbwela and Lukolwe) whose ancestors have inhabited the district for one and a half centuries or more, via the Lozi (Luyi, Barotse) people who, from their homelands along the Zambezi flood plain, have expanded into the district as members of a politically dominant ethnic group since the late nineteenth century, to, finally, the Luvale, Luchazi and Chokwe people, mainly first-, second- or third-generation immigrants from Angola, who have flooded Western Zambia since the early decades of the twentieth century.

The district was virtually inaccessible by modern means of transport until, in the 1930s, the Mankoya–Mumbwa all-weather road was built, reducing the effective

travelling time to Lusaka (the new colonial capital) to two or three days. Subsequently, in consequence of other far-reaching changes, this travelling time has been further reduced to a matter of hours. Since the early 1970s, an excellent tar road has connected the district capital, also called Kaoma, with Mongu (the provincial capital of Western Province) and the national capital. In 1973, a sign at the Kaoma exit proudly read:

> *Kaoma District – Granary of Western Province*

In terms of cash-crop output the district compared favourably with the other parts of the province, one of the more stagnant provinces in Zambia. This relative agricultural success was largely due to the efforts of peasant and 'middle' farmers belonging to the newcomer ethnic groups; the Nkoya had, until then, shown less initiative in the terms of modern agricultural production.

In Nkoya villages situated at a distance from the tar road, the modern state at the time appeared to be rather removed from rural life. State initiatives in the area of agricultural extension work were viewed with suspicion by the villagers, and met with hardly any positive response. The United National Independence Party or UNIP,[2] the national party, failed to inspire enthusiasm and, except among a small number of unemployed youths, had only a small local foothold (van Binsbergen 1975a). Many villagers did not vote in the 1973 national elections. Ten years after the country gained independence people would still refer to the country's political centre (Lusaka, and the Line of Rail with its towns, industries, mines and large-scale capitalist agriculture) as being:

> *'over there, in Zambia'*,

thus reducing the independent state of Zambia to a distant affair involving people who were, ethnically, aliens.

In conversations Nkoya villagers would spontaneously elaborate on the great economic, educational and moral decline their region had seen since independence: manufactured commodities that had found their way into the village economy (e.g. clothing, blankets, implements and certain foodstuffs) were claimed to have been much cheaper during the colonial period; job opportunities both in Northern Rhodesia (present-day Zambia) and 'down south' (on the farms, mines and in the urban centres of the then Southern Rhodesia and South Africa) were claimed to have been unlimited, and people continued to complain bitterly about the loss of labour migration opportunities owing to the closure of the Zambia's southern border shortly after independence.

Not just the elders, but also young adults of both sexes condemned the modern politics centring on the party and the ballot-box as evil and mercenary: the only politics that seemed to convince them and carry legitimacy in their eyes was that of the neo-traditional chiefs (Nkoya: *Mwene,* pl. *Myene)* and their councillors, firmly grounded in the local culture, its symbolism and cosmology. In addition to the state-recognised status of chief (with only a handful of incumbents in the district), a large number of traditional political titles existed; those who held them (often headmen at the village or valley level) would likewise be called *Mwene,* but beyond the narrow confines of their communities they lacked the prestige, let alone the income, that could justify the enormous amount

of attention and conflict that these traditional titles generated. Regarding the few state-recognised titles, the villagers could not totally ignore the links between the state and traditional politics: chiefs' royal establishments (Nkoya: *lukena*)*,* consisting of a palace, councillors, retinue and orchestra,[3] were maintained by means of a 100% state subsidy; moreover, one of the two major Nkoya chiefs, Mwene Kahare, had been a UNIP trustee for years, and was subsequently appointed to the national House of Chiefs; in the latter context he made frequent trips to the national capital.[4] However much people wanted to believe that in this capacity he had a lion's share in modern government, the miserable state of his palace, his very limited local powers (which from 1966 no longer included judicial powers, for instance), the way he was treated by district officials, and the lack of significant improvements to the conditions of their own rural life in terms of roads, clinics and cash income nevertheless told them otherwise.

All economic benefits and all state power seemed to go to other people, especially to the hated Lozi, who for about a century had dominated Western Zambia, to the extent of lending their ethnic name to that vast area during most of that period (it was called Barotseland until 1969). The modern state was further perceived as a collection of ethnically alien officers who (expressing themselves in English or Lozi, but not in Nkoya) would arrogantly confront villagers in need of medical treatment or official documents or who (occasionally, and rather ineffectively) would try to enforce government prohibitions on local hunting and trade in dried meat and ivory (redefined as poaching and the sale of its illegal proceeds), the collection of firewood (redefined as the illegal felling of trees), or peddling goods without a licence. Only in selected domains did the state get the villagers' full support: police and medical officers from the district capital would receive their eager assistance when dealing with cases of stealing, physical assault, manslaughter (if by physical violence and not by magical means), insanity and endemic infectious diseases such as leprosy and tuberculosis. In these areas of public life the modern state was considered to rightly discharge some of the functions that were at the root of *Wene*: the maintenance of social and moral order, as a source of physical well-being. But for most other dealings with the state the villagers did not deviate far from the example set by the Watchtower minority among them, who in theocratic expectation of the Kingdom of Heaven shunned the educational, medical or political traps of an earthly kingdom, be it headed by blacks or by whites.[5]

It would not be difficult to identify, in the situation as it pertained in the early 1970s, a number of factors explaining this fairly typical form of imperfect state penetration in the African countryside. Taking a synchronic view, and with emphasis on individual perceptions and motivations, one could try to explain the predicament of Nkoya villagers in terms of the forces determining contemporary markets of labour, agricultural produce and bureaucratic support – all of them perceived to be virtually closed to Nkoya villagers by a combination of geographic distance, lack of education and skills (particularly agricultural and entrepreneurial skills), and lack of access to mass media and decision-making bodies.[6]

Failing to mobilise state power in order to manipulate these market forces to their own advantage, the villagers turned away, playing at 'uncaptured peasantry' (cf. Hyden 1980; Geschiere 1984), and trying to eke out from their subsistence farming, illegal

hunting and rich musical and ritual life such livelihood and self respect as were denied them in the context of modern life. Or did they turn away? Does the very notion of state penetration not suggest that they had never really been part of the state, and were lingering in the pre-statehood limbo in which the colonial state had found them three-quarters of a century earlier? Such a view could lead to the hopeful thought that even if the modern state had as yet failed to penetrate these villages, the time might come when (perhaps as a result of the turning tide of market forces; or, failing these, of more determined and stern state action; or even of the villagers' own increasing *Verelendung*) the people would finally 'see the light and come out of their hiding places', to use a formula of the type cherished by senior Zambian politicians and civil servants. Whereas their situation in the early 1970s seemed to be characterised by the absence of the modern state (which apparently failed to reach out that far), they might one day wholeheartedly partake of its blessings. From their naive statal virginity, through the perhaps painful but necessary defloration of state penetration, the Nkoya peasant communities might yet graduate to the adult delights of state participation. Alternatively, in a more radical version of this tale, the state might appear not as a subtle and experienced lover but as a raping satyr, and the image of conjugal bliss of civil participation would distort into the state's pimping on the encroachment by capitalism onto the local community.

The change was not brought about by factors of a primarily economic nature. In the district itself, the material rewards of civil participation had yet to be reaped – and remain so to this day. And along the Line of Rail, employment opportunities for Nkoya migrants were, if anything, dwindling; in fact, many urban dwellers saw themselves forced to retreat to their rural homes as they could no longer maintain an urban livelihood. The new Nkeyema tobacco scheme near the district's eastern border further boosted the district's agricultural output as from 1971, but while tenants were recruited from all over Western Zambia, opportunities for Nkoya participation remained very limited – confined, in fact, to a handful of 'middle' farmers belonging to royal families. Outside the schemes, peasant production did not increase significantly. The misery of rural life continued as before: lack of transport, of cash, of medical care, occasionally even of food. But now it was tinged with hope and optimism.

The only real changes that had taken place were of a political and ideological nature, and followed the effective diminishing of Lozi domination (see below), and the corresponding dramatic increase in Nkoya access to modern representative bodies at the district, provincial and particularly (with the election of the first Nkoya member of parliament in 1973) the national level. Significantly, in a district that for years had been the distant constituency of the Southern Province politician Mwainza Chona (then Vice-President of Zambia), certain Nkoya candidates for the Kaoma District Council did not have to run for office, but were nominated directly by the State President. Their office came to carry real power, also at the grassroots level, where they became involved in Ward Development Committees (through which the state allocated for instance agricultural credit), Village Productivity Committees, and party branches. This handful of political 'new men' (several of whom were women) became powerful organisers of UNIP, and the first effective brokers between the modern state and Nkoya villagers – a role the *Myene* had been expected to play, but never did more than half-heartedly and ineffectively.

Their relation to the *Myene* was more complex than simple substitution, however. Mobilisation along regional lines has been a dominant feature of Zambian post-independence politics, and the peculiar ethnic composition and ethnic history of Kaoma district (with Lozi and particularly Luvale dominating the party at the district level) left the 'new men' no choice but to narrow their regional appeal in terms of Nkoya ethnicity. Thus in the 1973 general elections, which were to be a turning point in Nkoya attitudes to the national state, the successful candidate was identified as Nkoya, his two opponents being one Luvale and one Mbunda. Moreover, very close association with traditional chiefs appeared, in all cases, a condition for success. Little of the antagonism that has so often characterised the relations between chiefs and local 'new men' elsewhere in the Zambian context could be detected here. The former counted *Myene* and prominent chief's councillors among their closest kin. They conducted their local campaigns from the *lukenas*, and in their interactions with these traditional office-bearers meticulously observed the many rules of court etiquette that come naturally to any Nkoya, but had never before been put to practice by any representative of the central state. Not only in the presence of villagers, but also in the representative bodies of district and provincial government they advocated an increase in the subsidies made available to Nkoya chiefs and the restoration of certain Nkoya chiefly titles (most significantly the title *Shakalongo*), which had failed to receive state recognition during the colonial period.[7]

The 'new men' seemed to realise that they could aspire to successful brokerage between Nkoya peasants and the state only if they narrowed their ethnic claims to a point where they virtually became the modern, junior representatives of the chiefs. They were versed in modern state structures, and in that regard their legitimation consisted in such bureaucratic authority as derives from modern constitutional and administrative procedures. But at the same time, in the eyes of the villagers they had to gain legitimacy through the only source of political authority recognised by Nkoya society: the institution of chieftainship (*Wene*). For close to a century, the political history of the humiliation and powerlessness of Nkoya villagers has centred on the humiliation and powerlessness of their traditional rulers, under conditions both precolonial and colonial. A revival of Nkoya society was to find a political expression, since locally its downfall was perceived in primarily political terms. It was not as though the modern state had been unable to penetrate before, but for the first time relations with the state offered spoils that had previously seemed utterly unattainable: a restoration of local political forms in which the Nkoya had invested not only their total conception of social order, but also their self respect. The modern state could be accepted and positively embraced if that process included an affirmation of a much older, local form of political organisation, of which the latter-day *Myene* were the focus and heirs. This breakthrough in the mid-1970s enabled the Nkoya to revise their attitude towards the modern state because it finally allowed them to step back from, and to redress, their experiences with earlier situations of statehood. Thus, the changes that took place in the course of the 1970s did not consist in a transition from pre-statehood to modernity through 'state penetration', but constituted a gradual transformation (lagging a few years behind the more tangible political events that made it possible in the first place), allowing the Nkoya villagers to review their earlier denunciation of the modern state, to re-establish continuity with a traditional form of statehood that formed the essence of

their historical identity, and to strike a new balance (through the 'new men') between their own old state structures, and the new Zambian one.

Two issues underlie the political process that we can only superficially describe as 'state penetration'. The first is the endogenous dynamics of Nkoya precolonial states. The second is a process of political incorporation that, far from starting in the 1970s, in fact has a history of at least a century; as elements of this sustained and complex process, both the apparent rejection in the early 1970s, and the more positive state participation of the late 1970s, are but temporary options realised in the course of the prolonged and cumulative Nkoya experience with statehood.

Nkoya precolonial states

Precolonial Nkoya states emerged as a transformation of a pre-state pattern of sacred kingship (*Wene*). In an early wave of migration from Southern Zaire, perhaps around the middle of the second millennium, *Wene* was established on the Upper Zambezi by members of a matrilineage which much later, probably in the late eighteenth century, was to produce the Nkoya heads of states. The pre-state *Myene* were not political leaders but land priests, whose special links with the natural environment – as central figures in an all-encompassing cosmological and symbolic system – allowed them to assume co-ordinating and redistributive tasks in the local relations of production, which hinged on hunting, fishing, collecting and some limited agriculture, and which were largely structured by clanship (cf. van Binsbergen (1985c;1992b).

Likota lya Bankoya, an extensive collection of Nkoya oral traditions (compiled by Rev. J.M. Shimunika and edited by van Binsbergen 1988b), tells us how *Wene* was put to a decisive test at the time of the Humbu[8] war:

> *The Humbu war was the first war the Nkoya fought against other tribes. This war started when the Humbu wanted the Nkoya Mwene and his people to be circumcised. When the Nkoya people refused this the war started. [...] The Humbu came from Mwantiyavwa and they wanted to kill all the Nkoya Myene. The Humbu invaded Nkoyaland and killed most Nkoya people from the Kasheta clan, including female Mwene Shilayi Mashiku and many other Myene, both male and female. When the war became very fierce Mwana Mwene [Prince] Luhamba and his sister Katete Mashiku ran away and went to hide in the village of the Kambunze clan. [...] The war went on and the Nkoya defeated the Humbu. The latter declared that they had not wanted to fight against all the Nkoya but only against the Kasheta of Luhamba lya [the son of] Shilayi (van Binsbergen 1988b:21; van Binsbergen 1992a:195f).*

It is unlikely that by this time the group under Humbu attack were already identified as Nkoya (cf. van Binsbergen 1985b): they would in all likelihood still have been known as Mbwela.

Although the 'Nkoya' are claimed to have emerged victorious, the Humbu war brought home the great vulnerability of their underdeveloped socio-political system in the face of military attack. Also, many *Myene* (apparently not all of them female:

circumcision in this part of Africa is an exclusively male affair) are said to have been killed. The Humbu war is a watershed in Nkoya history, as it marks the emergence of fully fledged states: whereas *Wene* is already described for an earlier period, it is only with reference to periods after that war that all the characteristics of Nkoya states appear in the traditions.

The emergence of male leadership, and its assumption of secular and military overtones, is traced to this dramatic event. Female leaders are still reported in the early decades of the nineteenth century; male rulers' close ties of descent and affinity with the female leaders of an earlier stage are still emphasised, and these men's sisters (likewise called *Mwene*) occupy such prominence in the accounts that one gains the impression that the brothers are able to rule only on their sisters' behalf (and only with the latter's sometimes reluctant blessing).[9] Whereas this lack of clarity in the definition of political competence among siblings of a particular generation was subsequently resolved in favour of males, a more lasting vagueness attended the transfer of political office. In principle, an adelphic system was followed, all siblings of a generation succeeding one another until that generation was exhausted and the eldest sibling of a new generation took over. The ramifications of classificatory and fictitious kinship spread so widely that succession amounted to the selection, by a council of elders, of a suitable candidate from a large pool of possible incumbents – members of a predecessor's consanguineal kindred in the widest sense of the word.[10]

During the period after the Humbu war, certain traditions were established that until today constitute the central characteristics of a Nkoya royal court. These include distinguishing the royal village from other such villages by means of a specific designation, specific appearance and spatial arrangement of the *lukena* (including a reed fence supported by pointed poles), and regalia reserved for *Myene*: the *mpande* (a shell ornament) and certain musical instruments: xylophones, iron bells, and various types of drums. So much did the *lukena* become the spatial expression of this apparently new style of leadership that upon a ruler's death the *lukena* became the royal grave: it was deserted and left to be swallowed up by the forest, while the successor set out to construct a new, specifically named *lukena* elsewhere, typically more than 20 kilometres away.

As a verbal emblem of a ruler's individual identity, the *lukena* was complemented by a ruler's praise-name (*lizina lya litanga*). Many of these praise-names have been preserved by tradition, their archaic and dense means of expression conveying a wealth of historical information in a nutshell.[11]

The portable regalia were symbols not so much of an individual ruler, but of a royal name, a dynasty, and the state as a whole. These paraphernalia inspired awe and fear in both subjects and enemies, and human sacrifices were made to them; their capture by enemies spelled doom for the dynasty involved, and constituted a cause for ethnic shame for generations.

Initially, the *lukena* was the dwelling of the immediate royal kin. Over time, however, *lukenas* came to be peopled with other functionaries. The offices of royal musician and praise-singer (who were of lowly status, if not slaves) can be assumed to have existed from the time of the introduction of royal instruments. The office of *Mwanashihemi*

(principal councillor, the *Mwene's* spokesman to the people, and definitely a non-royal) is first mentioned in the mid-nineteenth century. Throughout that century, selected male rulers are reported to have divided up their territory among their male kin, who served them as councillors and territorial representatives (*silolo*). These offices, of an obvious political and military nature, were complemented by those of the court priests (*banga*), and the ruler's much-feared secret executioners (*tupondwa*).

The set-up is reminiscent of Lunda court arrangements (cf. Vansina 1966; Hoover 1980; Papstein 1978), although according to Schecter (1980:vi–vii) the principal structural features of these courts, perpetual kinship, and positional succession, were not well established among the Nkoya. It is very likely that the virtual absence of these features had a negative influence on the political survival of the Nkoya states, whose structure remained brittle and fragmented. Moreover, their emphasis on consensual democratic procedures repeatedly checked such autocratic tendencies as certain Nkoya *Myene* displayed in the course of the nineteenth century, which, if they had been allowed to persist, might have given rise to more enduring state structures or a wider geographical scope. Instead, the nineteenth-century history of the *lukenas* features cases of regicide, impeachment, abdication, and of *Myene* who lost the support of their subjects.

The central Nkoya regalia cannot be characterised as Lunda in the narrower sense. Nkoya *Myene* did and do possess some of the more strictly Lunda paraphernalia (cf. Papstein (1978:91, 104,137), such as the *chimbuya* (a miniature battle-axe), the *mukwale* (the double broadsword) and the *muchamo* (crown), but they have lacked the central Lunda symbol of kingship: the *lukano* (a bracelet of human penises and sinews). However, it is the *mpande* and the musical instruments, much more than the Lunda paraphernalia, that dominate Nkoya royal symbolism and ceremonial activities, and as such the Nkoya paraphernalia largely belong to a series with a much wider distribution over South Central Africa than the Lunda items.

However, Lunda characteristics can be detected in the ritual separation between ruler and subjects among the Nkoya, which to this day is reflected in a great many taboos and observances surrounding *Wene*. For instance, *Myene* are reported to have tried cases in their *lukenas*; during the process the *Mwene* would remain in the inner recesses of the palace, and the councillors, with the *Mwanashihemi* in the chair, would try the case up to the final verdict, which was to be the *Mwene's*, but communicated to the public by the *Mwanashihemi*.

The court priests were in charge of the royal medicine, without which no *Mwene* could hope to survive the attacks (both physical and magical) that rivals and enemies would launch against the ruler, and the latter's life and fertility. The priests would also be in charge of the shrine inside the royal village (the place where a new incumbent would be enthroned), and would make regular offerings at the more distant burial shrines of the dynastic ancestors. Powers over the natural environment were claimed for the latter shrines, as a result of which the earlier, pre-state cult of the land, at the clan level, was supplanted by a royal cult venerating deceased members of the royal clan.[12]

The new style of *Wene* (male, violent, dynastic, formally organised: *Wene* in a context of statehood) sought to find ideological support through such 'ecological' claims, but

even more so through terror and violence, both manifest (as through the actions of the *tupondwa*) and symbolic, associated with *Wene:* human sacrifices to the *lukena* fence, to the drums, and on the occasion of the burial of a *Mwene*; royal medicine manufactured from substances reputed to have magical qualities, including human brains; head-hunting, so that the *Mwene* and his courtiers could drink from human skulls; and notions of the incomparable skills of the *Myene* in trickery and magic (*malele*), including invisibility and the ability to travel through the air. Despite remaining the incarnation of the cosmological order of the pre-state period, and as such the embodiment of all that is positive and ideal in humanity, the *Mwene,* guardian of morality and sociability, thus simultaneously became the greatest sorcerer and the greatest evildoer of all. The institution of *Wene* developed from an idiom of ecological concern into an idiom of societal power. It is this redefinition that allowed the older institution of *Wene* to become the focus of states.[13]

Along with these male-centred ideological props for statehood, we see the political and ideological discrediting of women. From the second half of the nineteenth century onwards the sources portray female royals[14] no longer as protagonists but as mere pawns in male exploits of war and diplomacy, causing trouble and creating division between individual men and between peoples. The portable regalia develop into objects associated exclusively with men.

Slaves begin to be mentioned, not only in the context of pawnship for the indemnity of manslaughter, but perhaps as a perversion of this well-known institution throughout South Central Africa (cf. Douglas 1964b; Roberts 1976) – particularly as commodities to be traded for beads, bangles, chief's ornamental shells, cloth, cooking pots, and (more typically towards the end of the nineteenth century) guns and ammunition. While the contemporary stigma of slave descent led to a suppression of this topic in formal court traditions of the area, less official family histories I collected make it clear that slaves made up a considerable proportion of the *lukena* population. Along with tribute (*ntupu*) in the form of foodstuffs, skins and ivory brought in by subject peasant communities, slaves resident at the *lukena* fulfilled a large proportion of the court's day-to-day material requirements. Female royals would often marry slaves; the issue of such a marriage would be irrevocably tied to the maternal *lukena*, with none of the residential optionality between matrilateral and patrilateral relatives that has been such a dominant feature of social organisation in the area. Through their matrilateral ties with the *Mwene*ship slaves could occasionally rise to a senior political position themselves; this, however, does not seem to have reduced the connotations of low status that have adhered to both slaves and their offspring.

Did this socio-political system amount to statehood? Students of the early state in Africa would unhesitatingly say that it did: many of the recurrent themes of African precolonial states are manifest here, from prominent female royals to the ecological connotations of the royal cult, and from ritual separation between ruler and subjects to slavery (cf. Claessen 1981; 1984).

But how many Nkoya states were there? Female royals, royal consorts, and other prominent members of the royal families built their own *lukenas* (see figure 2.1), which became centres of factional conflict. While these could be seen as antagonistic elements

within what was, in effect, the same state, really distinct states emerged as in the early nineteenth century the original dynastic stock of the area (all tracing their descent to the legendary Mwene Libupe) split into four main branches, which in the course of that century came to be associated with the royal titles of Mutondo, Kahare, Momba and Kabulwebulwe respectively. Of these, the Mutondo dynastic line occupied mainly what is the present-day Kaoma district during most of the nineteenth century. The Kahare line was initially associated with the present-day Mongu and Lukulu districts, from there moving to the present-day Kasempa district during the reign of Shihoka Nalinanga, only to move south again, to the Kafue–Zambezi watershed near the headwaters of the Lwena River, in c. 1880. The Kabulwebulwe line is associated with the Kafue River and the Western part of Mumbwa district, and the Momba line settled far south (see figure 2.1). Relations of diplomacy, marriage, sanctuary, extradition, dynastic arbitration and occasionally succession[15] existed among these four main courts. No tributary relations or instances of military assistance among these courts are recorded, although nineteenth-century accounts are full of military exploits. Thus, when the Mutondo *lukena* (whose system of marital law was for some time very different from that of the other Nkoya states – another indication of autonomy) was ransacked by the Kololo[16] and its royal members led away in captivity, the Kahare *lukena* of Mwene Shikanda did not rush to their assistance. Likewise, when Mwene Kahare Kabimba was being pursued by invading Yeke, his wanderings brought him within earshot of the royal drums of Mwene Mutondo Shinkisha, but rather than invoking this kinsman's support, Kabimba turned back and allowed himself to be killed and flayed by his pursuers. The four polities centring on the four royal titles appear to have acted as independent states in relation both to one another and the outside world.

If they were independent states with only a common cultural and linguistic background,[17] however, they were very weak ones, lacking, as we have seen, the organisational arrangements that cemented the more successful states surrounding them, including the Lozi state. The plurality of Nkoya *lukenas* points to a fundamental problem: the *Mwene's* monopoly on royal status had only a weak constitutional, institutional and ritual basis, and had to find additional support in such social power as derived from military exploits, a political following, and diplomatic links with neighbouring states. Rivalry and fissiparous tendencies were at the heart of the royal families, as is the case throughout South Central Africa, but among the Nkoya they were less effectively counterbalanced by ideological and organisational means. The four royal titles were soon nothing but emblems chosen by a particular incumbent when defining his or her praise-name at the moment of accession. All incumbents would select such an emblem, and all sought to establish, by their deeds, a new title that would become permanent through the generations. Within the seed-bed of the four dynastic clusters – each roughly associated with a well-described part of Western Zambia – many royal kinsmen tried to build titles, *lukenas,* in short royal status, for themselves on the basis of a common socio-political culture, yet aspiring to autonomy. The economic basis for this was partly offered by the exploitative nature of the tributary relation between a *lukena* and village communities in the wider environment, but an additional basis was offered by opportunities for raiding (for cattle and slaves) and long-distance trade: the

region formed a meeting ground where the trade routes to the Atlantic Ocean merged with those to the Indian Ocean, and from about 1800 in particular long-distance trade had a considerable impact. These economic relations allowed for the emergence of entrepreneurs who aspired to convert their economic success into the more lasting and honourable achievement of a royal title, with all the trimmings (embodied in a *lukena,* regalia, a royal orchestra and royal rights over nature) of the local political culture. Thus ascription, on the basis of the ancient but recently transformed model of *Wene*, was not the only side of political leadership: entrepreneurial 'Big Manship' (only occasionally female) represented the other side, and just as 'Big Men' aspired to be rulers, rulers sought to use their political status for economic activities.[18]

Out of this turmoil of waxing and waning political and economic power positions, the four main dynastic titles emerged in a much more accidental fashion than the latter-day stability and permanence of this fourfold partition in the colonial period would suggest.

A good illustration of the vicissitudes involved is the history of the Kahare title following the killing of Mwene Kabimba. After he had been killed, his *lukena* destroyed and his people dispersed all over the southern part of the region, his son Muyani and sister's son Kalumpiteka settled in the present-day Namwala district (at Isalama), among Lubanda (Ila) people with whom their family had kinship ties. Muyani apparently gave up all aspirations to ruler status. Kalumpiteka, however, tried to assume leadership of the local population, but failed and was killed in the process, significantly during an incident in which he claimed the habitual royal rights over local fishing pools. Kalumpiteka's sister's sons, headed by Shambanjo, then sought sanctuary at the *lukena* of their kinswoman, Mwene Luwimbo Shakalongo, about 100 kilometres to the south west of their residence. From here Shambanjo sought to avenge the death of his mother's brother, Kalumpiteka. The attempt brought him in conflict with Mwene Kayingu, whose *lukena* in the Hook of the Kafue River was then a major connection between the Atlantic and the Indian Ocean trade routes. Shambanjo's successful participation in the trade circuit is clear from the fact that the conflict with Mwene Kayingu was resolved through the payment of a gun and a slave. Still without *Mwene* status, Shambanjo offered his military support to the Lozi *Litunga* (ruler) Lewanika (1878–1884, 1886–1916) in the latter's great cattle-raiding campaigns against the Ila (1878, 1882, 1888). With a ferocity for which he is still well known in local traditions, Shambanjo took his revenge, and under the protection of Lewanika (who had entrusted a portion of the raided Ila cattle to him) he succeeded in having Mwene Shakalongo install him as Mwene Kahare Shamamano, after the Kahare title had remained unconferred for several decades. He built his *lukena* at the Yange river near the Kafue–Zambezi watershed, and it was with the title of Mwene Kahare that he became incorporated into the Lozi state and thus into the colonial administration at the turn of the century.

The Nkoya experience of external political incorporation, 1860–1978

Shambanjo's exploits are not an exception in an otherwise stable and well-defined political arena, but are rather typical of the fact that the state-like political structure of the region was still very much going through a formative period. There is no telling where this process would have led had it been allowed to follow its own impetus. However, the process was soon effectively checked by the expansion of other, more successful states outside the region, ultimately including the colonial state. This is already clear from the repeated references to these other states – that of the Lunda to the north (with various offshoots on the Upper Zambezi), the Kololo/Lozi to the west and south, Kaonde states to the north west, and Mwengwa Msidi's Yeke state to the north. Another powerful influence was that of raids from Lobengula's Ndebele state to the south – a rival of the Lozi in the competition for Ila cattle, and thus an important cause of Lozi eastward expansion across and beyond the Nkoya region. Ndebele influence did make itself felt in the eastern fringe of that region (the Hook of the Kafue), as did that of the Chikunda states that emerged on the Lower Zambezi as a result of Portuguese activities. Documentary evidence describes the Hook in the later nineteenth century as a refuge where a fragmented and ethnically heterogeneous immigrant population became stranded while fleeing Ndebele, Chikunda and Yeke violence, and where trading lords in inaccessible *lukenas* (including the well-known Lenje ruler Chitanda, but also Mwene Kabulwebulwe and his senior councillors, such as Mwene Kapandula) tried to exploit the slave trade and derive political power from it. It is difficult to decide whether this forms part of the original process of state formation in the region (as I would suggest), or the reverse process of statal decline.[19] Whatever the case, the combined effects of the encroachment of precolonial states and the colonial state from outside the region halted the local formation of Nkoya states entirely, and reduced existing political structures to encapsulated, neo-traditional fossils. Dynastic processes, hitherto based on a combination of ascription and achievement, became frozen as a result of this incorporation, and the titles of Kahare, Mutondo, Momba and Kabulwebulwe (rather accidental and ephemeral condensation points of a political system in flux) came to represent fixed administrative arrangements within a wider state apparatus, reducing the bearers of these titles to dependent office-bearers, whose powers were static and limited when viewed in the totality of the encroaching wider state, but who nevertheless far surpassed the other bearers of Nkoya titles.

The major incorporating agent prior to the colonial state was the Lozi state. As we have seen, the Mutondo *lukena* had been ransacked in about 1860 during the Kololo occupation; after the eviction of the Kololo and the restoration of the Lozi dynasty, Lozi-Nkoya patterns of overlordship were perpetuated, and further extended to other titles, such as that of Kahare. Although the extent and nature of precolonial Lozi control over the Nkoya states remains an issue of heated debate among Nkoya today, it is abundantly clear from the combined evidence of oral and documentary sources that by the last decade of the nineteenth century the Lozi state effectively controlled constitutional and economic processes in the Nkoya states and that the two most prominent Nkoya titles, that of Kahare and Mutondo, had become incorporated into the Lozi state apparatus.

However, the Lozi state's influence among the Nkoya was to increase still further when that state was redefined in neo-traditional terms with the advent of the colonial state.

Colonial policy strove to consolidate and streamline the many-sided, pre-existing forms of political authority, forcing them into a uniform straitjacket of such elements as state recognition, subsidies, fixed territorial 'chief's areas' of jurisdiction and authority, fixed (if not undisputed) lines of seniority and succession between 'chiefs' (as the encapsulated neo-traditional rulers were invariably called), and subservience to the colonial state (cf. Apthorpe 1959). For decades, colonial officers throughout Northern Rhodesia devoted much of their time to the often highly artificial codification and formalisation of these patterns of traditional political organisation, and time and again intervened in succession disputes, conflicts over chiefly seniority and so on, as for instance the district notebooks and district correspondence files in the Zambia National Archives amply demonstrate. Clay's (1946) *History of the Mankoya District* resulted from such an exercise. Nor was the exercise wholly limited to bureaucrats, as Gluckman's (1943) early work on the Lozi indigenous administration shows.

This process of colonial incorporation raised some precolonial rulers to positions of unprecedented splendour, *Litunga* Lewanika and his successors being the most obvious case, long before indirect rule became the general British policy. Lewanika's state had been described in many books and articles prior to the imposition of colonial rule. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century it was a centre of precolonial missionary and European trading activities. It provided an apt condensation point for the European illusion of the splendid 'Sudanic kingdom' in British Central Africa. Lewanika suited not only the European imagination, but European administrative, political and economic interests as well. He was one of the very few Zambian rulers with whom formal agreements and concessions had been signed, and these formal justifications of colonial expansion in this part of Africa would stretch all the further, the more Lewanika was depicted as eminently powerful and effectively ruling over an impossibly large kingdom – particularly over those distant areas (hundreds of kilometres away from his capital, and clearly outside his sphere of influence) where rich mineral deposits were being discovered: the basis of Zambia's relative industrial wealth in later years. While the Lozi precolonial state and its ruler were thus raised to artificial heights, other political structures in the neighbourhood of Barotseland had to pass under the yoke. Various shades of statelessness, independence, diplomacy, occasional raiding activities, trading networks, tributary relations and internal colonisation were all forced into the formula of 'Barotse subject tribes', extending across the western lobe of Zambia. This story has often been told and re-assessed.[20]

In the process of accommodating the colonial state the Lozi state gradually had to give up part of its initial privileges, in terms of both territory and revenue, and between 1910 and 1950 many peripheral groups, such as the Tonga, Ila, Kaonde and Luvale, managed to escape from Lozi overlordship as reinforced by the colonial state. The Nkoya, however, did not, and each time the powers of the *Litunga* and his aristocracy suffered a blow, Lozi overlordship over the Nkoya became if anything more entrenched. For the Nkoya, the coup de grâce was the establishment, in the mid-1930s, of the

Mankoya Native Authority at Naliele (near the Mankoya boma).[21] In terms of this move both the newly created Mankoya Native Treasury and the Mankoya Appeal Court came under the direction of a Lozi prince, a senior member of the Lozi royal family and (in the Lozi system of positional succession) only a few steps away from succession to the Lozi paramountcy.

Throughout the colonial period, the colonial state allowed the Lozi 'indigenous administration' a fair measure of autonomy in dealing with the 'subject tribes', including the Nkoya. Thus the Lozi, more than the colonial administration, became the Nkoya's main perceived enemies, who humiliated (particularly through the actions of Lozi representative chiefs – *indunas* – in the Nkoya region), dethroned, exiled, and allegedly even poisoned, the various major Nkoya *Myene* at the time. These events distressed the Nkoya far more than the continuing immigration of both Lozi and Angolans into their region: in this sparsely populated region, with its culture of hunters and shifting cultivators, territorial notions were and are little developed, and it was considered beneath a person's dignity to quarrel over land. Colonial officers at the district level could keep up appearances of neutrality, to the extent that time and again Nkoya *Myene* solicited the support of these officers when seeking redress for grievances suffered at the hands of the *Litunga*. For instance, in 1933 Mwene Kahare Timuna (who a decade earlier had had serious trouble with the *Litunga* (cf. Gluckman 1968b) implored the District Commissioner, Mankoya, to intervene on his behalf with the *Litunga* to bring about the return of the Nkoya royal drums, which constituted the main regalia and central symbols of political autonomy, which the Kololo had taken to the Lozi capital and had never returned. Of course, the request was in vain. A further indication of the neutral attitude vis-à-vis the colonial state is gained by the fact that in the 1930s the same chief, under the aegis of the colonial state, made a tour along the urban places of work of Nkoya labour migrants, exhorting them to continue supporting both colonial and traditional authorities. While strictly political expressions of discontent were rare during most of the colonial period, it is significant that Watchtower preaching in the district in the 1930s and 1940s, with its emphasis on witchcraft eradication and the establishment of a totally new, millenarian social order, was very vocally anti-Lozi and anti-*Litunga*, and for that reason was effectively quashed not so much by the colonial state but by the Lozi administration; Nkoya chiefs who initially sympathised with the Watchtower activists were threatened with demotion, and backed down. The extent to which strictly political expression of local political grievance was blocked by the combined effects of both Lozi and colonial domination can also be gauged from a new wave of cases of witchcraft that struck the district in the 1950s: a self-destructive retreat into obscurantism that was excessive even for late-colonial Northern Rhodesia as a whole (cf. Reynolds 1963).

The rising tide of independence politics throughout the Northern Rhodesian territory in the late 1950s kindled, among the Nkoya, hopes not so much of shaking off a colonial yoke they little perceived as such, but of putting an end to Lozi domination. In the late 1950s, the establishment of an African National Congress (ANC) branch in Mankoya was prohibited on the ground of the threat of Nkoya separatism that it might pose – for the Lozi administration, and not, of course, for the national state, whose

borders were nowhere near the Nkoya region (Mulford 1967). The prohibition failed to check nationalist politics in the region. However, a dilemma soon emerged that was to keep the Nkoya divided for fifteen years or more.[22] On the national level, UNIP soon turned out to be the political force of the future, leaving far behind it the ANC from which it had sprung. However, Lozi politicians, such as the Wina brothers, occupied such conspicuous positions within UNIP that this party could not form a likely stepping stone for the political aspirations of the Nkoya people. The personal ceremonial rewards that some individuals, such as Mwene Kahare Kabambi, gained in the general rallying process around UNIP were insufficient to prevent many Nkoya from supporting the ANC minority option. However, with the increasing defeat of the ANC in the post-colonial political arena (for instance, a Nkoya parliamentary candidate was defeated on an ANC ticket in the 1968 general elections), the hopes they had initially had of the nationalist movement gave way to increasing disenchantment with the independent state and its political process. A crucial factor in this respect was the fact that the central government of Zambia curbed opportunities for labour migration to the south in such a way as to cut off a vital source of cash for the whole of rural Western Zambia, and for Lozi and Nkoya alike.

In the context of this disenchantment, traditionalist political and cultural notions offered a regressive retreat that could easily be mistaken for the persistence of precolonial socio-political structures. However, at the time, most adult male Nkoya as labour migrants had years of experience with modern political and economic conditions, and modern education and Christianity had made significant inroads. Aloofness towards the modern state could not have been an indication of the persistence of unaltered ancient structures (a case of non-penetration) – it is an option within a modern framework (a case of rejection).

The great breakthrough was to come not from any specific development in Lozi–Nkoya relations at the district or provincial level, but from a shift in political relations at the national level. In the late 1960s, UNIP politics had condensed around four major regional factions, very roughly coinciding with the 'neo'-ethnic labels of Bemba, Nyanja, Lozi and Tonga (cf. Molteno 1974). The Lozi element continued to lean heavily on such substantial remains of the Lozi indigenous administration as the Barotseland Agreement of 1964 had left intact – to the increasing irritation of President Kaunda, whose conception of the modern Zambian state proved irreconcilable with the royal presumptions of *Litunga*-ship and its ethnic, if not secessionist, connotations, and who besides found himself challenged by new alternatives to UNIP and international threats. In the years 1967 to 1971, the Lozi faction was neutralised at the national level; meanwhile, in 1969 in a dramatic turn of events well described by Caplan (1970), its ethnico-regional basis was undermined by Kaunda's dismantling of *Litunga*-ship, depriving it of most of its remaining privileges, and his altering of important Western Zambian place names with ethnic connotations, such as Barotseland (and, ironically, Mankoya).

While an essential reason for Nkoya non-participation in the national Zambian state was in this way removed, the episode also constituted a significant step towards 'one-party participatory democracy'. After a brief transitory period of distrust and limited

violence between UNIP and the ANC, the latter amalgamated into its much stronger offshoot, UNIP, after a short conflictive transitory period so effectively that certain earlier contenders for political office on an ANC ticket now became fully acceptable UNIP candidates – and occasionally saw their earlier hopes come true, as was the case with the first Nkoya member of parliament, finally victorious in the 1973 general elections.

Because the successful Nkoya candidates could and did associate with the *Myene,* they managed, for the first time, to create a direct and vital linkage between the encapsulated Nkoya states and the modern state. The energy that had hitherto been invested in ethnic and traditionalist retreat and entrenchment (and the above summary of Nkoya political history makes it clear why such entrenchment would have to focus on the institution of *Wene*), could now begin to flow through state and party lines.

What we have here is a case of attempted self-reconstruction of a rural society in which a modern political idiom, via brokers, managed to link up with the local socio-political system as supported by the local symbolism and cosmology. In the light of my analysis of the Lumpa rising (a case of societal reconstruction where such linkage proved impossible) one wonders whether, among the contemporary Nkoya, Watchtower did not offer an alternative solution, besides party politics. Watchtower retreatism has meant that local adherents have for reasons of Christian purity maintained a distance from central institutions in Nkoya rural society, not only chieftainship but also girls' puberty ceremonies, name inheritance ceremonies, and cults of affliction – in short, everything involving beer drinking, nocturnal musical sessions, medicine and spirits. Watchtower could not emulate the Lumpa example and attempt a total, theocratic transformation of local village society (cf. van Binsbergen (1981b:ch. 1,8) in either the 1930s or the 1970s, because in the 1930s repression (mainly at the hands of the Barotse indigenous administration) was too effective, while in the 1970s a politically meek Watchtower ideology could no longer accommodate the villagers' desire for a form of societal reconstruction that left intact and enhanced, rather than denounced as pagan and evil,[23] their central institution of *Wene*.

Such a linkage between *Wene* and the modern Zambian state needed the brokerage of the 'newer man', and could no longer be achieved by the *Myene* themselves. Some measure of participation by traditional rulers in the modern state has always been taken for granted in post-independence Zambia. State recognition of chiefs and state subsidies continued much as in the colonial period. Through the creation of the House of Chiefs it was hoped to bridge modern and traditional principles of government at least in so far as advice and information were concerned. The chiefs were to develop into foci of political and developmental mobilisation in the countryside, and to lend to the modern state such self-evident legitimation as they themselves derived from their rural cultures. However, as the state engaged in increasingly ambitious and complex administrative and political tasks, most chiefs lacked the education and dedication to participate in this process in any meaningful way. Moreover, the modern state did not give them the necessary power and status, feared them as foci of rural and ethnic protest and secessionism (the *Litunga* being a case in point), and ultimately had a use for them only as ornaments of its own secular, populist and bureaucratic conception of statehood.

Shortly after independence, chief's' areas ceased to be units of local government, and the chiefs' judicial powers were taken over by Local Courts in the interests of a more efficient, sophisticated and uniform administration of justice. Although most of the deliberations of the House of Chiefs could be shown to centre on the issue of traditional leaders seeking to define and enhance their roles in a modern state, the solution could not come from this point. Chiefs could only continue to 'rule' their peoples, to anchor the symbolic and cosmological structures of their cultures and to focus their historical experience, to the extent to which some boundary between local chiefly structures and the modern state was simultaneously maintained and crossed. The 'new men' have done just that.

Conclusion

Nkoya villagers rejecting or embracing the modern Zambian state in the course of the 1970s were not tabulae rasae, defining their attitude towards the state for the very first time, but people who had been political subjects and participants for a very long time, and whose contemporary political responses (even when they would at first glance seem to fit the metaphor of 'state penetration') reflect the accumulated political experiences, hopes and humiliation experienced throughout their history.

A historical perspective was needed to bring out this accumulated experience (the essence of being Nkoya), but at the same time allowed us to interpret as a modern, temporary option a phase of retreat and of rejection of the state which we might otherwise have misinterpreted as 'traditional' and 'non-penetration'. The concept of state penetration, as commonly applied in a synchronic approach, cannot throw light upon these relations, for while some basic Nkoya notions of socio-political order date back to a pre-state phase of sacred kingship, the dialectic of historical grandeur and humiliation that has accrued to these notions stems from historical experiences with other states, precolonial and colonial, over a century or more. My analysis also brings out the importance of the selection of the appropriate social-structural level: often studies of political penetration contrast small peasant communities with the modern state, and thus are bound to come up with clear-cut and partly artificial findings. It is not merely, or primarily, at the level of the village, the household or the individual peasant that Nkoya define and redefine their relation to the modern state, but as members of more extensive and permanent social units at a supra-local level: ethnic groups and subgroups which cluster on precolonial polities, and whose main distinctive feature is the awareness of a collective history of statehood.

Recurring penetration strategies in East Africa

Martin Doornbos

Over the years many studies have been concerned with the relationship between government and rural development in East Africa. In particular, issues of rural mobilisation and bureaucracy–peasant contacts have been explored from a variety of perspectives, on the basis of case materials from different levels of socio-political reality in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. Inevitably, the resultant diversity is considerable, but in searching for points of common interest or debate, the sources of this diversity have to be borne in mind. They reflect the complexity of substantive issues and the controversial nature of current strategies and choices in rural development in the East African countries; the different disciplinary backgrounds – sociology, political science, anthropology and economics – and methodological priorities from which analyses have been constructed; and, last but not least, the divergence, or conflict, among the theoretical positions of the researchers regarding the central problems. Such diverse points of departure inevitably limit the extent to which different analyses will converge into a neatly cumulative and comprehensive set of conclusions. There are different perspectives on what constitute key issues in political mobilisation for rural development. For example, concern with suitable institutional mechanisms and co-ordination is complemented and qualified by analyses which highlight the dynamics of grassroots conflict and increasing social inequality in situations 'reached' by mobilisation policies. Not surprisingly, questions about the 'how' of institutionalisation invariably lead to other questions that have first to be answered, about the 'what for' of institutionalised co-ordination and control. Not all of these differences are carried to the point where they can be finally thrashed out or in some way 'resolved'.

In what ways, then, has our understanding of the role of government in rural development in East Africa been advanced? For one thing, it is clear that certain

aspects of this relationship have become increasingly salient. These convey a renewed, if sobering, sense of historical continuity, and underscore our awareness of patterns and dynamics of structural inequality. Key factors include the critical importance of political choice – and of political will – in any attempt at rural and rural–urban transformation; the weight of local complexities in the realisation of alternative strategies; the increasing bureaucratic encroachment upon grassroots organisation and leadership; the recurrent lack of organisational sensitivity in the design and implementation of policies and, not least, the need to come to grips with the nature and configuration of the power structures in the East African states and their relation with the wider international context. In a broader sense, a shared concern with the various manifestations of neocolonial styles and structures in East African development has been emerging.

Perspectives on penetration strategies

If we are to consider these tendencies further, we might start from some of the concerns about government involvement in East Africa and see how these relate to issues and concerns in a wider context. We can adopt two approaches: the first associated with a fairly direct focus and the second with a more distant focus, directed at broader aspects.

When adopting a direct focus, we encounter a range of issues centred on the role of the bureaucracy in field activities. Irrespective of whether one considers attempts to restrict coffee growing, the handling of land tenure issues, the introduction of nutrition measures or the operation of agricultural extension services, in all instances, the key issue is the nature of the contact between government agencies and agents and local groups and institutions. Central to such 'field' situations is the tendency of central government agencies to extend their administrative control over widening areas of social, economic and political involvement. Viewed in this light, political penetration in rural development refers to the strategies and means by which an organising state asserts its power in rural societies, and seeks to incorporate and direct political and production processes on its own terms and premises. These tendencies of bureaucratic encroachment, however, seem to occur within, and to a certain extent notwithstanding, divergent political strategies in each of the East African countries. In a sense, they may well need to be considered as relatively autonomous processes, dictated by forces other than choice of strategy alone.

The focus on contact between officialdom and peasantry is related to a considerable body of writing on reaching strategies. This includes J.S. Furnivall's discussion of the logic and merits of direct and indirect rule for different economic objectives – such as plantation economy versus peasant cultivation (Furnivall 1948) – and Everett Rogers's prescriptions for stepping up diffusion of innovations in agriculture (Rogers 1969). Variants of contact theory have often outlined socio-economic, cultural or administrative dichotomies – with a 'frontier' hypothesised along a dividing line of 'original difference'.

East African societies are not dual societies in the usual conception (Mafeje 1973). They display profound internal and external contradictions; pluralist notions such as 'two worlds in one' or equivalent models are inadequate for an understanding of

their structural conditions or basic dynamics, let alone their probable course of further development. Transformed and deformed through colonial order and export-oriented peasant production, no presumed 'traditionality' can provide the intellectual rationale for their transmutation into 'modernity'. Modern tradition-based 'pattern-variables', so long emphasised in the mainstream of modernisation theory, hinder rather than help the understanding of reality. It would be a different matter, perhaps, if 'dual sectors' referred to 'created' or 'recreated' differences, as they are sometimes intended to do (Brett 1973). Conceptual confusion is bound to result if the same terminology is used in the obverse, and it is therefore better avoided.

Another juxtaposition appears more relevant and relates to a key aspect of the mechanisms referred to above. The confrontation between the organised and the unorganised, in Myrdal's analysis (Myrdal 1970), is a major one among a complex of basic cleavages – and it is within that context that 'penetration strategies' assume their role and special significance. 'Penetration' refers to issues which have long been prominent in the colonial and post-colonial discussion on Africa and Asia; they were basic to the colonial enterprise and are now basic to the role of the post-colonial state. Stripped of any dualist connotation, the heuristic utility of 'penetration' is that it directly indicates the strengthening of the centre's capacity in matters of organisation, production and control.

What further questions should be raised? Basically there are two positions. In terms of the first, the key 'problem' is essentially one of how to muster sufficient organisational strength and tactical sensitivity to 'overcome' obstacles, constraints or resistance in the delivery of development goods. The overriding concern here, as Hutton and Cohen (1975) have argued, tends to be with 'obstacle man'. Obstacle man, however, is an obstinate creature – not surprisingly, in view of all the psychological, cultural, socio-economic and other attributes which have been bestowed upon him over time. Time and again the conclusion has been reached that increasing ingenuity has to be used in approaching him.

In terms of the second position, the 'problem' is virtually the opposite; here the concern is with 'organisation man' of a sort. In terms of this perspective 'penetration' is associated mainly with the increased burden of demands, directives and extractions to which peasants are subjected at the hands of 'planistrators', to use Apthorpe's term (Apthorpe 1969; 1976). Planistrators have become responsible for an entirely new folklore in which technical shortsightedness and material selfinterest alternate as central themes and stereotypes. In view of the purposes and benefits they are assumed to serve, their involvement is seen largely to reaffirm and reinforce, rather than to minimise, distance, inequality and dependency.

The difference is compounded and poses profound dilemmas in the relatively few situations in which there is a political will to combat poverty and inequality. To be effective, the centre is likely to need increased powers; in fact, 'penetration' was first talked about in this sense. But if the centre is given extra powers, what is to ensure that these will not lead to renewed inequalities, a fresh class of 'dirigistes'? How can a concern for 'below' be validated through an approach from 'above'? Or indeed, how else? Although social analysis has achieved sobering gains in realism, the scope and

content of 'betting on the weak' policies are still far from clear. We now have some ideas as to what is *not* the answer and why. Again, discrepancies between declared goals and the extent of their fulfilment draws attention to the role of intermediate cadres – and to the admonitions of Michels (1949) and Fanon (1967).

The context of contact

Concern with penetration strategies usually implies particular interest in the connecting elements. In the relationship between an organising state and rural society, government invariably seeks channels of contact at the end of the line so that its policies, instructions and controls may be passed down and enforced. Such linkage roles are performed by a number of key factors in the local field: chiefs and headmen, ward chairmen and party officials, tax collectors, policemen, certain project personnel, extension workers, and also progressive farmers. Many have been objects of long-standing interest on the part of anthropologists and administrators. Following on the co-ordination and compromise between departmental policies, it is at their level that government presents itself to the rural population. All are designated as channels for contact, mobilisation and command. Most are appointed officials 'posted' to rural areas, but some are auxiliary members enlisted from 'below', for example, certain types of client chiefs, locally elected incumbents of linkage roles, and also progressive or model farmers whose function is to transmit innovations propagated by agricultural or veterinary departments. Clearly, at this level of encounter, the confrontation between bureaucracy and peasantry will find one of its most explicit expressions.

Opposite perspectives on 'penetration' are inevitably reflected in the treatment of linkage figures. Since in colonial Africa contact was frequently established through chiefs of various descriptions, it follows that they should have drawn more than usual attention in the literature. Chiefs were indeed often singled out for special interest. From a cultural perspective, concern might be with presumed role conflicts or with crises of loyalty and identity, all of which apparently added up to 'the predicament of the modern African chief', as Fallers (1955) first defined it. Administrative interests were focused, quite pragmatically, on the operational utility of chiefs within bureaucratic frameworks: that is to say as 'brokers', negotiating between two worlds, systems or orientations, each with its own demands, sensitivities and expectations.

Examinations along cultural and administrative-structural lines were strongly interconnected: based on notions of dualism, and directed towards overcoming the constraints between different sociocultural realities. What pertained to chiefs applied equally to other actors in the rural field. Model farmers, for example, selected as favoured clients of departments of agriculture, were typically seen as pioneering modern technologies amid traditional, parochial or apathetic environments. That premise is still widely held today. In support of these contact roles, diffusion theory has leant strongly on social psychology, communications techniques and other applied social sciences in developing improved methodologies for the neutralisation of constraints.

If the issue of penetration is viewed from the opposite angle, chiefs and other contact

agents themselves emerge as being part of the problem. Owing to their relative visibility they may still get special attention, but they are more likely to be seen as the frontline of an oppressive and exploitative system whose purpose is to extract and control. Recruitment from below, through co-optation of client chiefs or progressive farmers, will do little to change this picture. In fact, it may be viewed as a way of buttressing the 'system' at the expense of grassroots interests, if only because it siphons off the latter's potential leaders. It should be borne in mind that material incentives and status expectations are powerful instruments with which to ensure the loyalty of co-opted agents and their identification with the declared purposes and interests of government. Therefore, although the individuals concerned are exposed to demands and pressures by both sides, they are not likely to be subjected to chronic personal dilemmas. Such dilemmas, logical results of dualist theory, are hardly likely to emerge from variants of dependency theory.

Yet as we have seen, reality at this level can be both complex and subtle, obscuring some of the structural basis of the confrontation. Tactical considerations for safeguarding longterm political survival, for example, may well prompt a contact agent to play things both ways as long as he sees fit, or even at moments to favour the 'opposite' interest. The local scene abounds with examples of such subtle micropolitics. Again, as the eyes and ears of government on the rural development front, linkage figures may occasionally warn their superiors if they consider that the tribute or compliance demanded will exceed the tolerable or feasible. Therefore, when local people have some say in who will be recruited into contact positions, one criterion likely to be used in the assessment of a candidate is their willingness to stick their neck out. This, however, rarely becomes an exclusive criterion, since patronage and prospective gain are commonly decisive factors. Intimately linked to this, structural relationships are often obscured by the capacity of contact agents to manipulate both sides to their own advantage. In all penetration strategies the intermediary's own interest is a crucial factor.

Clearly, then, penetrative contacts are not enacted in a vacuum, nor should they be treated as such. The reality of contact situations on the rural development front is determined strongly by social inequality and local class differentiation; by stagnation and impoverishment; and by the emergence and consolidation of new kulak categories. The local context is further conditioned by a complex of conflicting aspirations and ambitions, frustrations and demands; by an ambivalent mixture of old and new forms of patronage; and by the articulation of new and fluctuating political affinities and coalitions – between chiefs and wealthy farmers, politicians and businessmen, central bureaucrats and local notables, for example. Other conflicting tendencies are exemplified within such contexts: the experimental nature of many programmes which imperil the security necessary in terms of farming routines; the gradual push towards institutionalisation, substituting bureaucratic for representative roles and, again, the tendency to cream off potential grassroots leadership by co-opting them into the state system.

The shifting power relations into which these processes are translated, with varying degrees of subtlety, form the core of the penetrative situation. These dynamics have provided the context in which various penetration strategies are implemented – policies and programmes officially declared to promote rural development. Here, too, however,

local variations are significant. In some situations the dominant coalition is between kulaks and staff – the staff favouring, and counting on, collaborative kulak farmers who assist them in the discharge of their penetrative functions (Thoden van Velzen 1977; Leonard 1977). The emphasis is then on distributive benefits, situations of 'unequal access to public services', in Bernard Schaffer's term (Schaffer and Wen-hsien 1975).

In other cases there has tended to be more direct conflict of purpose between these categories, that is, when wealthy farmers preempt government's capacity to implement particular programmes, or prevent government field officers from executing policies that would be unfavourable to themselves. Hyden and Lamb discuss such efforts to circumvent central policies aimed at more generalised objectives. In the Bukoba case, the landlords were fairly well connected with the party, the bureaucracy and the judiciary (Hyden 1977). In Murang'a, as Lamb reported, the dominant coalition was between better-off farmers and political representatives who helped to neutralise administrative policies through intervention at the centre (Lamb 1977). In another 'semi-underground' situation in Machakos district, Kenya, described by Mutiso, this political connection was even stronger: the extractive bureaucracy was avoided and self-help projects were sponsored in lieu of those of the administration (Mutiso 1977). Mafeje provided yet another variation from Uganda: different categories of Baganda farmers could expect different kinds of treatment from the central government and the Buganda government administration; they entered into alliances accordingly for as long as political conditions seemed to make this a prudent strategy, but no longer than that (Mafeje 1977).

The pattern of alliances is never identical, nor should this be expected. Lasswell's shorthand for politics, 'who gets what, when and how' might well be reformulated into 'who gets what, how, and from whom', thus stressing varying opportunities, channels and coalitions without presupposing a single source of benefits and sanctions. Generalisation is necessarily difficult at the micro level, as its constellation is mostly determined elsewhere. Hence, a narrow search here for the 'single enemy' may prove illusory. But there is no doubt that the grassroots experiences in rural Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda provide variations on a theme, that of differently mediated confrontations between an organising state and the peasantry. In all cases there has been a fair amount of carryover and extrapolation from the colonial setup – of penetration strategies, organisational forms and encounters, as well as corresponding 'contact' theories. In all strategy choices, the bureaucracy is the principal implementing and initiating body. This again raises the question of whether strategies have been, or actually can be, a matter of choice.

Strategy as 'choice' or 'given'

Whether or not 'choice' of strategy refers to more than a figure of speech depends largely on the level of abstraction at which the question is explored. This is immediately evident if we turn from a micro to a more macro focus on the role of bureaucracy in East African rural development. At one level, several significant differences of strategy may be noted. Kenya's neo-colonialist pattern of capitalist development, Tanzania's attempts to move

towards socialism and Uganda's military adventures have been strategic 'choices' of a sort. Again, in the rural context, these different strategies imply variations. It makes a difference, for example, whether in rural areas the bureaucracy is involved in matters such as the development of *ujaama* policy, as in Tanzania (irrespective of how that involvement has turned out); whether the rural scene is dominated by an assortment of corporals and privates turned chiefs, district officers or selfstyled constables, as was the case in Amin's Uganda; or whether, as in Kenya, a heavy provincial administration puts its colonially derived mark and conception on any issue of 'rural development'. There is also a difference of norms. Although rural class differentiation is visible in all three countries, it is ultimately of significance whether that process is actively promoted through policy, as in the Kenyan case; whether it seemed to occur despite declared objectives, as in Tanzania; or whether in the process a special bonus is reserved for particular groups, as for Uganda's military.

All these differences, then, have been a matter of 'choice', at least if that notion is stretched to include the 'option' of a military takeover and the distinctive philosophies and styles of different ruling groups – which, if Arrighi and Saul (1973) are right, enjoy a certain autonomy and 'plastic' quality. Beyond this, however, choice of strategy has been severely restricted by several basic 'givens', and in the end has often been rationalised accordingly. Notwithstanding the variations in style and approach to which we have referred, each of the East African countries has developed a rural development strategy which largely rests on, emanates from, and is implemented by the bureaucracy. In each case the state operates as a kind of 'macro' entrepreneur, in a sense that far exceeds the running of public enterprises or other specific economic ventures. The East African countries have of course become increasingly involved with foreign capital, in tourism, arms, selected manufacturing, agribusiness and other activities, each signifying additional economic roles for the state and bureaucracy. For the vast majority of the East African population, however, the dominant politico-economic relationship continues to be that of an extractive bureaucracy vis-à-vis peasant production. It is that relationship with which we are concerned here, and for which Furnivall's term 'business concern' is perhaps still the most appropriate.

We should guard against the implication that the bureaucracy, even with regard to this more limited field, is a single-purpose monolith. In all situations, various levels of difference and conflict can be found within the bureaucracy: among departments, policy orientations, or membership categories such as 'comprador' generalists versus technocrats. Significantly, when transposed into the context of a strongly externally oriented underdeveloped country, some of these differences acquire additional depth due to the manner in which staff/line, generalist/specialist categories relate to outside counterparts, contractors, and foreign business generally. Yet for various purposes we must and can abstract from internal differences and treat the role of bureaucracy vis-à-vis rural development as an analytic 'whole'. In regard to each of the East African cases, it is evident that the bureaucracy seeks to stimulate and control peasant production, mainly in order to reach an optimal level of exportable produce. Aside from specific issues and confrontations in the local context, there does not seem to be an a priori opposition of interests between technical departments and the general administration.

Much of the evidence underscores the extractive functions to which these various branches contribute. Price manipulation can be a crucial part of the incentive structure. At the end of the cycle, government intervenes again in the production process through marketing boards or equivalent arrangements and enjoys a controlled monopoly in selling the product on the international market.

Essentially, then, these mechanisms ensure that the surplus produced through peasant farming will be levelled off, rechannelled and indirectly utilised to meet the main item on the national budget: maintenance of the government apparatus. Thus, if we consider the externally oriented nature of peasant-based economies on the one hand, and the pivotal position of the bureaucracy within the 'formal' employment sector on the other, there appears to be a hard core of empirical validity to affirm an operative principle of 'the greatest surplus to the greatest usurper'. In this respect, the uses made of Tanzania's *ujamaa* policies were not essentially different from those of Kenya and Uganda. Political strategies towards mutual readjustment of agricultural and industrial production processes, and thus towards generation of internal and popular-oriented development have basically been lacking. Instead, policies remain by and large oriented towards the same, outward-directed processes, differing only in approach, style, or mode of extraction.

Given this central role of the bureaucracy, 'strategy' appears discretional in only a very limited sense. In each option the bureaucracy takes on the role of planner, executor and controller. In each case, too, the expanding bureaucracy is virtually dependent for its own upkeep on the way in which it is inserted into the production process. Any fundamental redirection of that process towards internally-linked production relations might easily imply a threat to the bureaucracy's basis of existence. Presumably this is why *ujamaa* policies were geared towards stepping up export production just as much as Kenya's measures towards rural 'mobilisation'. The erratic interference by Uganda's military, both locally and nationally, probably constituted the most serious disturbance of these patterns of extraction. Nonetheless, that involvement signified no more than the military's increasingly competitive demands for a share of the surplus; it does not alter the basic trend towards bureaucratic dominance and further bureaucratisation.

No wonder, then, that Michels's 'iron law' remains pertinent to an understanding of the contemporary East African scene, or that 'grassroots' comparisons between East African states continue to be made as plausible propositions – without too many complications due to divergent political strategies. It is not merely that any rural development policy is translated into bureaucratic terms and categories, posing comparable issues of 'contact' in the field. Bureaucratic interest is added to bureaucratic style, and together they define the reality of 'penetration'.

Accordingly, these dimensions have to be borne in mind when linking macro and micro perspectives and evidence. For example, we have noted the occurrence of different configurations in relationships between better-off farmers and the bureaucracy. In various contexts the bureaucracy figures as the dominant element in this reciprocity, while in other situations local kulaks emerge as the stronger party of the two. Even if the symbiosis is often uneasy, it is nonetheless there, based on connections of mutual benefit and dependency. Again, on the macro plane, convergence of interests must be placed

next to any apparent opposition. If kulaks figure as 'compradors' in the local context, it is the bureaucracy that assumes comprador qualities at the national level. This is not necessarily contradictory, but reflects the different ways in which these elements are linked into a single process. It is also largely due to the central role of the bureaucracy in rural development that many of the *kinds* of issues have emerged: the discussions of receptivity to government programmes, questions of proper organisational linkages and organisational sensitivity – indeed, the very notion of penetration. A wider connection suggests itself, namely that East Africa has long appeared to provide a fertile ground for policy-oriented 'applied' social science. Certainly, for much of the 1960s and thereafter, many sociologists, economists, political scientists and anthropologists tended to be concerned with the operations of government in the field, trying to identify the sort of bottlenecks, gaps and dislocations on the one hand, and appropriate modifications and reforms on the other, which were derived from a vision of optimal functioning of the system as it was constituted.

Yet the bureaucracy, while having its own interest and enjoying a fair degree of autonomy, is not the sole determinant of politico-economic mechanisms. Various external and internal forces have a bearing on current tendencies and on the position of the bureaucracy. They include international market forces and quota arrangements, organisational plan requirements stipulated by donor agencies, the demands of multinationals engaged in agribusiness, and the increasing pressures for land saleability and related local forces for change that are associated with the spread of capitalist commodity production. To a certain extent these pressures were slowed down in Tanzania by political forces favouring a socialist direction of change, but in Kenya and Uganda such countering has not been evident, not even during Uganda's abortive experimentation with the 'Move to the Left' in Obote's final year before the Amin intervention. While generalisation is hazardous, there is little to indicate that the bureaucracies have *not* been receptive to these external and internal influences. Circumstantial evidence rather appears to corroborate a coincidence of interests in this regard, and a more ready inclination to oppose 'socialist' experiments which threaten bureaucratic privilege.

Still, 'given' is not synonymous with 'constant'. Continuity of bureaucratic forms and the bureaucracy's continuing involvement in policymaking do not define bureaucratic power, interest or orientation. They may give the bureaucracy a certain 'access' advantage to political resources. Its political base, however, is primarily contextually determined, and of crucial importance is the particular way in which the bureaucracy is inserted within the general class structure and relates to the major socio-political conflicts within that context. Over time, new pressures on the bureaucracy constantly lead to redefinition and renewal of its political position, and its 'given' position must be understood against the background of changing political configurations. Thus, fluctuations have no doubt occurred in the power position of the Ugandan bureaucracy between the Baganda-dominated 1960s and the present day. Likewise, orientations in the Tanzanian bureaucracy have evolved into new – though no more facilitative – givens as a result of a mixture of austerity and conscientisation efforts on the one hand, and of a strengthened command position in rural mobilisation on the other. In Kenya,

re-orientations that have reshaped the givens refer in particular to the increasingly central role which is officially accorded to the cash nexus in agricultural production relationships.

By implication it follows that the political role and position of the bureaucracy varies significantly from one context to another. In contrast to the various East African configurations, for example, several Latin American and other settings offer considerably less scope for the political involvement of the bureaucracy: with fewer policy processes channelled through the bureaucracy and its general size and manpower budget more limited, there is less chance that bureaucratic interest and power will figure independently as a variable. Besides, a less entrenched and less powerful bureaucracy appears to be in principle more easily manoeuvrable and more responsive to new directives. The costs may then lie elsewhere, but at least the contrast underscores the implications of a centrally placed bureaucracy that politically is its own constituency.

The dominant role of the bureaucracy inevitably raises questions and dilemmas, one of the most crucial of which is the question of control, a variant of 'who rules the rulers', which here is necessarily focused on the bureaucracy. The weakness of political control and the lack of effective party organisation only enhance the dominance of the bureaucracy. Closely linked are questions about participation and popular involvement, recurrent themes in socio-political discussion. After noting the empirical fact that this involvement has not become effective, and that the dominant trend in all three East African countries has been one of increased bureaucratisation and centralisation, it must be asked whether a priori the frequent concern with participation is not really a non-issue. The logic of an organising state whose centrality is vital to its own existence ultimately appears to leave very little room for participatory politics. Indeed, much of what existed by way of popular representation has been eroded in recent years. The question appears to be whether the requirements of export-oriented economies based on peasant production are not likely to induce a progressive tightening up of organisational forms in order to approximate these given strategies, thus further reducing the scope for any attempt at alternative policies, such as those of Tanzania.

Finally, we consider the role of the state as entrepreneur. Under the characteristic East African circumstances of vast income differentials and a largely consumption-oriented bureaucratic establishment, the question is who or what will ensure surplus reinvestment for productive purposes. This issue is extremely pertinent, for although there are few historical examples of relatively successful state capitalism, it is doubtful whether the conditions of the East African states are even remotely comparable. In situations where there can be no question of bypassing, let alone of bringing down the predominant bureaucracy, prospects are rather of bureaucratic politics with involution as a main characteristic.

If the long-term chances for genuine development along the lines of present trajectories are far from reassuring, the scope for alternative strategies seems small indeed. The very nature of the 'chosen' strategies and their powerful traditions make any shift towards a truly peasant-oriented route of development extremely unlikely, if not inconceivable. The pull of bureaucratisation processes, notwithstanding *declared* policies to the contrary, is a cardinal factor. The lack of realistic conceptions of processes

and structures for development from below is another. Meanwhile, the spell of rapid social mobility has for some largely expired, and further consolidation of newly gained rural class positions must be anticipated. Any concluding note on the prospects for progressive rural development in East Africa is thus bound to be pessimistic. In the absence of processes or potential for the social mobilisation that is a prerequisite to ongoing transformation, the prospect is one of a bureaucracy-dominated pattern of relative rural stagnation, in which the question of strategic 'choice' is illusory.

Conclusion: 'Penetration' in retrospect

Reviewing the nature of the 'development discourse' up until the late 1960s, it is somewhat surprising, if not ironic, that the concern then should have been with the 'penetration' of government into society. No matter how 'incomplete' that process might still have been, one awareness brought home since then is precisely how established the central presence has been. The 'centre' may have been weak in an absolute sense, as Zolberg (1966) once argued, but in a relative sense it has proven to be extremely powerful within the East African context. Many structures were carried over and have been expanded since colonial times, and very few groups have escaped the influence of the central 'presence'. In retrospect, one cannot but wonder why various structural continuities – at least as far as the centre's presence is concerned – were so insufficiently recognised and underestimated. While it was partly through involvement in empirical studies that we began to appreciate the importance of wider contextual constraints, future research should be largely devoted to the systematic analysis of these dimensions, to a testing of the mechanisms at work, and to the exploration of the scope for manoeuvre.

Aspects of modern state penetration in Africa

Wim van Binsbergen

Pursuing their discipline's traditions as rooted, for a century or more, in the North Atlantic intellectual and political culture, constitutional lawyers, political scientists and students of public administration have never had to reconsider the problematic modern African state, to which their professional blinkers at first blinded them (cf. Hodgkin 1956). Perhaps one could chide them for taking the imported constitutional and bureaucratic organisational models at face value. Perhaps they were a bit slow in appreciating the complex socio-political realities so at odds with the formal administrative structures that were so confidently planted in the African soil with the advent of the colonial state, and so proudly revised at the emergence of independent African states, around 1960. It is for no more than a few decades that these disciplines have been considering such features as patronage and class formation; nation-building, ethnicity and regionalism; grossly inadequate patterns of state legitimation, information and participation; the often unchecked organisational and technological power of the military; the nature of international and intercontinental inequality; and the resilience (in an encapsulated, redefined form) of historical African political conceptions, such as focus on traditional rulers, precolonial polities, and ethnic groups. Far more tragic has been the case of the social sciences in the narrower sense: sociology and anthropology. For the latter, one could claim, with little exaggeration, that the discovery of the modern state in Africa only began more than half a century after anthropologists (under the tacit or explicit protection of the colonial version of that modern state) had begun to study African communities. Despite the fact that from the outset the economic, social, political and ideological dynamics of these communities had been deeply affected, if often only from a distance, by colonialism, anthropological theory and method were such that (as long as one gave the local remnants of precolonial states their due, and

underplayed the extent to which these were colonial neo-traditional artefacts) one could largely ignore the colonial state. Even so, one could still rise to such mythical professional heights as occupied by Evans-Pritchard, Fortes and Gluckman (cf. Asad1973). Although anthropologists were on a personal level very often sympathetic to the independence efforts, with a few notable exceptions[1] African independence found the anthropological profession largely unprepared. In the aftermath of *African political systems* (Fortes and Evans-Pritchard 1969/1940), anthropologists were still refining the theory of acephalous, stateless societies, and comfortably managed to find such societies within African colonial states (Colson 1962; Middleton and Tait 1958). The development of an anthropological approach to the modern African state, both colonial and post-colonial, only started in earnest towards the 1970s (cf. Goody 1968). This was partly a somewhat delayed response to the changing political realities in Africa itself (which did not always facilitate the type of field research anthropologists had habitually engaged in, and even forced many anthropologists to pose as sociologists or historians). Moreover, African anthropology was influenced by more general discussions, including those concerning the allegedly weak nature of the modern state elsewhere in the Third World (as initiated by Alavi); the rekindling (by such authors as Poulantzas, Milliband and Laclau) of the classical Marxist theoretical debate on state and capitalism; and the tentative models of ethnicity and primordial attachments as propounded by political scientists. Perhaps a major factor of the emerging anthropological interest in the state was the general rallying around the (inescapably state-oriented) issues of development and under-development; these issues have gradually come to dominate the genuine human concern, the rhetorics, and the funding structures of social science research on Africa.

As specialists in small-scale socio-political processes at the grassroots level, anthropologists have access to half the answer to the empirical, methodological and theoretical questions that the modern state in Africa raises – but in order to perceive this half as such, and to present it meaningfully in a wider context involving broad national and continental formal structures and prolonged historical periods, cross-fertilisation with the other disciplines mentioned is needed.

A workshop on the African state, involving Belgian and Dutch researchers and held in Antwerp from 20 to 21 December 1984, provided such a context. It was the second of its kind, the first having taken place in Leiden in December 1981 (cf. van Binsbergen and Hesseling 1984).[2] The purpose of the 1981 workshop had been a somewhat tentative meeting of minds across national and disciplinary boundaries, and to provide a forum for the presentation of the ongoing research of each of the participants, without any more specific unifying theme than that of the African state in general. In 1984 the conveners dared to be more ambitious. Considering the fact that, among the likely participants, specialists at the grassroots level (anthropologists) were neatly balanced with specialists at the national and international level (constitutional lawyers, political scientists and students of public administration), it was felt that the theme of state penetration at the local level would bring out and combine the best that either side would have to offer: the attempted linkage (however problematic) between our respective disciplines was to reflect the actual linkage (often much more problematic) between national and local levels of socio-political organisation and action in the African societies and polities we

had studied. We envisaged a focused confrontation of case studies and general statements, in an attempt to further a growth and convergence of more systematic insights to which it was hoped that all the various disciplines represented would contribute.

Themes and topics in the study of state penetration in modern Africa

State penetration in modern Africa is still a very broad topic indeed, involving not only a number of disciplines but also a variety of levels of analysis, of methods, and of underlying theoretical approaches.[3] It is not the intention of the present chapter to present an exhaustive view, nor to formulate the synthetic theory that so far has been missing in this field of enquiry. However, in reviewing the contributions made at the 1984 conference, we felt that the following four distinct themes were discernible:

1. Anthropological and historical perspectives

2. Institutional and legal perspectives

3. Perspectives of development and mobilisation

4. Towards a theoretical perspective

   Each of these themes will now be briefly discussed in an attempt to situate the positions of the contributors at the conference and others within the broader context of state penetration in Africa.

Anthropological and historical perspectives

Under this general heading we include studies which take as their point of departure African communities at the local or regional level, and thus concentrate on the receiving end of state penetration, tracing changing political relations with a geographically and structurally distant state in the context of a local economic, social, political and ideological structure. The modern African state, perceived as a still somewhat alien actor in the local set-up, is itself largely left unanalysed. Methods of enquiry and underlying theoretical perspectives are mainly those of anthropology, or of an anthropologically sophisticated historiography.

   As a metaphor, the concept of state penetration is as crude as the most prosaic representation of the sexual act, and as mechanical as the terminology that classifies electrical connectors as either male or female. Here history may allow us to achieve greater subtlety. A case in point is Schoenmaker's analysis of the establishment of the colonial economy in Guinea Bissau, which covers a period of more than a century, and which shows Portuguese state penetration in the regional economy of Upper Guinea to have been far from mechanical or straightforward. Similarly, in his contribution on the post-colonial state, 'state penetration' and the Nkoya experience in Western Central Zambia (which appears in this book), van Binsbergen argues how, in contemporary Zambia, what initially appears simply to be increasing state penetration between the early and the late 1970s in fact reflects a very complex historical process of centuries. If one were to

speak of state penetration here, it would have begun not with the post-colonial state, but at the very moment (some time in the eighteenth century) when autarkic communities, through a combination of endogenous factors and the emanations of the distant Lunda state and an even more distant mercantilism began to be involved in a tributary mode of production centring on local royal courts, thus creating the preconditions for statehood. In this case, and probably in many other contexts, the notion of state penetration thus would seem to obscure more fundamental relationships that would better be discussed in rather different terms. What appears to be defective or increasing state penetration might be attributed to collective historical experiences of a rather different, and sub-national (regional or purely local), nature. Such patterns are unlikely to be revealed by exclusively synchronic approaches: the short-term penetration of limited selected elements of modern statehood often presupposes a much wider, long-term process of incorporation.

Thus it is meaningful to explore the link between modern state penetration and the early state in Africa (cf. Vansina 1966; de Heusch 1972; Claessen and Skalník 1978), with special emphasis on the more recent transformations which these forms of political organisation have undergone in the colonial and the post-colonial period. In this context one would particularly consider early states as giving rise, in a process of modern state incorporation, to such specific sub-national identities as tend to be discussed under the headings of ethnicity and regionalism (cf. Amselle and M'Bokolo 1985). So-called traditional rulers or chiefs, and the encapsulated neo-traditional forms of political organisation they head, often form the condensation cores of such sub-national identities, to the extent that the position of these rulers in post-independent Africa increasingly constitutes a reviving topic of empirical study today. Adopting a more contemporary perspective, Peter Skalník's paper on Nanumba chieftainship facing the Ghanaian state takes up a similar issue, tracing a sequence of violent conflicts suggestive of the limitations of modern state power in the face of ethnic conflict, with traditional rulers uneasily straddling both sets of relationships.

The concept of culture occupies a central position in idealist anthropology, much as the concept of production does in materialist anthropology (with the articulation of modes of production as the latter's major stock-in-trade). Wouter van Beek, in his paper on cultural proletarianisation in Cameroon, manages to use an inversion of the current materialist idiom to discuss the cultural effects of incorporation as viewed from a Cameroonian segmentary society, in such terms as 'articulation of modes of destruction', and 'cultural proletarianisation'. While such usage drives home the seriousness of the situation, the systematic connections between what may have to be termed 'symbolic, or ideological, production' on the one hand, and material production and its exploitation on the other, remain to be analysed. However, the paper links the ethnographic argument to one concerning the contemporary emergence and manipulation of popular culture in a context of state penetration – a topic to which we shall return later.

Institutional and legal perspectives

We now turn to a cluster of studies that concentrate not on the passive but on the active actor in state penetration: the state in its many administrative and institutional forms, which constitute major vehicles of state penetration. While the grassroots studies may often leave the state itself in some indeterminate haze, with regard to the present cluster the danger exists that the receiving side, that of the clients of state bureaucracies, becomes relegated to some unstructured monolith in itself; to avoid this trap, it would be illuminating to specifically study the selective use of public services by such relatively powerless groups as women, or ethnic, regional and ideological minorities.

Probably the most conspicuous form in which the modern state penetrates at the local level is through public services: health care, education, agricultural extension work, maintaining of law and order, crisis intervention and so on. For many peasants and urbanites in modern Africa, the perception of the state largely, if not exclusively, revolves on the formal bureaucratic organisations created within this framework. African bureaucracies have been frequently studied in the context of public administration, and while in earlier periods research of this type may have tended to take for granted the formal structure of bureaucratic organisation, later studies often examine the manifold ways in which these structures (often at variance with original policy intentions, and transformed beyond recognition) are mediated to the members of African rural and urban communities, the clients of these organisations.

In studies of these bureaucratic mechanisms of state penetration, the lowest echelon of civil servants forms an interesting sociological category, with aspects such as their social background, processes of recruitment, attitudes, aspirations, problems of communication, income, power bases and networks of patronage deserving the closest attention. The relations between (lower) civil servants and their clients (peasants and the urban poor, and citizens in general) are influenced by the relations between civil servants and their superiors within the state bureaucracy – and further research along these lines might help us to identify the idiosyncratic logic of bureaucratic penetration.[4] Here one encounters such patterns as: the arbitrary imposition and proliferation of administrative territorial boundaries; bureaucrats' conflicts over competence, jurisdiction and informal factional support; the tension between bureaucratic and general societal norms and values (so that an individual's bureaucratic position may be made subservient to kinship demands to the point of misuse of public funds and authority, or become a foothold for personal economic expansion in the market economy) – in other words the problem of corruption; and the mutual encroachment between bureaucratic and traditional authority, both confronting and/or allying with modern political power. All this creates the potential for the state bureaucracy to generate networks of exchange and patronage (often ethnically, regionally or religiously based), which are far from envisaged in official policy declarations, yet come to form major vehicles of state penetration (cf. Thoden van Velzen 1977).

Within the more general framework of the Tanzanian development efforts (which makes his paper intermediate between the present and the next cluster of studies), Haile Asmerom takes up some of these issues in his paper on the Tanzanian village council.

This paper, situated in a body of work associated with the publication of the seminal *Government and Rural Development in East Africa* (Cliffe, Coleman and Doornbos 1977), makes it very clear that it is not always easy to distinguish between state penetration as brought about by formal bureaucratic organisations on the one hand, and the juridical mechanisms for state penetration on the other. Of course, any bureaucracy has its own juridical foundation, stipulating the internal organisation of an organisational body as well as its place and function within the overall state structure. The study of state penetration would be incomplete without ample attention being given to administrative law.

That this is a more dynamic field of study than many anthropologists would suspect, allowing for considerable variation in the extent to which non-juridical, socio-political factors could be drawn into the argument, is clear from two overlapping studies relating to contemporary Algeria: Gauthier de Villers's study entitled 'La révolution agraire et le pouvoir communal en Algérie', and Dirk Beke's entitled 'The administration of the commune in Algeria'. Not unlike Asmerom, Beke takes the formal institutional structure as his main point of reference, carefully avoiding the kind of analytical distance (an 'etic' meta-perspective to offset the bureaucrats' 'emic' or folk categories) that enables de Villers, on the other hand, to appreciate the administrative dynamics concerned in a perspective of the socialist transformation of rural society in Algeria. Underlying these two papers is also the theme of decentralisation, which constitutes a central political and administrative issue in many African states today, and which in the present context could be interpreted as both the administrative-legal vehicle of state penetration, and the limitations to such penetration at the local level.

National legal structures on the one hand render the state visible and make its power felt at the local level, but on the other hand enable us to explore the limits to effective state penetration, in so far as under the familiar conditions of legal pluralism in present-day Africa the state may aspire to legal hegemony, but has seldom yet achieved a powerful monopoly. In her contribution entitled 'La réforme foncière au Sénégal', Gerti Hesseling argues that from a legal perspective state penetration does not always have to result in the juxtaposition of two totally alien and unconnected legal systems, one local, the other national. Recent legal innovations are introduced within a more general economic and politico-legal context that (at least in the Senegalese case) has had more than a century and a half to gradually seep through to popular consciousness. Hence the diversity of perceptions and interests between peasants and bureaucrats nevertheless gives rise to surprisingly convergent views on contemporary land tenure.[5]

Finally there is also an obvious place here for constitutional law such as stipulates fundamental human rights (sometimes also fundamental duties) which effect the linkage between the individual and the state in so far as they determine the nature and the extent of citizens' information and participation; these two concepts in themselves offer qualitative indicators of effective (and desirable) state penetration in a democratic context.

Perspectives of development and mobilisation

Having briefly dwelt on the organisational and administrative-legal forms of state presence on the peripheral African scene, we now turn to their specific, both manifest and latent (unintended), functions in public life, and particularly in the peripheral economy of African countries. This third cluster of papers has already been foreshadowed by Asmerom's discussion of the specific instruments for rural development in Tanzania and by Hesseling's discussion of national land reform: in many African countries state-initiated land reform has as an unintended effect, if not an explicit aim, namely the creation of a framework through which the historic rural communities and their non-capitalist relations of production can be effectively penetrated.

Critical views of state penetration in Africa may claim that the dominant function of state services is to represent (i.e. serve penetration by) the central state; their secondary function would then seem to be to serve the interest of a bureaucratic elite and middle class whose main source of power and income is the national state, while finally the discharge of public functions in the interest of the local population would be relegated to an accidental side-effect, if that. This pessimistic view is strongly present in Sjaak van der Geest's paper entitled 'Health care as politics? "Missed chances" in rural Cameroon'. Even as a form of state penetration the defective functioning of the government medical services in that country is claimed to be counter-productive: instead of rallying around a central state that dispenses health and medicine, the local population is said to turn away from the state, not only for medical matters but in general.

Does the performance of state bureaucracies in other sectors of public life give reason to seriously doubt van der Geest's allegations? A case in point is state intervention with regard to the incorporation of peasants and marginal urbanites in the market economy through the efforts of state marketing boards and agricultural extension work, or in the framework of development projects. These topics[6] are represented in W.A.S. Cornelis's paper, 'A mechanism of state penetration: An evaluation of the O.R.S. development project in rural Mali', and by Johan Pottier's study of food security, local administration and peripheral development in Northern Zambia. Peasants are depicted as no longer looking to the state for solutions to their economic predicament, and the services that the state has extended, ostensibly in order to alleviate this predicament, turn out primarily or exclusively to serve state penetration at the expense of local initiative, control and economic growth. A similar concern forms the backbone of Asmerom's argument, in which an interesting comparison is drawn between state penetration and development, the latter signifying both increased levels of rural productivity and peasants' continued or increasing political competence concerning their own situation.

Is the price of economic development[7] not too often the reduction of the peripheral population to powerlessness? Must one expose much of the official development rhetoric as a thin ideological film around state aspirations of increased political control in the periphery? The case studies cited offer ample empirical substantiation for the applicability of such a view in at least selected specific situations. However, to the extent that the failure of these development-oriented services estranges the peripheral population from the state (a point stressed by van der Geest), one might suspect that the

state has other, more effective and less costly means at its disposal to effect successful penetration among the same people. Or do health care and increased income from agricultural production constitute the two desiderata that so absolutely dominate the consciousness of both the rural populations involved and international donors that the state is persuaded to spread its limited resources for these services too thinly, with both economic and medical failure as an unavoidable result?

Since a pessimistic, dismissive view of state penetration has become almost common-place in studies of the relations between modern African states and peasants and urban poor, we should ask ourselves to what extent such a view may yet take on, among less scrupulous researchers than our contributors, the characteristics of a scholars' myth? Those researchers who take the grassroots level as their point of departure in the study of the modern African state, and thus are the main heirs to the anthropological tradition of an earlier day, can no longer afford to ignore the modern African state; however, a profound scepticism, bordering on cynicism, is often the only response they can manage. The state is still perceived as doubly alien: both to their discipline as they see it, and to the peripheral population groups they study. And while familiarity may be said to breed contempt, much of the social sciences is there to show that alienness can inspire equally ugly feelings. Does the widespread cynicism concerning the African state always base itself on empirical proof relating to specific political and economic conditions? The fashionable appeal of Hyden's altogether too sketchy notion of an 'uncaptured' African peasantry (1980; cf. Geschiere 1984) owes much to these misgivings.

The other, more macro-oriented mainstream in the contemporary study of the African state would take state structures much more for granted. It may be better equipped for the identification of the concrete mechanisms through which state penetration is effected; here, for instance, recent studies have come to emphasise strategies of regional planning, at a level intermediate between the grassroots and the national centre. Only when we move from global sweeping statements to detailed empirical observations of specific processes within a well-defined socio-political and economic environment does it become possible to level meaningful, specific criticism at the structure and performance of modern African states. Then, also, the necessarily limited, but still tangible results of genuine commitment on the part of bureaucrats and politicians in Africa may become discernable and appreciated. A closer look at our own class position as North Atlantic academics might also be conducive to greater modesty (cf. van Binsbergen 1984). State penetration, like capitalist encroachment (cf. van Binsbergen and Geschiere 1985a), cannot be automatically deemed a bad thing for the peasants and urban poor we identify with, and under certain conditions (which our scholarly research may help to specify, and which certainly imply the local political competence stressed by Asmerom) it may even begin to offer the solutions for the extreme predicament affecting these people.

The topics indicated under this heading all relate directly to the economic crisis of Africa in the 1980s. Can the continent's increasing inability to feed itself be attributed to ineffective state presence in the rural areas and in the distributive and management sectors of the economy, in other words, to defective state penetration? Or, alternatively, is state penetration of itself partly responsible for a stagnant economy?

It is not only through such clearly developmental issues as health services or planned agricultural change that the modern African state endeavours to penetrate, with varying degrees of success and justification. Another such means is education. The contribution of ethnicity and patronage to state penetration is acknowledged, as is the fact that the dynamics of state penetration include channels and processes of mobilisation at the grassroots level. On the one hand one could think here of organisations which, from the national or international level, descend to the basis: political parties, women's movements, trade unions, Islamic brotherhoods, Christian churches and other religious and ideological organisations. Whereas the origin and the early development of such bodies was often situated outside the (colonial) state, and whereas they were initially often directed against that state, the post-colonial situation offers a varied picture of the ways in which such organisations tend to become caught up in the modern state. In extreme cases they have become fully incorporated in the post-colonial state, as happened to dominant political parties in many African countries – to the extent that the distinction between state and party has become ideologically blurred, with party membership turning into a major form of state penetration. In many other cases the state attempts to control such mobilisation organisations with varying judicial and political measures; again we touch on constitutional law. The local-level reactions to this interaction between the state and voluntary organisations deserve our closest attention. To what extent, and because of what structural and accidental historical factors, is the state's hold on these mobilising movements effective or ineffective, and in what direction does the process move? To what extent do these movements engender counter-currents once again directed against the (post-colonial) state? Under what circumstances can these counter-currents grow into revolutionary and secessionist movements, or strike alliances with such movements (Buijtenhuijs 1978; Ranger 1985a)? Can they team up with more 'traditional' sub-national identities as indicated above? Do 'socialist' regimes in modern Africa display a significantly different response from 'liberal' or 'bourgeois' ones in this connection?

Some of these issues are taken up in Piet Konings's discussion of the state and the Defence Committees in the Ghanaian revolution of 1981 to 1984. His argument, relating to a very topical series of events in modern African politics and highlighting the differential success of corporatist (ultimately populist) and collectivist tendencies within the Ghanaian revolution, shows the complexity and the limitations of state penetration through mobilisation.

In addition to more or less clear-cut movements that have evolved (independently, or under state initiative) a specific organisational structure of their own, we should pay attention to the more diffuse ideological expressions of a growing national (particularly urban) popular culture. The emergence and internal coalescence of such national cultures can be seen to make use of music, dance, drama, representational and literary arts and cults; in this way they are selectively mediating an ancient cultural heritage,[8] but also inventing and restructuring the new values and symbols of a multi-ethnic, dominantly urban, peripherally capitalist society in modern Africa (cf. Ranger 1975a; Fabian 1978). Often the forms, organisational structures and content of this field are to a considerable extent determined by North Atlantic cultural imperialism, and by both

North Atlantic and Far East electronic technology. Yet, making highly elective and innovative use of African cultural heritages, these national popular cultures may yet begin to gradually supplant the sub-national (neo-)traditional identities that, in a more particularistic fashion, continue to legitimate themselves by reference to a past long gone. Van Beek shows how the results of such cultural penetration (as compared with the situation immediately before effective penetration) is often far from reassuring. But by addressing the realities, frustrations and aspirations of Africa today, these expressions of an emerging popular culture have also formed a major (if diffuse) growth point of citizens' attitudes vis-à-vis the colonial and the post-colonial state – they are the cradle of a modern political culture. In so far as this culture includes historic, autochthonous elements (notably notions of sorcery, and traditional rulers), these should not be mistaken for simple revivals from a precolonial past, but acknowledged as essentially neo-traditional innovations, reflecting a symbolic and organisational transformation in the course of state penetration in the post-colonial era.

It is clearly for good reason that in the 1980s many students of African politics extended their fields of enquiry beyond party organisations, elite formation and voting behaviour, and turned to 'popular modes of political action', sometimes including activities as relatively amorphous and unfocused as petty crime, prostitution or student requests for better facilities, but which yet could be argued to reflect on the interaction between state and citizen at the grassroots level. This line of argument owes much to Bayart's work on Cameroon (Bayart 1979; 1983a; 1983b).[9] This emergent approach is represented by, among other research, Peter Geschiere's 'Hegemonic regimes and popular protest – Bayart, Gramsci and the state in the Cameroon'. Working within the Belgian tradition of critical Zaire studies (including exponents such as B. Verhaegen and L. Martens), a similar inspiration is behind Jean-Claude Willame's 'Réflexions sur l'État et la société civile au Zaire' – an attempt to interpret the remarkable features of the post-colonial state of Zaire (frequent internal insurgencies; populist state-initiated mobilisation under the aegis of 'authenticity'; and extreme intercontinental dependence) by a juxtaposition between 'civil society' and state – the latter manifesting itself, in the Zaire of the 1980s, in an exceptionally pathological and chimerical form.

Beyond these rather anonymous mass aspects of modern popular (including political) culture, one could begin to ask how cultural elites and leaders (modern media, formal education, the intelligentsia, artists, religious leaders and world religions) affect, perhaps dominate or exploit these processes. Do they each in their own way contribute to the construction of a civil ideology which underpins the state and its dominant elite; in other words, do they construct and maintain 'ideological state apparatuses' which, among other factors, enable an imperfectly legitimated state nevertheless to impose its hegemony? Or is their contribution to the ideological penetration of the modern state in everyday life not the whole story, and do their ideological expressions retain an element of protest, challenge and resistance – and if so, what sort of response do they then draw from the state and the citizens in general? At any rate, further explorations of the similarities and differences between state penetration, and such forms of ideologico-organisational penetration as attend the spread of world religions and modern mass culture are well worth taking up.

Towards a theoretical perspective

The question of whether modern state penetration in Africa is a good or a bad thing has obvious practical and political implications, but can hardly be said to advance our theoretical insight in the processes involved. African studies throughout have tended to concentrate on case studies and empirical generalisations, and as a regional specialisation have not been remarkably conducive to the development of abstract theory. However, a few illuminating attempts at generalisation and theory formation are available.

Geschiere's chapter (1986), reflecting on a good deal of the current literature on modern state penetration in Africa, and combining (in his concluding section) the emerging theory of hegemony formation with the paradigm of the articulation of modes of production that has captivated scholarly attention since the mid-1970s, perhaps comes closest to the formulation of a partial theory of the dynamics of state penetration. Written by an anthropologist-cum-historian, it nevertheless belongs in the grassroots stream of approaches to the African state, and may yet require further elaboration on the legal, institutional and constitutional side in order to convince researchers more squarely identifying with formal approaches that take the central state, rather than local and regional political processes, as their point of departure. In fact Geschiere's emerging approach is strikingly transactional, in that it tends to redefine the accepted hierarchy of organisational levels (national, regional, local) as a rather inchoate field of essentially horizontal, complex and dialectical interaction, whose uncertain and ephemeral outcome (the creation of effective hierarchy and control centring on the state) is based more on success or failure of alliance strategies (focused on personal interests and even on persons) than on structural characteristics of institutional units involved. As a consequence, his insights are heuristic and methodological rather than their concrete substance being generalisable: the specific features of the field at a given time and place can lead to totally different outcomes, and, as in other domains of African studies today, the methods of anthropology gradually give way to those of contemporary history.

Martin Doornbos in his paper entitled 'Incorporation and cultural "receptivity" to change' arrives at conclusions similar to Geschiere's, although Doornbos's conclusions are couched in a totally different idiom (one much more reminiscent of the type of structural-functional cross-cultural comparison that was in vogue around 1960), and derive from a rather different theoretical inspiration (a much more classical anthropology, in combination not only with latter-day political science but also with the accumulated experience of social research institutes in East and South Central Africa in the 1950s and 1960s). For Doornbos too, however, the process of state penetration remains essentially unpredictable as long as one concentrates on structural characteristics of the social units involved at the receiving end:

> In the final analysis, receptivity to planned change appears primarily a func-
> tion of the nature and quality of political goals and strategies (Doornbos
> 1986:364).

Limitations of current research

With a variety of disciplines having been brought together in an attempt to highlight significant connections between micro and macro levels in African political systems today, it is scarcely surprising that, out of the above panorama of possible themes and exciting lines of enquiry, only a few were actually pursued in concrete empirical research.

At least one classic theme of African political studies remained under-represented: that of political parties, although, as vehicles of state penetration par excellence, they deserve more than the cursory references made to them.

Further it would appear that more specific attention could have been paid to the specific problems of legitimation that beset African modern states, and to a variety of partial solutions to this predicament, such as:

- strategic use of (control over) the media;

- popular culture, either challenging the state or, in alliance with that state, giving rise to what could be called African populism (cf. Fauré 1978; Jackson and Rosberg 1984);

- world religions, again either challenging or underpinning the modern state; the obvious reference is Islam in West Africa (cf. Nicolas 1981, and references cited there), but Christian cases, too, could be cited, for instance in the case of Zambia;[10]

- attempts to enhance state legitimation by the adoption of an official state ideology, ranging from 'scientific socialism' to 'authenticité'.

That research current in the 1980s would appear to display blind spots on these points is partly due to the fact that 'legitimation' and 'state penetration' refer to different phases in the process of state formation, and to different realms of scholarly discourse. The legitimation of the state may well form the final outcome, on the ideological plane, of a crude and still uncertain process (often characterised by great socio-cultural distance, lack of political participation by the periphery, and a considerable degree of physical and structural state violence) by which a central state power seeks to gain access to a geographical and/or social periphery. In such a context ideological factors are of eminent importance: they may reduce distance, create incentives for identification and participation, and thus allow a reduction of the level of conspicuous and violent state presence. Alternatively, however, ideological factors may in this phase create new boundaries behind which peripheral citizens may entrench themselves in the pursuit of an ethnic or religious local particularism.

On closer analysis the contributions mentioned here have substantial insights to offer on these points, although not expressed in Weberian legitimation terms. Thus, a fair proportion of them illustrate the failure of the state to legitimate and assert itself despite all the above options, and as a consequence its being challenged by revolutionary alternatives, uprisings, secession movements,[11] coups, or (by far the most common option) citizens' more passive withdrawal from civil participation. More specific discussions of these ideological dimensions, which (as the contributions mentioned by and large imply) may even take precedence over institutional and economic aspects as determinants of differential patterns of state penetration, would be welcomed.

What appears to constitute a genuine blind spot is the international context of state penetration. The rise of international organisations for development co-operation of a bilateral or multilateral nature (including such immensely powerful bodies as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund)[12] introduces a powerful external element. Have these development agencies effectively inserted themselves between the modern African state and its peripheral citizens, mediating between both, and possibly eroding national state power in a context of international and intercontinental economic and political dependency?[13] Another aspect of this international context is to be found in the field of law and international relations. The internal affairs of modern states (and this includes their relations with their citizens) are influenced (if not exactly determined) by constitutional arrangements stipulating fundamental rights, the legitimate exercise of political power, and so on; these are often underpinned by international treaties and international public opinion as articulated by the media. A case in point is Zaire, whose constitution and state ideology 'window-dressed' actual internal state performance and intercontinental dependency so as to maintain a level of international respectability in the eyes of North Atlantic patrons. Nor is this merely a matter of ideological mimicry: ultimately, internal state–citizen relations within African countries may be subject to the power politics between major blocs in the centre of the world system who have transported their competition to the African soil, where it became a major factor in the relation between, for instance, peripheral populations of the Angolan, South African, and Ethiopian state (all displaying variations of the confrontation between East and West) or the Senegalese state (as a clear case of French imperialism within the Western bloc). In this connection one could also think of more tangible transgressions of national boundaries: military action, and refugees, which together significantly contribute to the picture of modern African politics, but which were largely ignored in the present context of state penetration – perhaps because our central metaphor erroneously conveys a sense of increasing order rather than of increasing chaos and misery.

These and other omissions do not necessarily reflect the state of scholarship in the Netherlands and Belgium in the 1980s. We could not hope to cover the total research effort currently directed, in both countries, towards the African state.

If much of the intervention of the modern state at the local level in Africa in the 1980s took place in a context of 'development', we are clearly dealing with a field intensively covered by such disciplines as economics, geography, demography, agronomy, and the planning and evaluation specialties that have evolved in these fields. We fully acknowledge the relevance of these approaches to our theme. However, for structural reasons, disciplinary networks and organisations in both the Netherlands and Belgium somehow led in the 1980s to a structure of academic exchange and a division of academic labour not conducive to the representation of these disciplines at our conference. On the other hand, when it comes to content and substance, in modern African studies disciplinary boundaries tend to fade. We flatter ourselves that a number of the contributions mentioned here would not look out of place in the context of a conference of geographers and economists.

Limitations of the concept of state penetration

Despite our emphasis on the extent to which the concept of state penetration has heuristic value and is capable of providing a common field of debate and exchange across disciplinary boundaries, we should not overestimate the theoretical and explanatory potential of what remains essentially a metaphor.

Perhaps the most obvious limitation of the metaphor is that it tends to view the penetrating agent, the state, as a monolith (and one with phallic connotations at that). Of course we all know that the state is a very complex, multi-dimensional set of contradictory socio-political and ideological relationships. One wonders how much of the initial insight that the metaphor suggests remains once one tries to steer away from the reification it so clearly entails. It is perhaps here that a class analysis of modern African societies, since an attempt at the exhaustive description of contemporary relationships has failed to convince,[14] may yet have the great advantage of drawing our attention to the selective and differential class interests behind state presence in the lives of African peasants and the urban poor: modern state penetration is, after all, to a considerable extent a form of class formation in an overall capitalist context. Konings's *The state and rural class formation in Ghana* (1986) is an eloquent statement to this effect.

The problem of monolithic over-simplification also exists at the receiving end, and there it turns out to be not only a conceptual but also a methodological problem. State penetration may not be primarily a matter of confrontation between the modern state and atomistic individuals (the most likely unit of study in the popular type of superficial sample surveys administered by teams of research assistants), or defenceless peasant communities, but between that state and fairly well-defined groups that (as ethnic groups, perhaps also as religious bodies) cluster around some conscious sub-national identity, and which one can approach only through prolonged participant observation and more or less formal group interviews, in combination with the documentary methods of contemporary or not-so-contemporary history.

We have already pointed out the danger of too synchronic a view of state processes in Africa (for an extensive argument, see Lonsdale 1981). Understanding the modern state often requires understanding a complex and lengthy precolonial local political history. The African precolonial past was (at least for the second millennium) not predominantly stateless, and although the specific type of modern state (literate, rational, formal, bureaucratic) may be relatively new to Africa, state penetration in general was often not a phenomenon that started with the scramble for Africa, or with North Atlantic involvement in general. In the 1980s, modern state penetration, therefore, may often have constituted a particular, recent form of incorporation, building upon earlier processes of incorporation which partly shaped the peripheral citizens' selective appreciation of the modern state. In this light considerable attention should also be paid to the specific patterns of continuity and discontinuity between the colonial and the post-colonial state in their penetration efforts and success.

Finally we should be conscious of the fact that the metaphor of state penetration is not totally neutral. It belongs to an idiom of meta-academic solidarity. In addition to its academic use, the model may easily provide a vehicle for the expression of such

suspicion, scorn and protest in the face of the many and undeniable contemporary cases of state failure in Africa – in such fields as the food and energy crisis, rural development, internal justice and international relations. Here the sexual symbolism of the metaphor of state penetration can be explored to its full extent, reducing Africa, and the modern Third World in general, to an arena where brave but doomed pre- or extra-statal remnants (cultural, ethnic and linguistic minorities, segmentary acephalous societies and 'traditional' chiefdoms, successionist movements, religious systems outside the mainstream of world religions, systems of production and circulation outside the direct control of capitalism) are first 'captured' and then violated by a brutal state and the cynical and greedy personnel that fill its bureaucratic apparatus.

How to avoid the underlying stereotypes: the anachronistic assumption of non-penetration, of 'statal virginity', among the peripheral citizens in African states; or the rhetorics of indiscriminately suspecting or condemning all state action and by the same token automatically supporting all sub-national identities that confront the state? How to arrive at a positive, yet critical and independent academic contribution to the immense problems of Africa today?

While the refinement necessary to escape from such stereotypes may not be found in the concept of state penetration itself, the studies collected in this book may go some way towards suggesting that that concept offers at least the heuristic inspiration for the sort of detailed and incisive research necessary for a more balanced and profound understanding of the relation between modern African states and peripheral local communities.[15]

PART II

ETHNICITY AND IDENTITY: WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

INTRODUCTION TO PART II

One of the discoveries of recent African ethnicity research has been that the ethnic distinctions non-African scholars imposed in their early twentieth-century pioneering analyses of African ethnicity were often subsequently appropriated as objective truth by African actors; these imposed distinctions thus became one of the bases for Africans' own modern ethnic distinctions, which have played such an important, and often destructive, role in post-colonial African states. It is as if the Gauls, from a state of fuzzy ethnic boundaries and fluid ethnic distinctions, subsequently adopted the clear-cut ethnic distinctions employed by Julius Caesar in his *De bello Gallico* – and for all we know that might in fact have happened when the Gauls of what is now France and Belgium were increasingly incorporated in Roman imperial state structures.

One of the most inveterate popular misconceptions concerning Africa today is the idea that the population of that continent would, in the first place, have to be classified into a large number of 'tribes', each characterised by its own 'culture', art, language, somatic features and political organisation (including 'tribal chief'), and having its own 'tribal homeland' or 'tribal territory'; the latter would cause the African continent to appear as a large patchwork quilt of adjacent, non-overlapping, fixed 'tribal areas', between which 'tribal wars' are postulated to go back to remote antiquity.

The tribal model for Africa has sprung from a number of sources, most of which have to be situated not in Africa itself, but in the North Atlantic region:

- the preference of European-dominated colonial governments, such as ruled most of Africa from the end of the nineteenth century to roughly 1960, for clear-cut administrative divisions, each coinciding with mutually exclusive territories in the landscape;

- the preference of such colonial governments for a model of inexpensive indirect administration that assumed the existence in the landscape of local, indigenous administrative territories coinciding with colonial territorial divisions;

- European views concerning the 'natural' coincidence of 'culture', language, territory and the state – the Early Modern (particularly Romantic) origin of modern nation formation in Europe;

- the rationalising need, not only among colonial governments but also among industrial enterprises, among the Christian missions, and gradually also among Africans, to unequivocally label the multitude of cultural and linguistic identities at the local, regional and national level.

While the above factors led to the crystallisation of clear-cut classifications of the African population – mainly on a territorial basis – African leaders (traditional chiefs involved in indirect rule, early converts to world religions, African entrepreneurs, and first-generation modern intellectuals and politicians) seized the opportunity to transform these new labels and classifications into self-conscious units ('tribes', 'ethnic groups') and to claim, for these units, an identity, a 'culture', of their own (although this usually amounted to no more than the selection of a few distinctive cultural features as boundary markers – see below), and a history of their own; this process is known as ethnicisation.

In the absence of other social and religious distinctions, these ethnic classifications, and the local and regional contradictions they suggested by virtue of their being bound to a territory, became the incentives for group formation and for competition in national politics.

The link between ethnicity and social inequality/class formation is particularly important: ethnic distinctions are seldom merely a nominal juxtaposition of groups to which equal socio-political status is accorded. Normally ethnic distinction carries overtones of social subordination and superordination; when ethnicity thus tends to be an oblique and essentialising idiom for the expression of social inequality, ethnic processes in modern Africa often reflect (and conceal under a cloak of primordial identities considered to go back to precolonial times) the rise of new forms of inequality in association with modern state formation and the imposition of the capitalist mode of production.

Formal politics along ethnic and regional lines also led to networks of patronage along which the elites, in exchange for political support, could offer specific advantages to their ethnic and regional followers; the latter had all the more need for these advantages, given the increasing failure of the formal institutions of the post-colonial state.

Even so, ethnicity in contemporary Africa has retained a situational nature, with some situations being far more ethnically marked than others. An increasing number of situations are constructed by the people involved in them primarily in terms of identities other than ethnic, notably in terms of religion, gender, class, professional group and national state. Also, it frequently occurs that people in situations that are emphatically ethnically marked (such as the migrants in the ethnically heterogeneous context of the modern city) operate alternately, and with success, in more than one ethnic identity. Alternatively they may at a given moment shed the ethnic identity conferred at birth, exchanging it for another that has greater prestige or for one that represents a local majority. Finally, people may opt for a different, more universalist kind of identity (for example Muslim, Christian-Pentecostal, or socialist) in the light of which the particularist ethnic identity becomes irrelevant. Here, a central thesis of contemporary ethnicity research meets the post-structuralist philosophy of Derrida: *the idea of the self as forming a self-contained unit is only a myth*[1] – albeit the most powerful myth of the North Atlantic region in the Modern era (i.e. the period that succeeded the Renaissance), and albeit that myth, rather than being separable from the truth, is an integral aspect of how we live our human truths.[2]

In our case studies in Part II of this book the above themes are selectively but persuasively highlighted. Following his theoretical and conceptual exploration of the relation between state and ethnicity in Chapter 5, Martin Doornbos is particularly preoccupied with the different trajectories of inequality and statehood that ethnicity

takes in various East African settings – the clamour for equal socio-political status among nominally juxtaposed (but effectively subordinated) ethnic groups, or the emergence of political independence as a political idiom that obliterates rather than exacerbates the previously prevailing ethnic idiom (Chapter 7). In Chapters 9 and 11 he specifically traces these trajectories for Rwenzururu protest songs as a form of expressive culture, and with regard to the memory politics relating to the debates about the possible restoration of Ankole kingship. Wim van Binsbergen's three contributions to this part of the book all deal with shifting but complementary perspectives on the Zambian Nkoya people, whose strikingly recent process of ethnicisation does not prevent us from recognising the crucial non-ethnic (especially class) dimensions of their twentieth-century political situation (Chapter 6), but whose vital expressive culture is increasingly capable of bringing the regional community to greater self-perception in ethnic terms, and even to have this perception accepted by other actors at the regional and national level (Chapter 8). Here the interesting situation arises of traditional rulers, relegated to mere symbolic presences by the post-colonial state, now finding a new lease of life by allowing themselves to be captured by new formal associations of an ethnic and regional nature (Chapter 10).

CHAPTER 5

Some conceptual problems concerning ethnicity in integration analysis

Martin Doornbos

With regard to the new states, the problem of integration has often been viewed as one somehow involving the incorporation of an amalgam of sub-national, particularly ethnic, groups into a single political framework. Hence, if we want to come to grips with this question, it will be necessary for us to assess the implications of these situations and try to define the problem of ethnicity.

Once this issue is raised, a host of subsidiary questions immediately suggest themselves as potentially relevant. For example: Why do lines of cleavage in the socio-political structure of society A run a different way, based on different criteria, from those in society B? Why, for instance, in one society's is religious affiliation more overriding in the formation of political groups than ethnic ties, clan loyalties, regionalism or personality factors, whereas an entirely different situation prevails in a neighbouring society ? Can one determine what causes dissension of a particular type to emerge, and if so, how does it happen? Further, if dissension widens between members of different ethnic groups, does this occur *because* they are of different ethnic groups or because there are other, less obvious factors underlying these differences? Again, if a particular pattern of conflict has dominated, is it possible for a shift to occur towards another type of confrontation? How, in fact, should one account for a succession of different alignments, especially when a seemingly highly entrenched division makes place for conflict between differently based political groups? Are some structures of conflict perhaps inherently immobile, others more flexible? Also, can two or more such patterns co-exist or are they mutually exclusive?

Questions such as these are preliminary to others of a directly political concern: What consequences do different political cleavages have for consensus and co-operation, both at the district and at the national level? How do they affect the operation of governmental

functions? Are some splits more functional (and therefore preferable) than others from a point of view of national integration? Do some of them allow for, or perhaps even promote, the achievement of goals in the unit as a whole? Finally, the opposite relationship seems of at least equal importance: Can government efforts modify, narrow or bridge these cleavages? Are some structural arrangements of government more conducive to reducing ethnic factionalism than others?

To begin with, questions of this kind would seem to require research on a variety of fronts to account for the particular juxtaposition of socio-political groups in a society and the social attachments that go with it. A broad historical account of the way relationships between ethnic, religious or other categories have developed into the present appears essential. Attention may need to be given to culturally determined factors which might have induced one group to develop economically more rapidly than others. At the same time, the role of education and differential access and response to it by various categories may be crucial in explaining relative advantages attained by particular groups within political systems. Again, religion may to some degree have modified outlooks and aspirations as well as the extent of participation and the share of benefits available to its adherents. Closely linked to this are possible differences resulting from unequal economic opportunities available to various groups, or sheer demographic factors which may have given one group a lead over others. Other possible determinants, such as the type of leadership exercised, organisational structures and skills, elite composition and motivation, and the pattern and effectiveness of communication would similarly require examination for their possible effects on integrative or disintegrative potential.

As for individual groups, one would want to trace their traditional political and social structure and their evolution, trying to understand the criteria by which these groups define their interests. Particularly, one might wish to know what kinds of issues are perceived as threatening to the basic attachments of the group and which interests are regarded as more instrumental and mundane. One would also be interested in the strategies and methods by which group members seek to further their interests in the national decisionmaking process and, in connection with this, their formal and/or informal links with political parties and their de facto representation in government. Similarly, the impact of counter-pressures on their interest articulation, especially by crosscutting so-called 'functional' pressure groups (such as trade unions) may need to be investigated. The strategy and methods of government to enhance national structures and solidarities, and the response to such policies among various groups, should be assessed.

Fact-finding along some of these lines may help to illuminate the nature of contact between different elements of a political system. In turn, this should increase our understanding of, among other things, whether and why conflicts are restricted to specific issues (such as competition for jobs or other immediate benefits) or generalised, affecting any contact and in any context between rival groups. Some ethnic groups, for instance, have coexisted within a single region or district in a basically noncompetitive relationship, whereas in other situations there has been a long tradition of conflict on many fronts. Particularly in cases where an element of subordination formed part of the relationship, one might expect to find a relatively diffuse and lasting sense of antagonism,

based on indignation over alleged inferiority on the one hand, and feelings of pride and superiority on the other. Immediate issues may no longer divide such groups, and conceivably continuing dissension may largely be attributable to a psychological lag. Nonetheless, such backgrounds would have important effects on popular identities, and in turn on people's preparedness to participate in wider frameworks. Closer examination of the nature of social cleavages should help determine whether the conflict concerned seems lasting or transitory, susceptible to intervention or rigid and inelastic, and whether, if untouched, it might gradually diminish, increase, or be supplanted by new types of confrontation.

We may note here that a considerable body of literature exists on the specific kinds and aspects of social attachments that we have discussed. Analyses of the social ties of religion and the strains and conflicts engendered in situations of religious competition seem immediately relevant to our concern. Similarly, studies made of communities of language and their consequences for national political frameworks, and studies of racial strife, regional division or the cohesive bonds of kinship would interest us. Custom and culture are closely related to these foci, particularly if seen in the light of change and innovation, while the relevance of studies of adaptation of systems of law and of education and political socialisation can also easily be seen. Again, analyses of ideology and value patterns as well as of tradition and traditional authority possibly bear on the nature of loyalties and by implication on the question of integration. Examination of social stratification may yield additional clues to divisiveness and cohesion, while social prejudice forms a further dimension of analysis crucial to the problem of identity and integration.

Each of these foci views the general problem area of political integration from a distinct angle. The study of nationalism, concerned with the actions and aspirations of groups and collectivities seeking nationhood, is particularly pertinent. Beyond potentially considerable differences in their historical manifestation, the orientations underlying nationalism often share an element of emotive, nonrational responsiveness to the situation in which the groups concerned find themselves. Usually they also share an expression of common identity experienced as intimate and sentimental. Especially important seems the fact that these expressions appear to have similar qualities irrespective of the particular symbols or 'causes' (such as language, race, or religion) for which people may rally together, even though the identifications and actions may actually be oriented towards these symbols (for an early exploration of these common qualities, see Emerson 1960).

The kind of attachments and orientations in which nationalism is rooted are central to the problem of political integration. Nonetheless, the integration issue is by no means restricted to groups which seek, or have, a nation-state. It pertains equally to groups or collectivities which may never desire their own nation-state, even if some of them may have strong reservations about the 'national' political framework they are in. These concerns, then, make it necessary to cut across the distinction between national and sub-national situations while focusing on certain similar attachments which underlay group cohesiveness in either case.

'Primordial loyalties'

Of potential help in the study of integration problems is the concept of primordial loyalties, first advanced by Edward Shils and further developed by Clifford Geertz. A discussion of the content which each author has given to this term may be helpful for an understanding of the issue of integration. First, in Edward Shils's article 'Primordial, personal, sacred and civil ties' (Shils 1957), the notion of 'primordial loyalties', also termed 'intense and comprehensive attachments', is derived by way of deduction. Taking his departure from Tönnies's concept of *Gemeinschaft*, Shils observed how this was modified by Hermann Schmalenbach, the German economist and sociologist writing in the early 1920s. Schmalenbach, he writes,

> *saw that it was possible for a state of intense and comprehensive solidarity to exist without those who shared it possessing either a common territory of origin and residence, a common place of work or ties of blood and sexual connection. When these* primordial elements *were isolated from the original concept of* Gemeinschaft, *the residue was the* Bund, *for which such terms as confraternity, brotherhood, league, band, gang are all poor translations but each of which brings to the fore the element of intense mutual attachment, independent of* primordial ties. *(Shils 1957:133–134 [emphasis added])*

Shils goes on to say that although Max Weber had previously introduced some distinctions along these lines, 'Schmalenbach's essay was the first stage in the turning away from the uncritical contrast of *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*, or primary group and the atomised large-scale society' (Shils 1957:134).[1] Hence the suggestion that 'the ecological or primordial base of the *Gemeinschaft* was different from the relationship itself' (p. 142), and further that 'the primordial or ecological basis of *Gemeinschaft* (seemed to be) not merely a precondition of the formation of *Gemeinschaft* but a very crucial property of the members which greatly influenced their conduct towards one another' (ibid). That basis, then, lay in the 'coerciveness of the primordial properties of the object, the ties of blood and of common territory' and also in 'religions of primordial membership' (ibid).

Thus, certain manifestations of loyalty and solidarity may be similar in their 'coerciveness' or their sentimental quality of expression, although they are quite distinct in origin. The attachment built through, say, a totalitarian party should be seen as radically different from primordial ties, except in the unlikely event that they would be developed over several generations. To adopt a biological metaphor, one might say that trees cannot be grown in hothouses.

Nonetheless, at least one qualification must be made to Shils's distinction. While the difference between *Bund* and primordial group is of critical importance, that *Bünde* may make appeals to primordial sentiments should not be overlooked. In Nazi Germany, for instance, a *Bund* clearly extolled, and capitalised on, old Teutonic values and attachments. Such manipulation of primordial sentiments does not necessarily make a *Bund* a primordial group, but in certain instances a *Bund* may conceivably be coterminous with a unit of primordial identification. And it hardly needs mention that, in political terms, actions of *Bünde* in reference to primordial sentiments can have grave consequences.

Shils considered primordial loyalties a precondition to *Gemeinschaft* and also rejected the 'uncritical contrast of *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*' in view of *Gemeinschaft*-like relationships occurring in *Gesellschaft*. Though he has not carried this further, one may ask whether several elements of the primordial attachment which Shils placed at the basis of *Gemeinschaft*, such as the ties of 'common territory of origin and residence' or those involved in 'religions of primordial membership', might not operate equally in *Gesellschaft*. In that case they would not be a precondition to *Gesellschaft,* as they are to *Gemeinschaft,* but might nevertheless form 'a very crucial property of the members which greatly influence(s) their conduct towards one another'. One might think, for instance, of the Belgian Flemish, the Dutch Frisians, the French Canadians, and the Welsh in their campaigns for language preservation and cultural identity. None of these groups can be considered a *Gemeinschaft* in the sense of the intimate, small-scale community which the term seems to connote; they are characterised instead by the usual criteria of modern society. Nonetheless, several of them also exhibit no small passion for the maintenance of common bonds and values. Seen in this light, primordial sentiments potentially appear to be of universal significance. Occurring more or less 'unspoiled' in *Gemeinschaft*, they may appear in modern societies in modified form and at times may be used and infused by *Bund*-like political movements.

It thus seems that focusing on what have been termed primordial bonds and sentiments is a potentially meaningful means of incision into the entire spectrum of loyalties. Its utility lies in the possibility of separating a wide but distinct range of feelings of togetherness from all other loyalties which from other angles cannot easily be brought under one rubric. Moreover, their inclusion into a common category seems useful because, prima facie, these primordial loyalties appear to carry similar kinds of social and political implications. However, the concept is not without ambiguities, since it implies two dictionary denotations which are easily confused. Bloodties, a common tongue, or the bonds which stem from a shared territory are all 'old' in the sense of 'original' and 'longlasting', as they go back to time immemorial and through various stages may have been transformed into their present form. While this is one of the meanings which can be associated with 'primordial', perhaps even the most basic one, the term also has a connotation of 'old' as 'primary' and 'primitive', thus in the sense of contrasted or opposed to 'new', 'modern' or 'sophisticated' (see *Webster's new international dictionary* 1934). The distinction between the two interpretations is important, as each may lead to a very different boundary upon the operation of primordial loyalties, as well as, of course, to entirely different research designs.

Unfortunately, Shils has not been explicit on this distinction, nor has he returned to the notion of primordial ties in subsequent writings. However, the connection he makes between primordial ties and *Gemeinschaft* may suggest he is inclined towards the 'old: primitive' meaning of the term. It should be noted, then, that if one adopts the 'old: primitive' meaning, one restricts the occurrence of primordial loyalties to those instances where each of the typical foci of primordial sentiments stands more or less opposed to loyalties based on their 'modern' counterparts or substitutes. On the other hand, with the 'old: long-lasting' interpretation the area of primordial loyalties may theoretically include any bonds of kinship, language, religion, and so on, whether operative in modern,

primitive, or the socalled transitional societies. If they were to be understood as mutually exclusive, then the 'old: longlasting' sense would offer certain advantages over the 'old: primitive'. It would not by definition cut off the bonds of a religious community or other sentimental ties in the modern world as 'unprimordial' and thus different in kind from essentially similar forms of group cohesiveness in the 'nonmodern' part of the world. As it more strictly maintains the link between sentiments from common language, culture or religion and 'primordialism', it would also follow more logically the minimum definition of 'primordial loyalties'. Thus, if one had to make a choice, the 'old: longlasting' meaning would seem preferable. However, as we will see later, it may be useful instead to consider these meanings as different aspects of the same concept.

Thus, if we borrow Shils's formulation we might call a primordial loyalty an 'intense and comprehensive attachment' to one or more typical primordial foci, for example kinship, race, religion, or region. Obviously, the saliency of these orientations may vary from case to case. Starting from each of these primordial foci, we may look for the corresponding attachment. In the case of religion, for instance, in most societies we may find religious attachments which are appropriately labelled 'primordial'. (For new converts, religion is mostly more a kind of *Bund*). However, having conceptually linked primordial attachments to kinship, race, religion, and so on, such an attachment need not visibly manifest itself as 'primordial'. For the most part, primordial attachments appear to be latent and may never be asserted, but this does not make them less primordial. On the whole, one would expect to find such cases in relatively homogeneous societies. In more heterogeneous societies, two dimensions of primordial bonds may be distinguished, namely the attachment to the particular focus as a *Ding an sich*, and also the solidarities evoked as a result of the cleavage with other groups in the environment. Depending largely on the type of conflict situation, a feedback system may operate between these dimensions. On the one hand, the primordial symbol receives increasingly intense attachments, while on the other hand it serves to reinforce group solidarity.

Thus, sometimes long-dormant primordial conflict may erupt abruptly and become a devouring political issue. The opposite, namely fairly constant strife with a sudden lull, may also happen. Religious conflict such as witnessed in Northern Ireland and earlier in the Netherlands; language struggle as in Belgium and Sri Lanka; racial strife as in the United States and South Africa; and cultural divisiveness as in Canada and Nigeria may all be taken as instances of primordialism in politics, but since they are structured differently, their political implications vary significantly.

Primordial conflict may be conducted within a political entity, but political conflict may equally be conducted within a primordial entity. Primordial attachments may reach across political boundaries, or they may be coterminous and reinforce each other. Primordial loyalties may occur alone, in pairs, or with even more dimensions. They may cut across population groups or be cumulative on each side, with various configurations possible. They may turn out to be rigid and fixed, or fluid and elastic. They may be structured as part of a class system, or more or less irrespective thereof. Loyalties may be directed mainly towards common symbols, but such symbols may also serve as banners for underlying conflict about other matters in the allocation of resources, for instance. Each of these patterns, moreover, may lead to particular kinds of political action and styles

of primordial conflict. Admittedly, this makes the concept extremely wide; nonetheless, even at this general level and despite the innumerable configurations possible, it is useful to be able to distinguish between different dimensions of social relationships.

Primordial conflict acquires an additional dimension if it occurs within marked technological, cultural or other discontinuities. In such situations the cleavages tend to be more profound, and may involve diametrically different world views and lifestyles. Though in all such instances some form of adaptation and transformation of attachments seem inevitable and necessary, in certain cases efforts may be directed particularly to bridging the 'cultural lag' or to the expression of interaction of primordial orientations within a more modern framework. In other situations policies may, rightly or wrongly, aim at their wholesale dismantling and sublimation. In either case, though especially the latter, emotions on all sides may easily be exacerbated and succumb to insecurity.

While the need to integrate primordial groups suggests itself with regard to virtually all African countries, widely different policies are being followed to fulfil this objective. Obviously, these approaches derive largely from the nature of the political system. However, all too often the pattern of primordial diversity has helped to determine the characteristics of the political system; in turn, the type and strategies of the political leadership may have a great deal to do with the kind of primordial difficulties which arise.

Geertz on primordialism

Clifford Geertz has carried the focus on primordial attachments as a field of enquiry one step further. In his essay, 'The integrative revolution: Primordial sentiments and civil politics in the new states' (Geertz 1963) he is mainly concerned with the problems arising from primordial diversity in the new states of Asia and Africa. On the concept itself, he writes:

> By a primordial attachment is meant one that stems from the 'givens' – or more precisely, as culture is inevitably involved in such matters, the assumed 'givens' – of social existence: immediate contiguity and kin connection mainly, but beyond them the givenness that stems from being born into a particular religious community, speaking a particular language, or even a dialect of a language, and following particular social practices. These congruities of blood, speech, custom and so on, are seen to have an ineffable, and at times overpowering, coerciveness in and of themselves (Geertz 1963:109).

One of the merits of Geertz's proposition is the variety of different kinds of primordial attachments which he has brought under a single focus. He has extended Shils's list of primordial foci (kinship, common territory, and religion) by adapting a categorisation by Rupert Emerson (Emerson 1960), and although these attachments emanate from different sources, he argues convincingly that they 'are in some sense of a piece. They form a definable field of investigation'. As these generally operative foci of primordial attachment he considers:

1. Assumed blood ties. The defining element of this is 'quasi' kinship, 'a notion of untraceable but yet sociologically real kinship'.

2. Race. Although this also involves an ethnological theory, the reference here is to physical features rather than to any very definite sense of common descent as such.

3. Language. Often the focus of deeply embittered conflict, although in other cases it hardly seems to affect relationships between primordial groups.

4. Region. This factor often accompanies other foci, but is in itself 'especially troublesome in geographically heterogeneous areas' [sic].

5. Custom. Is also present almost anywhere, though sometimes differences in custom do not lead to any primordial discontent; in other instances conflict arises between groups with almost no differences in custom (Geertz 1963:112–113).

On the basis of these various foci of primordial division, Geertz sets out to construct a typology of concrete patterns of primordial diversity, which 'should facilitate a more incisive analysis of the role of primordial sentiments in civil politics than is possible in terms of "pluralism", "tribalism", "parochialism", "communalism", and other clichés of commonsense sociology' (Geertz 1963:117). Despite this laudable objective, the resulting typology is quite commonsense. It includes patterns in which a single dominant group is offset against a single strong and 'chronically troublesome' minority; in which there is a central group and several medium-sized, somewhat opposed, peripheral groups; where there are two nearly evenly balanced major groups; a pattern of relatively even gradation, with several large groups, several of medium size, and a number of small ones; and finally simple ethnic fragmentation. Geertz concludes from this:

> The world of personal identity collectively ratified and publicly expressed is thus an ordered world. The patterns of primordial identification and cleavage within the existing new states are not fluid, shapeless, and infinitely various, but are definitely demarcated and vary in systematic ways (Geertz 1963:117).

Two points are in order here. First, it is quite evident that groups of people, however categorised, are of different sizes. There are large groups and small ones, with an infinite range between them. Thus, the groups within one state can be said to form one kind of pattern, and those in another state another pattern. A more extensive 'typology' of such sizebased patterns than Geertz has given could easily be constructed, but it is doubtful that this would facilitate more incisive analysis.

Second, and more important, it is uncertain whether Geertz is correct in stating that the patterns of primordial cleavage in the new states are 'not fluid' but, among other things, 'definitely demarcated'. Unfortunately, what he means by 'not fluid' is not immediately clear. Nonetheless, these points appear quite central to this theme, as is further suggested by the statement that 'Here we have not just competing loyalties, but competing loyalties of the same general order, on the same level of integration [...] possibly selfstanding, maximal social units [...] candidates for nationhood' (Geertz 1963:111).[2] Leaving aside the question of potential friction between 'national' and 'primordial' identity, this restricts

the recurrence of primordial sentiments to territorily based groups of a certain 'primordial' homogeneity. In this light one can see that Geertz's typology of concrete patterns of primordial diversity has place only for total, autonomous units, however small. However, this appears a considerable oversimplification of the scope of these loyalties in the new states.

To see this, we should note first that the type of primordial unit which Geertz is concerned with occurs more frequently in the new states than in the old. In precolonial times there were autonomous units of political, social, and cultural integration, which, though modified in various ways and degrees, have become one of the main primordial legacies of the new states. Even here there are sufficient instances of 'primordialism' which is structured in other ways than as 'maximal social units' to deny the validity of thus narrowing the discussion. Language, race or religious groups may exhibit highly sentimental affinities, but only in some cases are they structured as potential nationalities; many other configurations are conceivable. For instance, they may operate within units which aspire towards nationhood even if the latter are themselves at odds with the framework of the 'new state' in which they find themselves. In other words, though the nature of the attachments to primordial foci may be essentially similar (or at least of a different quality from other types of loyalty) and thus worth bringing under one heading, it does not follow that primordial groups or collectivities are 'of a piece'. To disregard this reduces the utility of the concept of 'primordial attachment' as advanced by Geertz, for after specifying that its sources lay in, for example ethnicity, religion, culture, or race, one would be forced to retract part of the thesis and say that it applies only if the groups concerned are 'possibly selfstanding'. The circularity of this is evident.

Nonetheless, Geertz's main theme is interesting and worth considering further. It is concerned with the conflict between primordial loyalties and the need for the new states to establish some kind of union of civic consciousness or 'civility'. The tension between these poles he considers potentially profound, expressed as it may be through numerous basic as well as trivial issues. In this view, a central problem for many people in the new states is that the primordial group is the unit with which they identify, through which their values and beliefs are transmitted and which in a very real sense makes life meaningful to them. At times, indeed, the primordial group is the terminal one, representing the major unit of socially legitimate and effective authority. Thus, primordial groups in the new states may sometimes stand for 'totalities of life'. Generally speaking, they are of greater consequence than primordial bonds in modern states; primordial divisions in modern societies have largely, though never entirely, been embraced within a wide civil order (Geertz 1963:110).

A major challenge for the new states is to create this sense of overarching unity. Geertz's title, 'The integrative revolution', refers to this need which, to be fulfilled, would involve basic changes in patterns of social life. As he points out, however, the problem is complex since, by the very attempts of the new governments to establish a civil unity, primordial sentiments may be evoked rather than attenuated. Conflicts tend to be especially acute about matters such as the adoption of a common language or a common school system, for which passionate campaigns to have the group's own rather than its neighbour's language adopted, or to have its own rather than alien social and

cultural values transmitted through the school system, may be anticipated. In Somalia, for instance, a prime issue was for years to agree on the selection of a common alphabet, which the Somali did not have. While proposals were made in favour of Arabic script, Latin script, and a newly developed 'Somali' alphabet, each of these tended to appeal to certain sections of the population in particular and as a result a the issue remained deadlocked for a long time. For the same reason there may be fierce fights about census figures; as these constitute one of the few 'objective' measures on which to base the allocation of political representation, development funds, and other benefits, it is in the interest of each subgroup to be 'objectively' well represented. A notorious case in this regard was a Nigerian census in the early 1970s; it was alleged that none of the regions dared raise objections about inflated figures in other areas for fear that manipulation of their own returns might be exposed.

These examples suggest that paying attention to inter-group conflict may be more profitable from an analytical point of view than direct concentration on the contrast between civil state and primordial group. Groups which were formerly isolated now find themselves within the same framework, competing for scarce resources. Groups which have traditionally been in conflict may find their new confrontation leading to continued or heightened antagonism. It must be stressed that the issues involved may stem largely from intergroup antagonism and not primarily or necessarily from uneasiness on the part of ethnic or religious groups about the wider state framework which incorporates them. The latter may be relatively 'neutral' as conceived in the popular mind unless, of course, as is often the case, people feel it is dominated by rival groups.

Geertz sees the danger of ethnic conflict and domination, although his main emphasis is on the tension between primordial identities and an 'alien civil order':

> *Multiethnic, usually multilinguistic, and sometimes multiracial, the pop-*
> *ulations of the new states tend to regard the immediate, concrete, and to*
> *them inherently meaningful sorting implicit in such 'natural' diversity as*
> *the substantial content of their individuality. To subordinate these specific*
> *and familiar identifications in favour of a generalised commitment to an*
> *overarching and somewhat alien civil order is to risk a loss of definition as*
> *an autonomous person, either through absorption into a culturally undif-*
> *ferentiated mass, or what is even worse, through domination by some other*
> *rival ethnic, racial, or linguistic community that is able to imbue that order*
> *with the temper of its own personality (Geertz 1963:108–109).*

The emergent conclusion is that the leaders of the new states must not try to wish primordial attachments out of existence by belittling them or denying their reality; rather they should domesticate them:

> *They must reconcile them with the unfolding civil order by divesting them of*
> *their legitimising force with respect to governmental authority, by neutralis-*
> *ing the apparatus of the state in relationship to them, and by channelling*
> *discontent arising out of their dislocation into properly political rather than*
> *parapolitical forms of expression (Geertz 1963:128).*

Prima facie, this formula seems adequately to state what is at stake when one talks of primordial integration. If one accepts the desirability of political organisation along lines of projected 'national' frameworks,[3] or at least subscribes to its necessity in the absence of alternative solutions, then one may have little hesitation in accepting the formulation and its policy implications. Nonetheless, it is doubtful that it suffices to state the problem this way. More important still, we should first ask whether integration can be achieved in this fashion. There are few guidelines as to how these processes might come about and it is by no means clear whether or to what extent desirability here implies practicability. A major question pertains, still, to the effect of 'primordial' loyalties, for if indeed the attachments thus defined are intrinsically profound, sentimental and long-lasting (and do not exist primarily in the minds of observers with a penchant for drama), then solving the integration issue may be very different from posing it. To go just one step further, the question might be raised whether it is consistent to identify primordial ties as deep-seated, virtually immovable properties, yet to call for their dismantling and sublimation into wider civil frameworks.

No ready answers suggest themselves in this regard. Instead, it is necessary to further break down the problem to facilitate analysis. Particularly, we should try to distinguish between some analytically distinct aspects of 'primordial' loyalties (as opposed to identifiably different 'symbols', such as language, religion, race and kinship) to increase our understanding of the effect and operation of these attachments.

Identity

One element which has often been seen as an explicit or implicit dimension of primordial attachments and which merits closer attention is that of identity.

Group attachments are mirrored in social identifications, by which social psychologists refer to the various aspects of 'self' which may enter into an individual's description of his/her role and place in society and the image he/she holds of his/her relationships with other people. Thus, any relationship in which an individual is involved, whether to family, fellow congregationists, coworkers, nation or language group, tends to contribute to an individual's self-identity. In addition, other descriptive qualities such as age, education, income level and profession enter the equation, and any or all of these aspects may form part of the answer to the question 'who am I?'

In various studies of the new states, identity has been considered as a problem, or even as a crisis. Pye (1966:63), for instance, wrote that the identity crisis 'focuses on the most explosive and emotion-laden issues in political development',[4] while Gulliver (1969:1) speaks of the issues of unity and identity as two crucial problems pressing East African states. In brief, the implication is that in many of the new states people's basic political identifications are generally not with the state but with sub-national units, such as linguistic, ethnic, religious, racial or regional collectivities. A lack of national identity may have serious consequences for the viability of the state, it is implied. Where there is not some minimum degree of 'belongingness' to the projected national framework, it is argued that such a state may lack sufficient cohesion, especially if it must face crises, but perhaps even for the smooth functioning of normal government operations.

In Africa as elsewhere, sub-national identities have indeed often appeared to be of considerable tenacity. Based on ethnicity, region or some other interest, they in many instances involve profound sentimental attachments. In a broader historical perspective, it appears that sub-national units of identification may well outlive the institutional structures superimposed upon them, finding new expressions of interests and identity in each new political framework. Europe has known various examples where such attachments have continued to be of pervasive impact, in Belgium, Britain, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, and without holding to the view that Africa must go through Europe's experience, there are not any a priori grounds to suggest that the process will be any different in Africa. On the contrary, overarching government structures commonly being relatively weak in Africa and virtually every country being divided along a variety of axes, there seems no reason to expect any dramatic shifts in African identifications.

While individuals commonly hold a whole scale of identifications (for instance with village, region, state; or lineage, clan, tribe, nation), there need not necessarily be conflict between them. Almost certainly people will attach more importance to one level of identification than to others. The generalisation has been advanced, for instance, that in Europe identity is emphasised at a national level, and in Africa at a tribal level.[5] Closely linked to this is the viewpoint mentioned above that a certain degree of attachment to the national centre is necessary to sustain, and create an increased basis of acceptance for, the execution of government tasks.

As noted elsewhere (Doornbos 1969), conceptually speaking, the identity issue appears to be of political consequence *indirectly*, that is, through its effects upon legitimacy. This is no reason to underrate its potential significance. It is useful, however, to consider some of the processes through which it may operate. A low degree of identification with the 'nation' may be reflected in and contribute to lack of legitimacy, that is, social acceptance of the authority structures. This is especially true for situations where a group feels that government is in the hands of 'the others', in which case 'the others' refers to people of a different identity (as in Cyprus, Sudan or even Canada). If one does not form part of the other group it may follow that one also does not wish to belong to that group; its extreme implication may be a refusal to co-exist within a more inclusive framework which also incorporates the opposite group. Thus, in Rwanda Bahutu had misgivings about joint membership with Batusi in the political framework, Greeks about Turks in Cyprus, and Muslims about Hindus in India. One description of these situations would contend that particular groups do not wish to identify with the larger unit that incorporates and legitimises an opposed group, and instead either try to opt out or to claim the entire unit for themselves. It also suggests, however, that identity largely derives its saliency and meaning from the social environment in which individuals and groups find themselves placed.

Another aspect of self-identification should be noted here. In terms of identity, what someone is not seems as important as what he/she is. In religious conflict between Protestants and Roman Catholics, for instance, not the least important element in the self-image of a Protestant appears to be that he/she is not a Roman Catholic, and vice versa. The same appears to hold in linguistic, ethnic, regional and other types of division, in each situation of which certain identifications and counter-identifications tend to become more pronounced as conflict deepens.[6]

For purposes of analysis, therefore, one should not focus primarily on the link between individual identifications and the political framework at large, but instead inspect the intermediate level of the rival groups or collectivities from which people derive their most affective identities. This is not to suggest that the concern with creating a stronger sense of 'national' identity among people who consider themselves first and foremost members of a particular ethnic or regional group is futile or irrelevant. However, if due attention is not given to the factors which sustain group rivalry, then citizenship training may not lead very far.

Even if this is accepted, however, other questions need clarification. In particular, a possible misconception must be removed, namely that reconciliation and adjustment of primordial attachments would necessarily imply integration in the sense of full, exclusive assimilation into new membership units.[7] This idea might easily gain ground. Leaders of many new states have often encouraged their people to think of themselves as citizens of the state rather than as members of particular sectional groups, or have even constitutionally forbidden any reference to ethnic membership, as in various francophone African countries. Frequently, scholars have echoed these desiderata, thus failing to distinguish between identity and other dimensions of primordial attachments.

Considering this, one cannot deny that identification as national citizens may well increase, and may correspondingly eclipse ethnic identity. Nor need it be argued that such transitions may be helpful in achieving integration of wider social processes, and thus be worth promoting. However, it would be erroneous to start from the assumption that it would be *possible* and *necessary* for, say, Yoruba or Hausa to become assimilated to the extent that they would no longer be Yoruba and Hausa but only Nigerians. That, in fact, might not only be a conceptual mistake, but potentially could have adverse consequences.

Let us take up these issues one by one. First, as to the possibility of assimilation, it is worth recalling that if the term 'primordial' has any minimal meaning, it is that it defines the basis of people's social existence, which is essentially non-manipulable and durable. This is basically a universal quality, operating in industrialised as well as preindustrial societies; the only major exception to date appears to have been the United States. Here, owing to unique historical circumstances, a process of dissolution of 'primordial' identities and their replacement by a sense of American-ness was brought about to a considerable extent, though never fully. It would require similar opportunities for massive immigration from heterogeneous origins and the attendant mixed settlement within one territory for this process to be possible elsewhere. Needless to say, African and Asian countries do not have these possibilities.[8] The Israeli case is already too different on a number of counts to enter as an example (Eisenstadt 1952:223–246). Instead, in Europe and elsewhere various forms of sub-national (and cross-national) 'belongingness' persist and seem to show no clear correlation with levels of modernisation, whether measured by economic or other indices. Thus, even if the multitude of different ethnic identities in countries of Africa and Asia may seem perplexing (and thus perhaps induce attempts to drastic change), there appears to be no basic difference between the prospect that Slovaks, Walloons or Scots will be identified (and identify themselves) by those names for a long time to come, and that the same will

happen in the case of the Ashanti, Kurds, Singhalese or any other of the innumerable ethnic communities throughout the Third World. To try and radically alter such situations not only seems futile, but may disrupt rather than serve to integrate.

It appears not only impractical to obliterate sub-national ethnic identities, but generally unnecessary too. Notwithstanding the concern frequently expressed with issues of ethnicity, it still needs to be demonstrated that the creation of uniform and exclusively national identities would in and of itself be requisite to modernisation. Would the fact of someone calling himself/herself a Kenyan rather than a Kikuyu make him/her perform 'better' in his/her country's development? In short, it would not, and the likely retort would be 'What's in a name?' It is a different matter that Kenyan, Ugandan, Ghanaian and other new national identifications may increase as a result of modernisation processes; also that the latter kind of identifications may, relatively speaking, be strengthened within a multiple set of loyalties. But to call for a total sublimation of nonnational into national identifications as a precondition to modernisation would put the cart before the horse and disregard the essential quality of these orientations.

More important is another concern, seemingly related but actually distinct. If the frameworks for new national communities are to be meaningful and viable, it will be necessary for various population groups to share a common basis of concepts, techniques, ways of life and patterns of communication. Potential obstacles to this are 'objective' barriers such as language or the limitations to physical movement, but also certain beliefs, authority patterns or traditional ways of doing things; rooted in immemorial values, these might conceivably inhibit general integration. These, then, represent another dimension of primordial attachments, which for obvious reasons are rather more salient in the new states than in the old. Following the introduction of new social and political frameworks in the new states, in not a few situations social values tend to be at variance with those of the wider environment and external power is experienced as alien and illegitimate. Also, when confronted with demands for adaptation a community may well react by resorting to traditional ways, thus reinforcing the primordial imagery involved.

In conflict situations, resistance to integration may readily induce a strengthening of ethnic as opposed to national identifications. Equally readily, the observer may lump together these tendencies as manifestations of ethnicity, failing to distinguish between dimensions of identity and of adherence to certain ways of life, 'values', or institutional arrangements.[9] It seems important that differentiations between these aspects are made, for one may be more adaptable, and also 'require' more adaptation, than the other. Specifically, identities may last while norms, institutions and relationships within the group and in regard to the environment are changed. Focusing attention, either implicitly or specifically, on ethnic identity ('we must stop thinking of ourselves as Baganda') is an incomplete response to problems of ethnic integration which may aggravate rather than alleviate them because it is directed at only one (possibly the wrong) aspect of primordial attachments.

Ethnic conflict and situational analysis

Beyond, and despite, the common observation that issues of ethnic integration constitute a major problem in Africa, it is not entirely clear precisely what the boundaries of the problem are, let alone what solutions are called for. As considered thus far, there is no denying that a variety of actions and attachments in African states, conventionally labelled 'ethnic', are oriented towards sub-national units and frequently operate in situations of conflict. Indeed, for analytical purposes the utility of considering a variety of superficially distinct attachments, whether based on language, religion, culture or some other criteria, under a single focus has asserted itself; in this regard the concept of 'primordial attachments' seemed a useful device. Nonetheless, of these primordial attachments the dimension of identity appeared distinct and worth special consideration if one is to come to grips with issues of ethnicity.

Turning now to other questions, curiously, clarity obtains least where one might have expected it most. In instances of belongingness termed ethnic or primordial, the moving forces do not appear to be readily evident. Usually, some kind of traditional referent to the observed ethnic attachment exists, while in addition, as noted, the problem is frequently posed as one obtaining in situations characterised by a dichotomy between 'modern' and 'traditional'. In such situations, the ethnic attachments are usually viewed as 'premodern', suggesting that their moving forces must necessarily be found in tradition. Whether they actually are is uncertain, however, for the assertion of ethnic attachments may instead originate in contemporary factors.

To consider this, it should be noted that in conflict between groups of different ethnicity, the dispute usually involves more than these attachments alone. Often, people of different ethnic backgrounds within a single political framework have different occupations, different educational opportunities, different measures of influence in the society, and so on. The origins of these ethnic divisions of labour, income, prestige and influence tend to be of the chicken and egg variety, that is, ethnicity first or occupation first? What matters is that either genuinely or by contrived means, much of the fuel for continuing interethnic dispute is provided by inequalities in the distribution of benefits. Disputes are often fought under the banner of ethnicity, giving more meaning to the 'cause'. The question then is whether the sentiments involved would be equally strong in the absence of ongoing divisive issues or, in other words, whether ethnicity operates as an independent factor, irrespective of social and economic discrepancies (or perceived discrepancies), or arrives and disappears with the latter. Obviously, these questions may have an important bearing on the role of ethnicity; practically, however, it is difficult to separate the sustaining factors.

Available evidence at first glance points in both directions, as an example from Uganda may illustrate. With regard to Buganda, a long-standing political entity with unique institutions and its own language and customs, apparently supported by widespread affinities, one might tend to the view that its ethnicity is 'permanent', likely to be sustained even in the absence of immediate conflicts. With its clear 'primordial' basis, Buganda ethnicity would seem to operate autonomously, without additional inducements. On the other hand, if one considers the Bantu–Nilotic split which evolved in Ugandan politics

in the 1960s, there seemed to be very little 'primordial' about it. The terms 'Bantu' and 'Nilotic' were introduced earlier by anthropologists for their own classification purposes and certainly had nothing to do with the attitudes and interactions which would emerge between and within these groups. Historically, there may have been some 'Bantu' awareness (coterminous with 'mankind'), but one would suppose there was very little, if any, 'Nilotic' consciousness. Yet these labels began cropping up, for some years sensitivity grew about disproportionate allocation of positions among members of the two categories, and political followings were clearly, though perhaps not openly, mobilised in their name. One possible apparent explanation was that certain politicians, looking for a way to extend their influence, struck on disproportions in the allocation of valued resources and found roughly corresponding labels for the discrepancies in some of the concepts of anthropology. If that is what happened, then ethnicity in this case was essentially a matter of symbol manipulation (even though there may need to be a minimum of response latently available before it can have any effect).

This implies a need for qualification in talking of ethnicity: the occurrence of ethnic attachments which are basically newly discovered attributes and possibly the result of symbol manipulation clearly calls for caution in assuming traditional referents. Assertions of ethnicity do not necessarily involve old and sentimental attachments, but may also be oriented towards newly 'discovered' or reinterpreted common bonds arising from current situations. However, there are further implications. The question might be raised whether political actions and orientations based on ethnic affiliation may then derive from more than one source, that is, either from tradition-based primordial sentiments or from symbol manipulation. Prima facie this might well seem to be the case. Nonetheless, without minimising the differences between the two kinds of situations, some similar elements shed further light on this issue. In both Ugandan situations, for instance, ethnic attachments not only were asserted within a wider political context, but also with regard to the 'opportunity structure' of that context. Thus, even if in one situation there is a 'primordial' basis for ethnicity while in the other there is not, the inducements for arousing ethnic attachments, old or new, may in either case need to be seen in terms of the chances and strategies of the political game rather than as emanating from and being 'inherent' in the attachments themselves.

This can be considered against the view, noted earlier, that ethnic attachments will outlive the institutional structures superimposed upon them and that, owing to their profound solidarities, ethnic groups are likely to find new ways to express their interests, almost irrespective of political frameworks. Linked to this view is a tendency for political affiliations in African countries to be evaluated in terms of how 'basic' they are; while in many instances ethnic attachments are predictably found to be more 'basic' than adherence to the nation-state, further explication of the forces at work is usually omitted, probably because basic allegiances are self-explanatory. Thus a picture emerges in which the colonial and independent political frameworks tend to be viewed as essentially an interruption, although a drastic one, of more fundamental and normal processes of social cohesion in Africa.

In taking issue with this, we do not question that there are (many) instances in which ethnicity has traditional referents (Gulliver 1969:33–35). Nor can one deny that ethnic

affiliations may involve pronounced sentimental dimensions and deeply felt attachments to symbols and institutions. Indeed, as we have seen, a case can be made for a concept of primordial loyalties, even if the cohesive processes on which these are based may not be immediately evident from the term itself. What must be challenged, however, would be the attribution of these loyalties and attachments to the working of some mysterious property called 'tradition'. Such use of 'tradition' as an explanatory tool makes political structures a priori irrelevant, analytically and practically; although a certain conviction has gained ground in support of this view, none of it seems corroborated by the facts. Instead, the occurrence of newly discovered ethnicity, induced by the stratagems of contemporary conditions, alerts us to the possibility that ethnicity which has traditional referents may be sustained by essentially similar and equally contemporary mechanisms. Here, too, 'primordial' bonds, latently and continuously present, appear to be evoked and articulated in particular situations, no matter how long they may last; they should be seen as the result of specific factors which leave room for or actually promote the assertion of ethnicity to the level of paramountcy at which it is often observed. Provisionally, therefore, we may conclude that ethnicity follows, rather than precedes, other factors in the political process.

Two further points may be added to this. One is that there is a certain inconsistency in the 'tradition' argument in that it tends to be employed wherever there are problems of adjustment, leaving the impression that tradition is not involved, or is absent, where such problems are not encountered. The fact is, of course, that 'tradition' is present throughout Africa (or Europe, for that matter); although in most cases tradition is not associated with conflict, in certain situations it may be raised to the level of a legitimate cause. Similar considerations apply more generally to ethnicity; only in certain situations (no doubt including some very grave ones) has this become a focal point for conflict, whereas there are literally hundreds of 'ethnicities' in Africa which have never appeared particularly problematic. If tradition, or ethnicity, was an intrinsically powerful force, one would expect all of Africa to be continuously immersed in problems resulting from it. This, however, is clearly not the case.

Second, with regard to the view that tradition would make political structures of no consequence, the counter cannot be that they have been particularly relevant. Relevance, however, is different from 'of consequence': while one can hardly deny the effects of new structural arrangements on the emergence of new patterns of political interaction, they appear to have often exacerbated rather than reduced the ethnicity factor, and in that sense have not been particularly relevant.

Once these points have been established, a final myth remains, namely that issues of ethnic integration would predominantly revolve, as stated by Geertz, around conflict between primordial attachments and an 'unfolding civil order'. If posed in terms of this dichotomy, even a preliminary attempt at operationalisation would reveal only a few cases of conflict between primordial groups and civil governments, simply because, to use these same terms again, there are not many 'civil' governments. Governments in Africa are commonly staffed from among various representative groups, proportionally or disproportionally. They tend to reflect the 'primordial' composition of society rather than pose a different, that is, civil and somewhat antiseptic front against it. Indeed, it is not uncommon for conflict between groups of different primordial/ethnic description to

be conducted right through to cabinet level. Thus, while membership of an ethnic group may easily go hand in hand with membership in a wider framework (unless the latter is dominated by an opposed group), the important issue would seem to be conflict between different ethnic groups, rather than between primordial groups and an 'unfolding' civil order.

It may be concluded, therefore, that study of primordial attachments or ethnicity per se does not promise to be particularly fruitful in integration analysis. Instead, it will be necessary to analyse the situational context in which these attachments are mobilised.

The uneasy relationship between state and ethnicity

By way of a postscript, we can look at some perspectives on the state–ethnicity nexus as they have continued to be put forward with reference to their dynamics in African contexts. One approach views these dynamics from a would-be perspective of 'the state' (or from an observer's perspective of what the state is about and should be doing). Some such approaches tend to take for granted that the state's role and state reforms are for the 'common good' (not unlike Geertz's 'unfolding civil order'), and would look for factors and forces outside the state to explain their failures. In a 1997 presentation at the University of Groningen, for example, Professor Naomi Chazan asked why it was that various state reforms in Africa and the Middle East have so often not resulted in the envisaged outcomes. In her presentation she sought to illuminate how in the post-Cold War and the post-reform era various kinds of articulations of ethnicity were interrelating with the particular nature and dimensions of civil society and activities of voluntary associations, and how the outcomes of their interactions have impacted on the role of the state. In her words, 'Ethnicity, religion, territoriality undermine the state apparatus and control and may also affect democratic propensities. Ethnicity is an indication of weak states and weak regimes' (Chazan 1997:16). In the light of this analysis Chazan offered various suggestions for reform that should help strengthen civil society and in turn strengthen state capacity: empowering citizenry, giving selective support to voluntary associations, promoting financial independence of civil associations, increased social services, as well as nurturing empowerment in other ways such as citizen participation, civil liberties, accountability, rule of law, and generally adherence to the rules of the political game. Basically, therefore, the concern was with how various kinds of impacts from the world of ethnicity and civil society were influencing the state in an era of reforms and post-reforms, and how this should be addressed. But what if we turned it around and asked about the impacts of the state and the reforms on ethnicity and civil society?

Of course, just as one should not generalise too readily about ethnicity, so one should not overly generalise about the state in Africa. Nonetheless, as regards the key question of whether the interactions between ethnicity, voluntary associations and civil society tended to present problems for state capacity after reform, as stressed by Chazan, then perhaps we should first ask ourselves: what was the picture before the reforms? And what did the reforms contain and imply to start with?

Again, there is no reason for bright pictures: post-colonial African states for a long time maintained an uneasy and 'precarious balance'[10] vis-à-vis various kinds of ethnic groups and civil society at large. Many African state structures sat uneasily on an amalgam of

regional ethnic and social groups and had difficulty developing a meaningful relationship with them. Ethnicity, shorthand for the way groups and individuals experience and express their culture, identity or language as something distinctive, very often tended to be ignored as such by the state. Any such links and expressions might either be suppressed or were somehow accommodated and camouflaged through intricate systems of patronage and clientship within state and party structures. The state itself often posed as omnipresent and powerful, though in actual fact it was not. In many situations it tended to be viewed as an alien element, if not as a hostile body. The greatest failure of the African state in the post-colonial period seemed to be its inability to come to terms with this ethnic and cultural diversity, which is simply a fact of life in Africa (Doornbos 1997:23).

Still, as Chazan (1997) also observed, in retrospect one might say that during the first decades of the post-colonial era African states by and large were doing better at keeping highly heterogeneous societies together than was the case subsequently. Ideology indeed had a great deal to do with that. The latter was partly a function of the cold war rivalry, and again it is striking, when looking back, to note how influential that particular factor was for decades in influencing and shaping conditions on the African continent.

However, articulations of ethnicity were by no means absent during that time. Suppressed or negated self-identity inevitably seeks ways of expressing itself. Owing to the failure of the modernising project of the African state these identities had not been brought into the legitimate fold of civil society. The weakening of states in the post-Cold War era began to offer opportunities for their expression. If since then there has been an enhanced manifestation of ethnicity and of ethnic conflict, one must remember how the state's earlier handling of this diversity was often at the root of this resurgence. Nor should it be forgotten that ethnicity usually is not manifested 'by itself', just for the sake of it. More often than not, one will find that differences have arisen from historical power relations, and from unequal treatment or access to resources.

In addition, if we specifically ask about reforms and why they did not achieve the outcomes that were expected from them, particularly with regard to the role of ethnicity and civil society, we should also ask about the content of these reforms, and which reforms they are. In the post-Cold War era African states have been subjected to numerous pressures for reform, some from within, but mostly from outside, at any rate more than ever before. There have been several kinds, but the most important no doubt have been the structural adjustment packages that have been imposed on African states. These, together with numerous political conditions that followed in their wake, were prompted by the needs felt in key global centres to ensure that African governments will better manage their economy and reduce their debt. The idea was also to try and arrive at leaner, more effective and more responsive governments.

One result, however, is that African governments during the past decade or two have had even less to spend on matters such as social welfare, health or education than before, which is precisely the kind of provisions that might have had the effect of sustaining some social cohesion and keeping social groups more closely oriented towards the state. At the same time the state apparatus and presence was strongly reduced, while challenges from various disaffected groups became more vocal than ever. The result has been a significantly reduced capacity to handle many burning social and political questions,

and in acute situations even to keep the country together. What makes things worse is that the structural adjustment packages in particular have tended to have serious differentiating effects in various instances, exacerbating the potential for interethnic conflict. This is not because the reform packages themselves contain prescriptions to differentiate, but simply because some ethnic groups are inevitably more vulnerable to austerity measures than others, given the economic niche they occupy within the system at large.

In the process of the introduction of reforms, many African governments have actually come under the hegemony and tutelage of the international financial institutions and the major donor governments. Thus, with regard to a whole range of fields, programmes and policies concerning African development are not designed in Africa, but are instead developed in Brussels, Washington, Paris or The Hague. Bound hand and foot to political conditions which tell African states what to do and what not to do, the vital element of policy initiative has thus been taken away from them. Hence African governments today are not in a very enviable position to meet ensuing ethnic challenges.

Again, we should not forget that in order to be heard, frustrations tend to be readily voiced as 'ethnic', though inequality of powers, resource endowments or coping capacities may underlie the discontent. The problem, therefore, is hardly one of silencing the ethnic voice so as to be able to get on with the larger tasks of development. Besides, seeking recourse to ethnic identity and expressions of ethnicity often also reflects a search for security in the wake of the failure of the state to instil or sustain a sense of confidence in its longer-term goals and objectives. Against this background, calls for civil liberties, coming after the economic reforms demanded and political conditions set by the major international organisations, have often fallen on deaf ears and have at times seemed only to add to long and external sets of demands.

A key question for future policy, therefore, is whether it is civil society that should somehow be developed, adapted and transformed, and come to include individual citizen rights – as Chazan suggested – so that it can better fulfil its role vis-à-vis the state and allow the move from a strong civil society towards a stronger state? Or would we rather need to turn this around and ask whether the state should not still be given a chance to develop alternative and more meaningful ways of relating to the amalgam of numerous different communities, cultural configurations, social networks and other institutional structures within the nonstate sphere? The latter would imply building on these, recognising that they exist and will continue to retain many of their particular characteristics. It would also imply trying to create new linkages and partnerships in state–society relations and development policies, starting from a fresh perspective on the balance between unity and diversity.

From tribe to ethnicity in Western Zambia: The unit of study as an ideological problem

Wim van Binsbergen

To get inside just one African tribe with as able and lucid a guide as Dr van Velsen is both a salutary and a pleasurable experience and one which can be confidently recommended

—Times Educational Supplement[1]

Introduction[2]

It was not only on the ground, and in terms, of the political and economic aspects of the lives of the people studied in Africa, that the 1970s were a decade of discontinuity. Academically this discontinuity meant the discarding of so much of established anthropology. A different type of anthropology came to emerge: one blending with history and political economy, and one in which structural-functionalist, one-tribe approaches hinging on culture or custom gave way, by and large, to more comprehensive regional approaches. Historical process and dialectics came to take the place of function. Allegedly firm and rigid cultural and ethnic boundaries were breached by economic, political and ideological processes of much wider scope than, for example, 'the Tallensi', 'the Kikuyu', or 'the Zulu'.

Turning to new paradigms, anthropology in Africa has shed the tribe or ethnic group as its basic unit of study. In this chapter I shall discuss the decline of Zambian rural anthropology, and argue that this decline is related to the reliance, among anthropologists, on this unit of study in the past. The problem of the tribe as a unit of study is, however, complicated by the fact that members of Central African society themselves structure their social experience partly in terms of tribes; it is hard for a researcher to tear himself/herself away from such a folk categorisation. I shall discuss this problem with reference to my own research among the Nkoya of Western Zambia. I shall then argue that one

way to escape from the tribal model on the analytical plane, without sacrificing the subjects' own organisation of their experience, is to try and explain this experience as a form of consciousness emerging out of the dialectics of political incorporation and, even more fundamentally, the penetration of capitalism, in other words, the articulation of capitalism and non-capitalist modes of production. This leads to a picture of complex relationships, of much greater scope and abstraction than, and extending in time and place beyond, anything that could be meaningfully defined as a unit of study. The alternative proposed here for the tribal model as a unit of study is not another, better unit of study (eg. mode of production, social formation, or a well-defined spatio-temporal portion of reality), but a growing awareness of possible problems and interrelations, informed by insights from history and political economy. Thus this chapter, much like my other work (cf. van Binsbergen 1981b; 1992b) will be an exercise in the interaction of anthropology and history in the analysis of a specific set of data. Such a form of anthropology could try and make its comeback on the scene of rural studies of Central and Southern Africa.

My analysis is set within the framework of the articulation of modes of production. However, the inconclusive nature of my argument reflects the fact that, ever since the emergence of neo-Marxist studies in the 1960s, understanding the *ideological* aspects of modes of production and their articulation have constituted their greatest challenge – a challenge not yet met in full.[3] As has been argued by Raatgever (1985), Godelier's attempts in this respect, dwelling on the applicability of the infrastructure/ superstructure metaphor, have not managed to produce much clarity; moreover, his work seldom specifically deals with the process of articulation of modes of production. Yet, among the modern French Marxist authors, Godelier appears to have been the only one to explicitly consider the problem of ethnicity.[4] His Marxist inspiration is however largely used to arrive at a formal and epistemological critique of the concept of tribe in classic anthropology. Godelier does not attempt (as is my intention in the present chapter) to identify the political economic conditions, and the intersubjective dynamics of participant observation, under which a group of people, and a researcher studying them, would adopt or reject the notion of tribe. With regard to other members of the French School, it is only fair to admit that the notion of bounded ethnic groups as more or less self-evident units of analysis was at first uncritically adopted by them; it is the work of Meillassoux and Terray which has made such groups as the Guro and the Dida famous.[5]

Subsequently, a Marxist perspective on ethnicity came to be formulated by writers in the Anglo-Saxon tradition, and largely by reference to East African data. Thus John Saul (1979:ch. 14), in a study of the dialectics of class and tribe in that part of Africa, offers three allegedly complementary approaches along which ethnicity could be drawn into the orbit of a Marxist analysis. Ethnicity, he argues, could be viewed first as a response to imperialism, at the sub-national level; second as an ideological aspect of the articulation of modes of production; and third as a form of ideological class struggle. Surprisingly, Saul fails to indicate the evident connections between these three interpretations, which in fact would appear to be very closely related. Behind political and military domination, imperialism obviously served the imposition of the capitalist mode of production. It

was thus a major factor in the articulation between that mode of production and such modes of production as were already in existence locally. In so far as it is inherent in the articulation process that these pre-capitalist modes of production retain their own distinct existence – if only in an encapsulated and subservient form, a neo-traditionalist expression of this distinct 'identity' (the very word refers to a problematic which is typical of capitalist encroachment) would readily assume the form of ethnicity. In so far as capitalist encroachment involves local people in new, capitalist relations of production, it amounts to class formation and thus to manifest or latent class struggle.[6] If the ideological expression of such articulation is predominantly in ethnic terms, the creation and assertion of ethnic identity vis-à-vis other emerging ethnic identities that form part of the ideological layout of the social formation might certainly take on militant overtones, yet such ethnicity would serve to conceal the underlying class nature of the process thus being expressed. Therefore it would be more appropriate to view ethnicity as an ideological diversion of class struggle, rather than an ideological class struggle in itself. The point has already been made in Mafeje's (1971) earlier analysis of 'tribalism', which draws on a more general Marxist inspiration without using the idea of an articulation of modes of production: such ethnicity could essentially be called 'false consciousness'.

In his review article on possible explanations of ethnicity as found in the work of Mamdani (1976), Leys (1975) and others, Joel Kahn (1981:489) is less sure of the appropriateness of the term 'false consciousness' in connection with ethnicity. Kahn offers a number of stimulating ideas. He dwells on the problematic of the relative autonomy of the ideological instance, the specific forms of domination found in the world-wide or national peripheries (cf. Meillassoux 1975; articulation of modes of production is however not explicitly mentioned), the significance of class analysis in this context, and the relevance of colonial forms of domination. Somewhat superfluously, he stresses that in the ten pages of his article he is not 'attempting to develop a universal theory of primordialism' (Kahn 1981:51). While many of his pointers have parallels in the analysis of ethnicity in Western Zambia as set out in the present chapter, my attempt will be even more modest in that I will largely focus on the concrete ethnographic and historiographic forms in which this ethnicity manifests itself to the researcher – shunning the explicit, abstract, Marxist theorising in which Kahn hopes to find the key for the explanation we both seek.

Finally, there is – precisely at the ethnographic level – a dimension of ethnicity which is surprisingly absent in scholarly analysis of the phenomenon: ethnicity may be an ideological process at the level of participants in any society under study, but our attempt to come to terms with this process in the course of our own intellectual production also has clear ideological implications.

In this chapter I shall argue a view of ethnicity as a response, among African participants, to the articulation of the pre-existing modes of production with capitalism. Alternatively, it is now fairly accepted to look at early anthropology as an ideological expression, among North Atlantic participants, of an imperialism seeking to create conditions for the world-wide penetration of the capitalist mode of production (Leclerc 1972; Asad 1973; Copans 1975). This imperialist heritage is likely to have some

continued, if hidden, impact on whatever study of whatever topic modern anthropology undertakes in that part of the world where conditions of peripheral capitalism prevail. Considering how long it took anthropology to take up the study of incorporation processes, capitalist penetration and so on (a very small trickle up to the 1960s, such studies became a major topic only in the 1970s), one begins to suspect that anthropology is genetically conditioned to turn a blind eye to the very processes of articulation of modes of production to which it owes its own existence. Indulging in a Freudian analogy, one might say that there is here a Primal Scene which anthropology could not, until quite recently, afford to face, for the sake of its own sanity. Since anthropology is primarily a matter of intellectual, that is, ideological, production, this problematic might have a less devastating effect on anthropological studies of economic or political aspects of the articulation process – studies that do not concentrate on ideology. But when anthropologists turn to the ideological dimensions of the articulation of modes of production, and for instance begin to study religious or ethnic responses under conditions of capitalist encroachment, then the ideological complexity of this research undertaking is raised to the power of two.

Two ideological processes converge in the anthropological study of ethnicity: first, among anthropologists, the modern transformation of an anthropology which started out as an ideological transformation of imperialism; and second, the emergence, as an ideological response to capitalist encroachment in the Third World, of new group identities which seek historical legitimation by posing as reminiscences or re-enactments of pre-capitalist African social forms allegedly unaffected by capitalism. Could such a convergence ever produce meaningful and reliable results at all?

The answer to this question cannot be given before we have fully analysed the extent to which the modern social sciences reflect, in their theorising as well as in the concrete organisation of their intellectual production processes, the contradictions inherent in present-day capitalism – in other words, before we have assessed to what extent modern anthropology succeeds in escaping from its imperialist heritage. The good intentions of anthropologists in the latter part of the twentieth century, the inclusion of Third World colleagues among their number, the emergence of a self-reflexive, even revolutionary, anthropology, the radical political stances a minority of anthropologists take in public life – all this may be encouraging, but it is not sufficient proof that the fundamental orientation of anthropology has completely altered since its inception in the nineteenth century. The complexities of the situation are further revealed when we look at the relations of intellectual production that prevail in modern anthropology (cf. van Binsbergen 1984). These largely follow the pattern of modern capitalism: intellectual wage labour, separation between intellectual workers and their means of production (libraries, computers, office space, motor vehicles used in the field), the bureaucratic organisation of production, the reliance on underpaid local assistants in the field, the commoditisation of such intellectual products as books, articles, degrees, academic honours, the ensuing academic market pressures, competition, and so on. And this confusing complexity manifests itself not just on the impersonal level of structures of academic production, but also in the very personal intimacy of individual thought processes, motivation in research, the sort of 'rapport' a fieldworker concentrating on ideological themes manages to establish with his/

her informants, and the force with which that research is drawn towards these informants' own viewpoints.

Once an ideological representative of capitalist encroachment, the anthropologist today may be tempted to identify with, if not to join, the forces fighting this encroachment, for example through such ideological forms as ethnic identity, authenticity, negritude, the African personality, Christian Independent churches, and prophetic religious movements. These forms appear to express aspirations which as yet – under conditions of intercontinental dependency in the military, monetary and cultural field – are still largely deprived of economic and political reality. In this chapter I shall describe an instance of such identification, on the part of the anthropologist, as a temporary by-product of research into ethnicity. The example does not stand on its own: several researchers of modern religious expressions in Africa have yielded to similar pressures by temporarily joining the religious organisations they were studying (Jules-Rosette 1975; Martin 1975). Are these responses on the part of researchers positive forms of solidarity with the ideological struggles of their informants, or do they amount to intellectual betrayal in so far as they further the production of 'false consciousness' – stressing ethnic or religious, over economic, analyses of reality?

These are weighty questions that have a bearing on our intellectual integrity, our class position in the world system, and the viability of a Marxist anthropology. My present argument will not offer adequate answers. Suffice it to say that anthropological analysis of the ideological dimensions of the articulation of modes of production contains a double bind, an ideological puzzle, which more than justifies a closer look at the anthropological researcher involved in such an exercise. This is the reason why, in the course of this chapter, I shall have to pay some attention to my own role as researcher blundering through 'Nkoya' ethnicity. At the same time it may be the fundamental reason why, for the present, any analysis of the ideological dimensions of the articulation of modes of production will remain unsatisfactory. However, it is to such an analysis that I shall now proceed.

The end of rural anthropology in Zambia?

Any analysis of ethnicity in Zambia today would have to reckon with the exceptionally rich tradition of colonial anthropology in that country, as created by the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute. In order to understand the reliance on the tribal model among the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute researchers of rural Zambia, we should not overlook the fact that they were adopting into their analytical frameworks emic categories employed at the time by Zambian villagers, townspeople and colonial administrators alike.

In addition, their academic discipline provided these researchers with at least two other reasons for upholding the tribal model. First, the concept of culture at the theoretical level reinforced the notion of tribe (as the most obvious carrier of a distinct, internalised, many-sided culture); it provided a perspective on allegedly deeply-rooted 'primordial attachments', which Shils and Geertz have stressed with regard to ethnicity (cf. Doornbos (1972) and references cited there). Second, the adoption of prolonged and intensive participatory fieldwork as the main method of data collection did much to

strengthen, among anthropologists, the concept of tribe at a personal level. The intimate communion with the one culture that one studies as an anthropologist can be seen as both an irritating cliché of the professional sub-culture of classic anthropology, and at the same time as a genuine, existential dimension of doing fieldwork in that tradition. It suggests the adoption of one particular unit of study, whose boundaries are defined by the limits of the cognitive and language field in which the anthropologist, after a long and painful learning process, acquires a certain (always hopelessly defective) mastery. 'My people.' 'My tribe.'

The Rhodes–Livingstone Institute researchers working in rural Zambia seldom explicitly considered the analytical status of the ethnic labels they used for their main units of study. The titles of their main publications demonstrate that they defined their units of study loosely in terms of tribes or ethnic groups.[7] Much sophistication, admittedly, went into the assessment of the transformation these rural ethnic labels underwent when they were introduced into the urban areas.[8] Within what was called the 'industrial–colonial complex of urban Northern Rhodesia', these labels were claimed to acquire categorical and situational overtones quite different from the 'total way of life' they were assumed to represent out in the rural areas. Not that the rural researchers claimed to analyse this way of life exhaustively. In fact, most of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute studies emphatically concentrated on only one major aspect of 'tribal life': either kinship, or marriage, or the judicial process, formal and particularly informal political organisation, community crises, ritual, and so on.

The concept of culture so conducive to the classic tribal model was rarely used explicitly; instead Gluckman and associates preferred the term 'custom', with its Malinowskian bird-of-paradise feathers. In contrast with American idealist culturology, the Manchester researchers were little inclined to view 'custom' as autonomously determining the course of the social process. If blame them we must, it could be for under-analysing, rather than for exaggerating, the cultural dimension of social life. Van Velsen and Turner[9] presented dynamic and situational approaches to village life in Southern Central Africa that were far richer and more convincing that anything the classic structural-functionalist paradigm had ever managed. Yet, even if one had to limit one's detailed study to selected aspects of 'tribal' life, and even if one studied these aspects in a masterly way, the tribe remained the basic unit of study. African village life was essentially depicted as closed in itself and following a logic of its own. 'Outside contacts', with European administrators, mission, the modern market economy, migrancy and nationalism were tackled in introductory or concluding chapters or in scattered articles, but not in the main books.

Of course, the anthropological discipline had at the time no theoretical solution to offer for the formidable problems posed by the persistence of encapsulated neo-traditional communities in a situation of articulation of modes of production. Individual researchers could hardly be blamed for the historical limitations of their discipline, especially not when they themselves were aware of these limitations. A case in point is Jaap van Velsen, who, in the end realising that the most fundamental questions concerning labour migration could not be answered from within Tongaland, at the last minute withdraw his chapters on this topic from *The politics of kinship* at galley proof stage.[10]

Two exceptions to the general pattern are Gluckman's study of the economy of the Central Barotse Plain (1968a) and Cunnison's *The Luapula peoples* (1959/1967). Both take as their main unit of study not a single 'tribe', but geographical areas which they see as filled with a variety of tribes. While Gluckman takes tribes for granted, leaving the concept unanalysed,[11] Cunnison (1959/1967:ch. 2) engages in a painstaking assessment of the local and analytical meaning of the concept of tribe in the Luapula context. It was the particular poly-ethnic structure of their respective rural research areas that forced Gluckman and Cunnison to discuss, with different degrees of sophistication, the interactions between 'tribes'. The other researchers were not particularly concerned with internal organisation at the tribal level, but rather used the tribe as a comprehensive setting within which the microscopic, face-to-face social process in which they were really interested took place, and which they studied with excellent results. This approach is particularly clear in Turner's *Schism and continuity*:

> *I focus the investigation upon the village, a significant local unit, and analyse it successively as an independent social system and as a unit within several wider sets of social relations included in the total field of Ndembu society. (Turner 1968a:xvii)*

Paradoxically, the study that, among the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute work, was most concerned with the relations between a local, rural Zambian society and the wider world as dominated by the capitalist mode of production, Watson's *Tribal cohesion in a money economy* (1958), was at the same time the study that tried to make the most of the tribe, conceived in terms that were essentially those of structural-functionalist anthropology. Mambwe tribal society, far from being a loosely descriptive (and hence pardonable) category, is for Watson a living, and surviving, integrated entity, tending:

> *to adjust to new conditions through its existing social institutions. These institutions will survive, but with new values, in a changed social system. (Watson 1958:228)*

Regrettably, Long's impressive attempt to break away from all this, in *Social change and the individual* (1968), was at the same time virtually the swan song of Zambian rural anthropology. Long studied what might have been called 'Lala village life' not as the enacting of changing tribal institutions or of some manipulative internal social process, but rather as the 'social and religious responses to innovation in a Zambian community'.[12] As a unit of study he used, at the descriptive level, a geographically defined 'Kapepa parish'. Here he sought access, analytically, not to representative glimpses of 'Lala society', but to a structurally complex social field, accommodating both local cultural and structural elements, and economic and social-structural pressures, as well as occupational and religious experiences pertaining to distant urban areas (Long 1969:6). In the extended-case studies of Van Velsen and Turner, custom, elsewhere considered king, had been dethroned, giving way to a complex social process that was determined by the internal dynamics of local rural society; in Long's analysis, the wider world was finally allowed to step in, and it offered altered patterns of agriculture and farm management, dynamics of power and prestige, and religious experience, that drove home the fact that the single

tribe is not a feasible unit of study at all.[13]

It is difficult to believe that Long's book, published in 1968 and dealing with the situation in 1963–64, was for nearly two decades the most current full-length anthropological study to be devoted to rural Zambia. In addition to Turner's *The drums of affliction* (1986b) (where occasional references to social and political conditions surrounding Ndembu village society cannot take away the fact that Ndembu society remains the crucial unit of study, just as in Turner's earlier studies), the only other examples to come to mind are Elizabeth Colson's *Consequences of resettlement* (1971), Stuart Marks's *Large mammals and a brave people* (1976), and George Bond's *The politics of change in a Zambian community* (1976), based on fieldwork in the same period as Long's. Whatever anthropology Robert Bates's *Rural responses to industrialization* (1976) contains is best left undiscussed here (cf. van Binsbergen 1977b). There must be some interesting rural studies lying buried in unpublished PhD theses. Lancaster's and Poewe's articles foreshadowed full-length books to be published in 1983.[14] But on the whole, Zambian rural anthropology was eloquently silent during the 1970s. There was only a faint trickle of publications, based mainly on fieldwork conducted before the mid-1970s; this includes articles by Bond, Colson, Scudder, Anita Spring Hansen, Marks, Robin Fielder, Lancaster, Hansen, Holy, and myself. In the 1970s and 1980s, the growth poles for the study of Zambian society were history and political economy, not anthropology. The anthropological study of Zambia's rural areas has hardly been a field in which the University of Zambia has excelled, and little rural anthropology has been published in the Lusaka-based journal *African Social Research*. One of the most significant studies of rural Southern Central and Southern Africa, including Zambia, to be published in the 1970s was *Roots of rural poverty* (Palmer and Parsons 1977); this book was inspired, to a limited extent, by radical anthropology (including the French Marxist school) as developed with reference to other parts of the Third World, but towards its argument Zambian rural anthropology did not make much of a contribution.[15] Similarly, the Centre of African Studies in Edinburgh could organise a full-length conference, 'Evolving structure of Zambian society' in 1980 without a single anthropologist among the contributors, and virtually without so much as a passing reference to Zambian rural anthropology in the footnotes to the papers.

This characterisation of Zambian rural anthropology in those decades of course relies on a particular conception of anthropology, which may well be debatable. I have elsewhere considered this question at somewhat greater length (cf. van Binsbergen 1981a). Here let it suffice that by anthropology I mean that body of social-scientific work that directly (ie. in a neo-classical, often implicitly structural functionalist form), or preferably indirectly (ie. in a form inspired by regional, historical and politico-economic considerations) derives from the methods and problematics of the classic anthropology of the 1940s and 1950s.

It would seem as if anthropology, with its prolonged participatory fieldwork and its profound insights into family and kinship, the micro dynamics of the political and economic processes, and the participants' construction of social and ritual meaning in terms of a local particularistic symbolic idiom, was unable, in those decades (and probably has been, to this very day), to make a meaningful contribution either to

the understanding of rural stagnation today, or in general to the ongoing research by historians, economists and political scientists. This has in fact been an opinion found, expressly or tacitly, among many colleagues from other disciplines currently engaged in the analysis of rural Southern Central Africa. Rural anthropology in this part of the world may have been too slow, or too entrenched in its classic problematics, to address itself to the academic and societal problems of the late twentieth century. Given its reliance, in the past, on the tribe or ethnic group as a standard unit of study, a re-assessment of the unit of study may help to find a way out of this dead end. I am convinced that the predicament is largely a theoretical one, and cannot be explained away by such practical problems as the availability of research funds, the limitations imposed by research permits, or the hardships of rural fieldwork.

At the same time I would claim that the perspective of modes of production and their articulation does provide a means to link traditional and meaningful anthropological concerns on the one hand, and the economic and political realities beyond the local rural community on the other. Without denying the specificity and the internal logic of the domestic or tributary mode of production, the analysis does not stop short there, but instead the conditions are identified for the continued existence (in other words, the reproduction) of this mode of production; these conditions are not sought in internalised culture or similar primordial attachments, but in the material and ideological processes through which surpluses generated in modes of production such as identified locally are appropriated by other modes (particularly the capitalist one) in such a way that the domestic community is accorded a measure of distinct, but encapsulated and neo-traditional, identity.

The unit of study

For an outsider to the social sciences, and perhaps particularly for a natural scientist, it would be difficult to appreciate a situation where libraries have been filled with studies in the field of Southern Central and Southern African studies, and specialists hold conference after conference, conversing happily without more than the usual terminological confusion, without any real consensus having been reached as to the solution of the problem of the unit of study in this field of enquiry.

What makes our present situation less dramatic than it may appear to outsiders is the fact that considerations of the unit of study tend to refer to a much higher plane of abstraction and analysis than that on which our raw data are usually collected. On the level of the life experiences of the people inhabiting the part of the world we are studying, the concrete data are fairly straightforward. Our research notes consist of interviews, documents, observations, local words and their meanings, and sometimes (for those of us who are engaged in participatory research) the subjective experience of partially sharing an initially unfamiliar variety of human social life. These elementary particles of social and historical research in Africa may form, in a strict methodological sense, our real units of study, but they are not the ones that concern us here. We have, I suppose, a sufficient amount of trust in one another's professional skill and integrity to accept the

descriptive evidence each of us digs up from his/her particular academic gold mine. The problem of the unit of study as I understand it arises only when it comes to collating these minute facts into meaningful patterns, into more comprehensive complexes that have a systematic extension in space and that go through an identifiable process in time. The question boils down to: what scope of vision should the blinkers through which we peer at reality allow? For ultimately, everything social is related to everything else, so nothing less than the whole world constitutes an adequate unit of study. But such a unit is impossible to handle, and is as uninteresting to read about as the tiny particles of information that constitute our raw data. An adequate unit of study should enable us to select as well as to synthesise. We might tentatively define such a unit of study as:

> an analytic construct which, in a manner acceptable to a specialist academic audience, allows for the meaningful and systematic integration of disconnected research data around a common focus, in such a way that the analytic construct thus arrived at is relevant for the pursuit of a specific scientific and/or societal problematic.

This sums up a couple of crucial points. First, the distinctions we impose upon the phenomena we study are essentially arbitrary, man-made constructs, and do not in themselves emanate from the nature of these phenomena. Second, the choice of a particular construct as a meaningful unit of study is subject to a process of negotiation between colleagues.[16] Third, a unit of study is not on the same level as our concrete research data, nor on the most abstract level of grand theory, but on some intermediate level: that on which our disconnected raw data are processed so as to bring out patterns capable of being generalised and explained in fairly general terms that are yet particular to the geographical area and the historical period we are concentrating on. And finally, the choice of one unit of study rather than another may be fairly arbitrary from the point of the true structure of reality (which we in any event see only through a glass, darkly); but this choice is far from arbitrary when considered within the process of academic production, where such units of study should be selected as have the greatest potential of enlightening the problematic which informs the research that is undertaken. Such problematics, moreover, are not exclusively defined by academics holding conferences, sitting on boards that distribute research funds between them, or deciding on the publication of one another's papers and books. The study of kinship terminology and the symbolic layout of homesteads[17] would be even more of a booming field of research if research problematics were exclusively defined by so-called disinterested intellectual concerns. Fortunately, however, scholars are free, to a considerable extent, to turn to problematics that seem to be of particular social relevance, and that may help to explain, if not to alter, the vital predicaments that beset the people they are studying. In this respect studying the 'roots of rural poverty' (Palmer and Parsons 1977) may be more relevant, as a problematic, than the kinship terminology and symbolic structures obtaining in the same part of the world. And whereas the latter problematic may lead one to distinguish between a host of different tribes or ethnic groups, each with its own total culture, including kinship terminology and spatial symbolism, the former problematic would lead one to look for broad, comprehensive, regional patterns that

would explain the remarkable similarities in the present-day predicament of the people of Southern Africa. Here, of course, anthropology has been merging with history and political economy, so that non-anthropological work on rural Zambia during the 1970s and 1980s (eg. by Muntemba, Klepper, Palmer and Vail) has taken on a new significance.

Nor is it only the conscience of more or less committed scholars, and the whims of funding agencies (usually located in the North Atlantic region), that suggest the adoption of one problematic rather than another. The official institutions in the areas our research concentrates on, and the very villagers and petty administrators that provide us with our data, coax us towards the adoption of particular problematics, and thus towards the adoption of particular units of study. Needless to say, their prodding is not always in a direction that coincides with the choices academics would wish to make. The crisis at the University of Zambia early in 1976 and the state of the social and historical sciences within the Republic of South Africa in the pre-democracy days of the 1970s and 1980s are only two examples that suggest that the adoption of a radical problematic may not make us, as researchers, more attractive in the eyes of the members of the society we study. Below I shall reflect on my personal experience with this problem at a local level, in the course of my participatory and oral-historical research in Kaoma district (Western Zambia), and among people from that area now living in Lusaka, 400 kilometres east of Kaoma.[18]

That definitional and methodological rigidity is necessary in the handling of one's unit of study has been emphasised in particular by scholars trying to compare the phenomena pertaining to different geographical areas or different periods. The problem of the definition of the units of cross-cultural comparison has haunted comparative studies in the social sciences ever since the end of the nineteenth century. Although there have been several attempts at cross-cultural comparison in the Southern African region,[19] the problem of the unit of study was hardly explicitly considered in the course of these attempts, and probably some of the data used derived from loosely defined units ('tribes', 'ethnic groups', 'cultures', 'societies') that were essentially incomparable. The assumption was that, for example 'the Bemba', 'the Lozi', 'the Tonga' not only really existed as collective representations of participants in Zambian society, but also formed viable units of analysis.

The example of urban ethnicity may illustrate that adopting a particular unit of study sheds light on a certain problematic, but at the same time, like all classification, forces an essentially volatile and dynamic reality into a straitjacket. In their Copperbelt studies Mitchell, Epstein and Harries-Jones have treated ethnic identity primarily as a logical device to classify individuals. These researchers stressed the situational aspects of urban ethnicity. Reliance on a particular ethnic identity is only one of many options a town dweller has for his/her personal organisation of urban relationships. He/She may temporarily drop this identity and emphasise, in different urban situations involving the same or a different set of people, a different ethnic identity. Among themselves, and vis-à-vis 'Lozi', the Lusaka migrants from Kaoma district would identify themselves as 'Nkoya', but in many urban situations they would pose as 'Lozi', and sometimes they would try to pass for 'Bemba' or even 'Nyanja'. Alternatively, the town dweller may, situationally, stress a social identity derived from class, occupation, educational level, or

political or religious affiliation. The ways in which ethnicity is alternatively dominant or downplayed can only be understood against the background of the total social process in which the participants are specifically involved.

Description implies fossilisation, no matter how dynamic a reality we try to capture. The inevitable result is lack of precision. It is tedious to have to constantly indicate that the unit of study one imposes covers only a certain aspect of the social reality, only in certain situations, and subject to the participants' own conscious and unconscious manipulation. One has to adopt shorthand formulas, and these tend to acquire a life of their own in the course of one's argument. This accounts, for instance, for the following paradox: in his work in the 1950s and early 1960s Mitchell is on the one hand clearly aware of the situational and manipulative aspects of ethnicity, yet does not shrink from detailed studies of, for example, intertribal prestige scores and differential fertility, where these tribes are neatly boxed and appear as entries in sophisticated, computerised tables – as if they formed both emic and etic categories at the same time (cf. Mitchell 1956; 1965).

This methodological problem, by the way, is not limited to the main unit of study that we adopt in our analyses. Ever since the extended-case method has made us aware of the shifting, inchoate, situational, competitive elements in the social process, persuading us to consider these elements as the real basic data out of which we have to build a picture of a 'social structure' and a 'culture', we run into the epistemological difficulty that, in order to discuss the data, and the emerging interpretation, at all, we have to lend them far greater invariability and stability than our analysis would yet show them to possess.[20]

Studying the Nkoya

I have already indicated how the choice of a particular unit of study can be suggested to the researcher on the basis of other than strictly academic concerns, for instance by his/her commitment to a problematic that is of wider social relevance, or under pressure from members of the society he/she is trying to study. In so far as participants are often ideologically determined to ignore the true nature of their own situation, there may be considerable tension between these two possible influences on one's choice of a unit of study. In the remainder of this chapter I shall bring out both the lure of the tribal model as a unit of study for rural Western Zambia, and its spuriousness in the light of a more profound analysis. In my conclusion I shall indicate the implications of this experience for the problem of the unit of study in general.

My first research contact with people from Western Zambia was in Matero, a fairly respectable residential area in the north-western part of Zambia's capital. Early in 1972 a friend took me and my family to a nocturnal healing session, staged by one of the senior leaders of a cult of affliction that had been founded by the prophet Simbinga in Kaoma district in the 1930s, and introduced into Lusaka in the 1950s. The languages spoken at the session were Nkoya, Nyanja, Lenje, Luvale and English, in that order of frequency. Most of the cultic personnel, and most of the patients and onlookers, would when among themselves identify themselves as belonging to the 'Nkoya tribe' (*mushobo wa shinkoya*), notwithstanding the fact, already indicated above, that for many social

purposes within the capital they would claim to be 'Lozi', and would use, with varying success, the Lusaka lingua franca, Nyanja.

Hoping to penetrate the cultic and social idiom acted out in that nocturnal urban session and in many others I was to witness, deeply impressed by the dramatic and aesthetic aspects of the cult, and in general unable to resist the very great attraction that the remarkably closely knit, encapsulated group of 'Nkoya' immigrants in Lusaka exerted on us (an uprooted nuclear family of Dutch expatriate academics), I allowed the Nkoya-ness of this set of ritual and social relations to dominate all other aspects of my urban research (which had started out as a sociological survey of religious organisations in Lusaka). I learnt the Nkoya language (and no other) and got deeply involved in Nkoya urban network contacts and collective ceremonies, which even in town were of an amazing scope: while the number of Nkoya in Lusaka, including children, was only about 1000 out of a total urban population of about 350 000 (in the early 1970s), for girls' puberty ceremonies, healing sessions and funerary wakes scores, even hundred of participants were mobilised from all over the capital. We were introduced to urban members of one Nkoya royal family, and would be visited by the chief himself in our urban home whenever his membership of the House of Chiefs brought him to Lusaka. As we acquired a working knowledge of those aspects of Nkoya culture that were still prominent in the urban relationships of our Nkoya friends and informants, my research began to concentrate on urban–rural relations between what I then labelled, provisionally, Nkoya village society, and Lusaka recent immigrants from that society. After initial, exploratory visits we settled in Chief Kahare's capital, Kaoma district, for participatory, quantitative, and oral-historical research into the rural ends of the urban–rural networks whose urban ends we had previously got to know fairly well. While my main published academic output during those years remained focused on more general, regional concerns,[21] my main Zambian fieldwork experience, and my main emotional identification as a researcher in Zambia, came to lie with the Nkoya: a small ethnic minority whose homeland was structurally peripheral to the Zambian nation-state, and whose political and economic history over the previous one and a half centuries had been determined by their being peripheral even within Barotseland (where, along with so many other groups, they had been labelled a 'Lozi subject tribe').

Developing out of a context of urban ritual among migrants, I had certainly not selected my initial set of informants on the basis that they might form a tribe. It is they who told me that they were a tribe, very different from the scores of other tribes which (according to a folk classification system they shared with virtually all Zambians, urban and rural) make up the population of the country. My earlier research in rural North Africa, far from preparing me for a countryside apparently parcelled up into neat tribal units, had instead conditioned me to look at a cultural region or subcontinent as displaying essential cultural, structural and historical continuity, and to downplay local idiosyncrasies in this regional pattern (cf. Gellner and Micaud 1972); urban–rural differences might be far more significant than intra-rural variation. I also knew that the anthropology of sub-Saharan Africa since the late 1960s had been moving away from the tribal model; such tribes as anthropologists, administrators and Africans had distinguished were beginning to be looked at as more or less recent emic constructs,

responses to increase of political scale, as the creation of new political arenas (late precolonial, colonial, and post-colonial) called for new symbolic definitions of group opposition.[22]

And yet I could not resist the very strong illusion implanted by day-to-day close interaction with people who, in their dealings with me at least, emphatically identified themselves as Nkoya. Their Nkoya-ness very soon became their main, even only characteristic in my eyes, and I myself became more or less Nkoya-ised in the process.

Rich and rewarding though the experience was, I had some reservations, and felt uneasy about them. As an anthropologist I knew that my friends, modern peasants and proletarians, were not just Nkoya and nothing more, but agreement on their Nkoya-ness had become the raison d'être of our frequent interactions. Although I circulated my early papers on the Nkoya widely among my Nkoya friends, I did not dare to show them a conference paper I wrote shortly after my main fieldwork (van Binsbergen 1975a). There I tried to demonstrate that, when all was said and done, Nkoya ethnic identity was only a dependent variable, to be explained by reference to the economic and political dynamics of relatively recent incorporation into a market economy and wider state structure, both precolonial and colonial, and I could trace the process of this response in some detail. A few years later, when I gave a seminar at the University of Zambia, Robert Serpell pointed out the extent to which my research had a Nkoya bias, and wondered how very different my analysis might have turned out had I not learnt the Nkoya language, but conducted my urban research in Nyanja. I pretended not to understand what he was aiming at: the fact that most of the social life of my Nkoya friends was determined by principles other than their claiming to be Nkoya. Yet only a few weeks earlier, during a field trip to Kaoma district, I had conducted collective interviews with chief's councils, and had consciously felt how the notables present (representing both traditional and modern rural elites) were manipulating me as a likely ally in the expression of a new, proud Nkoya identity that would provide them with a political base in a district and a province dominated by people adhering to ethnic labels other than Nkoya (notably Lozi, Luvale and Mbunda). But then, again, had I not in the course of the same field trip (which had brought me back to the area after three years' absence), at a collective celebration for which Chief Kahare had spontaneously made available his royal (though 100% state-subsidised) orchestra, been formally declared a Nkoya ('*baji kankoya! baji kankoya!*'), by the same chief's prime minister; and had not the headman of the segment of the chief's capital where we had lived during most of the main spell of rural fieldwork, on that occasion publicly called me his sister's son ('*baji ba mwipa wami!*'), offering me the most intimate relationship than can exist between men in this local society?

Already the situational use of Nkoya-ness in the urban situation, and particularly the 'passing' to more prestigious ethnic identities of certain middle-class people born Nkoya, made me realise that primordial attachments based on a unique, total tribal heritage did not apply at all to the Nkoya situation. But there was much more. For reasons of space I must refrain, in this chapter, from a discussion of inter-ethnic relations at the level of interpersonal, face-to-face relationships, both in town and in the rural areas, as reflected in residence, sexual and marital relations, friendship, political and economic support,

ritual and medical interaction. My monograph on the 'Nkoya' research is more explicit on this point. Concentrating here on more or less static attributes of 'Nkoya-ness', the data I had collected, mainly through the generosity of the Nkoya, made it very clear that the Nkoya were not a 'tribe' characterised by a unique combination of language, culture, political and social organisation, and economy dating back to the precolonial era.

Most people who identify themselves as Nkoya are effective members of the Nkoya speech community, and in this respect language could be said to underpin Nkoya identity. But most are also fluent in one or more of the other Western Zambian languages or urban linguae francae, and owing to the enormous extent of rural–rural and rural–urban migration, a considerable percentage (perhaps 15%) of the people who today in their homes use Nkoya as their main language were born in a different speech community or will spend their later life in yet other speech communities.

Moreover, there never was a 'traditional' Nkoya culture, with unique distinctive features. Asked to define Nkoya-ness in cultural terms, my respondents invariably came up with features which were far from peculiar to the Nkoya: their system of name-inheritance (*ushwana*); their collective nocturnal celebrations in which a singing and joking crowd dances around an orchestra composed of xylophones and drums (*ruhnwa*); girls' puberty ceremonies (*kutembwisha kankanga*); absence of male puberty ceremonies (*mukanda*); their skills as elephant hunters and musicians. Yet apart from their language which, however, closely resembles Luyana,[23] Kwangwa and Southern Lunda, there are no features of so-called Nkoya culture that are not also found with lesser or greater prominence in other parts of Western and even Central Zambia. From girls' puberty ceremonies to the Lunda-style ceremonial culture surrounding chieftainship, from patterns of hunting and cultivation to ancestral ritual and name-inheritance: whoever knows the ethnographic literature of Zambia, or, better still, has intensively participated in any rural village anywhere in Western or Central Zambia, will have a strong sense of déjà-vu in a Nkoya village today. Admittedly, there are specific details. Nkoya music has unmistakable qualities which have allowed it to become the court music par excellence throughout Western Zambia. There are specific variations in style patterns as manifested in cultivation or hunting, in food habits, girls' initiation, dancing, hair style, and so on. Also it is possible that the amazing cultural and structural homogeneity that characterises post-independence Western Zambia is partly a result of processes of political and economic incorporation over the past hundred and fifty years, which may have obliterated much that was uniquely local, and may have supplanted the neo-traditional hotchpotch of peripheral-capitalist rural culture prevailing throughout the region. There are indications in the field of chieftainship and religion that such a converging transformation was one among several intertwined processes of cultural change affecting Western Zambia. Present-day similarities should not offhand be taken as proof of past identities.[24] Yet in the final analysis Nkoya culture seems to be no more than a slightly idiosyncratic combination and permutation of productive, social-organisational, and symbolic patterns widely and abundantly available throughout the entire region of Western and West Central Zambia.

Some of the potentially distinguishing cultural features of Nkoya-ness underwent considerable change over the past few centuries. A case in point[25] is male circumcision

(*mukanda*), which, introduced around the middle of the nineteenth century by a Nkoya ruler with close Lunda connections, became a fairly widespread practice among Nkoya-speaking groups until about the 1920s, but which over the past fifty years has entirely fallen into disuse. The fact that today Nkoya ridicule *mukanda* as a distinctive feature of Luvale and Mbunda ethnic groups with whom they have been in heavy political and ecological competition since the 1920s (when these immigrants from Angola started to arrive in Kaoma district in large numbers) suggests that the absence of male circumcision became a distinctive feature of Nkoya-ness only recently, and in response to Luvale/Mbunda encroachment.

This does not mean that in the precolonial past there never was a group of people designated as Nkoya. Although the ethnic distinctions operating today in Central African society have been greatly influenced by inter-group processes within political arenas defined by the colonial and post-colonial state, and therefore must be seen as essentially recent phenomena (cf. Colson 1968; Ranger 1982), there can be no doubt that many of the ethnic labels and cultural symbols employed in that modern context have a nominally precolonial origin, whatever fundamental changes in form and function they have since undergone.

As anywhere else in the world, people in precolonial Zambia saw themselves and one another as belonging to various, named groups defined by any one or perhaps a loose combination of the following criteria: language, place of residence, culture, political organisation, and economic specialisation. Named social groups of wider or lesser scope are too prominently and too consistently present in oral traditions to be explained away as mere projections of colonial or post-colonial realities into a precolonial past. Moreover, the same names appear in written documents generated in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, before the imposition of a colonial administration could have made a deep impact on the way people structured and named their social environment. However, it is more than likely that, like almost anywhere in the world, the various generic and proper names for groups thus distinguished by Zambians in the precolonial period operated at various levels of inclusiveness; that their various dimensions did not coincide (eg. named political units did not coincide with linguistic or economic ones); that these groups were situational and often had blurred boundaries; and that they were constantly manipulated in the course of inter-group interaction. Only in this way did 'tribes' exist in precolonial Zambia;[26] and even so, clans were more prominent forms of social organisation. Distinctions and identifications at the level of 'tribe' (the word exists in every Zambian language) may have occasionally provided a framework for political and military mobilisation, but are not likely to have automatically determined actual group processes; rather they were the shifting results of such processes. A tribal model such as propounded by classic structural-functionalist anthropology could have explained precolonial societies in Zambia no more than it sheds light on contemporary social realities in that part of the world.

The name 'Nkoya' stems without any doubt from before the imposition of colonial rule.[27] According to particularly convincing oral traditions, it is claimed to derive from a toponym denoting a forest area near the confluence of the Kabompo and the Zambezi rivers, where one of the royal clans (the one owning the Mutondo chieftainship) of the

Nkoya is said to have lived around 1800.[28] As the name of a social group, 'Nkoya' appears in several royal praise-names with which Nkoya rulers acceded to their respective thrones in the course of the nineteenth century; I feel certain that these boastful mottoes are no recent fabrications projected back into the past. But there never was, in the precolonial era, an autonomous Nkoya polity encompassing the many thousands of people who today are claimed to be Nkoya. Instead, the area has, since the end of the eighteenth century, been the scene of a number of mutually independent chiefdoms, typically with short-lived dynasties which hived off or replaced one another following a complicated fissiparous pattern, and without recognised hierarchy among them. The group named 'Nkoya' obviously had a political dimension, but it was a very small group, and moreover, its boundaries certainly did not coincide with the (much more extensive) areas of distribution of the linguistic, cultural and economic features displayed by, among others, the members of that group. In reports dating from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the 'Mashasha' group centring on the Kahare dynasty is at least equally prominent. The definition of 'Nkoya' and 'Mashasha' as more or less exclusive or (at other times) mutually inclusive categories, and as major constituents (along with Mbwela, Lukolwe, the Nkoya offshoots in the Zambezi plain etc.) of today's Nkoya, as well as the contiguous geographical areas imputed to them on tribal maps, have gone through a number of rather different versions since David Livingstone first marked the Bamasa (= Mashasha) on the 'Detailed map' in *Missionary travels and researches in South Africa*.[29] An analysis of these versions[30] would take us too far in the present context, but it would certainly corroborate the point I am trying to make: that as an ethnic category 'Nkoya' is fluid, and expanding.

The extension of the name Nkoya to an entire cluster encompassing several mutually independent chiefdoms throughout Western Zambia dates only from the second half of the nineteenth century, and was due, largely, to the incorporation, with different degrees of effectiveness, of these several shifting and unstable chiefdoms into the Kololo/Luyana state, and its heir, the Barotseland Protectorate. This ethnic labelling in the context of Lozi tributary relations was further formalised when, in the first decade of the twentieth century, a boma was established and Mankoya[31] (sub) district was named after what was then considered the main 'tribe' inhabiting the district. Thus contained within a well-defined administrative and territorial unit, Nkoya identity could further develop within the arenas created by the colonial state, and the Lozi neo-traditional government depending upon that state.

Ethnicity, history and the Nkoya experience

How did the Nkoya, against so many odds, manage to convince me that they were 'a tribe'? Why was I lured into adopting this unit of study? My tentative answer is that, although the Nkoya had never been a tribe in the sense of classic anthropology, I became involved with them at a point in their history when they were trying very hard to believe that they constituted such a tribe; when this attempt was finally beginning to pay off; when I was in a position to help the attempt succeed, because of my access to

venues for publication; and, particularly, when, on my part, underneath their mistaken idiom of ethnic expression I detected a sense of deprivation, protest and struggle, with which I could identify – and identification grew as I learnt their language and culture, and exposed myself and my family to appalling conditions of rural life which, although commonplace to the Nkoya, seemed to epitomise their deprivation.

For there was a serious, real-life dimension which my earlier, hidden conference paper had not managed to capture. The Nkoya experience may be understandable as a product of historical circumstance, may even (as I shall argue below) contain elements of one-sidedness and exaggeration – but this does not make it less real. The Nkoya ethnic pathos swept me off my feet, not so much because it provided a temporary shelter for my own uncertain identity, but because it was so clearly a timely and active reaction to a collective historical experience. I was not the first anthropologist to struggle with the experiential side of ethnicity. Whereas Mitchell's later work on urban ethnicity (1970; 1974) was primarily a (successful) attempt to remedy the analytical confusion of emic and etic aspects in urban ethnic categorisation, Epstein went much further in his revision. In *Ethos and identity* (Epstein 1978), he elaborated on aspects which the Copperbelt studies initially had left untouched: the emotive aspects of identity as deriving from a sense of collective history, and from identification between (alternate) generations. Perhaps it is the emotional struggle to do justice to this experiential side that tempted so many students of ethnicity to adopt such terms as 'identity' and 'primordial attachments' as ultimate explanations.

Let me summarise how contemporary (ie. post-independence) Nkoya have looked upon their history – that is to say, upon their history following the emergence of their own major chieftainships in the early nineteenth century. They migrated to their present territory in response to Kaonde and Yeke pressure.[32] Their royal capitals were pillaged by the Lozi (who earlier, in Mulambwa's time, the early nineteenth century, are believed to have come and begged for chiefly medicine and instruments from the Nkoya!) From the first decade of the twentieth century they were supervised and humiliated by Lozi representative indunas; and since 1937 were relegated to an inferior position altogether with the creation of the Mankoya Native Treasury and the Lozi court at Naliele (near the Kaoma district capital), occupied by a senior member of the Lozi royal family. Their lands were encroached upon by Lozi and especially by thousands of Angolan (Mbunda, Luvale, Luchazi) immigrants into the district from the 1920s. They were evicted from much of their agricultural and hunting territory with the creation of Kafue National Park in the 1930s. They were left without adequate mission-provided educational and medical facilities, which (in the Nkoya view) were concentrated near the centres of Lozi power in the district and in Barotseland as a whole.

Nor did the first ten years of Zambia's independence do much to restore Nkoya pride. At the district's primary schools, use of the missionaries' Nkoya textbooks was abolished, and Lozi ones substituted, in the late 1960s; the predominantly non-Nkoya teachers were blamed for the very poor educational performance of their Nkoya pupils, most of whom received their education in a language (Lozi) they could not speak at home. Promotion to secondary school was very low, and access to higher educational institutions negligible. Radio broadcasting in the Nkoya language, never more than a

few minutes per week anyway, was discontinued altogether. At the provincial level, Lozi, and at the district level especially Mbunda and Luvale, dominated the national party, UNIP, as well as the various elected bodies of local government, and the Nkoya mainly supported the ANC until this party was integrated into UNIP at the creation of the one-party state (1972). Like the whole of Western Zambia, the Nkoya saw their major access to capitalist labour markets cut off when labour recruitment for the South African mines was stopped shortly after UDI. But, somewhat different from the Lozi, the Nkoya, because of their different educational and mission history, and because of their lack of previously established urban footholds, could find little in the way of compensation in migratory opportunities along the Zambian Line of Rail. Cash cropping opportunities were slowly increasing in the district, owing to agricultural extension work, the erection of national agricultural marketing depots, and a massive tobacco and maize scheme of the Tobacco Board of Zambia. But again preciously few Nkoya benefited by these, except as low-paid agricultural workers. People in the outlying areas negotiated in vain for tractors to come to their villages and plough their maize fields. By the 1970s, cash crop production among the villagers still tended to be limited to a few bags of maize a year; seed maize and fertiliser were difficult to get[33], and after marketing their crops the peasants had to wait for months to be paid. In 1969 the name of the district was changed from Mankoya to Kaoma, wiping out the last traces of official recognition that the district had originally been Nkoya land. The two main Nkoya chiefs, Kahare and Mutondo, continued to maintain a state-subsidised royal establishment, as guaranteed under the 1964 Barotseland Agreement (the 1969 alterations did not affect this point). However, they were denied the status of senior chiefs, and their subsidies were substantially lower than those received at Naliele.

In the 1970s and 1980s the Nkoya keenly resented their lack of success in the wider society, which they blamed on their history of deprivation. By the mid-1970s, the Nkoya could boast only one university graduate (a junior partner in a law firm). In addition, a few dozen had, through their good fortune, political credit and education, managed to occupy middle-range positions in government institutions and private enterprise in urban areas. A similar small number were established as modern farmers in Kaoma, Mumbwa and Namwala districts. Among these people, the pressure from poor relatives and the stigma of belonging to a despised ethnic group was severely felt, and some went through periods when they denied being Nkoya, and no longer honoured claims to kinship support.

In the 1970s and 1980s the majority of the Nkoya were still dependent on labour migration for their family income, and have only unskilled labour to offer. They partly maintain a pattern of circulatory migration and family separation which for others in Zambia is increasingly a thing of the past. The Nkoya presence in the urban areas along the Line of Rail is limited and reflects a rapid turnover: it even seems to be declining under the effects of a shrinking market for unskilled labour, and the increasing competition from people from areas that have more established urban footholds (easterners in Lusaka, northerners on the Copperbelt).

Above I have discussed this stereotyped experience as a collective representation among a set of people[34] – recent history as most Nkoya today would see it, and not

history as a detached historian with free access to all relevant sources would write it.[35] For instance, the extent and variation of nineteenth-century Lozi and Kololo control over the eastern part of what is now Western Province remains a problem which crops up again and again in Nkoya oral sources: some admit established tributary relations, others stress the common origin between Nkoya and Lozi, and still others deny any Lozi domination of the Nkoya prior to colonial rule. How, and where, to distinguish between history as self-expression, and history as a detached outsider's undertaking? The point is crucial, since the Nkoya are people united, not so much by the distinguishing features of a common language, culture, or rural production system, but by a particular conception of their recent past. They define themselves mainly as the bearers of a common history, and (as came out very clearly in the course of my work sessions with the chiefs' councils at the two main Nkoya royal establishments in the district) they expect from the explicit formulation, and circulation, of this version of history an internal mobilisation and an outside recognition, which, when translated into political and economic benefits, will remedy their predicament through government appointments and development projects coming their way.

In this emic version of their history, their misery is offset against delusions of past grandeur and of immense geographical extension,[36] comprising all speakers of Nkoya, Mashasha, Mbwela and related dialects, and their descendants, throughout Zambia's Western, North-western, Central and Southern Provinces. It is not so much the redefinition of history in the hands of an ethnic group, but rather the creation of history as an aspect of the contemporary emergence of an ethnic group.

The post-independence Nkoya would thus appear to be a case of what Abner Cohen has so aptly termed 'retribalisation':

> *a process by which a group from one ethnic category, whose members are involved in a struggle for power and privilege with the members of a group from another ethnic category, within the framework of a formal political system, manipulate some customs, values, myths, symbols and ceremonials from their cultural tradition in order to articulate an informal political organisation which is used as a weapon in that struggle. (Cohen 1969:2)*

During the colonial period various attempts to confront Lozi domination met with utter defeat. Chief Kahare Timuna was temporarily demoted in 1923 (Gluckman 1968b:95). When in the 1930s Watchtower agitation in Mankoya district challenged the Lozi administration, the latter banned the preachers and threatened the Nkoya chiefs siding with them with demotion (cf. van Binsbergen (1981b:344f, n. 73, 77), and references cited there). Soon after the creation of the Naliele Court, the incumbent of the Mutondo chieftainship died under what the Nkoya consider to be suspicious circumstances; ten years later his successor, Muchayila, was dethroned and exiled to Kalabo for ten years (van Binsbergen 1988b; Anonymous [Shimunika] [n.d.]). Witchcraft cases in Mankoya district in the late 1950s, directed in part against the local Lozi establishment, were vigorously quashed (Reynolds 1963). In 1960 a Nkoya-based ANC[37] branch was refused registration because:

> *it was felt that any political organisation in the Nkoya area would stir up long-standing secessionist agitation among a subject tribe against the Barotse government. (Mulford 1967:223)*

Attempts to organise a Nkoya tribal association along the Line of Rail, and a political party largely on a Nkoya ethnic basis, were also undertaken around 1960, but failed, partly owing to difficulties arising from the then recently enacted Societies Ordinance.

It was probably no coincidence that my research among the Nkoya took place in a period when the tide seemed to turn for the Nkoya, owing to a number of developments at the national level in Zambia. The same move that led to the alteration of the district name from Mankoya to Kaoma implied far-reaching measures that all but dismantled the remnants of the Lozi state within the Republic of Zambia, and marked the defeat of the strong Lozi faction within the Zambian government (Caplan 1970:223). This diminished the extent to which non-Lozi Western Zambians would be dependent on Lozi patronage for a political career; in fact, the former became likely allies of the state against the Lozi establishment. The integration of the ANC into UNIP in 1972 relieved former ANC candidates of the stigma of disloyalty, and the one Nkoya candidate, defeated on an ANC ticket in 1968, was victorious for UNIP in the 1973 and the 1977 general elections. He became the first Nkoya MP (although representing only part of the area inhabited by Nkoya). Yet he might just as well have identified himself as Lozi, and in fact often did so: his father was Lozi, but he spent part of his childhood at one of the Nkoya chief's capitals, from which his mother originated. In addition, a few Nkoya became appointed (that is, non-elected) members of the Kaoma Rural Council, partly on the strength of their traditional offices. No Nkoya played leading roles in UNIP at the district level (regional office) or above.

In the 1970s modern Nkoya politicians not only relied on their roots in the Nkoya royal families, but also tried to instil a sense of new possibilities existing at the national and district level, since Lozi power was so clearly on the decline. They stirred up a new ethnic pride, and in that way created a local following; their action managed to pull local people, distrustful of the independent Zambian state and of UNIP, back into national political participation. One of their proudest achievements was that in the newly established party branches well-known UNIP songs (such as 'Tiyende pamodzi' – a Nyanja text) were for the first time in Zambian history sung in Nkoya translations. Besides their political activities, they also furthered the interests of traditional leadership, instigating discussions about the level of subsidies for Nkoya chiefs, the revival of certain chieftainships that had been abolished in the colonial era, and the creation of senior chieftainships among the Nkoya. A sign of the changing tide was the reinstatement in 1980 of Chief Muchayila Mutondo, decades after his demotion and exile. Besides these political activities the new leaders availed themselves of the new economic opportunities which, particularly, the Tobacco Board of Zambia was creating in the district. In this context they acted as employers of agricultural wage labour and as entrepreneurs in the retail trade.

In addition to active Nkoya politicians in the 1970s, a major builder of Nkoya ethnicity was Rev. J.M. Shimunika. Born c. 1910 as a member of the Mutondo royal

family, he is rumoured to have been a *nganga* (diviner-priest) prior to his conversion to Christianity, which came to the district in 1923 (after A.W. Bailey's abortive attempt in 1913–14). Shimunika was a teacher, an evangelist, and finally a pastor with the South Africa General Mission (subsequently the Africa Evangelical Fellowship, whose missionary activities led to the creation of the Evangelical Church in Zambia). Shimunika's translation of the New Testament and the Psalms was published in 1952;[38] his Old Testament translation was completed in the 1970s. In the 1950s he published a short pamphlet in the Nkoya language, *Muhumpu wa Byambo bya Mwaka* (Anonymous [Shimunika] [n.d.]), which overlaps with his larger work, *Likota lya Bankoya* (*The history of the Nkoya*), which was published by myself, first as a separated booklet (van Binsbergen 1988b), and subsequently as part of an analytical study of Nkoya ethnicity and history (van Binsbergen 1992b). Instead of boosting Nkoya morale, *Muhumpu* created internal animosity because of the allegations it contained regarding the weak stand taken by a particular Nkoya royal family vis-à-vis the Lozi. Educated Nkoya of a later generation than Rev. Shimunika's invested a great deal of time and energy in enabling me to publish *Likota* in a form that will avoid similar animosity in future.

My research was firmly supported by both traditional officeholders and their kinsmen, the Nkoya modern politicians. Without the introductions extended by the latter, a substantial part of my data could never have been collected. But in the first year of my Nkoya research this element was still absent. The eager support the Nkoya townsfolk in the compounds offered me at that stage derived from a less sophisticated perception of my possible role, but was likewise cast in ethnic terms. The following episode brings this out clearly.

By May 1973, I had decided to add some systematic, quantitative census data to my observational and participatory urban data as acquired so far. I prepared a mimeographed one-page questionnaire, and administered it to scores of Nkoya assembled for a girls' puberty ceremony in Lusaka compound. One elderly man showed a healthy suspicion, and wanted to know why I needed the basic information I had asked him. But before I could explain my intentions at length, he was scolded by his fellows: 'You had better answer him, you stupid fool. Otherwise we are never going to have a book about ourselves, like the Lozi have and all those other tribes!'

This eagerness to tell their tale, to have themselves put on the ethnographic and historical map, was the main force behind my initial concentration on the Nkoya during my urban research. Confronted with the very strong attraction that this emerging ethnic group exerted on me, I had no reason to resist.

Nkoya ethnicity, the articulation of modes of production, and the dialectics of consciousness

Through the preceding two sections of this chapter I hope to have created some tentative insights into the nature of Nkoya ethnicity which could not have been arrived at through consistent application of the classic tribal model. In the 1970s and 1980s the Nkoya situation turns out to have had many of the ingredients stressed by interpretations of ethnicity that were to be increasingly dominant in the Central African context. Underneath a strongly

situational and manipulatory surface which is particularly apparent in urban and middle-class contexts, there was a genuine Nkoya identity, but based less on primordial attachment to a way of life, culture and language than on a collective sense of deprivation in the course of a shared recent history. Expecting to extract, from the state and the party, goods and services which for many decades had been denied them (Bates 1973), peasants identifying themselves as Nkoya on the basis of this historical consciousness gave voting support to politicians from their midst; the latter, linked to Nkoya royal families but at the same time through their education and careers involved in modern economic life, explored the possibilities of ethnic identification and actively furthered the building of Nkoya ethnicity in an attempt both to safeguard their own positions (cf. Molteno 1974) and to serve their people's interest. Their efforts at retribalisation converged, and sometimes coincided, with those of local intellectuals. Just like everything social, Nkoya ethnicity turns out to be man-made, and even amazingly recent. However, realising that the Nkoya are not a 'natural', primordial unit in fact attributes social and historical meaning to Nkoya-ness, instead of – as I thought in my first disappointment – depriving it of meaning.

However, showing how one particular unit of study, the tribe – already subjected to so much criticism – is inadequate in the Nkoya case as well, only goes half way towards solving the problem of the unit of study. I shall now carry the argument further, sketching the wider sociological implications of the picture of Nkoya ethnicity presented above, and arguing that the structure of the social field which thus becomes visible solves the problem of the unit of study for us.

I have discussed Nkoya ethnicity as a form of consciousness, which may lead on, situationally, to social and political mobilisation, but which primarily is a process of self-definition among a set of people perceiving themselves as sharing a common history of deprivation. One of the major tasks confronting the social sciences is the development of a sophisticated theory of the conditions under which particular forms of consciousness relate to particular social, political and especially economic processes. As has been argued by Kahn (1981), an idealist, culturological position such as that taken by those looking for primordial attachments is just as untenable as a vulgar materialist position which, against all evidence, posits a simple one-to-one relationship between economic conditions and the attending forms of consciousness. The task is fundamental, on the one hand because the social sciences in themselves are a form of consciousness, and on the other hand, because it is precisely by virtue of other, non-scientific phantasms of consciousness that conditions of deprivation, injustice and exploitation persist – just as they are actively challenged, and altered, as a result of an emerging, truer consciousness.

What further insights in Nkoya ethnicity can we gather if we subject this form of consciousness to a Marxist-inspired contextual analysis?

In order to answer this question, let us briefly review the history of the social formation of Kaoma district, in terms of the articulation between successively emerging modes of production (cf. van Binsbergen 1981b:258–263).

In the nineteenth century dramatic changes took place in that social formation. By the end of the eighteenth century, the social formation was already a highly complex one, in which, as a result of the emergence and articulation of various modes of production in previous centuries, various mutually dependent branches or forms of production[39]

co-existed: highly developed hunting and gathering; rather crude fishing and farming; a limited form of domestic slavery;[40] and petty commodity production (particularly ironware) for local trade circuits. Clan chieftainship was largely confined to ritual functions concerning the land, and to exclusive claims to certain proceeds from hunting, which were locally consumed or hoarded but were not yet circulated in long-distance trade and tribute.

Oral tradition, and written documents relating to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries,[41] as well as the converging evidence from scholarly studies of neighbouring areas,[42] suggest the following trends for the period starting around 1800. Small militant groups coming in from the north brought a new, more exalted style of chieftainship, as well as some of the economic prerequisites (better crops, cattle, and cattle raiding) with which to generate a surplus on which the chieftainship could thrive. Domestic slavery was greatly increased, and lost the earlier kinship connotations of pawnship. Between local communities and the emerging chiefly courts, and between courts of different importance, tributary networks were developed, along which travelled not only the products of local branches of production, but also slaves in increasing numbers. This process was further intensified by the advent, around 1850, of long-distance trade in the hands of Mambari and Swahili caravan traders, and the marked ascent, some 200 kilometres to the west, of the Kololo/Luyana state. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century the economy of that state became largely dependent upon slave labour; hence large raiding expeditions for slaves and cattle were organised, and extended well to the east of the Nkoya lands. Whereas in the social formation before 1800 a domestic mode of production could be said to be dominant, the later period saw the gradual subordination of this mode to tributary and, via long-distance trade, mercantile-capitalist modes of production. The new modes of production emerging in the nineteenth century were closely linked. Most, if not all, slaves were controlled by chiefs and their office-bearers; this gave these nobles unique opportunities to have a local surplus generated, available for long-distance trade. It appears that domestic slavery rapidly declined to a trade in humans from which even close kin (notably sisters' sons) were not excluded.

The precise interrelations between the tributary and the mercantile-capitalist mode of production await further research. Both were still groping to establish themselves, and both never attained the full realisation of their respective models. But what is important here, and fairly well documented, is the subordination of the domestic mode of production to other modes.

As the penetration of the capitalist mode of production in the social formation of Kaoma district proceeded (and as this social formation itself became integrated in a much wider formation: Northern Rhodesia, and the capitalist world at large), the tributary and mercantile-capitalist modes of production (having gained dominance in the nineteenth century) were encapsulated and largely destroyed. That colonial rule was committed to the spread of capitalist relations of production no longer requires a lengthy discussion. Very soon after its imposition (1900) the flow of commodities into the area would be channelled through the rather ill-equipped rural trading stores, but particularly through the purchases by labour migrants at their distant places of work. Long-distance trade was forced to an end. The tributary mode of production was destroyed by colonial legislation

abolishing slavery and tributary labour. Government subsidies allowed some of the chiefs and aristocrats to keep up the remnants of a political and ideological pre-capitalist structure, after the relations of production underlying that structure had been radically altered.[43] These subsidies were paid out of the revenues from hut tax, a direct form of surplus extraction imposed by the colonial administration, and one that soon forced people to sell their labour for money, after the rapid breakdown of local participation in the agricultural market. The circulation of traders, commodities and slaves (the local manifestations of extraction by an as yet invisible mercantile capitalism) had given way to the circulation of money and of labour migrants, and many people had become directly (though seldom permanently) involved in capitalist relations of production.

The Nkoya situation in the 1970s and 1980s provides (cf. van Binsbergen 1978/2002, 1981b; van Binsbergen & Geschiere 1985b) a good illustration of the articulation of a domestic mode of production, stripped, to a considerable extent, of the remains of the tributary mode, and articulated to the dominant industrial capitalist mode. The old branches of production organised by kinship were more or less surviving, although they had been encroached upon by state control (alienation of land for game reserves and (para)statal agricultural enterprise; and prohibitions on hunting). Likewise they had been eroded by the exodus of male labour; the penetration of capitalist consumer markets (all clothing, most implements, and some food was then bought from outside); and the introduction, on a limited scale, of cash cropping and agricultural wage labour.

Adult males participated as migrants in the urban capitalist economy and a minority of them managed to set up and maintain urban nuclear families which, if continuously successful in town, were to contribute directly to the reproduction of the capitalist sector. However, the footing of these urban migrants was particularly insecure; and many of the members of their households ultimately ended up in the rural sector. While remaining in town, these migrants could find greater security in the domestic domain by participation in dyadic networks as well as collective ceremonies and rituals, which encompassed both urban wage-earners, recent arrivals, urban dropouts about to return home, and people without any participation in the urban relations of production: women and villagers. The domestic sector extended well into the urban areas, and into the households of the urban wage-earners. Religious and ethnic ceremonies, mobilising a large proportion of the 'Nkoya' population of a particular town, provided a setting for this interpenetration, as well as a means to re-circulate money earned in the urban capitalist sector to those debarred from it. These ceremonies constituted instruments of articulation, and notably as such siphon resources back into the domestic sector, contributing to the latter's reproduction rather than to its exploitation.

Armed with this cursory analytical view of the articulation of modes of production as determining the post-colonial Nkoya situation, let us now return to their collective view of Nkoya history.

Viewed as a possible response to the articulation of modes of production, it is a crucial feature of the Nkoya view of their history that no distinction is made between those aspects of local decline that were due to national or global processes of the penetration of capitalism as mediated by the colonial state (and that, therefore, affected the people of the district in a way unrelated to their being, or not being, Nkoya), and those that

more directly reflected intrusion by other Africans (Lozi, Angolans). Analytically, only the latter – if still only superficially – could be dealt with in ethnic terms. The colonial state served the creation of capitalist conditions, and the attuning of pre-existing non-capitalist modes of production to these conditions. However, the colonial state realised its aims partly by furthering a neo-traditional indigenous Lozi administration, sanctioning the latter's hold upon the peripheral groups in Barotseland, as well as allowing the settlement of large numbers of Angolan immigrants – not, of course, near the centres of Lozi presence, but in the same outlying areas. The Nkoya clearly perceived the Lozi and the Angolan immigrants, but failed to detect the forces of the colonial state and of capitalism behind them. Therefore, the colonial state remained fairly neutral in the conscious historical perception of the Nkoya. The frequent expressions of Nkoya protest in the colonial period, if they did at all take on political overtones and were not entirely clad in religious forms (cf. van Binsbergen 1981b:58f, ch. 4), and for sources p. 344), were directed against Lozi domination, and not against the state. One of the most shocking aspects of my fieldwork in a newly independent country was to hear peasants, as a standard turn in their everyday conversation and certainly not prompted by interviewing, praise colonial conditions and the economic and political security they had implied, in contrast with the situation after independence. The penetration of capitalism had numerous structural effects on the local society (wage labour, migrancy, monetarisation of bride wealth, fragmentation of productive units and of settlement, partial dismantling of traditional authority by divorcing it from its exploitative economic base). But in so far as these effects were not welcomed (they often were), they were blamed on the Lozi. The negative aspects in the Nkoya collective experience came to be perceived almost entirely in terms of ethnic conflict. Even the modern national state is for the Nkoya primarily veiled under ethnic perceptions. For the Nkoya today the modern state of Zambia is largely considered as a remote affair of the Bemba, Tonga, Lozi and Chewa, in various shifting alliances; Nkoya peasants even frequently use the word 'Zambia' when from the context it is clear that they exclusively refer to the Line of Rail: the area extending from Livingstone, through Lusaka and Kabwe, to the Copperbelt – the part of Zambia where the capitalist mode of production is the most manifest and dominant. As late as 1973, when the district authorities staged meetings in the villages in preparation for the general elections, these meetings were boycotted or challenged because they were conducted in the hated Lozi language; and the two opponents of the one Nkoya candidate were viewed with disfavour since they were known to be Mbunda and Luvale respectively.

This ethnic fixation, however, enabled Nkoya politicians to look to the post-colonial state with new expectations, now that the main perceived enemy, the Lozi ethnic group, is no longer so closely allied with the state as used to be the case in the colonial era and in the first years after independence.

It would be foolish to accept the Nkoya's one-sided view of history, and to attribute their predicament entirely to the effects of Lozi domination. As a 'Lozi subject tribe', the Nkoya were exposed to both Lozi and European imperialism. Historically these followed each other in quick succession, and the two could be argued to be indirectly related in the precolonial period too,[44] for both were specific forms through which

the penetration of the capitalist mode of production was ultimately effected. After 1900, the class alliance between the Lozi aristocracy and the colonial powers led to fundamental changes in the type of economic exploitation to which the people in the eastern periphery of Barotseland were subjected. The taking of slaves, and the payment of tribute, had within two decades of the imposition of colonial rule completely given way to forms of taxation which virtually reduced the Lozi to a mere administrative presence, whereas the economic exploitation was achieved through the mechanism of labour migration as furthered by the colonial state. In that period, the deprivation (in the fields of chieftainship, educational and medical facilities etc.) for which the Lozi were blamed ultimately sprang from the logic of imperialism. From this angle, Nkoya ethnicity, even in the powerless form in which it expressed itself during the colonial period, had the effect of obscuring such class consciousness as might have emerged among the villagers in the first decades of their incorporation into capitalism. Indirectly, therefore, such ethnicity appears as an ideological effect of imperialism.

Interestingly, among the non-Nkoya inhabitants of Western Zambia the prevailing stereotype of the Nkoya is not that of people deprived under the impact of Lozi domination, but that of hunters drinking honey beer, expertly playing their xylophones, hiding in the forest from the responsibilities and vicissitudes of modern life, uninterested in commercial farming, and actively furthering truancy in their children: in other words, people who can afford to shun participation in modern life because their old ways are still fairly intact, rather than people who have been denied access to modern life as a result of Lozi machinations. This would suggest, as a possibility, that it is precisely the relative viability of their non-capitalist modes of production which prevented them from successfully manipulating capitalism to their own lasting benefit. But of course, stereotypes are not enough to go by.

The French School of Marxist anthropology (cf. Meillassoux 1975; Rey 1971; 1973; and the extensive discussions elsewhere in the present book) has two illuminating insights to offer for an understanding of the Nkoya situation. First, capitalism penetrating the Third World has a well-defined interest in the partial survival of encapsulated, non-capitalist modes of production, for these are the niches where a new labour force is reproduced and where a discarded labour force is taken care of, at virtually no cost to the capitalist sector. Second, capitalism makes inroads into these non-capitalist modes of production by means of class alliances between capital, on the one hand, and the exploiting class-like groups in the non-capitalist modes of production, on the other.

What the Nkoya resented in their situation in the 1970s and 1980s from this perspective would appear as common features of a labour reserve in a context of peripheral capitalism: lack of capitalist amenities that serve the reproduction of the labour force (schools, hospitals); and the limited size of local capitalist markets for labour and petty commodities (cash crops). But the other side of the coin is that, in their area, non-capitalist modes of production persisted throughout the colonial era and, even if made subservient to the reproduction of labour for capitalist markets, nevertheless proved quite viable (van Binsbergen 1978/2002). Hunting, fishing, collecting and subsistence agriculture, organised on a kinship basis, in the 1970s and 1980s were still economically vital undertakings, especially in the eastern part of the district. Of course, these forms of

non-capitalist production could not in themselves supply the cash needed for clothing, tools, transport, and so on. Moreover, none of these forms persisted unaffected by capitalism. For instance, the Nkoya hunter in the 1970s was often a youth who did not own the gun and ammunition he used, but offered his skills to the owner of the gun in exchange for a portion of the bag he brought home; the owner was usually a senior kinsman of the hunter, a village headman and retired labour migrant who had purchased a gun out of the proceeds of the sale of his labour in the capitalist sector, and who sold most of the meat thus procured. Relations of production in hunting combined capitalist aspects (separation between worker and means of production, separation between worker and product, and sale of this product as a commodity) with forms of authority and reciprocity proper to domestic and tributary modes of production outside capitalism.

These historical relations of production can only survive, more or less, if they continue to be embedded in the social, judicial and ritual forms in which they used to be enshrined in the past – or, more accurately, in forms mimicking these historical ones. Although these forms do not derive from a capitalist logic, it is not in the interest of capital to destroy them. And in some cases, particularly those where capital can strike a class alliance with exploitative elements in the older modes of production, it actively supports them. For a different part of Africa, Rey (1971) has argued that the monetarisation of bride wealth was one way to synchronise the interest of capital and village elders: thus the latter could continue to exploit male youths through their control over marriageable women, but now in a form which forced these youths to go and sell their labour as migrants. This process took place among the Nkoya too (Van Binsbergen and Geschiere 1985a:ch. 7). But an even more striking form of class alliance influenced the subsidies which the state paid to chiefs. Owing to historical circumstances which we need not enter into now, in Barotseland these subsidies were higher than anywhere else in Northern Rhodesia, and the Nkoya chiefs shared in them. At independence, this state of affairs was reinforced, and subsequently the subsidies were even substantially increased. Paid out of state revenue, and in early years consisting of a fixed percentage of the revenue from hut tax, these subsidies amounted to a sharing out of the fruits of capitalist exploitation to the remnants of a tributary mode of production. Capitalism, while still reproducing a substantial part of its labour force via an encapsulated domestic mode of production such as found among the Nkoya in the 1970s and '80s, in its turn reproduced an encapsulated tributary mode, at least in its symbolic and ceremonial form of councillors, retainers, *kapasus* (court messengers with police functions), royal musicians, and a palace of sorts. In passing we note that Nkoya chiefs benefitted from an updated form of the Barotseland Agreement, a treaty between the colonial state and the Lozi aristocracy; surely, then, the effect exerted by the Lozi on the Nkoya experience was not entirely negative.

Much more important is that we now find, in the political economy of the area, a reason for the Nkoya's insistence on the existence and persistence of their 'tribe'. As a distinct culture and society, in other words as a tribe, the Nkoya never existed. However, to the extent that the persistence of historical forms in an encapsulated, neo-traditional version is part and parcel of the mechanism of the reproduction of cheap labour, and

to the extent that the articulation of modes of production crystallises around a state-subsidised neo-traditional chieftainship,[45] Nkoya ethnicity can be considered a product of this situation of articulation.

In this perspective, the view of ethnicity as primordial attachment to a tribal model dating back to precolonial times becomes more than bad social science: it becomes part of the ideology of capitalism itself – but I am sure that advocates of that view would have equally nasty things to say about the conception of ethnicity advanced here.

In the juxtaposition between non-capitalist aspects of Nkoya rural society and capitalism, the specific features of the former take on a new function: they are to be the legitimation of kin-based claims to assistance and the resulting security through which people peripherally participating in a capitalist order seek shelter in non-capitalist relations of production which exist in the shadow of, and in servitude to, that capitalist order. Nkoya ethnicity is the expression of this problem at the level of consciousness: by stressing the viability, splendour and antiquity of the non-capitalist modes of production, it struggles to keep them intact, so that the individual worker in the process of peasantisation and proletarianisation can effectively benefit from what remnants of these non-capitalist modes still exist. Their survival has become both problematic and vital – hence ethnicity to endow them with rather more reality and resilience than they in fact possess.

Also the role of modern politicians is thrown in relief. At the level of the state's organisational and ideological apparatus (government and the party), these leaders represent a new phase in the class alliances by means of which capitalism imposes itself on pre-existing modes of production; combining traditional elite connotations, ethnicity-building and their own capitalist enterprises, they represent solutions for the contradictions inherent in articulation: through their activities in the retail trade, agricultural development schemes (for which they hire wage labour), and their supervisory capacity as members of party and local-government bodies, they further capitalism – at the same time as helping to buttress non-capitalist modes of production against capitalism by the emphatic support they give traditional authorities and the Nkoya ethnic identity in general. They further incorporation in the national state, but in a form that conceals the exploitative and manipulative elements of the political process, and of their own role; and thus, as political and ideological brokers, they legitimate the state in the eyes of the Nkoya, and at the same time further Nkoya interests within national and sub-national political areas.

Under these conditions it would be ludicrous, along with John Saul (1979), to expect the Nkoya to display explicit surface manifestations of class struggle, albeit in the ideological idiom of ethnicity. Both the incorporation into the Lozi state in the course of the nineteenth century, and the peripheral integration into capitalism, objectively can be taken as forms of class formation: the imposition of new forms of exploitation. It would not be altogether unjustified to ultimately attribute the depth of emotion and the vehemence of expression attending Nkoya ethnicity today to a form of class struggle seeking in vain to break through. This, I realised much later, is probably an important reason behind my own emotional identification with the Nkoya.

Analysis of Nkoya ethnicity in terms of the articulation of modes of production brings

out both the limitations of ethnicity and its power. In their ideology of ethnicity the Nkoya express a partial interpretation of historical developments: they identify the Lozi as their oppressors, but fail to recognise the forces of capitalism and colonialism that lay behind Lozi domination. In this respect there would be some reason, along with Mafeje (1971), to consider Nkoya ethnicity as 'false consciousness'. Yet such a characterisation would be less adequate in so far as it underestimates the very real power of ethnicity – its emotional appeal. In the perspective of an articulation of modes of production we have the beginning of an explanation as to why ethnicity is able to exert such a powerful grip on people: ethnicity[46] is revealed as an ideological reaction not to phantasms of the imagination but to very real conditions – the uprootedness resulting from capitalist penetration.

However, the trappings of ethnicity, under conditions of articulation and class alliances, prevent the Nkoya from adopting anything remotely resembling a revolutionary consciousness. Considering the remarkable choice of revolutionary and counter-revolutionary ideological positions available in the district in the 1970s – from Maoist Chinese building the Lusaka–Kaoma highway, through MPLA and SWAPO guerrilla camps, to the South Africa-sponsored adventurer Mushala – the Nkoya have not exactly shown an inclination towards left-wing radicalism, to say the least.

Conclusion

Seeking to project himself/herself against the surging flood of data, the researcher tentatively cuts out a field of study for his/her personal attention; and since he/she is studying people who themselves are constantly constructing and reconstructing their reality, he/she may be tempted to let his/her analytical distinctions coincide with folk distinctions. What the would-be Nkoya expected from me, in this context, was that I would lend my own intellectual resources (access to national and international media of publication and scholarship) not for the production of a more penetrating and thus liberating form of knowledge and consciousness, but for the buttressing of their own emerging ethnic illusion. It was up to me to describe 'the Nkoya' in all the historical glory of their nineteenth-century chieftainships, and to enlist, among the population of Zambia at the time, a maximum number of inhabitants of Western and Central Zambia as de facto or potential members of the 'Nkoya tribe'. I have described how I was at first caught in this trap, and how I scrambled out of it by the adoption of the analytical framework of modes of production and their articulation, which not only belong to a different realm of discourse from that in which the Nkoya consider themselves a tribe, but also explodes the whole notion of the Nkoya, or some other such group, as a unit of study. What remains is a complicated picture of relationships, informed by Marxist anthropology, historiography and political economy, and far removed from the Nkoya experience and from the unit of study it seemed to suggest. There is no obvious, let alone natural, unit of study that is more likely than others to give insight into the sort of relationships which I have tried to disentangle in this argument. A simple spatio-temporal delineation would not do either: the picture of a field of specific relationships which emerges as the major result of my Nkoya research is neither geographically

contiguous (for it extends, far beyond the Nkoya chiefs' areas of Kaoma district, into urban Zambia, North Atlantic metropoles, and my own department), nor historically defined – extending as it does from the twentieth century into the eighteenth.[47]

Instead of a clear-cut unit of study as a source of security for the fieldworker and as a handy artefact to be manipulated by the cross-cultural comparativist, we thus end up with an awareness of interesting questions and possible sources of inspiration; an interdisciplinary outlook; and the intention to analyse the dialectics of consciousness not only among the people selected for study, but also within the realm of scholarship, and ultimately, in one's private reactions as a researcher.

The emerging picture, while explaining to some extent the nature of Nkoya-ness, hopefully helps to eradicate the stereotype of bounded ethnic groups which happily lend themselves to cross-cultural analysis. As the Kaoma District Governor exclaimed during a heated political meeting, in preparation for the 1973 general elections:

> *This nonsense has to stop! Chief, you must control your people! There are no Nkoya! 'Nkoya' does not exist!*

Neither do the Lozi, Bemba, Tonga or Ndembu – unless as phenomena at the level of consciousness, whose dialectics we – as the producers of a different, and hopefully more liberating, sort of consciousness – should trace and explain, instead of adopt. Our results may at first puzzle, disappoint or infuriate the people we are writing about, but ultimately we may manage to show them their own situation in a form less veiled by the phantasms produced by their politico-economic situation.

Kumanyana and Rwenzururu: Two responses to ethnic inequality in Uganda

Martin Doornbos

When trying to come to a better appreciation of trajectories of state formation in the Ugandan context, attention to the formative processes at the national and sub-national levels in the years preceding and following independence (1962) is essential. These formative processes have been very important in shaping the nature of political orientations and relationships in post-colonial Uganda and in prompting sub-nationalist movements in several regions. In more than one instance this entailed the articulation and redefinition of social and ethnic relations and their becoming embedded within the new, 'de-colonised' government structures. In turn this led to the emergence of novel niches of power as well as of protest against prevailing or renewed patterns of political subordination in a number of regions. The nature and conduct of ethnic conflict arising as part of these formative processes has largely shaped the contours of sub-national interactions and conflict until the present day.

Against this background this chapter will be concerned with the contrasting development of ethnically based political protest in Ankole and Toro, which constituted two neighbouring districts in western Uganda in the years around independence. A comparison appears useful because, in their origins, the two cases displayed many similarities, while in the conduct of protest there were marked differences in terms of the objectives and achievements of the respective movements. Furthermore, as Ankole and Toro were subunits within the broader political framework of Uganda, analysing their internal conflicts may throw some light on some specific problems encountered in the formative processes of the Ugandan state.

As districts, Ankole and Toro were situated in the western lacustrine region, which included neighbouring Buganda, Bunyoro and Rwanda. Until 1967, Ankole and Toro figured as kingdoms with a quasi-federal relationship to the national political centre of Uganda. With the introduction of a centralised constitution for Uganda in 1967,

however, kingship was abolished and Ankole and Toro became districts similar to other administrative districts in Uganda. In subsequent years, both Ankole and Toro became subdivided into three districts each. In 1993, monarchical institutions were allowed again in Uganda, leading to their restoration in Toro (though for a much more circumscribed jurisdiction), but not in Ankole, where the question remained contentious well into the early twenty-first century (Doornbos 2001).

Both societies comprised different ethnic communities, and in each social status and privilege were for a long time distributed unevenly among the distinctive groups. In Ankole, these comprised the dominant cattle-keeping Bahima and the historically subordinate Bairu peasant communities, while in Toro there were the politically dominant Batoro and the subordinate Bakonzo and Baamba. Although it has been widely assumed that these relationships were of long-standing, historical evidence suggests that the Baamba and Bakonzo at least had not been subordinated until after Britain had begun to rule in the early part of the twentieth century.[1] However, the premises of hierarchy and subordination that had become embedded in the colonial political structures of Ankole and Toro were vigorously challenged towards the end of that period. Just as inequality had in both cases become defined mainly in ethnic terms, so protest was expressed along correspondingly salient, ethnic lines. In Ankole, a reaction among the Bairu against Bahima dominance culminated in a movement which has become most widely known as Kumanyana (from a Runyankore expression, 'to get to know one another'). In Toro, the Bakonzo and Baamba mobilised fierce resistance against Batoro domination through the Rwenzururu movement, which derived its name from the Lukonzo term for the 'Mountains of the Moon', the Ruwenzori range on the Uganda–Congo border, which was home to most of the Bakonzo, while also separating the Baamba from the Batoro.

In several respects the two movements had comparable origins. In particular, protest in Ankole and Toro arose in an attempt to redress ethnic inequalities in the two societies: inequalities in the distribution of power and of social and economic opportunities as well as in terms of social and cultural status and recognition. In the actual course of affairs, however, these objectives were to a large extent fused. During the first half of the twentieth century, not only was social and political inequality in Ankole and Toro comparable in a general sense, but there were also significant specific similarities in their manifestation. Politically, the most visible sign of ethnic inequality was the fact that members of the ethnically distinct elites of Ankole and Toro for a long period held all the key government posts and senior chieftainships. Socially, the elites in both areas had frequently used similar derogatory terms to refer to the subordinate ethnic groups. On the whole, members of both ethnic elites treated Bairu, Bakonzo and Baamba as 'unclean'; they did not, for instance, permit them to eat in their houses, at most giving them some food outside. In both societies there was also a taboo on intermarriage, which became even stronger as ethnic animosity increased. These and other similarities could be anticipated, as the two adjacent societies shared various cultural traits and traditions. In addition, underlying similarities were reinforced by the application of what was by and large the same pattern of colonial rule: administratively the Ankole and Toro kingdoms had both formed part of the Western Province of Uganda. Indeed,

not least significant was the support the British initially gave the ruling classes. In both kingdoms this had had the effect of solidifying the ethnic hierarchies and perpetuating them until at least the middle of the twentieth century.

The voicing of protest against inequality was also spurred by comparable factors in Ankole and Toro. Thus, the economic and social transformations which took place during the twentieth century were basic to the emergence of protest in both kingdoms. Specifically, following the introduction and cultivation of cash crops such as coffee and cotton, incomes rose more generally than before. Progressive increases in school enrolment diffused skills of various kinds and widened the social basis for recruitment for paid employment in various sectors of the societies. In turn, new employment opportunities created increasing numbers of positions outside the chiefly hierarchy. As a result, Bairu in Ankole and Bakonzo and Baamba in Toro gradually began to share in social advantages previously concentrated in the dominant groups. Rising material welfare, increased access to education and the spread of more egalitarian ideas militated increasingly against continued acceptance of social and political inequality. Although the actual incidence of discriminatory practices had begun to decline by the early 1960s, especially in Ankole, this did not necessarily mean a decline in indignation over remaining, as well as remembered, inequalities. To the contrary, advances made in economic and social respects stimulated a heightened self-awareness and demands for general, especially political, equality among the ascending groups. The Kumanyana and Rwenzururu movements were expressions of these sentiments and, from the outset, their protest accordingly had strong emancipatory characteristics.

The rise of the two movements was also prompted by the process of constitutional development initiated during the final phase of colonial rule in Uganda. During this period increasing powers and functions were delegated to the governments of kingdoms and districts and, step by step, these bodies were also made responsive to popular representation. Moreover, the relationships between constituent units were being revised.[2] One effect of these measures was enhancement of the district-centred basis of politics in Uganda, already strong as a result of over half a century of largely separate development. However, they also created new political arenas in which long-standing grievances between conflicting groups could be transposed into new political terms and issues. Above all, they fostered definite interest in the future distribution of power among hitherto excluded groups and thus provided new foci for political alignments and conflicts: subgroups in the several kingdoms and districts of Uganda became aware of the relative gains and losses in political influence which wider local jurisdiction, enhanced representation and a redefinition of relationships would entail for them. Clearly, minority concerns emerged as a natural corollary of the advance to independent statehood. The Kumanyana and Rwenzururu movements were as much products of this development as of the social and economic transformations which were taking place in Ankole and Toro.

Major distinctions between the two situations lay, however, in the nature of contact between the ethnic groups in Ankole and Toro and in differences in the relative numerical strength of the constituent communities within the two societies. In Ankole, Bahima and Bairu by and large shared the same territory and many of them lived in close

physical proximity to one another. In Toro, in contrast, Bakonzo and Baamba occupied distinct and separate areas, large parts of which were characterised by a considerable degree of isolation. Moreover, in Ankole the dominant Bahima elite formed only a small minority of the population (about 5 per cent), while the Bairu constituted the vast majority of a population of roughly 700 000 around the time of independence. In Toro, however, the politically dominant Batoro comprised more than half of the population, which totalled about 350 000, whereas the Bakonzo and Baamba together numbered only about 40 per cent.

As we shall note, various important factors of history and culture must be added to these distinctions. Nonetheless, the contention underlying this chapter is that the divergent development of the two protest movements evolved largely from the different social contexts within which inequality had been embedded in Ankole and Toro. Although the two movements both strove for political emancipation, they came to define their targets in entirely different, if not contradictory, terms. While the Kumanyana movement pressed consistently for the *inclusion* of the Bairu into the Ankole ruling class – to them the most strategic and most obvious way of attaining equality in that context – the Rwenzururu movement pursued the same general objective by seeking the *exclusion* and separation of the Baamba and Bakonzo from the Toro political framework. Indeed, from the outset the establishment of a separate district for the Bakonzo and Baamba had been one of the principal goals of the Rwenzururu movement. The most militant section of the Rwenzururu movement went a step further and actually created its own autonomous state, later kingdom, which was to survive for several decades.

As for the trajectories of political protest in Ankole and Toro, they differed in three more significant respects. First, whereas the Kumanyana movement sought its objectives by continuous and steady pressure for inclusion and integration, the Rwenzururu movement made a sudden and radical bid for power. Second, the Rwenzururu movement broke out as a mass movement, whereas involvement in Kumanyana remained by and large restricted to the level of notables. Third, while the Rwenzururu movement was primarily preoccupied with political objectives, Kumanyana was stimulated to promote Bairu emancipation along a wider range of fronts.

The Bairu movement on the one hand and the Bakonzo and Baamba movement on the other thus took on very different forms: the Bairu demanded inclusion into Ankole's political elite; the Bakonzo and the Baamba insisted on separation from Toro. The reasons for such differences may be found in a number of contextual factors: a contrasting structure of ethnic cleavages; the different proportions of the dominant and subordinate strata and the varying degrees of cultural affinity of the conflicting communities in Ankole and Toro. Thus, for example, Ankole's ethnic structure directed Bairu aspirations toward some form of participation within the established framework because the Bairu and the Bahima largely constituted two horizontal social layers, spread out, though in varying degrees, through most of the kingdom. Hence there was no territory but Ankole – and none but the whole of Ankole – which the Bairu could consider their own. As a result, they had no alternative but to seek equality within Ankole. The fact that the Bairu formed the vast majority of the population fostered a certain confidence among them that political emancipation was attainable in the process of general constitutional transitions.

Moreover, notwithstanding the differences in their customs, there were important cultural affinities between Bairu and Bahima: they shared the same language and a good many had been living with one another in some kind of symbiotic relationship. Together, these factors strengthened Bairu allegiances to Ankole as a political entity, though this did not necessarily reflect an allegiance to the regime, nor to the overall political community. Using anthropological speculation, radical Bairu have at times considered the Bahima as 'Hamitic' invaders who should go back whence they came and themselves as the 'pure Banyankore', a distinction which in its extreme implication emphasises exclusive Bairu claims on Ankole. The general effect of these conditions has been to stimulate Bairu demands for their due share of influence and power within Ankole.

In contrast to the Ankole situation, the relationship of the Bakonzo and the Baamba to the Batoro in Toro was marked by a kind of vertical-territorial cleavage in addition to the horizontal-hierarchical one. As virtually all Bakonzo and Baamba lived in physical separation from the Batoro, it is easy to see that they would consider the best way to overcome Batoro domination to be political autonomy in their own areas. (The inaccessibility of the Rwenzori mountain range strengthened this outlook to the extent that the Bakonzo in the mountains eventually decided to secede from Uganda.) The desire to separate was strengthened by the minority position of the Bakonzo and Baamba in Toro. Since they constituted no more than 40 per cent of the total population of Toro, the Bakonzo and the Baamba thought it extremely unlikely that they would ever be granted full equality with the Batoro within the existing structure. Finally, there were few cultural and historical links between them and the Batoro which would counter their wish to be divorced from the Batoro and Toro. Not only were their languages and customs markedly different, but the Bakonzo and the Baamba retained a vivid memory of an independence which had been destroyed by their colonially engineered inclusion within Toro. Indeed, it was largely due to this perceived heritage that the outbreak of conflict in Toro was accompanied by a pervasive cultural renaissance. Nothing of this magnitude happened in Ankole; the few Bairu leaders who took an interest in folk tales and history in the 1950s often recorded traditions which were not essentially different from those handed down by the Bahima. In contrast, the special conditions of the Bakonzo and Baamba prompted the latter to claim separation from Toro as the most logical means of achieving equal rights with the Batoro. Hence, while Kumanyana became an assertion of equality, Rwenzururu was an assertion of independence.

Other aspects of the composition and position of the subordinate populations also enhanced the potential for radical departures in Toro, in contrast to the more accommodative trend adopted in Ankole. These conditions did not of themselves cause the differences in the nature of confrontations, but they restrained or spurred the two movements as these were given shape by other, more immediate factors. Thus, in Ankole, the adoption of slow but sustained pressure for integration was induced by an important religious division among the Bairu as well as by their close proximity to the Bahima. This division – a cleavage between Protestant and Roman Catholic Bairu – had weakened their numbers as well as their power and had introduced an element of competition among the two groups which tended to prolong the influence of the traditional Bahima elite. Moreover, the scope for the emergence of radical programmes among any one of the Bairu

groups was diminished by the fact that the two religious groups lived side by side, though in varying proportions, over most of Ankole. This cut into their homogeneity and reduced the ease with which the two sections could be mobilised. Of even greater importance was the fact that Bahima and Bairu lived together in the areas where grievances were most articulate and where protest eventually originated. The physical proximity of the Bahima as well as their political and economic influence imposed a considerable constraint on Bairu activities. The vulnerability of those Bairu who challenged the regime thus induced more cautious and secret stratagems, which would not be given up until the Bairu had achieved a substantial amount of influence in the Ankole government.

In contrast to Ankole, the potential for open protest was much greater among the Bakonzo and the Baamba. Although political agitation preceding the establishment of the Rwenzururu movement had usually occurred separately within each group, the initial articulation of radical attitudes was not checked by divisions within either of them. Also, the marked physical distance of the Bakonzo and the Baamba from the Batoro enhanced the scope for the rise of open opposition and stimulated the proliferation of distorted stereotypes on each side. Besides, the Bakonzo and Baamba could expect fewer administrative positions and other benefits from the Toro government than could the Bairu in Ankole. The discontent arising from their discrimination thus more easily led to an outburst of hostility. Still, the most important factor enabling the adoption of a radically militant stand by the Rwenzururu movement lay in the protective nature of the impressive Rwenzori mountains.

Three other factors were of more direct influence in prompting Bairu protest to take the form of continuous pressure for participation while Bakonzo and Baamba protest became an abrupt attempt to overthrow Batoro dominance. One significant difference was that the ruling class in Ankole was generally more accommodating of pressure for integration than was Toro's political elite. This was in large measure due to the numerical weakness of the Bahima, as well as to the fact, as has been mentioned, that they had been gradually losing their educational and economic advantages over the Bairu. The Batoro ruling class, on the contrary, retained a much wider and stronger social basis. Thus, while the Bahima elite felt compelled to give consideration to Bairu discontent, the Batoro elite could more easily resist – and indeed ignore – Bakonzo and Baamba claims for equal rights. Bairu demands for a share in government positions and other privileges thus had been accommodated in piecemeal fashion since the late 1940s, whereas the Bakonzo and Baamba lacked any prospect of this happening until the early 1960s. Although the accommodations made in Ankole did not prevent the emergence of the Kumanyana movement, they certainly resulted in that movement's being less radical than it might have been in the absence of any concessions, and certainly less radical than Rwenzururu.

Bairu protest also remained more limited in scope than Bakonzo and Baamba dissent because of the more gradual constitutional development in Ankole, as compared with that in Toro. The application of new constitutional instruments in Ankole had progressively widened Bairu political representation in the 1950s, whereas in Toro this process had virtually stagnated during the same period. In part because of its relative weakness, the Bahima elite in Ankole had been unable to resist the introduction of the 1955 *District*

Administration Ordinance, which was the most critical constitutional innovation of the period, whereas the Batoro elite persisted in its opposition until the possibility of its application was superseded by the *Toro Agreement* of 1961. Hence, during the years when the Bairu were beginning to participate in the Ankole government, the Bakonzo and the Baamba remained virtually without any sense of involvement in the political process in Toro. As a result, the legitimacy of the regime was far more vigorously challenged by the Rwenzururu than by the Kumanyana movement. Indeed, the confrontation in Toro was not only more open, but much more severe than in Ankole. Moreover, due to the deadlock which resulted from the Rwenzururu movement's demand for a separate district, the issue in Toro remained more narrowly focused on the definition and structure of the political framework, while problems of social and economic accommodation were largely left in abeyance. In Ankole, on the other hand, the higher degree of political accommodation, even though piecemeal, could give rise to a broader range of objectives and activities on the part of the Kumanyana movement. Indeed, throughout most of its existence, the Kumanyana movement was almost as actively concerned with alleviating problems of social and economic inequality as it was with immediate political issues.

A final factor underlying the divergent trajectories of the two protest movements stemmed from some central axioms entertained for decolonisation and post-colonial state-building at the time. In Africa, as elsewhere, it was often held that two basic requirements for the development of a stable polity would be the promotion of equitable popular participation and the maintenance of territorial integrity, among as well as within post-colonial states. For these reasons, steps were encouraged that might foster the representation of subgroups in political institutions, while at the same time resisting the creation of new political divisions. Over and above the immediate impulses and more general preconditions which played a role in the two cases, it is the centre's adherence to these postulates which ultimately motivated the Kumanyana movement to press for integration and the Rwenzururu movement to resort to rebellion. The principle of increasing participation held out promises to the Kumanyana movement which seemed attainable within the Ankole context, whereas the insistence on maintaining existing district boundaries proved a serious obstacle to the fulfilment of Rwenzururu aspirations. Bairu emancipation, it might be argued, was promoted by the force of these departures, but Bakonzo and Baamba advancement was victimised.

Inter-ethnic relations, and prospects for change with regard to them, may be illuminated from new and unexpected angles. Thus, the aspirations of Bakonzo and Baamba to a separate district were met by President Idi Amin, who granted a separate district to each group as part of his efforts to reverse the policies of his predecessor, Milton Obote. Rwenzururu frustrations lingered on, however, and in the 1990s and beyond focused on the Uganda government's refusal to recognise the Rwenzururu kingship, which Rwenzururians had wanted to see restored at par with the restoration of Toro kingship. In former Ankole, however, the possible restoration of the kingship led to new rifts and divisions between an active Bahima-led lobby to restore the Ankole monarchy, the Nkore Cultural Trust, and the largely Bairu-based Banyankore Cultural Foundation, which opposed it for fear of reinstating what they would regard as a symbol of ethnic subordination (Doornbos 2001).

Protest in Ankole: The assertion of equality

In 1949, a small incident touched off ethnic protest in Ankole. For the first time a Mwiru had, under British sponsorship, been appointed Enganzi, or chief minister. Four Bahima students at Mbarara High School, believed to have been encouraged by influential elders, wrote a letter to the Omugabe, the ruler of Ankole, protesting against this encroachment upon positions to which, as representatives of the new generation of Bahima, they considered themselves entitled. Even though its various provisions had long since been disregarded, they based their position on the *Ankole Agreement* of 1901, which had given the principal chiefs the right to nominate their own successors. The letter was intercepted and circulated among the Bairu. Its effect was to crystallise latent antagonisms into concrete alignments, among both Bairu and Bahima. It was at that moment that the Bairu protest movement, which eventually became known as Kumanyana, emerged.

The situation following the 1949 incident differed from earlier protests, as the expression of Bairu discontent was now far more explicit than it had been in the past and because a sense of grievance and indignation was now shared by more Bairu than ever before. This is not to say that there had been no antecedents to the Bairu movement. In fact, the earliest organised expression of Bairu aspirations went back to the Church Missionary Society Association Club of the 1930s. Under this name, selected to minimise vulnerability, a handful of educated Bairu met regularly to discuss matters of common concern. One of the most important matters so discussed was to remain a continuing and major theme of protest: that appointments to public service should be on merit. Although the Club's direct influence was minimal, it was nevertheless significant as an early discussion ground for an incipient Bairu elite and because for the first time it stimulated reflection on discrepancies within Ankole's ethno-political structure. In this connection it should also be mentioned that in 1940 the Bairu students at Mbarara High School organised themselves into an association named Obutsya Ni Birwa (after a Kinyankore proverb meaning 'The daughter will equal her mother'). They had done so in response to an organisation founded by the Bahima students, called Kamwe Kamwe ('One by One', an abbreviation of a proverb meaning 'One by one together makes a bundle'). After this, regular meetings among small numbers of Bairu leaders, of Bairu past pupils of Mbarara High School, as well as of student organisations at the school itself, held continued discussions on the position of Bairu in Ankole society.

By 1949, however, circumstances had become quite different. In that year, a new African Local Government Ordinance had been issued, designed to expand local administrative functions and to allow greater local involvement in local affairs. Although it remained basically an advisory body, the Ankole Eishengyero (the legislative assembly of the kingdom) was enlarged to include more official and unofficial members and expectations were fostered that the Bairu would be granted steadily widening participation in local government. That the Bairu believed that the Protectorate had come to support their political advancement was clear from their pleas during the next years addressed to the District Commissioner, the Governor and British members of parliament demanding an increased role in the local government. They also had reason to believe, however, that

the Bahima ruling class did not favour such changes. And indeed the Bahima continued a substantial influence on the recruitment of personnel for local government.

Against this background, educational advancements became increasingly important. Since early in the century the Mbarara High School had been the main training ground of Ankole's elite; by the 1940s the student body had become more and more mixed in its composition. As its graduates normally moved into positions of leadership, the question whether educational qualifications would be allowed to supersede ethnic criteria as the principal consideration for admission into government service became key. The dilemma was acute, as the administrative positions constituting the Ankole establishment were limited in number and not likely to be expanded to a significant extent. There were then ten county chieftainships, about an equal number of senior posts at Kamukuzi, the local government headquarters, and lastly between forty and fifty sub-county chiefs. If Bairu were to have equal opportunities, major changes would have to take place in the recruitment for these posts. This was not likely. Increasingly the Bairu leadership became convinced that the Bahima elite was determined to divert the direction of Bairu advancement. Suspicion grew.

Thus, in the climate of expectations which had come to exist in Ankole in 1949, a minor incident such as the students' letter had consequences which would have been inconceivable in an earlier period: protest and the start of Bairu organisation. Significantly, the chain of reactions that this event produced became closely linked to past events. Thus, when protest was articulated, it was often in terms of a reinterpretation of the historical relationship between Bairu and Bahima in the light of what the Bairu increasingly saw as unjust Bahima domination. Indeed, discontent about a wide variety of matters became more consciously linked than before and social grievances, whether based in reality or history, fact or fiction, were more fully explained in terms of Bahima supremacy. There appeared to be one important qualification, however, and that was that the base line of Bairu grievances generally tended to be drawn at the time of the establishment of British rule in Ankole. This was so because, although the Ankole region had for centuries comprised various hierarchical societies, the foundations of the political framework as it operated in the 1940s and 1950s had to a significant extent been laid by the British when they assumed dominance in 1901.

One effect of British rule appears to have been the increased exposure of ethnic cleavage between Bahima and Bairu, partly because colonial rule tended to make redundant the few mitigating structures that had existed. In the precolonial past, though the cattle-keeping Bahima had for a long time exercised authority and enjoyed privileges not accorded to the Bairu (Oberg 1940:126–132), some of their institutions had reduced the visibility of the ethnic distinction. Most of the clans, for instance, had both Bairu and Bahima sections and used to be important units of identification as well as serving important protective functions. In addition, a Bambari substratum, consisting mainly of privileged Bairu who were accorded a higher status as a reward for loyalty or special services and whose descendants could eventually be assimilated as Bahima, formed a thin social layer between the Bahima and the Bairu. However, the security provided by British colonial rule in large measure removed Bahima needs for clan support to maintain their hegemony. As this umbrella weakened, so did the Bahima elite's sense of obligation

that they should allow the Bairu at least minimal opportunities for social mobility. Whereas previously the security of power of the Bahima elite had been partly sustained by piecemeal accommodations of Bairu demands, after the British assumed control and incorporated the Bahima chiefs into their government framework, the tenure of chiefly positions rested on British sanction rather than in their own responsiveness to grassroots needs and demands. Among the Bahima themselves, despite an early struggle for influence among leading clans at the turn of the century, the fact that chiefly positions were henceforth safeguarded by the colonial framework soon began to foster a certain congruence of interests among the Bahima incumbents, which increasingly superseded previous rivalries among them.

Initially, British control also reaffirmed and entrenched the ethnic hierarchy in more direct ways. Upon the establishment of colonial rule, the Bahima ruling class was granted various privileges, the most important of which were formally laid down in the *Ankole Agreement* of 1901. Chieftainships were central among these benefits. Since they were for a long time, with the tacit concurrence of Protectorate officials, largely filled by co-optation, Bahima remained quite firmly established in these ranks and, indeed, as late as 1966 still held five out of the ten senior county chieftainships. Also, the British gave the Bahima chiefs a role in tax collection and labour recruitment: this not only strengthened their political power, but significantly enhanced their economic resource base and their own welfare. Tax and labour excises from Bairu were often quite substantial and were in no small part used for personal enrichment. The distribution of mailo land – a term adopted from Buganda, where mailo had developed as the local expression for the square 'miles' also allocated there – similarly accentuated the social and economic gap between the chiefly Bahima and the Bairu peasants. Contrary to the terms of the *Ankole Agreement*, which read that the mailo estates should be created from 'waste lands', the Bahima allottees were allowed to carve them out in the most densely populated, central parts of the kingdom. This enabled them to levy rents as well as to demand food and services from the Bairu peasants living on their mailos. And since a substantial part of the mailo land was irrevocably issued as freehold grants, the system of landlord–tenant relationships which developed on estates of this type continued to exist, with relatively minor modifications, and after independence still affected over 10 000 Bairu in Ankole (Uganda Protectorate 1901:par.7; Report 1965a; Doornbos 1975a).

During the decades following the British assumption of power, every advantage given to the Bahima became an object of Bairu discontent. The disproportionate allocation of chiefly positions became a focus of Bairu grievances as soon as educationally qualified Bairu were available to occupy these ranks. Indeed, the emergence as well as the activities of the Kumanyana movement in the 1950s was to a large extent prompted precisely by discrimination in this sphere. In addition, the tax and labour contributions which were demanded from Bairu were often felt to be excessively burdensome and frequent transgressions of authority by Bahima chiefs in these matters increased the feelings of discrimination among the Bairu.[3] A sense of injustice was also prompted by the fact that the non-chiefly, pastoral Bahima, who were generally wealthier than the Bairu, were usually not only excluded from labour duties, but for many years were able

to avoid taxation. The distribution of mailo land holdings likewise became an irritant to the Bairu, among other reasons because of the preference given to Bahima. For a long time Bairu tenants on the mailo estates lacked any security of tenure and were not infrequently evicted at the whim of their landlords. In addition, property rights on their crops and belongings were often found difficult to uphold and severe restrictions were frequently imposed on the improvement of their houses and gardens by their landlords. The arrangement appeared even more anomalous in light of the fact that Bairu who did not live on mailo land were free to develop their plots without excessive interference.

Generally, during the first half of the twentieth century, Bahima domination was maintained by a surprisingly small chiefly class and seemingly met with a great deal of submissiveness on the part of the Bairu. This may have been partly because the Bairu had little conception of a different order and because opportunities to express discontent were very limited. It is often argued in Ankole that the Bahima made conscious efforts to minimise the pace of social development of the Bairu so as to maintain their political supremacy. Examples cited include discouragement of Bairu from seeking an advanced education and discrimination in the allocation of school bursaries. Also, a number of myths have developed relating to the behaviour of Bahima chiefs. There is a widely circulated assertion, for instance, that they first burnt the cotton seed before distributing it among the Bairu peasants. Although this remains unproven, it is no exaggeration that the Bahima chiefs, who traditionally had not been involved in agriculture and had little more than disdain for their subjects, took only a limited interest in the agrarian development of the kingdom. As a result, Ankole remained for a long period a relatively backward corner of the country. Perhaps also in consequence of this situation, it took at least half a century of slow social and economic change before Bairu protest against traditional Bahima dominance began to gain momentum.

When protest finally emerged, it originated mainly among Protestant Bairu, the Kumanyana movement being a principally Protestant one. Basically, the Protestant Bairu were more alert to the differences which separated them from the Bahima elite than were the Roman Catholics. Paradoxically, this seems to have resulted largely from the social advantages which the Protestant Bairu had over the Roman Catholics, as well as from their closer contacts with the Bahima. The result of missionary activity by the mid-1960s had been that, with no more than five exceptions, all converted Bahima were Protestants, belonging to the (Anglican) Church of Uganda. However, the majority of Bahima (who, it will be recalled, totalled approximately 5 per cent of Ankole's population of 700 000 at the time) had not become Christians. On the other hand, most Bairu were Christians, and a slightly larger number had become Roman Catholics than had become Protestants. These differences resulted from the way in which Christianity made its entry into Ankole. Protestant missionaries gained an advantage by arriving first and, moreover, they enjoyed the support of the colonial authorities. Initially they concentrated their efforts on the Bahima ruling stratum at the centre, whereas the Roman Catholics started among the Bairu peasants in more distant locations. As a result, the Protestants gained a virtual monopoly of Bahima converts. Following the pattern of establishment of mission stations by the two denominations, Protestants became relatively predominant in the central counties of Shema, Igara, Kashari and

Rwampara, whereas Roman Catholics tended to become concentrated in the northern peripheral areas of Bunyaruguru, Buhweju and Ibanda as well as, though to a lesser extent, in Isingiro. In the outlying counties to the north there were either few or no Bahima.

Educational differences were also important. Whereas Roman Catholic missions combined broad-based, low-level education with specialised, mainly seminary-type training for a selected few, the Protestants had from an earlier date offered wider opportunities for intermediate and extended instruction. In the tradition of schools for chiefs' sons, the Protestant curriculum was more closely geared to the requirements of the colonial administration. In part as a result of these differences, the Roman Catholic population of Ankole for a long time produced relatively few – though some outstanding – social leaders, in contrast to a fairly substantial leadership stratum among the Protestants. Initially, the Protestant facilities for education benefited the Bahima most, adding a strong buttress to the perpetuation of their chiefly class. The Mbarara High School register reveals that during the first few years of the school's existence (it had opened in 1911), over 75 per cent of the student body were Bahima, 8 per cent Baganda and the remainder were Bambari and Bairu. Many of these early students were appointed to high positions and for years several of them continued to be highly influential in Ankole affairs. From the 1930s onwards, however, increasing numbers of Protestant Bairu attended the school, which eventually resulted in the growth of an especially vocal social segment.

An equally crucial factor in the growth of different orientations and levels of achievement among Protestant and Roman Catholic Bairu lay in the Protestant complexion of Ankole's ruling group after 1900. Not only did this group, with the tacit consent of the British District Commissioners, generally support the interests of the Native Anglican Church and its schools; it also gave relatively better chances of employment to Protestant Bairu than to Roman Catholics, as Protestant Bairu were appointed in greater numbers than Roman Catholics as lower ranking chiefs, clerks and askari. A few were even able to rise to important positions before the 1940s. On the whole, therefore, the opportunities open to Protestant Bairu, though far more limited than those available to the Bahima, were invariably better than those extended to the Roman Catholics. As a result of these conditions, Roman Catholic Bairu remained engaged longer in subsistence cultivation, while Protestant Bairu began to engage in individual and collective enterprise.

The factors which differentiated the Protestant Bairu from the Roman Catholics were most pronounced in the centrally located counties of Ankole, where a majority of the Protestants lived. Physical proximity to the centre enabled them to keep in touch with developments in the public arena more easily and facilitated the marketing of cash crops, which they had begun to cultivate. Indeed, the introduction of coffee in the 1930s stimulated a rise of incomes, especially in the counties of Shema and Igara, as well as in parts of Rwampara. This in turn provided a financial basis for increasing school attendance, which helped to spread new skills and qualifications. Shema and Igara especially competed, for many years, in claiming the largest numbers of graduates at various levels. Eventually, a majority of the leaders of the Kumanyana movement who entered the scene in the 1940s and thereafter were also from Shema and Igara; most of

them in fact attended the same primary school – that of the Native Anglican Church at Kabwohe in Shema.

Thus, it was the Protestant Bairu, and not the Roman Catholics, who took a stand against Bahima domination, precisely because their relatively greater opportunities, their economic advancement and their educational attainments gave them stronger incentives and better means to strive for a widening of equal chances. Moreover, their relatively closer contacts with the Bahima elite made them more sensitive to the advantages given to their Bahima schoolmates, fellow church members and government co-workers than were the Roman Catholics, who had not much in common with the Bahima. In addition, since the majority of Protestant Bairu were concentrated in the central areas, they witnessed more directly some of the negative aspects of Bahima supremacy, such as the relationships between mailo landlords and tenants. As greater numbers of them reached higher levels of economic and educational advancement, such instances of Bahima privilege became increasingly exasperating. For these reasons, it became more and more evident that the fringe benefits granted to Protestant Bairu had laid only a fragile bridge, not a firm basis for concurrence between the two Protestant groups. Although the Protestant Bairu had become the most favoured of the underprivileged stratum in Ankole, their pressure for greater equity ultimately led to an attack on the principle of Bahima dominance.

Notwithstanding the depth of animosity which came to characterise Bairu–Bahima relationships, ethnic conflict in Ankole hardly led to open confrontations. Indeed, in striking contrast to the developments in nearby Rwanda, or to the violent clashes arising from ethnic antagonism elsewhere in Africa, the tension between Bairu and Bahima remained throughout singularly devoid of spectacular events (see Doornbos (1966a:3–5); Maquet (1968:10–13). This absence of landmarks was not unrelated to the basically accommodationist quality of protest in Ankole. In fact, there appears to have been a fairly general conviction that incidents were to be avoided because they would serve no purpose. This point is perhaps borne out most clearly by the role which the Kumanyana movement chose to play.

Generally, the Kumanyana movement opted for indirect strategies rather than for any open onslaughts on what it considered to be the wrongs of Ankole society. Throughout the 1950s, when the Kumanyana movement was actively engaged in the assertion of Bairu interests, it certainly sought to remain as inconspicuous as possible. Its members did not stage demonstrations or become engaged in fights; nor were reputations established or enhanced by prison terms. Perhaps most significant, the Kumanyana movement never initiated a large-scale mobilisation of the peasant masses. Through preliminary meetings, the movement tried to influence votes in the Eishengyero, the Ankole Public Service Commission, or other official bodies; it definitely did not put itself up as a bargaining group. On occasion, it would call upon its members to submit protests and petitions to Ugandan and British authorities if the situation so demanded; again, however, these people were expected to do so as individuals and not in the name of the Bairu or of the Kumanyana movement. One reason for this circuitous approach was, no doubt, that Kumanyana was for a long time of necessity an underground movement of sorts. Challenging Bahima supremacy amounted to questioning the traditionally sanctioned ethnic hierarchy and could easily have invoked retaliation. In this regard, it was of no small significance that

many who were in the vanguard of the Kumanyana movement occupied, and depended economically on, government positions. This made them more vulnerable to official sanctions and caused them to refrain from bringing their actions into the open.

Other factors tended to lead in the same direction. One of them lay in the paradoxical fact that, notwithstanding the pervasive nature of Bahima domination in the Ankole political and social arena, there was no legal or other concrete basis for recognition of this hegemony. Despite the established prevalence of ethnic co-optation in the Ankole government system, the formal structure of government laid down by the British was theoretically neutral and recruitment supposedly took place on consideration of merit alone: even the signatories to the *Ankole Agreement* of 1901 had been recognised in their individual capacity rather than as Bahima. Thus, the Kumanyana movement, whose very existence was rooted in the problem of Bahima domination, might well have found itself at a loss if it had been required to point to any explicit code or procedure as evidence of a wilfully maintained Bahima supremacy. Given this lack of 'proof', discontent could not easily be directed in any concrete direction; it could also not be displayed as openly as it might have been with a more clear-cut cause. (Hence, too, the rather disproportionate importance attached to a minor but at least tangible piece of evidence, such as the 1949 letter.) In addition, however, no Bairu movement could afford openly to propagate the doctrine of Bairu ascendancy if it did not want to lay itself open to accusations of ethnic partiality similar to that of which it was accusing the Bahima. If they did not want to weaken their argument, the Bairu could, at least publicly, only justifiably stress broad egalitarian principles and the need for merit and qualifications as criteria of recruitment in government employment. Covertly, however, far more particularistic, and at times petty, interests were often expressed.

The organisation of the Kumanyana movement was in keeping with its strategies. Basically, it was a loose assemblage of Bairu leaders, without formally designated office-holders or any other explicit framework. There was clear consensus, however, as to which individuals exercised overall leadership in the movement. The underground nature of the Kumanyana movement was perhaps best revealed by the fact that for a long time contact was maintained by secret gatherings, usually irregularly called by means of person-to-person communication to confront immediate issues. In a very real sense, the Kumanyana movement was these meetings and vice versa. Indeed, as already noted, the term 'Kumanyana' itself has connotations of fellowship. No more than about seventy people were ever present at any of the meetings, but large sections of the Bairu population were nonetheless effectively kept up to date with what evolved. The most important convocations were usually held in or near Mbarara. The participants in these meetings served as links with subgroups of Bairu in different parts of Ankole as they communicated the results of the discussions to gatherings which were subsequently held in the various counties. To reach the grassroots, at these gatherings individuals were often assigned to contact Bairu in various corners of the counties. This was frequently done after Protestant church services, which was one reason why a strong parallel emerged between the Kumanyana movement's network and that of the Native Anglican Church. Once relationships had been established with parish congregations, such groups were asked to send delegates to future meetings at the next level up.

The leadership of the Kumanyana movement consisted mostly of educated Bairu. In addition, most of its leaders were men who already had a certain prominence (the record does not speak of women playing a significant role at the time). Most of the key figures held positions of some significance in Ankole and these were generally the highest that had been attained by Bairu. Conversely, virtually all Bairu who subsequently held high-ranking positions were at one time engaged in the Kumanyana movement. The central personality in the movement was Kesi Nganwa, supervisor of the Native Anglican schools in Ankole. Nganwa was sometimes called Ruterengwa ('Nothing compares with him in stature'), a name which was objected to by royalist circles because it implied superiority over the king. Another prominent figure was C.B. Katiti, one of the first members of the Uganda Legislative Council and later a Ugandan cabinet minister. Katiti was one of the people who established a relationship between party politics and the movement. Many of the leading participants were teachers, the one profession in which Bairu had been able to fill the great majority of positions. In addition, there were clerks, traders, medical assistants, farmers, some chiefs who disregarded the ban on political activities and several Protestant clergymen. The latter had a particularly strong incentive to become involved, since the hierarchy of the Anglican church in Ankole, like that of the government, was dominated by Bahima. With dramatic sermons and references to Christian doctrine, they contributed greatly to the spiritual basis of the movement. Although Kumanyana was basically a Protestant group, a few Roman Catholics remained regular members over the years. Most participants, at any rate those in the central and county level gatherings, were prominent figures in their home areas and had considerable influence over local opinion. A number sat in the Eishengyero and were thus in a position directly to represent Bairu interests as formulated at the Kumanyana meetings, as well as to influence fellow councillors. After 1955, when Bairu influence in the Ankole government was substantially increased, Kumanyana's political role became largely that of a shadow parliament, in which alternative policy ideas were sounded out before they were tabled and from which an important source of support emanated for the Bairu leadership, whose position in the government remained precarious.

Not the least compelling of the movement's objectives was to instil a greater sense of self-confidence among Bairu generally. One of the most important driving forces of the Kumanyana movement was undoubtedly the resentment, especially among educated Bairu, of continuing attitudes of superiority and arrogance among the Bahima elite. This prompted the movement's assertion of equality of status and dignity in many areas of life and greatly enhanced the impetus of the movement's activities in the political and economic spheres. It certainly appears to have been realised that the movement's strength would rest not only on its ability to give expression to Bairu grievances, but also on its capacity to alert the Bairu to possibilities of social and political change.

A recognition of the relationship between social ranking and political influence was strongly evidenced in Kumanyana's preoccupation with the educational progress of the Bairu. Because it was realised that the future position of the Bairu depended largely on the attainments of the student generation, the Kumanyana movement exerted much pressure on the allocation of bursaries and itself maintained a relief fund which was used largely to pay the school fees of needy children. It also encouraged parents

to build schools in remote areas which did not have educational facilities. Similarly, its supporters campaigned for the erection of more hygienic and permanent houses and for the adoption of more productive methods of cultivation, and generally tried to awaken the people to the idea of higher standards of living. Kumanyana was of no less importance in articulating the grievances of mailo tenants, and it played an active part in stimulating, without official sanction, resettlement from the densely populated counties of Shema and Igara to Kashari. It also was a strong promoter of the establishment and growth of co-operative societies. Lastly, it was instrumental in several counties in the creation of local welfare societies which focused on the needs of the Bairu. Basic to all this activity was an urge to demonstrate that the Bairu were capable of attaining increasing economic and social prosperity. As they had for ages been subordinate and regarded as inferior, there was a compulsion to assert their equality with the Bahima and to imprint this same notion upon much larger numbers of Bairu. Kumanyana was at once exponent, symbol and radiator of these sentiments.

Notwithstanding its wide range of involvements, the most critical goals of Kumanyana remained in the realm of political participation. The movement was particularly concerned with trying to increase and strengthen Bairu representation in the Ankole Eishengyero and in the corridors of the Ankole government. Closely related to this, the movement also sought to influence the appointment as well as the transfer of chiefs and other government staff. After the initial stimulus of 1949 and subsequent skirmishes in 1952–53, peak times in its fluctuating role as a political pressure group were reached whenever major choices were imminent – such as in 1955, at the nomination of a second Mwiru Enganzi and again around 1958, when a growing entente between Protestant Bahima and Roman Catholic Bairu created an entirely new political situation. The 1955 crisis was decisive for much more than the selection of an Enganzi alone. The Bahima group, including the Omugabe, were determined to have a Muhima county chief who had a rather unfavourable reputation among Bairu. Under the then existing constitutional procedure, laid down in the 1949 African Local Government Ordinance, the Enganzi would be appointed in agreement between the Omugabe, the incumbent Enganzi and the District Commissioner. The Kumanyana movement mobilised fierce opposition to the proposed nomination and a deadlock ensued which was resolved only by altering the constitutional framework of the Ankole administration. Protectorate officials speeded up the process by which Ankole, as the first district, could come under the regulations of the District Administration (District Councils) Ordinance, which was being prepared in 1955. This ordinance broadened the area of jurisdiction of the local government; expanded the Eishengyero by enlarging the number of directly elected members; and provided for an Enganzi elected by the Eishengyero. As a result, Bairu henceforth obtained a substantially increased influence in the Eishengyero and Kesi Nganwa, the man who had emerged as leader of the Kumanyana movement, was elected Enganzi.

Once this was achieved, however, Kumanyana's political role began to change markedly. One result was an increase, rather than a decrease, in the number of its meetings and the size of its following. Another was that, during the following years, the focus for the movement's political action became increasingly narrowed to securing positions for its more active supporters who, as it was locally expressed, 'had killed the

animal and wanted to eat it'. Their desire to be rewarded with sinecures was, however, thwarted by two conditions. One of these was that the tenure of most posts held by Bahima was protected by civil service regulations; the other was that Roman Catholic Bairu increasingly expressed an interest in having a share in the benefits. Roman Catholic Bairu had begun to constitute a third political force in Ankole and by the mid-1950s they had been attracted to Catholic Action and other lay organisations. Through the working of electoral mechanisms, they obtained a substantial representation in the Eishengyero. In 1955, they considered it in their best interests to support the Protestant Bairu in the Nganwa election, thus bringing about a complete Bairu alignment vis-à-vis the Bahima. They became disenchanted, however, when they felt that the Protestant Bairu were gaining most of the advantages for the achievement to which they had given their support. Protestants, on the other hand, considered that they had borne the brunt of the struggle for Bairu advancement, that they had more qualified people available to take positions, and that there was thus a stronger justification for distributing chieftainships and other posts among themselves than among the Roman Catholics. As a result, the initial alignment between Protestant and Roman Catholic Bairu was followed by a widening estrangement between the two groups. Kumanyana, which had originated as an expression of protest against conditions affecting all Bairu, played an increasingly partisan role in matters of appointment and, since the spoils were limited by the protection of tenure, its pressure to gain appointments for its own group became more intense. Whereas in a different context the Kumanyana movement might have unified all Bairu, it now grew into one of the factions dividing them.

Political developments in the late 1950s and early 1960s reaffirmed the tripartite nature of Ankole politics and further restricted the scope of the Kumanyana movement. A convergence of interests gradually led to a coalition between the Protestant Bahima and the Roman Catholic Bairu. This was first manifested in 1958 in the Eishengyero, during the nomination of representatives to the Uganda Legislative Council; its organisational basis became the Ankole branch of the Democratic Party. As for the Protestant Bairu, they were subsequently attracted into the Uganda People's Congress, which then used Kumanyana's organisational network. In keeping with other parts of Uganda, the Protestant–Roman Catholic religious cleavage assumed major dimensions in the immediate pre-independence period, and ironically forced the two Bairu groups to compete for Bahima support in the 1962 Ugandan elections. As a result, Bahima received no less than half of the six elective Ankole seats in the National Assembly (Uganda People's Congress: 1; Democratic Party: 2), while in addition they had a substantial influence on each party's executive. Clearly, this enabled them to gain a much stronger position than their small numerical strength among the population of Ankole would have made possible under, say, conditions of proportional representation. Nevertheless, the vast majority of Bahima had remained loyal to the alignment between Bahima and Roman Catholic Bairu and voted for the Democratic Party. Kumanyana was temporarily eclipsed in this process; later it underwent a minor revival as one of the factions in the Uganda People's Congress in Ankole. Although this revival was not solely concerned with Bahima-Bairu differences, these questions did form an important part of its raison d'être.

Despite the changing political situation, the following years brought frustration to many Bairu, who had expected to enjoy more visible and complete fruits from their victory. Instead they saw continued over-representation of the Bahima elite in high political, administrative and ecclesiastical positions. This elite continued to form a wealthy class based on substantial cattle ownership. Differences continued between Bairu and Bahima on matters concerning land tenure, the allocation of cattle ranches and other questions. Though losing much of their sharpness, social distance and prejudice also remained, in some peripheral areas such as Buhweju and Nyabushozi even retaining old clientelist forms. However, in spite of lingering grievances, in other respects the Bahima at the time appeared to have been eclipsed as a political force of much consequence. To this the Kumanyana movement had made an important contribution. As the issues corresponding with the ethnic division dwindled, there also seemed fewer 'sociological' reasons for an ethnic movement to persist.

Thus, when the new Uganda Constitution of 1967 abolished the kingship and made it possible for the faction of the Uganda People's Congress, which claimed descent from the Kumanyana movement, to take office, this was perhaps not as momentous an event as some seemed inclined to portray it. But in more ways than one it did mark the end of an era. As economic class differences increasingly became the major focus of political discontent, ethnic inequality at the time seemed to be becoming outmoded as a vehicle for protest.

Protest in Toro: The assertion of independence

Among the attempted secessions that have followed independence in Africa, the Rwenzururu movement was perhaps one of the most radical, as well as one of the least noticed: one of the most radical, because the Rwenzururu kingdom, as the secessionist offshoot of the wider Rwenzururu movement was called, represented a virtually complete rupture from the state of Uganda and was able to maintain its own, however rudimentary, government from the time of its establishment in 1962 until the early 1980s; and one of the least noticed, mainly because, in its splendid isolation, it did not pose an immediate security problem to the government of Uganda and for prolonged spells could therefore remain ignored.

The Rwenzururu movement also represented a tragic example of an unresolved local dispute which became so bitter that genuine reconciliation was no longer conceivable. Originally an attempt by the Bakonzo and Baamba peoples on the Congo border to shake off Batoro political domination, the movement sought to redress the minority status which had been imposed on them around the turn of the century, when the British re-established and enlarged the Toro kingdom. Unequal social development had since then considerably widened the social distance between the Batoro and the Bakonzo and Baamba. In a variety of respects, the Bakonzo and the Baamba were neglected over a long period and it was not until the 1950s that some significant economic development began to take place in their areas. The ensuing changes, combined with expectations created by constitutional transitions, stimulated discontent among the Bakonzo and Baamba over their inferior

position in Toro society and eventually led to a desire for independence.

For a better perspective on the movement's development, it will be useful to look first at the wider Toro context from which it emerged, for while the Rwenzururu movement was certainly the most dramatic, it was by no means the only reaction to regional disparities in Toro. To put it very briefly, when the British re-established Toro around 1900, they added to it certain peripheral areas in an effort to bolster Toro against Bunyoro, the neighbouring kingdom, which had resisted the imposition of British rule and which had earlier ruled over Toro. Apart from Busongora and Bwamba counties, home to most Bakonzo and Baamba, these included Kyaka county to the east, Kibale to the south, the non-Bakonzo parts of Busongora and smaller entities elsewhere. However, the people of the central and original part of Toro, in Mwenge county, continued to think of themselves as the only real Batoro, looking down on the peoples in the other areas. Again, during colonial times educational and economic opportunities were centred in the areas around Fort Portal, the district headquarters. The most conspicuous regional differences lay, however, in the composition of the kingdom's government staff, since most senior officials, including the chiefs posted in other counties, were recruited from Mwenge and Burahya and thus from the core area of Toro.

Toro's regional distribution of social advantages was thus not unlike that in Ankole, where the central areas had also provided the nucleus from which the system was expanded. But whereas in Ankole the juxtaposition of ethnicity and religion fostered the growth of a major political cleavage at the centre, this did not happen in Toro. The relationships between the three status categories among the Batoro – the ruling Babito clan, presumed to be of Nilotic origin, the cattle-keeping Bahuma, corresponding to Ankole's Bahima, and the Bairu – have been less hierarchical than in Ankole. Historically, Bairu status in Toro appears to have lacked the stigma of inferiority attached to it in Ankole, largely because the Babito sought to counteract Bahuma influence by promoting the Bairu. During the twentieth century, there was also more social mixing between these strata than in Ankole, as a number of Bahuma took up agriculture, and intermarriage among Babito, Bahuma and Bairu had been increasing. Consequently, although some prestige continued to be attached to Babito and Bahuma descent, the influence of ethnic distinctions was much less pervasive than in Ankole.

One result of this lack of distinction was that although a disproportionate number of the senior chiefs from Mwenge and Burahya were of Babito and Bahuma ancestry, rivalry for power rewards at the centre was not so much seen as ethnic conflict. Instead, during the first half of the twentieth century, it was perceived mainly as competition between clans, some of which were supposedly 'closer' to the Omukama, the ruler of Toro, while others were less 'known' to him. Similarly, although chiefly prerogatives introduced by the British had induced a social and economic differentiation comparable to that in Ankole, these differences in Toro were not commonly associated with ethnic status distinctions. In the outlying counties populated by Batoro, the ethnic descent of the 'central' chiefs remained a matter of indifference; it was their area of origin which was a focus of attention. In turn, Batoro attitudes toward other people incorporated in Toro, such as the Bakonzo and the Baamba, tended to enhance the status of the lower stratum among the Batoro themselves. Whereas in Ankole Bairu were looked down

upon as inferiors, their counterparts in Toro (who were, incidentally, only infrequently referred to as 'Bairu') were often regarded, and regarded themselves, as superior to the Bakonzo and the Baamba.

Religious divisions in Toro also had different consequences and did not accentuate and multiply social cleavages as much as in Ankole. Although the majority of the Toro ruling elite was Protestant, a number of Babito and Bahuma became Roman Catholics, and some came to hold high offices. Roman Catholics and Protestants were more evenly distributed in the various parts of Toro than in Ankole, although Roman Catholics, who formed a greater majority in Toro than in Ankole, were concentrated in large numbers around Fort Portal. Roman Catholic schools, such as St. Leo's College near Fort Portal, helped the social advancement of Roman Catholics in Toro and cursory evidence suggests that Batoro Roman Catholics generally had better economic opportunities than their co-religionists in Ankole. Religion-based party politics in the early 1960s did, nevertheless, cause increased friction between Protestants and Roman Catholics in Toro and reached a climax when the Protestant-led government dismissed some Roman Catholic chiefs. The protests that this action provoked in some cases ran parallel with regional disaffection, but among the Batoro these were not clustered together with ethnic grievances as was the case in Ankole. On the whole, therefore, regional disparities produced more pronounced distinctions in Toro.

In the 1950s and early 1960s, discontent over regional discrepancies was voiced in several areas, with particular emphasis on the distribution of chieftainships and other government posts. In some areas, such as Kyaka and Kibale, some thought was even given to seeking association with Bunyoro or Ankole if no amelioration were forthcoming. This tendency to assess political representation in terms of the number of chiefs appointed from a particular region was enhanced by the way constitutional developments had affected Toro during these years. Persistent demands by the Toro government, led by the Omukama, for federal powers similar to those possessed by Buganda kept the new 1955 District Administration (District Councils) Ordinance from being applied to Toro: this ordinance would have provided a greater sense of popular political involvement. Instead Toro until 1961 remained under the 1949 Local Government Ordinance, which vested authority more exclusively in the chiefly hierarchy. At the same time, however, the political climate in Uganda in the years leading up to independence had brought a general expectation of increased political participation and greater political equality. In Toro this was to give rise to demands that the chiefly hierarchy itself should become more representative of the various regions.

The first protests in reaction to these discrepancies were from east, south, and south-west Toro. For several reasons, however, these remained much more constrained than the subsequent protest of the Bakonzo and Baamba would be. For one thing, the language, customs and traditions of the people of Kyaka, Kibale and Busongora were much closer to those of the central Batoro than were those of either the Bakonzo or the Baamba. Although they were not considered proper Batoro by the people of the central region, they were not treated as inferiors in the way that the Bakonzo and the Baamba were, and the name 'Batoro' was never seriously questioned in relation to them. In addition, and in contrast to the relative isolation in which most Bakonzo and Baamba

lived, their areas were linked to the central parts of Toro by several main roads, which had given rise to more extensive contacts and common interests. However, probably the most important reason why protest against perceived inequalities in east and south Toro remained relatively limited and short-lived lay in the sudden appearance of the Rwenzururu movement in 1961–62. In reaction, the Toro government accelerated its efforts to accommodate grievances in other areas so as to enlarge its basis of support against the movement. The relative affinity between the centre and the south and east of Toro facilitated such alignments, although regional demands did not altogether disappear in those areas. Thus, when, in an attempt to quiet the disaffection, Bakonzo and Baamba were installed as chiefs in Busongora and Bwamba, the interest of groups in other areas in getting similar appointments increased.

The immediate background to the Rwenzururu movement may be described as follows. The decade preceding the establishment of the movement had brought pervasive economic change in Busongora and Bwamba, making them the two most prosperous counties of Toro as well as the areas with the greatest tax yield. Large numbers of Bakonzo had come down the slopes of the Rwenzori to cultivate cotton in the plains of Busongora, while they also grew coffee on the mountain spurs. In addition, the economic significance of Busongora was enhanced by a flourishing fish industry, salt mining at Katwe and copper mining at Kilembe, all of which increasingly offered employment opportunities to Bakonzo.

The Baamba also took up coffee cultivation, though in their area an increasing number of plots were bought by Batoro who subsequently employed local Baamba as their labourers. The important point here is that many Bakonzo and Baamba were receiving substantially increased cash incomes and came into more frequent contact with the Batoro. Besides, the results of their labour gave them an important sense of achievement and to them signified at least economic proof of their equality with the Batoro, who had never considered them capable of any productive pursuits.

With such advancements, however, came increased sensitivity to discrimination in other respects. Although in the 1950s government activities had expanded within their areas, the fact remained that the Bakonzo and Baamba had never provided a county chief and only very few sub-county chiefs. As late as 1962, only six out of thirty-eight sub-county chiefs in all Toro were Bakonzo or Baamba (Uganda Government 1962). There were also far fewer teachers, medical staff and other government personnel among them than among the Batoro and it was even observed that there were no Bakonzo or Baamba clerks in the central office (Uganda Government 1962:8). It was further found that until immediately before the emergence of the Rwenzururu movement, both Bakonzo and Baamba had been discriminated against in the allocation of scholarships, bursaries and government development loans (Ssembeguya report 1962:7, 9).

Such discrepancies strengthened the conviction among Bakonzo and Baamba that the Batoro were not prepared to deal with them on a basis of equality. At the same time, political developments in Toro, and elsewhere in Uganda, alerted them to the possibility of seeking a political solution to their predicament. Prior to independence, the Toro government itself advanced exaggerated demands as to the future status of the kingdom within Uganda. Not only did it want a federal relationship with the centre and 'recognition of Toro as a nation first' (*Uganda Argus*, 19 July 1961) before its

constitutional position should be further considered, but it also started a campaign for the recovery of a large part of Kivu province in the Congo, which it claimed had been 'lost' as a result of the Anglo-Belgian boundary settlement of 1910. Most of the area concerned was populated by Bakonzo and Baamba. Some parts had at some time in the past been in a very loose tribute-paying relationship to Toro, but most had never in any real sense formed part of Toro. Thus, although the claims of the Toro government for enhanced prestige and increased autonomy directly involved the Baamba and the Bakonzo, the latter had no voice in the formulation of these demands. The demands did, however, create an impression that bids for alterations in constitutional status provided an appropriate avenue for the redress of their political grievances.

Another important factor was that during the term of office of the Democratic Party as the government of Uganda (1960–62), the Sebei in eastern Uganda were granted separate district status. The Sebei had for a long time been in a fairly similar position with regard to the Bagisu in the Bugisu district compared with the Bakonzo and the Baamba to the Batoro in Toro. Numerically, the Sebei had been a minority in Bugisu, living more or less in isolation in the higher regions of Mount Elgon and being regarded as socially inferior by the dominant Bagisu. The Bakonzo and the Baamba hence regarded the Sebei solution as a precedent which should also be adopted in their own case. Moreover, after a visit to the Bakonzo and Baamba areas, Benedicto Kiwanuka, the leader of the Democratic Party, left the impression that a Democratic Party government would further their demands for a separate district in exchange for support at the polls in 1962. Although the Democratic Party did thus obtain support in the region, the Uganda People's Congress was victorious in the country as a whole, while in addition, the new constitution made it infinitely more difficult to change the existing boundaries of districts and kingdoms. These facts were to become a serious obstacle to the achievement of Bakonzo and Baamba aspirations. It is conceivable that if the Baamba and the Bakonzo had begun to press half a year earlier for a separate district, they would have had a fair chance of achieving it under a Democratic Party government.

For a long time, however, the Bakonzo and the Baamba had lacked effective channels to express themselves politically. Only in 1961, when the first direct elections to the Toro Rukurato (Council) were held, did it become possible for them to voice their discontent. Significantly, the Rukurato was not only a convenient body for the airing of their common grievances, but also a meeting ground of key significance for the two communities and the place where the alliance between the Bakonzo and Baamba leaderships was forged. Their joint membership of this body made the common interest they had against the Batoro very clear, and in a real sense the Rwenzururu dispute was thus sparked off in the Rukurato. In 1961–62, the two groups realised that they could put up a meaningful case for a separate district if they did it together. Moreover, the Baamba, who were far outnumbered by the Bakonzo, in a sense had only one choice, namely to follow the Bakonzo, as their habitat was separated from Toro proper by the Rwenzori range, populated by the Bakonzo and accessible only by an easily blocked escarpment road.

Dissent in the new Rukurato, in which Bakonzo and Baamba members held 21 of the 58 seats, precipitated the crisis. Lack of familiarity with parliamentary procedures

among the Batoro as well as the Bakonzo and the Baamba encouraged conflict. Baamba and Bakonzo had not been included in a constitutional committee appointed from among members of the Rukurato to negotiate a final agreement on Toro's constitutional relationships with the central government; only after complaints had been made, were two representatives from among them admitted to the discussions. At that point, the Baamba and the Bakonzo demanded that the new constitution should explicitly recognise the Baamba, Bakonzo and Batoro as the three 'tribes' of Toro. When this demand was refused by the Batoro majority, the Baamba and Bakonzo walked out of the proceedings and took no further part in the negotiations. Isaya Mukirane, the principal Bakonzo leader, subsequently submitted the aspirations of the Bakonzo and the Baamba to the Governor of Uganda, at the same time asking for a separate district (Uganda Government 1962:3). At the next meeting of the Rukurato, in March 1962, all Bakonzo and Baamba members walked out; immediately thereafter Mukirane and the Baamba leaders Kawamara and Mupalaya were arrested on charges of having insulted the Omukama. While they were imprisoned, it was decided to hold by-elections for several Bakonzo and Baamba seats which had been declared vacant. This decision caused a tense situation, as large sections of the population considered the announced elections invalid. Violence broke out in Karambi sub-county of Busongora in August 1962. Shortly before nomination day, a new Mutoro chief was molested on a tax-collecting tour, which the local Bakonzo regarded as a provocation. This sparked a series of similar incidents throughout the Rwenzori mountains which, as it turned out, were just the prelude to far more violent conflict during the next few years.

Until the end of 1964 engagements took place primarily between Rwenzururu forces and Batoro. Bakonzo and Baamba made numerous attacks on Batoro and their properties in retaliation for evictions and other punitive measures enforced by the Toro government and the Ugandan army and police troops which were sent to the area. Rwenzururians burnt houses and chased Batoro out of Bwamba and some other areas which were populated predominantly by Bakonzo. Batoro chiefs were the foremost targets, but many other Batoro who took a stand against the movement were also assaulted. Most of the violence occurred during night raids. Night after night, selected homesteads were attacked, although not many Batoro were killed. Largely because of their unpredictability, these raids stirred a sense of insecurity among large numbers of Batoro. Rwenzururu forces would stage a minor incident at one end of the Rwenzori range to attract Ugandan security forces away from areas where they would subsequently launch their major attack. Such actions showed a marked capacity for strategic co-ordination and for effective communication over extended distances.

Violence in the first year or two by no means originated exclusively from among the Baamba and Bakonzo. Batoro bore the primary responsibility for many of the incidents. In June 1964, however, the initiative clearly shifted to the Batoro. Apparently under the instigation of Toro government officials, Batoro then made a ten-day onslaught, primarily on the Bakonzo, which was unprecedented in its brutality and the extent of indiscriminate killing. Brought from Mwenge and other Toro counties to the plains and lower slopes of the Rwenzori, hundreds of Batoro spearmen together with local Batoro killed numerous Bakonzo men, women and children. Official figures reflected a few

hundred casualties, but it was widely believed that the actual number was many times greater. Police and army personnel arrived too late to intervene effectively, and even then they were often powerless or unwilling to stop the Batoro. This virtual civil war caused a wholesale flight of Bakonzo into the mountains. Social life became completely disrupted and a legacy of hatred persisted, defying any return to normal relations.

Although it did not endorse the demand for a separate Rwenzururu district, the report of the Ssembeguya Commission, convened to inquire into the disturbances among the Baamba and Bakonzo, placed the responsibility for the emergence of the Rwenzururu movement firmly on the Toro government. In its opinion, the government had handled the complaints raised by the Bakonzo and the Baamba without tact (Uganda Government 1962:14). Despite the seriousness of the grievances and the extremely sensitive feelings among wide sections of its population, the Toro government, in the Commission's judgement, had made no constructive attempts to conciliate the dispute. Instead, even after the conflict had come out into the open, it still met moderate Bakonzo and Baamba leaders who sought to arrive at a settlement 'with intimidation and high-handedness', while the request for a separate district itself 'was dealt with in a most obtuse and insensitive manner' (Uganda Government 1962a:12).

Acting upon the recommendations of the report, which was published on 10 October 1962, one day after independence, the government of Uganda also rejected the demand of the Bakonzo and Baamba for a separate district (Uganda Government 1963). The most compelling reason for this decision was the determination, in the interest of national unity, to avert fragmentation of the country's political structure. Moreover, it was argued that the proposed district would prove uneconomical and, given the prevailing shortage of staff, would be difficult to administer, especially since large areas of Bwamba and Busongora (particularly in the higher mountain regions) were undeveloped and inaccessible. Though unmentioned, an additional factor of significance appeared to have been the concern of the central government, controlled by the Uganda People's Congress, not to jeopardise its chances of strengthening its political support among the Batoro.

It is open to question, however, whether the economic and staffing arguments put forward by the Ssembeguya Commission were as compelling as they were purported to be. In comparison with the Sebei, for instance, whose control of a district had enabled them to obtain a modern hospital, more schools and an improved road system, the Bakonzo and the Baamba were not only several times more numerous but also economically far more advanced. Indeed, some of the country's major sources of revenue, such as copper mining, lay in their areas and could well have provided a ground for a separate district to begin with. In addition, their total population, which in 1959 amounted to nearly 137 000 (Bakonzo 103 868; Baamba 32 866) (Uganda African General Census 1959) exceeded that of other districts such as Bunyoro (126 875) and Madi (50 627) and by Ugandan standards included a relatively high proportion of taxpayers (26 435). Although staffing would have presented certain problems, it was no easier in Sebei, Madi or in Karamoja, the most undeveloped area of the country. The situation which evolved at any rate prevented the continued employment of Batoro staff in Bakonzo and Baamba areas. Increased conflict forced the central government in early 1963 to take over the administration of the services in Busongora and Bwamba for which the Toro government had been responsible and,

subsequently, these functions were entrusted to an administrator appointed by the central government and aided by Bakonzo and Baamba appointees.

Whereas the relatively underdeveloped state of sections of the Bakonzo and the Baamba areas was advanced as an argument against a separate district, this situation might likewise have been used more convincingly to argue in favour of it. Quite aside from the question of whether or not the nature of social relationships in Toro would have allowed fruitful co-operation within the existing framework, the special problems of terrain and communication, as well as the economic potential of the Rwenzori region, could have been considered a powerful argument for the creation of a special district as possibly the most effective form. Lastly, although the decision to reject the claim for a separate district may have forestalled similar demands emerging in other parts of the country, the effect of the policy stand in respect of the Baamba and the Bakonzo was certainly not to strengthen national unity. The Baamba and Bakonzo who had pleaded, solely on account of their adverse historical relationships with the Batoro, for the establishment of a Rwenzururu district as an integral part of independent Uganda, became increasingly disaffected from the national framework following the announcement of the government's position. Not only had the government not granted their wishes for autonomy, but, in addition, it did not act upon some of the major recommendations of the Ssembeguya Commission. The Commission had urged the calling of new elections throughout Toro to re-establish the representativeness of the Rukurato, the levying of a special tax on all the people in Toro to compensate for damage caused during the initial disturbances and the encouragement of the Toro government to make a formal public pronouncement, in the nature of an addendum to the *Toro Agreement*, that the three main tribes of Toro were the Baamba, the Bakonzo and the Batoro (Ssembeguya report 1962:14–15, 17, 18). However, the Uganda government, although not absolving the Toro government from all blame, took the position that it was 'unable to accept the view of the Commission of Inquiry that the present Toro government is largely responsible for the "disturbances"' (Uganda Government 1963b). The Commission's call for a 'change of heart', which was not followed up by any dramatic gesture by the national political leaders, thus remained an exceedingly feeble basis for reconciliation. In consequence, the basis of Bakonzo and Baamba protest, which had been essentially emancipatory, shifted to one of frustration. The escalation of regional demands into secessionist aspirations soon followed.

One of the common features of African protest movements has been a tendency toward fragmentation and disunity when strong resistance is encountered. Internal divisions have quite often assumed the form of bitter disagreement over strategy and tactics. This pattern was also manifested in the Rwenzururu movement. The shattering of expectations which followed the government's refusal to consider Rwenzururu's claims not only spurred the movement, it also stimulated divergent tendencies within it. Indeed, the government's position later provoked an anticlimactic disintegration of the Rwenzururu movement, the basic reason for which was that, in the new and increasingly complex situation which came to prevail, there was great difficulty in developing any single Rwenzururu strategy which could hold out hopes for eventual success. Baamba and Bakonzo had joined hands in the movement for a separate district as a means of gaining independence from and equality with the Batoro. To both of them this target

had not only seemed a straightforward and desirable solution, but it had also appeared that its early fulfilment was within easy reach. The depth and the genuineness of the grievances had, moreover, caused virtually all sections of the Bakonzo and Baamba to support the goals of the Rwenzururu movement.

Once the central government adopted its firm stand against the movement's aims, however, the critical question became one of strategy. As the government's denial had not been accompanied by clearly constructive alternative measures to accommodate Bakonzo and Baamba discontent, a subsiding of the movement was hardly to be expected. Yet, as all constitutional channels and targets for the promotion of the Rwenzururu cause had been exhausted, none of its leaders was able to offer prospects which could continue to attract the support of all shades of Bakonzo and Baamba opinion. Various components adopted contrasting and indeed conflicting positions, of which the only common basis remained opposition to the Batoro. Over the years, these different positions multiplied following severe clashes with the Batoro, the standard of living deteriorated for a very considerable part of the population, while the central government increased its involvement in the Bakonzo and Baamba areas. In the complex array of attitudes which resulted, two were of major import: the thrust toward the creation of a secessionist state – the Rwenzururu kingdom – and the persistent pressure for some alternative arrangement for remaining within Uganda, but outside Toro. Both of these tendencies, it should be noted, were commonly referred to as 'Rwenzururu'. The Rwenzururu kingdom was no doubt the more spectacular of the two, but not necessarily the more important in terms of popular support and influence on the course of events.

Major determinants of the growing divergence within the movement were geographic and social. The notion of an independent Rwenzururu state found its support among the Bakonzo of the higher Rwenzori regions, whereas the continued claims for autonomy within Uganda emanated mostly from the Baamba as well as from the Bakonzo on the lower mountain spurs. As already noted, the terrain in the higher Rwenzori was a crucial factor in the establishment and survival of a secessionist government. The fact that there were no roads, only an intricate maze of steep footpaths connecting homesteads over a large area, had for a long time prevented government administrators from permanently establishing their presence and influence. In addition, the fact that the area bordered on Congo increased the possibility – actively exploited – of hiding from the Ugandan security forces (though it did not necessarily lead to an enduring rapprochement between the Bakonzo of Uganda and those living in Congo). In contrast, the few roads leading into the Rwenzori foothills and into Bwamba made the Bakonzo and Baamba living there more exposed to government reprisals and hence less free to support the move for outright secession, had they wanted to do so. The same environmental factors had also resulted in the higher regions being educationally and economically relatively less developed, and thus in a sense less vulnerable, than Bwamba and the lower Rwenzori areas. All these conditions may have stimulated the preparedness of highland Bakonzo to take greater risks and to be more militant, while the realities of the situation in Bwamba and the foothills, where people had jobs and properties to lose, may have induced them to adopt more conciliatory approaches. Moreover, owing to the comparative inaccessibility of the higher mountain regions a more pronounced spirit of

independence had perhaps lingered on there over the years and could be more easily reasserted.

The splits which occurred between the Bakonzo and the Baamba in the movement appeared to correspond roughly with the situation before 1961–62, when the common front between the two groups first emerged. They appeared reflective of wider differences between the two peoples who, though inhabiting neighbouring areas, had by and large led separate existences. Historically, it has been suggested that the relative non-violence which characterised their relationships appears to have been partly due to some countervailing deterrents: the Baamba did not encroach upon the mountain for fear of being stoned by the Bakonzo, while the Bakonzo did not intrude into the Bwamba plains out of respect for the superior arrows of the Baamba. Although both were basically non-centralised societies, the Baamba and the Bakonzo had different traditions and customs, social contact had been limited and intermarriage was rare. There were also major differences in their languages, which forced them at times to use Rutoro – the language whose imposition upon them had been one of their sources of discontent – in their communications within the Rwenzururu movement. (Apart from the difficulty of understanding each other in Lukonzo, Kwamba, or any of the other Baamba languages, an additional reason appears to have been that no agreement could be reached as to which should be the official Rwenzururu language.)

In the decade before the Rwenzururu movement broke out there was some reciprocal influence between the discontent voiced among Baamba and that voiced among Bakonzo, though basically this had taken the form of separate streams of activity within the two communities. During that interval, most of the ferment originated not on the Rwenzori, but in Bwamba county, with Harugali, a sub-county on the mountainside populated predominantly by Bakonzo, serving as a key contact point with the Baamba. Eventually it was their leadership which spread the movement further up the mountain. At the same time, that is, in the 1950s, a succession of new Baamba organisations also developed. The earliest organised expression of discontent among the Baamba had occurred in the 1940s, when Mikairi Nturanke, a clerk and later a clergyman, had led the influential Baamba Native Association. In the 1950s, one of the most important groups was the outspoken Musana ('Sun') Society, founded by Erisa Nyamuseesa, also a Mwamba clergyman. In 1957, the Musana Society split into two equally militant groups, the Baamba Students' Progressive Association led by H.M. Kibulya and the Balyebulya Society (meaning 'one day they [the Toro] will be caught unawares'). The importance of these organisations lay in their articulation of a consciousness of social inequality and the reflections which they stimulated about the future role of the Baamba within Toro society.[4] An indication of Nturanke's, and especially Nyamuseesa's, influence can be seen in the fact that the leaders to whom the task of formulating Rwenzururu's goals fell had almost all earlier been under their influence. These included not only Yeremia Kawamara and Petero Mupalya, the principal Baamba spokesmen who led in pressing for the separate district solution rather than for secession, but also Isaya Mukirane, the Mukonzo leader who, when the other two were restricted, adopted the more radical line of an independent government in the Rwenzoris.

Among the Bakonzo a man of early influence, though not of undisputed popularity, had been S.R. Bukombi, a former chief of Harugali. In the early 1950s he had taken it

upon himself to record the history of the Bakonzo and in 1954 he was one of the main initiators of the Bakonjo Life History Research Society (Bakonjo is an earlier spelling of Bakonzo). This society was an example of the transformation of a cultural organisation into an influential political action group, as frequently occurred in the pre-independence periods in African countries. Very soon after the Society's establishment, Mukirane, who was then a primary school teacher and had been assisting Bukombi in organising the Society, took over its leadership (Sommerfelt 1958).[5] Immediately after assuming the presidency of the Bakonjo Life History Research Society, Mukirane began to alter its organisation and goals. He established a network of branches, staged numerous meetings and enlarged the membership – predominantly from among younger people, by and large ignoring the elders. The Society's historical objectives and research interests provided an important background to and cover for the pursuit of political concerns. Mukirane obtained official introductions from the District Commissioner, Toro, to organise his research. The major preoccupation of the association was, naturally, with past and present relationships between the Bakonzo and the Batoro. Traditions of lost independence and memories of insults inflicted upon the Bakonzo were recovered as a background to current grievances about discriminatory treatment. Just as in the case of the Baamba, a central concern was the future status of the Bakonzo within the political framework of Toro. As early as 1955 and 1956, the Bakonjo Life History Research Society presented to the Toro government the demands which were to become an increasingly important focus of their disaffection: direct representation in the Rukurato and recognition of the Batoro, the Bakonzo and the Baamba as the three 'tribes' of Toro (Bakonjo Life History Research Office 1955/56).

Until 1961, the Baamba and Bakonzo organisations operated basically independently of one another, while their grievances were by and large ignored by the Toro government and went unnoticed elsewhere in the country. Sensitivities steadily increased within both groups during this period until, shortly before independence, their collaboration in the Rukurato and the prospects of possible constitutional rearrangements induced them to align themselves within the Rwenzururu movement in opposition to the Toro government. But no matter how dramatic the appearance of their unity, they had entered the movement from different backgrounds and perspectives. Somewhat sadly, after a brief honeymoon, the Baamba and Bakonzo leaders of the Rwenzururu movement found themselves in conflict over such elementary matters as to which grievances they should submit in a joint memorandum to the Prime Minister of Uganda (Correspondence between Rwenzururu leaders 1962). Both sections nonetheless continued to pose as the representatives of all Bakonzo and Baamba, in the process denouncing each other's legitimacy and tactics. It does not necessarily follow that all Bakonzo could be identified solely with the secessionist strategy, nor the Baamba population as a whole with the objective of a separate district. Certainly, lowland Bakonzo in the populous Busongora area in time clearly disassociated themselves from the Rwenzururu kingdom, while viewpoints in Bwamba were for a long time markedly ambiguous and susceptible to change. Nonetheless, the Baamba leaders by and large remained faithful to the original option of pressing for a separate district, whereas the Bakonzo faction led by Mukirane opted for the strategy of all-out independence, first in a republican arrangement and ultimately as a kingdom with Mukirane himself as king.

Both courses perhaps represented little more than acts of desperation; in the final analysis, neither had much to offer under the prevailing circumstances. They shared one important characteristic, however, and that was their singularly prolific publicity campaigns. Whereas in the 1950s it had been necessary to move cautiously so as to avoid being branded as subversive, once their complaints had become an open political issue, the main weapon available to Rwenzururians was to try and inform public and international opinion. Besides, popular sentiments in the Bakonzo and Baamba areas had been aroused to such an extent that the very continuity of either wing of the movement depended on its providing an outlet for and, later, a means of sustaining these sentiments. Consequently, both groups became prolific sources of innumerable memoranda, letters and pamphlets. The Baamba group directed this material mainly to Ugandan cabinet ministers, government officials and embassies, the Mukirane group to a standard mailing list of heads of foreign governments, the Secretaries General of the United Nations and the Organisation for African Unity and, invariably, the British Colonial Secretary. Indeed, so compelling was the need to communicate, that one of the first actions of the secessionist Rwenzururu government was to establish a training school for typists (Rwenzururu Kingdom Government 1966). Meanwhile, grievances against the Toro government, the elections and the constitutional developments leading up to the crisis, the encounters and skirmishes with Ugandan security forces, and the heroic deeds of Rwenzururu's leaders, were recounted throughout the Rwenzori in numerous songs and recitations, especially among the Bakonzo. As will be discussed in chapter 9, songs were also composed on such subjects as the scenery of Rwenzururu country and the virtues of its citizenry, adding to the cultural renaissance which the conflict had evoked.

Over the years the symbolic expressions of independence took on ever more exalted forms in the Rwenzururu kingdom. Ministries and chieftainships were created and adorned with neo-traditional titles, a God of Rwenzururu, to whom great protective powers were attributed, made his entry and Mukirane himself became surrounded with various emblems of royalty. The monarchy even became a hereditary one after Mukirane died of dysentery in 1966. His 14-year-old son Wesley Charles, then a primary school pupil, was crowned as Rwenzururu's new Omukama Kibanzangha, while a regency of three senior ministers took over responsibility for the affairs of government. Monarchical symbolism to assert independence from and parity with Toro kingdom became very pervasive. Expressive of revealing afterthoughts, however, were some Rwenzururu songs ending on the phrase 'What will happen to us?'

Rwenzururu was a mass movement involving men, women and children in what was generally considered a 'just' war. Until 1963–64, its stand against Batoro domination attracted widespread response and support throughout the Rwenzori region. Its leaders were comparatively young and educated. A good number of them, at any rate among the Bakonzo, belonged to clans of such relatively high status as the Baswaga, Bahira and Basukale. A majority were Protestants, suggesting again a greater Protestant propensity for militancy even in areas far removed from the origin of the idea of the 'Protestant ethic'. In other words, the leadership came from the educationally most advanced element in the population, which could therefore pose, and command support, as the group

which should tackle these contemporary issues. After 1967, however, as the conflict dragged on without resolution and at great cost to the population, a profound sense of weariness enveloped more and more people and growing cynicism began to confront both those who propagated the separate district solution and those who persevered with the secession; most of the rank and file, even many of those who had actively supported the movement, longed to see the end of conflict and to return to their daily pursuits. Although only a few Bakonzo and Baamba were prepared to accept renewed integration within Toro, there was a growing lack of belief in the leaders' ability to extort a settlement. For several years, this dilemma was perpetuated by a weird immobility in the position of each of the parties to the dispute, leaving creeping disaffection virtually the only element of change.

The Uganda government under Milton Obote (1962–71), for its part, did not yield in its opposition to a separate district, but otherwise its position remained exceedingly vague, counting on piecemeal adjustments. It established county councils in the Baamba and Bakonzo areas to foster a sense of involvement among the population in the running of their own affairs. This involvement was not forthcoming, however, because these councils' authority, the source of their revenue and their relationship to the Toro and central government's administrations were not clearly spelled out. Consequently, these bodies remained by and large devoid of meaningful functions. The resulting indifference was matched by the suspicion which government officials met in their attempts to restore Baamba and Bakonzo participation within the Toro political framework. Many Baamba and Bakonzo were ready to collaborate with agencies of the central government as an interim measure or even as a permanent solution, but not as a step towards 'restoration'. Government representatives, however, saw their involvement as a transitory stage toward the re-incorporation of the Baamba and Bakonzo areas within Toro. This divergence of attitudes and objectives foreclosed rapprochement between the central government and the Baamba and the Bakonzo, so that the government's policy resulted mainly in a continuing impasse.

The Toro kingdom's government added to the deadlock by insisting on at least *de jure* recognition of its authority over the Baamba and Bakonzo areas. Basically, it expected the Uganda government to restore order in the areas and then to return them to the Toro administration. On various occasions, it showed its impatience at the apparent slowness with which, in its view, the Uganda government was approaching the Rwenzururu problem. Despite the fact that the administration had been placed in the hands of central government agents, the Toro government maintained its own chiefs, stripped of all functions, in the two major centres of the areas.[6] They constituted a heavy drain of financial resources and served as a constant reminder of Toro government claims to rule the Bakonzo and the Baamba.

Rwenzururu itself had passed a point of no return. Concessions less than the granting of a separate district could not divert it from its course, and to capitulate short of this goal would have constituted gross political and moral defeat. The Rwenzururu secessionist leadership, moreover, had developed obvious interests in keeping up ministerial and chiefly positions and their maintenance became even more crucial in the face of alternative prospects of severe punishment. The basis of the kingdom's authority,

however, shifted progressively from popular acceptance to coercion and exploitation. Opportunities to raid the Batoro became limited by a buffer of Ugandan security forces along the mountainside, so that after 1964 Rwenzururu militias increasingly directed their attacks against the Bakonzo and the Baamba living down the mountain and in the plains. The motives of these raids, in which people were assailed, houses burnt and crops, money and livestock confiscated, were to ensure loyalty to the Rwenzururu regime, to inflict punishment for co-operation with central government officials and especially to levy tribute towards the kingdom's upkeep. The Bakonzo population in the foothills therefore found itself between two governments, both of which demanded taxes and compliance. Increasingly the Rwenzururu kingdom came to be regarded as the greater threat of the two and as time passed the Baamba – as well as a growing number of Bakonzo – became disaffected from it. By 1968 indications were that the Rwenzururu regime was fragmenting into a loose alliance of powerful chiefs exercising control over their immediate surroundings and themselves wielding considerable influence over and against the central Rwenzururu government. The gradual fragmentation of the movement did not necessarily mean that its demise was near, however, as it was able to survive the death of its founder and leader,[7] while its physical strength ensured the perpetuation of its control over the inhabitants of Rwenzori. Although there were sporadic outbreaks of Bakonzo resistance against the secessionist state, the Bakonzo living on the mountain spurs were generally not well enough organised to bring an end by themselves to their subjection to Rwenzururu power. In some areas they organised vigils and on occasion they succeeded in recapturing mountain spurs from the Rwenzururu militias. Large numbers of them, however, continued to be exposed to Rwenzururu threats, in the face of which they were usually powerless. Their precarious position remained basically unchanged for years, as it was rooted in the wider deadlock over the Rwenzururu dispute.

For years, also, the Baamba and Bakonzo leaders who were prepared to co-operate with the central government found themselves in an unenviably restricted position. If anything, failure to achieve their original promises and their resultant insecurity tended to make them rather inflexible. A separate district, or some alternative form of independence from the Batoro, remained a stringent standard against which any new proposals were to be judged. Deviations from this, in the form of calls for reconciliation with the Batoro or agreement with central governmental policies deemed too vociferous, tended to be punished: for example, E. Bwambale, the Mukonjo member of parliament, was kidnapped in 1963, and similar events occurred in 1965 and 1966. At the same time, repeated demands for separation from Toro hardly elicited a favourable response from the then Uganda government. In the absence of more constructive gestures from the central government, the more conciliatory Rwenzururu leaders thus remained unable to provide any alternative direction. Their predicament is perhaps best illustrated by the fact that quite a few were punished by both the Uganda and the Rwenzururu kingdom governments. Indeed, in various instances the same individuals were restricted in turn by the Uganda government because they were suspected of furthering the secessionist cause, and by the Rwenzururu government because they were considered dissident elements who were betraying Rwenzururu solidarity, as defined by the secessionist kingdom. Within the extremely narrow range left between

these two poles, for years virtually the only suggestions which these leaders could make were for the transformation of the county councils in Bakonzo and Baamba areas into more executive and autonomous bodies and their amalgamation, if only for certain purposes, into a larger joint assembly. Proposals to this effect, which were made to the Obote government in the hope of ultimately achieving a separate district in all but name, came especially from the Bakonzo leadership in the Busongora lowlands – but without any result. Some support for this line was also forthcoming from Bwamba, but conditions there left possibly even less room for new departures. In the late 1960s, the decisive factor in Bwamba was the simultaneous operation of two competing structures. Behind the day-time facade of co-operation with central government agents, Rwenzururu forces exercised enormous powers over the local population, in no small measure based on intimidation which increasingly reduced the scope for the emergence of any new departures.

All these positions remained basically unchanged until at least the fall of 1967. Unfortunately, during the first years after Uganda's independence none of the attempts made to solve the deadlock had a chance of succeeding. Primary responsibility for breaking out of the impasse rested with the Uganda government. While it did not retreat from its decision to resist the Bakonzo and Baamba claims, neither did it initiate any serious actions to end the movement. The Uganda government appeared to entertain hopes that the Rwenzururu movement would die a natural death. Its passivity, however, sustained the immobility which surrounded the dispute and thus infused the movement with additional life.

Some important modifications in the situation first seemed to occur with the introduction of a new republican constitution for Uganda in September 1967. Most significant from a Rwenzururu perspective were the abolition of kingship in Toro and the strengthening of central control over district administrations – among other things, in matters of appointment. Naturally, the abolition of the Toro kingship was cause for considerable rejoicing throughout the Rwenzori; also, Baamba and lowland Bakonzo welcomed the moves toward more unitary forms of government in Uganda, as they decreased the significance of local government and hence the extent of Toro government control. However, they were disappointed because the constitution did not remove the obstacles to the creation of new districts in Toro. Their frustration was all the more bitter because the same constitution created four new districts to replace the kingdom of Buganda. The attitudes of the Baamba and Bakonzo were thus pulled in different directions as a result of the Uganda government's position; acceptance of the 1967 constitutional changes was regarded by some as a defeat and by others as a victory for the movement and its goals.

Subsequent modifications in the Uganda government's position brought some modifications in these attitudes. President Idi Amin's move to grant a district each to the Bakonzo and the Baamba effectively ended the separate district issue. Reinstatement of the Buganda, Bunyoro and especially the Toro monarchy (with claims over assets located in the Rwenzururu region), however, ignited a strong popular movement demanding official recognition of Rwenzururian kingship. That recognition was not forthcoming, however, partly owing, perhaps, to the unresolved deadlock relating to the nearby Ankole kingship controversy, in which the government was constrained in lending its support to restoration in view of the strong local opposition to any such move.

Conclusions

In this analysis of the trajectories of ethnic protest in Ankole and Toro, the focus has been mainly on specific local dynamics of conflict in two subunits of a wider political framework. What is the significance of such conflicts when seen within a broader national context of state-building? The problem is not merely a derivative one; there is not necessarily a one-to-one relationship between integration at the local level and the national level. For instance, to say that a secession of local origin, such as that of Rwenzururu, was subtracting from national unity in Uganda may be correct in a sense, but perhaps only superficially so. Conceivably the Rwenzururu secession was the price which the Uganda government of the time chose to pay for maintaining political unity elsewhere in the country, on its own terms. Dynamics of conflict and integration within subunits do not occur in isolation from those operating at the next higher, or national, level. Rather, conflict and integration at these two levels affect each other in complex fashion – at times being mutually supportive, and at other times pulling in opposite directions (Etzioni 1965:83).

Two possible ways of looking at this relationship, starting from opposite ends, therefore suggest themselves. One is to ask what the effect is of the national context on the exercising of protest and the outcome of conflict within particular regions or subunits. The second is to try to assess the effect of conflict within subunits on unity at the national level. The first of these questions is of course inordinately speculative, because what it asks is essentially what difference it would have made had Ankole and Toro not formed part of a more comprehensive political framework. Yet it is only in this way that we can hope to get a glimpse of the particular conditions of protest and conflict that derive from the regional subunit level in which they occur. Moreover, by beginning with this dimension, we can start to formulate questions about the reverse connection, namely the implications of sub-national conflicts for national unity.

The Kumanyana and Rwenzururu cases suggest that a wider national context may affect subunit conflict in a variety of ways. Certain aspects may diminish and others perpetuate the propensity for protest and, hence, the potential for conflict within subunits. A national context may mitigate the sharpness of protest and conflict if and in so far as it opens alternative outlets for individual and collective coping strategies and aspirations. It may also do so to the extent that the centre can effectively act as an arbiter in local disputes. On the other hand, having a wider political framework may perpetuate the grounds for regional protest by sustaining specific local social discrepancies as they become, as it were, 'protected' by general rulings applicable to the country as a whole. Evidently, both these tendencies may occur simultaneously. The examples from Ankole and Toro seem to illustrate both kinds of effects.

The potential 'mitigating' outlet of a wider framework is perhaps most clear-cut with regard to the alternative opportunities for social mobility which it may allow. Over and above the direct and specific grounds for protest, ethnic, ideological or otherwise, political protest often also entails competition for positions of power and influence between an established ruling class and newly emergent groups staking out a claim to them. In situations of conflict within subunits, a national political framework may draw many educationally qualified members of both contending groups into central government

posts and thus away from the local competition for positions and benefits. This may let off some of the steam of local protest and may make conflict less intense and sudden. In the two cases of ethnic protest we have dealt with, this spill-over effect was clearest for some time in Ankole, where a good many years of educational advancements by both Bairu and Bahima fostered the growth of qualified cadres among both groups. Over the years, increasing numbers of highly educated Bahima and Bairu found employment in Kampala, Entebbe and elsewhere in Uganda. Had these individuals been confined to competing for the already limited number of positions of influence within Ankole, it would probably have aggravated local tensions. In Toro, on the other hand, this outlet was relevant only to a much more limited degree, primarily because educational advancements among the Bakonzo and the Baamba appear to have been blocked by the Batoro, thus reducing the possibility of their recruitment into the Ugandan government service. It was not until 1968, for instance, that the first Mwamba to receive a university degree graduated from what was then Makerere University College. Consequently, Baamba and Bakonzo were largely confined to seeking employment locally rather than within the wider Ugandan context. However, this goal too was blocked by the Batoro, who held the leading positions. Even if some of the educated Batoro, like their counterparts in Ankole, had benefited from employment opportunities elsewhere in Uganda, they would nevertheless have felt sufficiently strong within Toro to disregard and resist Baamba and Bakonzo aspirations for social advancement.

The accommodative capacity of a central framework may also be looked at in a somewhat different light. If the centre tends to draw some of the most qualified individuals away from contending groups, it may actually cream off the potential leadership of these communities. Such tendencies can lame the movement concerned, especially if an emergent leadership cadre is relatively small. In some cases, the overall result may then still be the same: a diminution of tension because of the lack of an organising cadre. But other examples are conceivable, particularly where conflict is generated by grassroots resentment that is so strong that the presence or absence of an educated cadre may not make too much difference to the articulation of protest. In such cases the siphoning off of a potentially more conciliatory leadership may only result in more anomic and irreconcilable expressions of discontent. This tendency seems to have manifested itself in the Rwenzururu movement at certain times.

A wider national framework may conceivably also mitigate conflict at the local level if the centre can effectively play the role of arbiter. This role may be possible as long as the conflict does not pervade from the regional to the national level, challenging the centre's own position. It is not just that a central government may be a relative outsider at the subunit level; normally, one would expect the centre also to exhibit an interest in the maintenance of peace throughout the country. Theoretically, a national centre should be adequately equipped to seek and enforce compromises at the subunit level. With varying degrees of clarity, this assumption is borne out by the cases of Ankole and Toro. In Ankole, the timing of the (still colonial) centre's decision in 1955 to alter the constitutional basis of the district as a means of easing the dilemma surrounding the nomination of the Enganzi is a case in point. With regard to the emergence of the Rwenzururu conflict, the centre does not appear to have exploited all its opportunities

for arbitration; nonetheless, the Uganda government's direct involvement in the administration of the Baamba and Bakonzo areas for some years, substituting for Toro government involvement, to an extent fell within this category.

However, a centre's capacity to act as arbitrator is closely linked to, and circumscribed by, the fact that it is also the body which defines the rules of the game: theoretically, it determines what rights can be maintained and what actions are permissible. In doing so it also sets the terms for conflict in a wider sense as it simultaneously predetermines what issues may be contended next, legally or illegally. In terms of this perspective, rules are more than just 'legal' prescriptions; they fix the boundaries for actions either to change or uphold the status quo. The major turning points in the development of protest in both Ankole and Toro, for instance, were brought about by central government rulings which defined, redefined, or reaffirmed the issues and, by implication, the targets. In other words, the centre establishes the objects of competition by opposing groups within a sub-system. This exemplifies the somewhat contradictory fact that it was not against the Uganda government but primarily against the Batoro and the Toro government that Bakonzo and Baamba antagonism was directed; nonetheless, it was the Uganda government which had ruled against a separate Rwenzururu district.

The centre's function in laying down the rules is restricted but also strengthened by the general applicability which they must have. In accordance with this principle, the centre is in a position to induce basic adjustments in certain instances of intra-regional conflict, but is prevented from doing so in others. The Obote government's refusal to create a separate district for the Bakonzo and the Baamba, for instance, followed largely from this principle of the general applicability of rules, or its understanding of it: granting Rwenzururu demands was not considered compatible with its policies for the country as a whole, as it might set the 'wrong' kind of precedent. On the other hand, political democratisation in Ankole was fostered and implemented in keeping with trends in the country at large at the time. In this regard, the Ankole case illustrated the contribution which a wider national context can make towards resolution of ethnic inequality within regional subunits. It contrasts markedly with Rwanda, where the struggle for political equality has entailed repeated violent upheavals. But Ankole also offers some contrary evidence, without which protest could not have persisted. Although the political supremacy of the Bahima elite tended to become eroded by more general constitutional transitions, their economic advantages and their predominance in public office did not disappear, or at least not so quickly. These aspects of Bahima status were supported by statutes applicable throughout Uganda. Civil service regulations ensured the tenure of Bahima chiefs until they reached the age of retirement; land tenure legislation upheld property rights of mailo landowners; and a progressive tax system which would level the wealth and incomes of various economic categories existed only in embryonic form, and hence perpetuated marked economic differences. Basically, pronounced social and economic inequality in subunits within a wider political entity may partly endure because the larger body is not in a position to adopt special measures to solve local discrepancies. To exercise the flexibility necessary for such adjustments would be contrary to the development of uniform policies which are generally applicable. Paradoxically, subsystem non-integration may thus be congruent with system integration.

If we reverse the perspective and look at the potential effects of protest and conflict within subunits on national unity, then clearly the problems here are quite different from those involved in the integration, on a national or even an international plane, of subunits exhibiting basic internal consensus on policy alternatives. Where such consensus is lacking, it is obviously not very meaningful to discuss the integration of the subunits into a wider framework while disregarding the political divisions within them. One can hardly talk of the integration of Toro into Uganda if an important section of Toro secedes from Uganda, for example. Problems of integration may in fact be most critical not at the national level, but at a level one step removed from the centre. Accordingly, we may have to adjust our focus. However, it may be erroneous to leave the matter with the assumption that non-integration at the subunit level implies non-integration at the national level. For it is conceivable that in some situations conflict within a subsystem may induce a strengthening, rather than a weakening, of national ties and identities among one or even both parties engaged in dispute. Moreover, it is possible that an absence of local integration is compatible with accommodation of elite interests at the national level.

The Kumanyana and Rwenzururu cases shed some interesting light on these possibilities. In Ankole, Bairu and Bahima preoccupation with the local political framework during periods of ethnic tension would seem to have shifted the focus away from the national level; yet, in a different fashion, both groups often manifested their dependence upon the national centre of power for support in the local dispute. In Toro, the Rwenzururu kingdom evidently provided an example of subunit conflict detracting from national unity. Nonetheless, a good many Bakonzo and Baamba not falling under the Rwenzururu kingdom often tended to identify with 'Uganda' as an alternative. But in a way, the Batoro, too, though not quite so voluntarily, became more dependent on the centre as a result of the Rwenzururu issue. At an earlier stage, however, marked by the resistance to the application of the 1955 District Ordinance to Toro as well as by such acts as calling for the recognition of Toro as a nation, sentiments were fostered in Toro which were hardly conducive to the promotion of 'Ugandan-ness'. These moves were not only a way of demanding a higher price for Toro's integration into Uganda but, in addition, were meant to perpetuate the political supremacy of the Batoro elite within Toro.

This last point underscores what may have been the most crucial connection between conflict, integration and protest in Uganda during the years before and immediately after independence. Uganda was for a long time known for the district-centred basis of its politics. To a very significant extent the districts and kingdoms provided political power bases to different groups and individuals and the national centre largely reflected this pluralism. Political power at the time was largely in the hands of elites with a strong district basis and, to fit the multi-centred power structure, took the form of a coalition. From the national centre, which derived its strength from the district elites, these elites could expect a certain willingness to back them up if trouble arose.

Basic political alignments and counter-alignments occurred to a large extent at the level of internal district and kingdom politics. While sharp political cleavages thus existed within a majority of the subunits, the national coalition tended to reflect the groups in power in most of the districts and kingdoms. Political unity at the national level as it

existed in Uganda, therefore, was largely based on the consensus of these power elites. But in various subunits, and certainly in the two with which we have been concerned, the position of the power elites did not remain unchallenged. Pressure and protest from groups claiming a larger share of influence and benefits were not uncommon in a number of local areas. Although challenges were made, they did not affect the system as a whole because by and large they remained as localised as were its component parts. Perhaps the major reason why this system was able to function was to be found in its pluralist characteristics. In a sense, the national system could bear the occurrence of protest and conflict within subunits, even of the extreme variety of Rwenzururu, because its very pluralism prevented a spill-over effect in adjacent areas. Conflict could put one of a series of watertight compartments out of order, but it could not make the ship sink. Such an arrangement could function as long as the issues at stake and political alignments concerned did not become more broadly connected. Once such connections began to be forged, however, giving rise to South–North, Bantu–Nilotic, rich–poor and other two-nation perspectives entertained at the time, Ugandan statecraft and politics became challenged in much more fundamental ways directed at the centre.

CHAPTER 8

The Kazanga festival: Ethnicity as cultural mediation and transformation in Western Central Zambia

Wim van Binsbergen

Ethnicity[1]

A perennial and probably universal aspect of the human condition is that we give names,[2] to elements of the non-human world which surrounds us and to human individuals, but also to the groupings into which we organise ourselves.[3] Usually members of a society designate their own grouping by a proper name, and they give names to other groupings around them. Such nomenclature is often vague, but it brings about a dramatic ordering within the wider social field which various communities share with one another. On the logical plane, projecting onto another grouping a distinct name which does not apply to one's own grouping denies that other grouping the possibility of differing only by degrees from one's own. Through the expression in words which make up the name, the opposition between groupings is rendered absolute, and is in principle subjected to the relentlessness of the dendrogram, of binary opposition, which plays such an important role in human thought.[4] By calling the other category 'A', one identifies one's own category as 'not-A'. The latter is usually also given a name, 'B', by those that it has called 'A', and third parties within the social field can either adopt this nomenclature or replace it with one of their own invention.

Every society comprises, among other features, a large number of named sets of people: for instance local communities, kin groupings, production groupings, parts of an administrative apparatus, cults, voluntary associations. We would call such a named set of people an 'ethnic group' only if certain additional characteristics are present: when individual membership is primarily derived from a birthright (*ascription*); when the set of people consciously and explicitly distinguishes itself from other such sets in its social environment by reference to specific cultural differences; and when the members of such a set identify with one another on the basis of a shared historical experience.

'Ethnicity', then, is the totality of processes through which people, by reference to the ethnic groups which they distinguish, structure the wider social and geographical field in which they are involved so as to transform it into an ethnic field.

The nature of the additional characteristics mentioned is gradual and not absolute, for their formulation and application is in the hands of the members of a society: the social scientist tries to identify these socially constructed characteristics through empirical research. In order to be effective, the relationships which people enter into with one another have to be not only systematic, but also flexible and contradictory. The social process creates boundaries in order to create separations, but also in order to cut across them. For instance, most ethnic groups include a minority of members who have gained their membership not at birth but only later in life, in a context of marriage, migration, language acquisition, adoption, the assumption of a new identity and a new lifestyle, religious conversion and so on.[5] Ethnic fields turn out to be differently organised at different places in the world and in different periods of human history; there is a great variation in the way in which people demarcate ethnic groups through distinctive cultural attributes (for instance, language) and through historical consciousness.[6] Ethnic groups may often have a subjective historical consciousness, but what they always have is an objective history open to academic enquiry, from their emergence to their disappearance,[7] and this history cannot be understood unless as part of the history of the genesis of the encompassing ethnic field as a whole.

It is analytically useful to make a clear distinction, by reference to strategically chosen characteristics, between ethnic groups and other ascriptive groupings such as castes and classes, but we must not expect that such analytically-imposed distinctions stand in a clear-cut one-to-one relationship to analogous distinctions in the consciousness of the social actors themselves. The distinction between such ethnic groups as exist, side by side, within the same social field is not limited to the logic of nomenclature (which merely entails co-ordinative relationships, without hierarchy), but tends to assume a subordinative nature; within the overarching ethnic field, the participants articulate political, economic and ritual inequalities between ethnic groups in a way which the analyst would rather associate with classes and castes.[8]

Ethnic nomenclature is a complex social process which deserves specific research in its own right. This is a position which anthropology has adopted only in relatively recent decades. Until the middle of the twentieth century anthropology used ethnic names as labels marking apparently self-evident units of culture and social organisation: within the units thus demarcated one defined one's research, but the demarcation in itself was hardly problematised.

In the early years of anthropology, the card-index boxes and bookshelves of this young science filled up with an overwhelming volume of ethnographic material which almost invariably was presented by reference to an ethnic name intended to identify a 'people' or especially a 'tribe'. Colonialism produced a nomenclatural fragmentation of social fields in the colonised areas, with the implied assumption that each of the units so identified displayed absolute boundedness and internal integration, characteristics which allegedly were inescapably underpinned by century-old tradition. Such was the unit of analysis within which the individual careers of anthropologists would, it was assumed, come to fruition.

It was only in the 1960s that the concept of 'tribe' was subjected to profound criticism as an ethnocentric and reified designation of an ethnic group *within the global ethnic field but outside the politically dominant civilisation* – in other words in the so-called 'Third World'.[9]

Since then much has been written about the rise and fall of the concept of tribe in Africa, in the context of political and economic processes in this continent since the end of the nineteenth century.

In a nutshell, this body of literature revolves around: *colonisation* (in the course of which the state created administrative units which were presented as 'tribes' – an optique which the Africans soon took over in their own perception and political action);[10] *the implantation of the capitalist mode of production by means of cash crops and migrant labour* (which eroded local systems of production, reproduction and signification, and at the same time produced regional inequalities which soon came to be interpreted in terms of an ethnic idiom); *urbanisation* (in the course of which a plurality of ethnic groups, and their members, engaged in urban relationships which, through a process of selective transformation, referred less and less to the traditional culture of their respective region of origin);[11] *decolonisation* (the rise of a nationalism which exposed ethnic fragmentation as a product of manipulation by the state); and, notwithstanding the previous point, the ethnic overtones of political mobilisation and networks of patronage in the post-colonial states;[12] the vicissitudes of military and one-party regimes, which often presented themselves as the solution for ethnically-based domestic political problems; and most recently the rise of democratic alternatives which, despite their emphasis on constitutional universalism, would yet seem to offer new opportunities for ethnic mobilisation.[13]

The Africanist literature on these topics is extensive and rapidly increasing, but at the same time we know far less of the processes of symbolic and cultural transformation which have informed ethnicity in these contexts.[14] It is these processes, specifically, which constitute the main topic of this chapter.

Ethnic identity and ethnic brokerage

A common term in the context of ethnicity and ethnicity research is 'identity'.[15] As social scientists in the narrower sense, we might define 'identity' as the socially constructed perception of self as group membership. Everybody plays different roles in different groupings, and therefore everybody has a plurality of identities, as acquired in the course of one's socialisation to become a member of these groupings.

Usually the rise of an ethnic group in Africa consists, as a project, in the launching of a new identity and the installation of that identity in the personalities of the ethnic group's prospective or intended members. The project of ethnicisation presents the ethnic identity (as expressed by a group name) as the ultimate, all-encompassing and most deeply anchored identity, which is then supposed to incorporate all other identities which one has acquired as a member of the local society.

Not by accident, such an ethnic identity reminds us strongly of the concept of *culture* in classic anthropology, often defined as: 'everything one acquires as a member of a society'.

However, the local culture need not in the least be limited, in place and time, to a specific named ethnic group; often it has a much wider distribution. For instance, in the savanna belt of South Central Africa, which will be the scene of most of my argument, scores of ethnic groups have been distinguished since the nineteenth century; yet if one were to concentrate on the distribution of patterns of production, reproduction and signification one would perceive such an underlying unity that there is every reason to speak of one large cultural area in this part of the world.[16] Within this far-reaching regional continuity distinct ethnic groups have distinguished themselves – almost in the way one may cut several differently shaped biscuits out of the same slab of dough. Among those sharing in this regional cultural continuity, self-perception will be anchored in ethnic names (which do not define cultural boundaries), and moreover, rather diffusely, in references to kin groups and local groups at various levels of inclusiveness and scale, in a landscape, a language, a polyethnic state system and so on.

Ethnicity comprises the process of taking consciousness (which for many people means being actively persuaded to do so by ethnic leaders and brokers), in the course of which a plurality of diffuse, accumulated, often cross-cutting, identities are brought under the denominator of one *ethnic* identity, which is then marked by a specific name. The ethnic name is constructed so as to mark a cultural boundary, and therefore pre-existing culture (or at least a selection of items from that culture) has to be partly reconstructed so as to fall within that boundary and to offer distinctive cultural attributes. In the bundling and reshuffling of identities the personal experience of self and of the world is transformed: the discovery of 'I am a Fleming/Azeri/Yoruba/Nkoya' and so on offers an ordering perspective in which powerlessness, deprivation and estrangement such as one has experienced earlier in all kinds of situations suddenly appear in a new light – as if the collective historical experience suddenly makes sense of them, and as if there is reason for hope that these negative experiences will be turned into their opposites through ethnic self-presentation. Viewed in this way, ethnicity has many parallels with other ideological phenomena such as nationalism, the awakening of class consciousness, religious conversion and religious innovation.

Ethnicity displays a remarkable dialectics which I am inclined to consider as its engine.[17] On the one hand, the binary opposition through nomenclature offers a logical structure, which is further ossified through ascription and which presents itself as *unconditional, bounded, inescapable and timeless*;[18] on the other hand, the actual processual realisation (through the construction of a culture coinciding with the group boundary, through distinctive cultural symbols, through a shared historical consciousness, through that part of membership which is non-ascriptive but acquired) means *flexibility, choice, constructedness* and *recent change*. Both, entirely contradictory, aspects form part of ethnicity. This dialectic renders ethnicity particularly suitable for mediating, in processes of social change, between social contexts which are each of a fundamentally different structure, and particularly between the local level on the one hand, and the state and wider economic structures on the other.[19] The ethnic name and the principle of ascription produce the image of a bounded *set* of people. Therefore integration between the local level and the national and international level, which poses such bewildering problems of structural discontinuity, under conditions of ethnicisation, no longer remains a

challenge which the vulnerable individual must cope with on his/her own on the basis of his/her inadequate skills and perceptions geared to the local level; on the contrary, such integration becomes the object of *group* action. Internally, a set of people is restructured so as to become an ethnic group by designing a cultural package which, *in its own right* (i.e. not just because of its symbolising more abstract power relations such as exist between the local level and the more global levels) constitutes a major stake in the negotiations between the emerging ethnic group and the outside world. One takes a distance from rival ethnic groups on the local and regional scene through a strategic emphasis on cultural and linguistic elements; and on a more comprehensive, national level of socio-political organisation one competes for the state's political and economic prizes (primarily for the exercise of power and the benefit of government expenditure) *by means of the state's recognition of the ethnically constructed cultural package.*

In this process the ethnic group increasingly articulates itself as just that. But although all persons involved in this process are in principle equals as carriers of the ethnic identity, the contact with the outside world, *precisely if* it shapes up successfully, causes new inequalities within the group. The mediation takes place via political, economic and ideological brokers who (through greater knowledge, better education, more experience, better political contacts and more material means of sustaining such contacts) are in a better position than their fellow members of the ethnic group to exploit the opportunities offered by the outside world.[20] These brokers develop ethnic leadership into an instrument of power formation which works in two directions:

- externally, towards the outside world, where these leaders claim resources in exchange for an effective ordering of the local domain;[21] and

- internally, within the ethnic group itself, where the brokers trade a limited share of their outside spoils for internal authority, prestige and control at the local level.

The leaders negotiate with both the outside world and their potential followers in the local society. In this context of brokerage between local community and the outside world, that which constitutes one's own identity becomes problematic, and asserting the 'traditional', 'authentic' (but in fact newly reconstructed) culture appears as an important task and as a source of power for the brokers. Ethnic associations, publications, and such manifestations as festivals, under the direction of ethnic brokers, constitute widespread and time-honoured strategies in this process.

The insistence on ethnic identity produces powerful ideological claims, which the outside world sometimes meets with more sympathy than analytical understanding. These claims may not be recognised as a recent, strategic, and rhetorical product, but may be idealised (as they are idealised by the ethnic brokers themselves) as, for instance, 'the courageous expressions, worthy of our deepest respect, of an inescapable identity which these people have acquired in childhood socialisation and which takes a desperate stand against the encroachments of the outside world'. For instance, in today's thinking about intercontinental development co-operation a fair place has been reserved for such claims and the associated cultural expressions.

Is it really the mediation of a deeply anchored tradition that is at stake here? Is that the reason why ethnic processes deserve the kind of sympathy and support which we, in a rapidly changing world, are inclined to extend to forms of culture threatened with extinction? How do these ethnic manifestations reveal the details of the negotiation process between the outside world and the local community? How do they express new inequalities? Can we find here new arguments for the classic thesis of Marxist researchers and politicians, who claim that the ethnic process produces a false consciousness *which prevents the actors from realising the underlying structures of exploitation such as should be interpreted in class terms?*[22] *What does the analysis of the ethnic negotiation process teach us about the characteristics of the wider political and economic system in which this process is embedded in the world today?*

I invite the reader to come with me to an ethnic festival in Western Central Zambia, to which these questions are eminently applicable, and where they may find some provisional answer.

The emergence of the Nkoya as an ethnic group, and the Kazanga Cultural Association[23]

Since 1988, every year during the first weekend of July a particular ceremony, the Kazanga festival, has taken place in Kaoma district, in Western Zambia. From the time it was first held in its modern form until 1991, the Kazanga festival was held at Shikombwe, Mwene (Lord, Chief, King) Mutondo's capital.

That Shikombwe is a royal residence (*lukena*, pl. *zinkena*) is clear from the *lilapa* surrounding the inner part of the complex: a reed fence supported by pointed poles, which is a royal prerogative. Inside the *lilapa* we find a simple, four-roomed house serving as a royal palace, a reed audience hall, and a shelter where, as principal regalia, the instruments of the royal orchestra are kept and where they are played twice a day. A large open space outside the *lilapa* is dominated by the modern court building, in front of which a rough flagpole has been erected; here the *kapasus* – constables attached to the royal court – hoist the Zambian flag every morning. This open space is the scene of the Kazanga festival. Around it lie the residential compounds of the courtiers and members of the royal family. A narrow track connects Shikombwe to the tar road fifteen kilometres away, and along the tar road it is another twenty kilometres to the district capital Kaoma, which until 1969 was called Mankoya. Kaoma district is part of Western Province (formerly called Barotseland), whose modern and traditional capitals, Mongu and Lealui respectively, lie at the end of the tar road two hundred kilometres west of Kaoma; at the other end, four hundred kilometres east, lies the national capital of Zambia, Lusaka. Mutondo, which is roughly ten thousand square kilometres in area, consists of fertile wooded savanna, inhabited by peasants in small villages that are mostly concentrated along the many rivers and streams. Many (by no means all) inhabitants of this chief's area consider themselves subjects of Mutondo and members of the Nkoya ethnic group, and preferably (but seldom exclusively) speak the Nkoya language; others identify with the Lozi group,[24] which is politically and socially dominant in Western Zambia, or with the groups which, from

the beginning of the twentieth century, immigrated en masse from Angola: especially the Luvale[25] and Luchazi.

Mutondo derived his hereditary title and hence royal status from a kingdom which was established in this region in the eighteenth century by his ancestors, dissidents who broke away from the famous Lunda empire in southern Zaire. The dynastic group adopted the name of Nkoya, which was originally[26] the name of a forested area around the confluence of the Zambezi and the Kabompo rivers. Given the cultural continuity in the region, the name 'Nkoya' certainly did not designate a distinct and bounded culture; the formation of the Nkoya as an ethnic group was still a thing of the future. After Mutondo's state and subjects became tributary to Barotseland's rulers in the middle of the nineteenth century, they were, as a so-called 'Lozi subject tribe', incorporated in the colonial state of Northern Rhodesia in 1900 under the name of 'Mankoya'. In 1964 the colonial state became the independent Republic of Zambia. At incorporation Mutondo became a relatively high-ranking title within the Lozi aristocracy. The *lukena* and its court retinue are still subsidised by the national state on the basis of treaties which the latter, and its colonial predecessor, concluded with the Lozi king in 1900 and 1964.

Nonetheless, Lozi–Nkoya relations have largely been experienced as antagonistic and humiliating by the Nkoya, especially under the colonial state, which allowed the indigenous Lozi administration considerable freedom. Mankoya district then suffered under Lozi domination.[27] Besides Mutondo, only one royal title-holder in the region managed to survive incorporation into the Lozi state: Mwene Kahare of the Mashasha people. The many other royal title-holders were replaced by Lozi representative *indunas*. Two other princes who were closely related to the Mutondo dynasty in time moved their seat to outside Barotseland: Mwene Kabulwebulwe and Mwene Momba, who from the outset had been recognised by the colonial state in their own right, but of course could not share in the Lozi subsidy, which was strictly limited to Barotseland.

A decisive year in the development of the 'Nkoya' into a self-assertive ethnic group was 1937, when the Lozi king established a filial branch of his own court right in the middle of Mankoya district, in order to control the local chiefs, judiciary and district finance. Another such year was 1947, when Mutondo Muchayila was demoted and exiled for ten years by the Lozi king on the grounds of 'restiveness'. At that time the Rev. Johasaphat Shimunika, the first autochthonous pastor of the Evangelical Church in Zambia,[28] translated the New Testament and the Psalms[29] into the local language, which, along with its speakers, was by then already called 'Nkoya'. Despite much effort on the part of missionaries it proved impossible to have this language recognised for use in education and in the media – understandably, since its speakers comprised less than one per cent of the Zambian population, in a country which in addition to English as the official language has recognised as many as seven regional languages, including Lozi. In the years 1950 to 1960 Rev. Shimunika also processed oral traditions into writings which depicted a glorious past for the growing 'Nkoya' identity.[30] He explicitly extended his pan-Nkoya efforts to include, besides Mutondo, the princes Kahare, Kabulwebulwe and Momba along with their subjects, and exposed Lozi domination as historically unjustified.

During this formative period the Nkoya as an ethnic group regarded Zambia's struggle for national independence primarily as an opportunity to end Lozi domination at the

regional level. Their political initiatives, presented under a Nkoya banner, were immediately prohibited.[31] Their choice in favour of the United National Independence Party (UNIP), as opposed to Lozi power, backfired when in Barotseland UNIP itself came under Lozi domination. In response, many Nkoya joined the opposition. Thus in the first years of Zambia's independence they were estranged from the UNIP-ruled national state. With the decline of the Lozi in national politics from 1969,[32] and the disunity among Luvale and Luchazi voters in the district, the Nkoya gained their first and only parliamentary seat and ministerial position in the 1973 general elections, shortly after Zambia had become a one-party state under UNIP. Afraid of 'tribalism', the government was still hostile to expressions of Nkoya ethnicity. In the same period a large development project was started in Nkeyema, in the eastern part of the district. The villagers gained hardly any direct benefits from the scheme, in contrast with the enterprising African farmers who flocked in from other districts, as well as the members of the modern and the traditional political elite of the Nkoya, between whom close kinship ties existed. This elite instilled great enthusiasm and loyalty among the villagers by formulating ethnic goals such as increased subsidies for state-recognised chiefs, the reinstatement of some titles which had disappeared, and the propagation of the use of the Nkoya language in education and the media. The growth of local UNIP branches under the leadership of this modern elite rendered the expression of Nkoya ethnicity acceptable to the national state. For the first time the Zambian national anthem and the UNIP marching songs could be heard in the Nkoya language.

From the beginning of the twentieth century part of the life of the inhabitants of this region was lived outside the region, on the commercial farms and the mines, and in the urban areas of Zambia, Zimbabwe and South Africa. The local people's low level of education, their limited job experience, small numbers as migrants, their low ethnic status, and the fact that, in their urban places of work, they constituted only a tiny and powerless minority as compared with the urban population as a whole made it virtually impossible for them to collectively and lastingly occupy niches of their own within the capitalist labour market. Although they could pass for Lozi in the company of third parties, the highly successful Lozi denied the Nkoya access to Lozi resources in the towns. Nonetheless, going to town was a necessity: it was there that one could find cash for consumables and bride wealth, and also a refuge from the tensions within the village community, which were experienced in terms of sorcery. Because of the uncertainty of the urban labour market, migrants usually maintained a strong connection with their village, to which they expected to return only too soon, and with their 'homeboys' in town, who constituted their only support upon arrival and in times of unemployment, illness and death. Wherever in town the numbers present allowed for collective ceremonies to be staged, healing rites, puberty ceremonies and funerals offered the opportunity to keep alive the contacts with their homeboys, in a context marked by their own music and dance from home. For those who achieved a measure of success in town, the Evangelical Church in Zambia offered an urban network, power base and identity; this church was active mainly in their home area, and through its mission schools offered a modest channel of upward mobility. Most villagers and urban migrants, however, participated intensively in autochthonous and syncretistic cults, which might or might not be combined with a nominal form of Christianity.

For a long time the urban component of the village community was not formalised into an ethnic association, despite the fact that colonial Zambia knew many such associations, which only later became suspect in the post-colonial crusade against 'tribalism', and subsequently disappeared. Only in 1982 did the Kazanga Cultural Association materialise as a formally registered society under the patronage of the Nkoya minister. This was an initiative of a handful of people from Kaoma district who, by the time they reached middle age, and against all odds, had made the grade from insecure circulatory migrant labourer to member of the capital's middle class. With the drop in copper prices in 1975 Zambia entered into a crisis which in essence has lasted until today, even though the country's socio-economic performance has fluctuated over the decades as a result of the negative effects of the Structural Adjustment Programmes of the 1980s and of the (in the short term positive) effects of the international expansion of the South African economy since the end of apartheid in the 1990s (cf. Ferguson (1999). Therefore even the urban middle class could not ignore the economic developments taking place in Kaoma district. Some returned to the district for good; others established farms there but continued to live in town. Their enthusiasm for the Nkoya identity, which became increasingly overtly articulated, brought these urbanites in close contact with the district's political elite, and earned them new credit in the eyes of the villagers from whom they had previously been distanced by reason of their class position and urbanisation. They adopted the ethnic goals as mentioned above. In addition the Kazanga Cultural Association continued to offer a support structure to migrants. It also provided the infrastructure for a number of conferences held to validate the Nkoya translation of the Old Testament, a project which Rev. Shimunika had not been able to complete before his death in 1981. However, the association's main goal was the propagation, through the annual Kazanga festival, of the local culture which, inevitably, was labelled 'Nkoya' as well. From the name of a forest, via that of a dynasty and a district, that name had developed to designate an ethnic group found in several districts, and at the same time a language, a culture, and a cultural project intended to articulate this newly emerged group at the regional and national level.

The 1989 Kazanga festival

In the open space around the court building reed shelters have been erected, offering a refuge from the winter sun to a small part of the audience, numbering in total roughly one thousand. Also, two loges have been constructed out of the same material: one for the chiefs, and, on the other side of a reed wall, another one for a handful of state dignitaries, including two ministers.[33] The two-sided strategy of ethnic mediation could not be expressed more eloquently: the *construction* of ethnic identity as embodied in the *chiefs'* loge coincides, along a parallel axis in the same viewing direction, with the *assertion* of that identity as embodied in the *state* loge.

Since in 1989 the media are still disappointingly absent from Kazanga, no special recording facilities are required. However, there is a loudspeaker installation, which constantly squeals and thus leaves no doubt about the fact that the local music, song and dance are now to be produced in a format different from the usual one. The audience does

not pay an entrance fee – the costs are paid out of spontaneous contributions from the audience during the dances (when people come up to the dancing ground to place their coins and bills on the head or shoulders of the dancers), from a general collection, and from money which the Kazanga Cultural Association has earned from the sale of Nkoya-language calendars depicting 'highlights of Nkoya culture': the dance of the *kankanga* (which marks the end of the life phase between a woman's menarche and her becoming nubile), and the traditional hunter complete with his bow and arrow, axe and tinderbox.

After the spectators have installed themselves on the festival grounds the four chiefs, one after the other, make their dramatic entrance. The festival directors tell the people to kneel down in the traditional royal salute. Directly in front of a small thatched shrine which is situated in the centre of the festival grounds, musicians produce the unique sounds of the snare drum (*ngoma ntambwe*) and the royal bell (*ngongi*) – which are very rarely heard, even at the royal courts. Preceded by a *kapasu* walking with measured parade steps, the chief enters the festival grounds, followed by a procession of subjects, clustered closely together immediately behind the chief, but further back fanning out to the left and the right, and abandoning their stately walk for dance steps. The women in the retinue ululate, the thrilling sound shimmering in the air. The musicians immediately behind the chief are all but pushed away by two of the festival directors, who on their shoulders carry a cassette recorder as one carries a relic shrine; in 1989 the urban middle class making up the core of the Kazanga Cultural Association did not yet possess video cameras (a situation which had changed by 1991). When the chief is halfway across the festival grounds, a number of other members of the Kazanga Cultural Association come forward to welcome him. Cheered by the crowd, and with his traditional praise-names blasting from the loudspeakers, the chief takes his place in the loge. After a few minutes of silence (which several more owners of cassette recorders use to place their equipment, in recording position, near the musicians) the crowd claps the royal salute, after which the musicians, kneeling behind their instruments, perform one of the praise songs from their habitual repertoire. This sequence is repeated for each of the four chiefs.

In addition to the entrance of the chiefs, the mimeographed programme for the day, distributed to the audience, reflects the following items:

- an official part featuring the Zambian national anthem (in Nkoya, naturally) and speeches by the chairman of the Kazanga Cultural Association, and the minister of culture; and

- performances by various dancing groups, solo dancers and the accompanying orchestra, consisting of xylophones and drums, in order to present a representative sample of Nkoya expressive culture.[34]

We shall first examine the official part of the festival, in which Kazanga clearly appears as mediation towards the national state. Then we shall assess how the festival, by virtue of its organisational structure, selects and transforms the local culture. We shall see how it not only expresses new inequalities, but also exerts a decisive influence on the hierarchy of the traditional chiefs. Finally we shall pay attention to the specific nature of the symbolic production which characterises the festival, and in which its mediatory nature is most acutely expressed.

Kazanga and the state

The mediation around which Kazanga revolves is exclusively directed vertically, at the state and not horizontally, at other ethnic groups.

The festival no longer carries any explicit reference to the Lozi as ethnic enemies or as a reference group.[35] Meanwhile the Lozi at the district level have been partly supplanted by the Luvale and the Luchazi, who in 1988 conquered Mr Kalaluka's parliamentary seat. Their *makishi* mask dances, which are never absent from cultural manifestations at the district level, are excluded from the Kazanga festival as non-Nkoya, even though male circumcision (a widespread ritual complex throughout the region, of which the *makishi* dances form part) was still practised as late as the end of the nineteenth century, by the ancestors of those now identifying as Nkoya, and particularly in the Mutondo state.[36]

In his address the Kazanga chairman expresses his disappointment at the absence of the media, which, he claims, is unjustified, since Kazanga is not a tribal ceremony:

> *Kazanga ceremony is a ceremony of the Nkoya people like any other ceremony that are [sic] held in other parts of the Republic. I wish the government could help us organise this ceremony as the other kinds*[37] *have received the same help. And I would have wished the TV to cover this ceremony and at the same time the radio. But unfortunately enough this has not been the case on our ceremony for the second time. The party and its government have been made to believe that Kazanga is a tribal ceremony.*[38] *I say: No! And it is quite unfortunate that people have said so. Kazanga is merely a ceremony of the Nkoya people just like any other ceremony as I have said. [Applause]*[39]

The Junior Minister of Culture, Mr Tembo, hails from eastern Zambia, and like 95 per cent[40] of the Zambian population he does not know Nkoya. Until a few years ago his speech would have simply been in English. But many things have changed in Zambia. Before the ceremony, therefore, the Minister has had one of the Kazanga leaders (the ex-trade unionist and now gameskin dealer Mr D. Mupishi) dictate a number of appropriate Nkoya phrases to him, and these he now utters – not visibly reading from a sheet of paper, but from Braille notes in his jacket pocket. This is the very first time that a state representative in an official capacity has addressed the Nkoya in their own language. The acclamation is overwhelming:

> *Our culture,* says Mr Tembo in laboriously, but imperfectly, pronounced Nkoya, *is the Nkoya culture, the culture of Zambia, a great culture which is very dear to us.*[41]

Soon switching to English, which Mr Mupishi translates into Nkoya, the minister praises the festival organisers for the excellent reception they have given the politicians, and declares their ethnic mediation successful:

> *We are here to express the party's policy of cultural unity through diversity. Kazanga is a Zambian ceremony.*

He calls upon the elders to educate the youth 'on the meaning of Kazanga', and exhorts the youth to show interest:

Let us all be proud that we are Zambians.

This year, 1989, the silver anniversary of Zambian independence will be celebrated, and the minister praises God's great blessings and the wisdom of President Kaunda:

> *When we think of the miraculous – er – escape from certain tribes[!]. When we think of the wisdom of our leadership – our great beloved President's wisdom ... We will meaningfully praise God if we treasure what we have. God wants us to look after our nation by following the party's policy, the party's direction; by treasuring our leadership; to listen to them especially when they tell us over and over again: 'love one another', 'love one another'.*[42]

The Zambian state is bankrupt and needs all the support it can get. The Kaunda regime is near its end; in the democratic elections in 1991 UNIP, after controlling the state for almost thirty years, will be defeated by a national democratic coalition named the MMD (Movement for Multi-Party Democracy) led by Mr F. Chiluba. The night before Kazanga in 1989 the Zambian currency was once again devaluated by 100 per cent. The religious idiom must conceal the fact that politically the minister has nothing more to say. However, that does not disqualify him in the eyes of his audience. Particularly in the light of Nkoya humiliation during the colonial period, and the initial distrust between the Nkoya and the post-colonial state, Minister Tembo's message of the unconditional acceptance of Nkoya ethnicity by the state is more than sufficient.

At the end of his speech the blind minister, once Zambia's most popular singer, calls upon the public to sing – in Nkoya, and to a tune that accompanied a dancing group of schoolgirls earlier in the ceremony – a simple song on Zambian development which the minister has just written. His call is answered reluctantly, while in accompaniment he taps his folding cane in front of the microphone. Ethnic mediation is something this minister understands only too well; he was a final-year student of mine at the University of Zambia in the early 1970s.

Let us now analyse the details of the ethnic mediation process as it presents itself at the Kazanga festival.

Cultural selection and transformation in Kazanga

It is essential for ethnic mediation that the brokers' leadership should assert itself not only through serving the ethnic group in an organisational capacity, but also through cultural selection and transformation.

In Zambia, as almost anywhere in the modern world, public life and the national political culture are dominated by the media, especially radio and television. Ethnic mediation towards the outside world seeks media access, and festivals are a time-honoured means to acquire it. In the specific case of the Nkoya two important reasons must be added to this. Kaoma district has had an established and extremely rich musical tradition.[43] At the beginning of the nineteenth century even the Nkoya royal orchestra was permanently adopted by the Lozi. Therefore, music that the Nkoya rightly recognise as their own is often broadcast via the Zambian media – but then as an attribute of the

hated Lozi traditional establishment; all efforts which Nkoya have made over the years to have radio broadcasts in their own language have been in vain until as late as the early 1990s. And, secondly, the principal public expression of that power is the Kuomboka ceremony, which is held every year in April at the occasion of the Lozi king's (later paramount chief's) moving, by ceremonial barge, from his summer residence to his winter residence. For a century Kuomboka has attracted the keen attention of the media and of national dignitaries. The Kazanga ceremony was meant as the Nkoya's answer to Kuomboka,[44] just as the Kazanga Cultural Association (even down to printed T-shirts for the associations' members and to be worn as part of the dancers' uniform) is an attempt to emulate the much richer, more powerful, more numerous and more efficient Lozi association which year after year makes Kuomboka possible.[45]

Thus the Kazanga festival is a strategically chosen new form. In what ways does it select and transform the existing local culture?

Kazanga in the nineteenth century

The name Kazanga is derived from a ritual that lapsed into disuse at the end of the nineteenth century.[46] The king was the principal officiant at the ritual, performed to obtain permission from the supernatural world to partake of the new harvest. The climax was the sacrifice of one or more slaves over an anthill (a symbol of the fertility of the land); the blood was led into the ground along gullies dug for that purpose.[47] Kazanga was the only time during the year when the entire populace came together around the king, and music and dance were important components. It was exclusively the latter aspects which the leaders of the new cultural association selected when designing a new and modern Kazanga ceremony.

Zambia is a post-colonial state that emphasises its respect for human rights. The Nkoya try to articulate themselves as an ethnic group in a context of peripheral capitalism, where food and food crops have turned into commodities and where the fertility of the land has lost its sacred nature. The Nkoya identity first emerged within the Evangelical Church in Zambia, and Nkoya chiefs counted among that church's founding members. The revival of the old harvest ceremony in its original guise was therefore unthinkable.

Kazanga for four chiefs

As an expression of the recent Nkoya identity, the new-style Kazanga ceremony would make sense only if it were not limited to one chief or king (as was originally the case), but involved all four chiefs with their retinue and subjects. Here a major problem arose.

In Western Zambia royal persons, as an expression of their incomparable political and ritual status, are separated from their subjects through strict rules of avoidance and respect. For instance, they must not eat together with anybody else (except very close kin), nor come into immediate contact with death. They can be approached only through the intervention of court dignitaries, and on such occasions the visitor displays humility through the adoption of a kneeling, squatting or sitting position and through rhythmic clapping. The purpose of court life is not so much the handling of administrative affairs but the glorification of the king and the guarding of his prestige, protocol and person. The king is the living axis of the community, and the *lukena* is the centre of the universe,

in which there is, strictly speaking, room for only one king. This was the fundamental idea expressed by the old Kazanga ceremony.

Kings who are not each other's vassal and lord respectively, but equals, may not visit each other, and must certainly not eat together or sleep under one roof.[48] When a meeting is unavoidable, the visiting king is to have his own retinue and his own temporary *lukena* at his disposal.[49] Bringing together several royal chiefs, as in the new-style Kazanga, was therefore a significant innovation, which required sacrificing much of the Nkoya cultural logic. Four temporary royal residences, complete with *lilapa*, had to be erected at a considerable distance (roughly a kilometre) from the festival location. The royal procession and entrance in itself did follow a historic model,[50] but their fourfold repetition was unheard-of.

Kazanga and the dynastic shrine of Mutondo

In the middle of the festival area there is a low round thatched shelter, inside which a dozen sticks, each bearing a large number of transverse incisions, have been placed in the ground. This is a shrine for the deceased members of the Mutondo dynasty. The shrine has been especially erected for the occasion of Kazanga, and at a most exceptional spot, for a village shrine should not be situated along the public road but at the centre of the settlement, between the village headman's house and the men's shelter (*kuta*); the proper place for a dynastic shrine is inside the *lilapa* – but it would be unthinkable to organise a massive festival in that secluded and sacred space.[51]

For the conceptualisation of space and time, and for the unleashing of the symbolic potential of the new-style Kazanga, all this is of the greatest importance. The shrine confers on the festival the sanction of an ancestral past, a strong suggestion of continuity of tradition, which helps to disguise such actual breaches of the cultural logic as we have already recognised. Revolutionarily situated in the open festival space, it turns the latter into a sacred space.

Thus a symbolic decrease of scale is brought about: the dynastic shrine poses as village shrine, entire region having been transformed into an imaginary Nkoya village; of this village the loges represent the men's shelter; and the nearby *lilapa* represents the headman's house, which implies that Mutondo – unjustifiably – is symbolically turned into the traditional leader not only of his own subjects, but of all those who embrace the Nkoya identity – including the other Nkoya chiefs' subjects. By articulating itself as the sacred centre of the entire social and geographical space within which Nkoya identity is being constructed and expressed, the shrine lends a cosmic significance to that identity. It is near this shrine that the most sacred, ancient and rare royal instruments are played.[52]

Also, in its new form Kazanga remains a glorification of the kingship, which hence remains one of the pillars of Nkoya ethnicity. However, this idea is expressed by means of a shrine, which symbolically replaces the sacrificial anthill in the old Kazanga ritual, and which should not be where it is; it therefore represents a double breach of tradition.

Kazanga in 1989 as confirmation of Mutondo hegemony

While the ethnic brokers who organise Kazanga strengthen their own positions of power both in the outside world and within the Nkoya ethnic group, they also have an impact on the hierarchy of the traditional chiefs. The 1989 festival presented Mutondo in a position of seniority to which traditionally he could in fact lay no claim.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries a fair number of royal titles defined as many independent states. The political relationships as existed between groups at a particularly decisive moment in their genesis used to be expressed, within the Lunda sphere of influence in South Central Africa, as a permanent kinship relation between titles, such that each holder of title Y, regardless of period, age, sex or actual biological relationship, would appear as the 'younger brother', 'father' and so on of each holder of title Z. This system of so-called 'perpetual kinship'[53] formed the basis for 'positional succession', according to which individual title-holders in the course of their career would be promoted from lower to higher titles as the latter became vacant through death or demotion. However, these time-honoured instruments of political integration were not applied within and between the states of Kaoma district;[54] this led to an extreme political fragmentation which made these states defenceless against Lozi expansion and the colonial state. When locally only the two titles of Mutondo and Kahare survived, a marked dichotomy arose, with intense rivalry between each chief's following. The colonial district was named after the Mutondo dynasty, and in accordance with Kahare's more peripheral geographical position, Mutondo's following claimed seniority for their prince. It is only from this early colonial period that Kahare (in a belated attempt at perpetual kinship, and despite the greater antiquity of his own title)[55] addressed Mutondo as 'elder brother' (*yaya*). Kabulwebulwe and Momba, too, followed this convention in relation to Mutondo, and for somewhat better reasons, since certain early incumbents of these titles are known to have broken away from the Mutondo dynastic group as recently as the nineteenth century.[56]

This formal subordination is not confirmed by the outside world. In general, the hierarchy of state-recognised chiefs in Zambia comprises paramount chiefs, senior chiefs, and chiefs; Mutondo and Kahare were both only chiefs, and as such each other's equals. Also, in the hierarchy of the Lozi indigenous administration they occupied the same, relatively exalted level: as royal chiefs they were entitled to a *lilapa* and to an orchestra, but not to the most senior type of royal drums, the *Mawoma* kettledrums.[57] Under the post-colonial state, Kahare's position[58] was always stronger than that of Mutondo.

The issue of equality among the Nkoya chiefs has played a significant role in the choice of the location of the new-style Kazanga festival. The large majority of those identifying as Nkoya lived in Kaoma district as subjects of either Mutondo or Kahare, and a location outside the district was therefore not contemplated. The district capital (where the Nkoya are politically and economically a minority as compared with the Lozi, Luvale and Luchazi) was rejected as a possible location, and initially preference was given to either of the two *zinkena*. In principle it was decided to alternate between Mutondo and Kahare's capital. In practice, however, all festivals between 1988 and 1991 took place at Shikombwe. It was here that in 1981 Muchayila, who had been demoted

as chief in 1947, was reinstated after the death of his successor, a pro-Lozi figurehead; until Muchayila's own death in 1990, that is, in the formative years of Kazanga as an association and as a festival, the hale and hearty Muchayila was to remain the undisputed symbol of Nkoya ascendancy.

The shrine in the middle of the festival grounds explicitly relates only to the Mutondo kingship and its previous incumbents.

Despite the pan-Nkoya signature of Kazanga, and the presence of other chiefs with their retinue, it is Mutondo's royal bell and snare drums which are being played here, by *his* musicians. The few solo dancers who will significantly touch the shrine during their performance are members of the Mutondo royal family, and so are the score of people who, as a separate item on the festival programme, are to dance around the shrine.

The subordination of the other chiefdoms under Mutondo hegemony in the context of Kazanga is also clear from other details in the course of the festival.

Mutondo is not only the chief who makes the first entrance (at the same time as the modern dignitaries, who unobtrusively take to their place in the loge) but it is also he who, standing in front of the royal loge, welcomes the other chiefs with a handshake upon their arrival. Compared with the historic clapping among the Nkoya this is an exotic gesture, which, however, has become a completely accepted aspect of the Zambian urban and national culture today; in the present context it underlines the lack of protocol for the meeting of royals. By means of the handshake Mutondo asserts himself as the host and as senior to the other chiefs at this pan-Nkoya festival. As if to stress that Mutondo, more than his colleagues, represents the link with the glorious past, he is the only one to wear historic regalia over his Western dress: he wears leopard skins across his back and chest, and three shell discs[59] on his brow. However, all four chiefs carry an eland tail (*hefu*) as item of regalia, which they wield as a fly-switch when walking or sitting in state.[60]

The presentation, in the context of Kazanga, of Mutondo as the most senior Nkoya chief is immediately taken over by the state representatives at the festival. Minister Tembo explicitly directs his speech to Mutondo, whom he erroneously calls 'Senior Chief' and whom he addresses by the Nkoya honorific *ba Hekulu* ('Your Majesty'). No doubt this is partly due to his preparatory conversation with Mr Mupishi, member of the Mutondo royal family.

Expressing the pan-Nkoya identity in new-style Kazanga turns out to have its price: giving in to the seniority aspirations of the Mutondo title and its followers. Integration of the geographically and politically highly fragmented local groupings under the Nkoya emblem does not produce a unity of equals. Presentation of one's ethnic identity to the outside world does not do away with the internal contradictions but, on the contrary, reinforces them within the new political space which opens up by contact with the state.

However, we shall see that this initial attempt at hegemony through Kazanga did not last, and soon, in the early 1990s, was resolved through a compromise which combined such potential for unity as could be derived from both village culture and from mediation towards the state.[61]

Expressive culture in Kazanga

As a form of ethnic mediation Kazanga seeks to present a sample of Nkoya culture. What would we expect such a sample to look like, given the habitual forms of expressive culture in the village situation?

Expressive culture in the village situation

For two centuries the local music and dance (always with their song texts in the Nkoya language) have been a model for the whole of Western Zambia. The riches in this field are in contrast with the fact that visual arts and ornamental architecture are virtually non-existent here.[62] Most forms of expressive culture are linked to specific ceremonial situations: girls' initiation, marriage, therapy, name inheritance, royal accession, the twice-daily performance of the royal orchestra, the hunters' guild celebrations. Besides there is a, fashionably changing, festival repertoire (*ruhñwa*) to entertain those villagers who take part in these situations, but play non-specialist roles. Playing the main instruments (drums and xylophone) is reserved for men, the royal instruments are reserved for paid court musicians, the ceremonial situations enumerated above define for some participants solo roles as singer or dancer, and certain expressive forms (*makwasha*) are reserved for people of middle age or older. But apart from this relatively limited structuring of the expressive domain, each member of the community has both the right and the competence to make public and active use of virtually the entire repertoire of Nkoya expressive culture.

Singing along with others, dancing along with others, supporting the sound of drums and xylophone by clapping, by shaking a rattle or by shouting exhortations, criticisms and witticisms, and rewarding the dancers by dancing forward oneself and putting money on the dancer's head or shoulders – for the villager music and dance always mean the actualisation of a cultural domain in which he/she is in principle competent, both in the cognitive sense (of knowing how to appreciate and what to do) and in the normative sense of possessing an unchallenged birthright to participation. This does not mean that in every musical event everybody present dances and sings along constantly. Many of those present are content, most of the time, with a place at the men's fire or the women's fire, where people engage in conversation, where the plastic beer container, the cigarette and the snuff box are passed form hand to hand, and where innuendo and joking are standard; however, the expectation of active participation is present throughout the ceremony and almost everybody does participate at one time or another in the course of the event.

In this domain, it is only in the context of the royal orchestra that one can witness pure musical and dancing *consumption*, without the possibility of active participation. On all other occasions we hear, polyphonically and overlaying one another, many slightly different voices and texts, and also with regard to the dancing forms we could speak, by analogy, of 'polychory'.[63] There is never any question of stage direction, orchestration or choreography. Musicians, singers, dancers and spectators change places according to their own needs and preferences. Leading men and women only see to it that the solo roles, if any, are not too much obscured in the general mêlée. In time and space these musical expressions are self-evidently integrated in the social and geographical space of

the village, and they constitute a very frequent part of the life cycle of the village and of its individual members.[64]

In everyday village life in Kaoma district the roles that people play in material production and reproduction are largely unformalised, with ample freedom for personal interpretation, weak social control, and constantly erupting conflicts for which moving to another village is the standard solution. Local society is an example of the somewhat amorphous social organisation which the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute and the Manchester School considered characteristic of South Central Africa.[65] The expressive culture ties in with this. The ceremonies and rituals into which song and dance are structured refer, largely implicitly and non-verbally, to symbols which yet impose a cosmological ordering, and thus meaning, on the loose social structure.

As a structure of activities the domain of music and dance offers for many hours, sometimes days, at a stretch situations of uninhibited articulation – often characterised by great virtuosity – of the individual as member of a group which, assembling for symbolic production, largely coincides with the local group within which material production and reproduction take place. Without the slightest exaggeration, it can be said that the expressive domain forms the pivot of the village society.[66]

Expressive culture in Kazanga

How much of all this do we find in new-style Kazanga? If one views the festival as an authentic expression of tradition, much less than one would expect.

The festival is dominated by 'the performance' as a cosmopolitically produced format of symbolic production. We may define this format as a specialist activity which is structured and standardised in detail by stage direction; *disconnected* in space and time from the habitual local context of material production and reproduction; and with a strict separation between (a) controllers, (b) direct producers (i.e. performers), and (c) a crowd of symbolic consumers who have been reduced to productive incompetence and non-participation.

Such a production format denies the characteristics of the expressive domain in the village society. It offers a modular matrix in which disconnected parts can be entered and replaced *ad libitum*; these parts are made into objects and are consumed in order to gain – in the midst of similar performances – a market value in the outside world, which is seen as a market for 'performative' products. The constituent parts of the performance could be derived from a local idiom, but they come to function in a context and in a manner which is so radically different that any idea of continuity vis-à-vis the tradition has to be given up. Kazanga is the uprooted performance, the playing-back full of ostentation, of the local domain of symbolic production. Under the guise of articulating the vitality of the local culture in the world today, it offers a format within which that culture runs the risk of being turned into a meaningless folkloristic cultural product.

A closer analysis of the entrance made by the four chiefs reveals how Kazanga is a carefully directed performance, in which the suggestion of a traditional model (that of the 'royal procession') is achieved by taking a leaf from the book of the cinematographical industry. The naive spectator sees four chiefs in a row, each followed by his own orchestra and retinue and by representatives of his people, sufficiently numerous to raise clouds of dust with their dancing. In fact, however, this impression is correct only

for Mutondo and Kahare. The other two chiefs in fact make their entrance in front of Mutondo's orchestra, and because they have been able to bring only a few subjects from their distant capitals, their procession consists mainly of local 'extras' who have just participated in the previous chiefs' entrances! In view of the emphasis, in this society, on one's exclusive allegiance to one specific chief as a method of social placement, and in view of the rivalry between the chiefdoms, it is clear that Kazanga, as a planned performance, demands from the performers that they take an almost cynical distance from their own cultural logic.

Let us now look at the three roles of controller, performer and spectator, starting with the last.

The spectators

Within the format of Kazanga the spectators along the perimeter of the festival grounds have been reduced to passive consumption, a state which the directions blasting from the loudspeakers help them to maintain. With enthusiastic cries they respond to the chiefs' entrances and to most performances, and many cannot help themselves and unconsciously move in time with the music. But it is only a few elderly women who do claim their birthright, and dance and sing wholeheartedly along with the performances. Their dancing is energetic and uninhibited, and involves the entire body. One or two of them have actually dressed in genuinely traditional dress made out of gameskins or bark, or wield a miniature hoe as a dancing prop.

The performers

Of the fifteen performances listed in the programme, only a few are presented by fully fledged villagers, notably from Kahare's area. These articulate their expressive culture with a minimum of stage direction and choreography, in their everyday clothes, and many with bare feet. However, by contrast to the village situation they do not engage in this expressive production because in the space and time of their community a self-evident reason for such production has presented itself, but instead because they have been co-opted by ethnic brokers. In these hard times the prospect of financial gain appeals to them, and after the festival they are deeply disappointed when they are sent home each with barely enough to buy a packet of cigarettes. However, this in itself suggests that the villagers are beginning to become accustomed to the performative model, and to see their own dancing as productive wage labour.[67]

They were brought to Shikombwe on the eve of the festival in an open truck, and for them the height of the festival lies in the night before and the night after the festival, when the combination of instruments, musicians and a crowd in the same open space produces a spontaneous celebration virtually indistinguishable from the village *ruhñwa*. The large xylophone flanked by drums, the crowd which spontaneously wheels around the musicians and improvises joking songs, the women who peddle their village beer and scones, the absence of artificial light, the fact that one may unexpectedly encounter relations and friends from sometimes hundreds of kilometres away – all this retains the taste, smell, sound and effervescence of the village ceremony, articulating a cultural

identity at the village, valley and regional level which has not yet been transformed by ethnic mediation.

The other performers are solo dancers impersonating a traditional court jester, hunter or warrior in dress not seen for many years, and women's dancing groups: two from a village school, one consisting of female members of the Kazanga Cultural Association in Lusaka, and one consisting of two young village women who perform the *kankanga* dance. The latter are led onto the dancing ground stooped and concealed under a blanket, as is usual in the girls' puberty ritual, but they are clearly no longer *kankangas*: their breasts are mature and contrary to tradition are covered by conspicuous white bras; they display nothing of the shy grace and the fear of failure of the adolescent debutante, and towards the end of their dance they wave little white scarves in a way almost reminiscent of revue artists. The urban dancing group is conspicuously urban: all wear shoes, their hair has been expensively styled, some wear sunglasses, and all wear over the *chitenge* wrapper skirt which is an inevitable concession to village taste and norms of propriety a uniform T-shirt bearing the slogan 'Kazanga 1989 – Nkoya cultural ceremony'. Their inhibited movements bear reference to North Atlantic middle-class ideas and cosmopolitan Christianity: an unmistakable attempt to construct an ethnic culture which is capable of being mediated to broader society in that it emphatically does not confirm stereotypes of 'paganism' and 'primitiveness'; there is no shaking of breasts and bottoms in *their* performance. The members of each women's group are dressed identically, and each makes every effort to keep time with the others, performing the same movements and taking the same steps, tracing the geometric figures of circle and straight line. This lends to their joint performance a flat unity, predictability and poverty of form which stands in flagrant contrast to the traditional expressive culture.

The urban women are coordinated by a male dancer, Mr Tom, who – for all his wearing women's clothes, a blonde nylon wig (!) and dancing rattles on his lower legs – constantly emphasises his male leadership over dancing and singing women, something again completely unthinkable in the village situation. He also dances along with the other women's groups, even with the pseudo-*kankangas*. Although his attire and behaviour are reminiscent of the historic figure of the jester at Nkoya courts,[68] his role is truly unique and without proper precedent – just like the Kazanga festival as a whole – and can be understood only in light of the fact that he is generally considered a musical and choreographic genius, the composer ('dreamer', in the local conception) of all the Kazanga songs – so evocative of Nkoya ethnic consciousness – and director of the Kazanga dance troupe from Lusaka.

As an aspect of its mediating nature, and largely through its reliance on visual and other non-verbal symbols, the festival is capable of presenting, within one and the same framework of space and time, contradictions which could not be grasped within the same repertoire of meaning. On the level of the performers Kazanga expresses, despite the proclaimed quest for pan-Nkoya unity, contradictions which divide the ethnic group into several camps: contradictions between an urban and a rural lifestyle, between classes, between men and women, and between autochthonous religion and Christianity.[69] Somewhat surprisingly these contradictions are hardly concealed or coded under a smokescreen of symbolism; on the contrary, the subordination as exerted by the

dominant group (urban, middle-class men) is explicitly made manifest. An interpretation in terms of a 'mystifying false consciousness' which conceals the real contradictions, as is sometimes applied in the study of the cultural dimension of ethnicity, does not do justice to this state of affairs.

Only Christianity remains implicit as a reference;[70] nevertheless it has obviously succeeded in debarring from the festival programme the music and dance of syncretistic healing cults, even though at the village level such cults have constituted the dominant religious expression for half a century or more,[71] with singing and dancing forms which closely follow those of the historic expressive domain. Those attributes which are considered to be acceptable to the wider society (shoes, sunglasses etc.) are particularly prevalent among the members of the urban dancing group, who consider it their right to mingle constantly with the other performances, and who welcome the chiefs during their entrances. As members of the Kazanga Cultural Association they are among the ethnic brokers, and they assert themselves as the owners of the Kazanga festival and of Nkoya ethnicity – and they do have a point.

A final small group of performers incorporate in stance and apparel another crucial contradiction: these are the uniformed *kapasus*, who stand and salute, military fashion, when everyone else kneels and claps, who strut in rigid parade fashion when everyone else walks or dances, and who thus constantly emphasise the contradiction between the local level and the state (whose authority they directly represent at the local level).

The controllers

Part of the Kazanga leadership we have already encountered, dancing in T-shirts, giving speeches, administering the festival programme and instructing the public via the intercom system. In addition to the T-shirts with their special slogan, they are often to be seen wearing formal European dress, complete with tie. During the festival they constantly and without signs of friction deliberate, all the time clearly visible as a distinct category near the microphone, with the court dignitaries of Mutondo, who are also formally dressed and more often than not are the Kazanga leaders' kinsmen. Their attitude towards the national politicians is less uninhibited, and in this respect the bulk of the responsibility is carried by Mr Mupishi, who accompanies the high-ranking guests, and who prompts diplomatic statements to his fellow members of the executive. None of the leaders in ties can be persuaded to dance or to give the royal salute – superior distance from the cultural product as offered by Kazanga appears to be a necessary component of their mediating role.

The performative format as ready cash in the outside world today

Of course examples could be quoted of Third World societies in which stage-directed performance by specialists has traditionally been a local culture trait. However, in the case of Kazanga the performative format is an exotic, cosmopolitan formula established at the beginning of the twentieth century, and with considerable political and ideological

force, also in Kaoma district, exerted by mission and formal education, and which subsequently was furthered by the post-colonial state in the context of the celebration of national festivals, agricultural shows and so on. Little wonder that this formula facilitates mediation towards the state, which for its own legitimation leans heavily on performative cultural production.[72] The formalised performance, a unidirectional endeavour no longer routed in a practice of material production and reproduction, and which relegates the target group of consumers to passive incompetence, is a powerful metaphor of the relationship between the modern state and the citizen. The Zambian consumers are confronted daily with the performative formula via radio and television, from performances by the national dance troupe to the North American television series Dallas and the international top ten on the pop charts. It is the formula of today's mass culture on a global scale as propagated by the electronic media. It is that part of the contemporary African experience which is in line with, even coincides with the experience of North Atlantic media consumers and cultural consumers, in a market of commercialised, stage-directed and estranged symbolic products, among which, incidentally, modern African products are increasingly conspicuous.

Behind the electronic gadgets (represented in Kazanga by the intercom system and the cassette recorders, and, more recently, also by video recorders) stands the globally dominant capitalist mode of production, characterised by the separation between immediate producers and their product, the ensuing alienation, the market as the principal basis for the formation of value, with its emphasis on standardisation and modular replaceability, as it applies to an industrial product, or a worker under capitalist conditions. These traits are so conspicuous in Kazanga[73] that the festival must be seen as mediating not only between the local community and the state, but also between the non-capitalist production of that community and the global capitalist mode of production.

Conclusion

An unprepared researcher who in the course of fieldwork in Kaoma district stumbled upon the Kazanga festival would probably be inclined to consider the phenomenon as an integral part of the local culture, and in doing so would miss much of the political and cultural implications of the ethnic mediation process. However, anthropological research in the district from the 1970s to the 1990s gives us a touchstone for what is being presented today as 'traditional Nkoya culture'. Kazanga turns out to be anything *but* the expression of a well-defined, traditional cultural identity. It is the relinquishing of diffuse local identities in exchange for the construction of an ethnic identity which makes for ready cash in the outside world because there its products are recognisable.

One might consider new-style Kazanga as an example of bricolage or of the 'invention of tradition'. In anthropology, *bricolage*, the French word for artisan do-it-yourself, has become a technical term for an innovation which selectively brings together elements from a culture's repertoire in a new combination while more or less retaining the pre-existing underlying cultural logic.[74] Kazanga is not bricolage because, as we have

seen, all elements have been profoundly transformed and have come to function in a way which grossly violates the cultural logic of village society. 'Invention of tradition' was introduced a decade ago by Hobsbawm and Ranger as a technical term for the phenomenon of newly-invented symbols of group identity and political legitimacy being represented as traditional and of considerable antiquity.[75] This term would at first sight seem to fit Kazanga, especially when we consider that it was named after a nineteenth-century ritual. Uninitiated visitors, including state dignitaries, do have the impression that what is offered to them in the form of the festival is 'traditional Nkoya culture' – a fiction if only because of the recent emergence of 'Nkoya' as an ethnonym.

However, my detailed analysis has shown that the festival, whose extremely recent nature nobody denies, revolves not so much around *legitimation of the past* as it does around the mediation of the local culture *towards the outside world today*, while in the process that culture is radically transformed, and new inequalities are created and emphasised. Calling this process 'invention of tradition' would risk overlooking these essential features and mistaking the prime direction of the ethnic processes involved in Kazanga: they look to the future more than towards the past, and are extrovert rather than introvert.

The analysis of Kazanga does more than merely offer one illustration of a model of cultural selection and transformation in the context of ethnic mediation – even though that model appears to have wide applicability, from the Afrikaner and Zulu movement in South Africa[76] to patterns of leadership in the multi-cultural society such as has emerged in, for instance, the Netherlands over the past few decades.[77] Kazanga poses a question which is of the greatest importance in today's growth towards a global society:

> *Is there any future left for the cultural riches of the peripheral, powerless societies of the Third World other than to be encapsulated, more or less as folklore, in the outside world under an alien (performative) format?*

Detachment from the original context is inevitable in the process of cultural exchange, and cultural exchange would still appear to constitute the only means left – not only to document and explain (as is our job as anthropologists) the priceless accomplishments of the numerous distinct cultures in the Third World, but to incorporate these riches as part of the universal inheritance of mankind.

One important factor in our longing for distant cultures, one reason why in every new generation there are North Atlantic anthropologists ready to go to Africa, is the hope of experiencing a totally different culture in its own context, coherence and meaning, to the greater glory of human culture as a whole and as enrichment of our existence. Such a quest has often been denounced as romantic and egoistic, and it hardly tallies with the subordination which for centuries has determined South–North relationships. This hope has produced an ethnographic literature which, although highly specialist and rarely giving rise to aesthetic gratification in its own right, often succeeds in mediating between the local society under study, and the cosmopolitan or global society. Every ethnographer in the writing-up process takes a distance from the immediate experience in the field – just like Kazanga takes a distance from the expressive domain such as it functions at the village level.[78] Are there any conditions under which this process, in Kazanga, in other attempts

at cultural mediation, and in ethnography, can be completed without throwing the baby out with the bath water? Adherents of a world religion are by definition inclined to give an affirmative answer to this question: their universalism implies that the organisational and ideological core of such a creed, despite its becoming detached from the environment in which it was originally founded, can be introduced into a new environment, in starkly different local societies, and yet remain equal to itself, and recognisable.[79] As someone who, after growing up in Dutch society, has acquired – at the price of great and lasting conceptual and emotional discomfort – a certain competence in two local societies in Africa (in Zambia and Botswana) and has scratched the surface of two more (in Tunisia and Guinea Bissau), I am far more sceptical on this point.

However, who shall say where the limits lie beyond which, in a process of change, one refuses to recognise, and to claim as one's own, that which originally pertained to one's own identity? In the construction of identity one is, by definition, not accountable to others. The anthropologist may find that ethnic mediation produces a cultural product which fundamentally differs from 'the real thing' – but who is to deny the participants in that culture the right to be happy with the transformed product, to recognise themselves in it, and to send if off into the wider world? The performative format, and in general any kind of mediation which is largely informed by the structure of the cosmopolitan outside world, offer opportunities for negotiation with the state and the global economy which, given the latter's dominance, may well constitute the only chances for local cultural elements to survive at all.

The unmitigated enthusiasm with which the villagers acclaimed the chiefs as each made his entrance, and with which they came forward to give money even to the pseudo-*kankangas*, suggests that they would in all likelihood disagree with that part of my analysis of Kazanga which puts so much emphasis on the breaches of their own cultural logic. Their lack of rigidity vis-à-vis traditional canons, their implicit trust that whatever really counts may not have to be lost despite selection, transformation and the burden of new inequalities, may give us as social scientists courage in our own attempts to intellectually mediate between local societies in the Third World, and the intimidating globalising structures of today.

That the actors' optimism is partly justified – that the ethnic mediation produced by Kazanga is revitalising rather than destructive, can be gauged not only from the unexpected way in which the Kazanga dances and songs – with their dramatic and explicit evocations of Nkoya ethnic consciousness – have, in their turn, invaded musical expression in the villages themselves, but also from the most interesting innovations which, under the impact of the Kazanga festival and association, came to take place in the Nkoya kingship. In the early 1970s the Nkoya neo-traditional court culture was marked by a rigid, wholly introverted splendour. The maintenance of nostalgic historic forms of protocol and symbolic, particularly musical, production (no longer corresponding to any real power invested in the kingship under conditions of incorporation by the Barotse indigenous state and by the colonial and postcolonial central state) reflected the fact that the need for *boundary maintenance* vis-à-vis the outside world was at its peak. All this contrasts strikingly with the laxity of court life at the *zinkena* from the late 1980s onward. Of course, the kingship, based on a local vision of the political and cosmological order, could only lose out when the

subjects came to participate more effectively and whole-heartedly in a national political and economic order based on very different constitutional principles. However, at the same time a fervent reconstruction process was going on. Kazanga's effective negotiation between the state, the kingship and the villagers insisted on a new symbolic and ceremonial role for all four Nkoya kings together along lines which were all bricolage and thoroughly unhistorical, but which did result in restoring the kings to a level of emotional and symbolic significance perhaps unprecedented in twentieth-century Nkoya history. Mwene Kahare, who used to be a somewhat pathetic, stammering and alcoholic figure dressed in a faded suit with ragged shirt collar, in his seventies appeared at the 1992 Kazanga festival covered in leopard skins and with a headband adorned with regal *zimpande* – regalia he had probably never worn since his installation in 1955 – formidably brandishing his royal axe in a solo dance that took the audience's breath away and moved them to tears. He did so not at his own *lukena* nor at that of his rival, Mutondo, but at newly inaugurated Kazanga festival grounds neutrally situated on the banks of the Luena river forming the border between both chiefs' areas. The suspiciously untimely death of Muchayila's successor Mwene Kanchimpi in 1991 prevented Mutondo control over the 1992 festival (a successor is seldom installed within a year), and rendered the Mutondo *lukena* inappropriate as festival grounds in that time of mourning. Mwene Kahare's royal dance centred, of course, on a shrine situated at the hub of the festival grounds; but it was no longer the *mukanda*-related thatched shrine of Mutondo, nor his own wooden pole adorned with buffalo trophies, but a neutral shrub of the type found in most Nkoya villages.

In 1992 the state delegation to the Kazanga festival was led by the Cabinet Minister for Education, the Hon. Arthur Wina M.P., a Zambian politician of long-standing, subsequently a member of President Chiluba's MMD cabinet, and son of a former Lozi *Ngambela* (traditional prime minister).[80] In his speech, Minister Wina explicitly joked that, with the recent shortage of water in the Zambezi flood plain (location of the Lozi paramount chief's residences) there was little point in attending the Kuomboka ceremony, Kazanga providing an adequate alternative. This was coded language understood by the audience as a pronouncement on the limits, if not decline, of Lozi power under MMD conditions (although Mr Wina and Mbikusita-Lewanika, the grandson of a former Lozi king, were clear examples of Lozi ethnic prominence in MMD circles) and of the full acceptance of Nkoya ethnic aspirations after Mr Kaunda's political demise.

With such a high-powered state delegation the courtiers from Mutondo could not persist in their earlier refusal to attend Kazanga in a form which so effectively denied Mutondo hegemony; in fact, the Kazanga executive (in which MMD and UNIP supporters subsequently worked hand in hand) made it clear that staying away would be interpreted by the new government as an anti-MMD demonstration and might therefore have unpleasant consequences. Having been a distant enemy, the state had become an ally; and from being introverted and divisive, ethnicity, at least in the form of ethnic mediation it assumed in Kazanga, had come to combine inward symbolic reconstruction with confident participation in the national space.

Rwenzururu protest songs

Martin Doornbos & Peter Cooke

In this chapter we shall examine songs of the Rwenzururu movement of the Bakonzo and Baamba people in Western Uganda. We shall be concerned with their different uses as repositories of history and vehicles of exhortation, and also with their origins in time and space. The main interest in this chapter, however, is in finding explanations for the simultaneous expression of often strongly contrasted moods, viewpoints and styles in Rwenzururu songs.

Rwenzururu as a movement of political protest was rooted in resentment against the discriminatory treatment of the ethnic minorities in the kingdom of Toro (Doornbos 1970). Until 1967 Toro had figured as one of four semi-traditional states within Uganda, at the apex of which stood the *Omukama* (king). The Bakonzo and Baamba, who lived along the Zaire (DR Congo) border, comprised approximately 45% of the population of the kingdom, whereas the Batoro were in the majority in Toro. The Bakonzo were the larger of these two oppressed groups, totalling 110 000 in 1959 as against 36 000 Baamba. Compared with the Batoro, the Bakonzo and Baamba had for a long time enjoyed fewer social and economic opportunities. They had less access to education, and fewer chiefs or other government appointments; in addition, few medical and other facilities were available in their areas. Moreover, Bakonzo and Baamba were often treated by Batoro as inferiors.

In 1962, shortly before Uganda became independent, the Bakonzo and Baamba joined hands in the Rwenzururu movement, which aimed at establishing a separate district for themselves as a way of improving their political status. This united front came about in the Toro *Rukurato* (Council), where elected representatives of the two groups had been meeting since 1961 and had come to know each other's grievances. For a variety of reasons, however, both the Toro and the Uganda governments resisted

Rwenzururu demands. A prolonged deadlock ensued. Aggravation and violent conflict between Rwenzururu and Batoro became dominant; particularly severe clashes occurred between 1963 and 1965.

As time passed, the issue became exceedingly complex, with not only the Uganda and Toro governments, but also major factions within the movement adopting different positions. In 1962, one wing of the movement, led by Isaya Mukirane and based in the inaccessible Rwenzori mountains on the border with Zaire (Congo), declared itself an independent state called the Rwenzururu Kingdom. Other factions, primarily identified with Yeremia Kawamara and Petero Mupalya, continued to press for some kind of arrangement whereby they could remain within Uganda. Over the years, constitutional deliberations, emergency measures, army and police interventions, raids and counter-

Figure 9.1:   Rwenzori region, with pre-1981 kingdom/
district boundaries of Western Uganda

raids by Bakonzo, Baamba and Batoro, as well as the imprisonment and displacement of many people and considerable loss of life and property, became commonplaces of the dispute. As no clear solution was forthcoming, the Rwenzururu movement eventually became mired in misery and disillusionment. Some change of situation occurred in 1967, when Uganda adopted a more centralised framework of government and Toro became a district. However, if there appeared to be a certain respite, this was probably due as much to pervasive fatigue among the parties involved in the conflict as to the abolition of the Toro kingship and any other political concessions granted to the Bakonzo and Baamba. The demand for a separate district was not fulfilled until 1971, when Idi Amin came to power and gave one to the Baamba, and another to the Bakonzo. Although the issue would thus appear to have been resolved, the Rwenzururu kingdom, having gone beyond a point of no return, persisted in its secession and somehow continued to exist at least until the 1982 agreement reached with the Uganda government mentioned in chapter 1. Thereafter, in more recent decades the movement resurfaced in a new guise as a struggle in search of recognition of Bakonzo identity (Worrall 1980; Stacey 2003). For some time the secession after1981 acquired a new significance in providing a base for the operations of one of the guerrilla groups fighting the Obote regime, the National Resistance Army (NRA).

Songs and history

The songs which grew out of the Rwenzururu movement form an oral record of the hopes, frustrations, purposes and confusions generated by the conflict. People sang these songs to air their feelings of the moment, to articulate their situation as they perceived it and to pray for justice. Typical is a song called 'Rwenzururu Wethu Mulilirwa', which in a few lines summarises the Rwenzururu agony:

> *The Rwenzururu we cry for is our land, we cried for the land,*
> *Batoro are happy, but the day we shall get our land,*
>   *we shall sing cha-cha-cha*
> *Our Rwenzururu, where have you gone? When we think*
>   *about you tears appear*
> *Army men came and beat everybody for Rwenzururu,*
> *When we think of all these sufferings,*
> *tears drop.*

These sentiments recur in many songs. Brief and direct, the contrast between the confidence of the second line (note the use of the foreign 'cha-cha-cha' to convey joy) and the increasing despair of the last two lines is noteworthy. Rather than conveying an inherent inconsistency, the song's reaffirmation of the 'just cause' from which it springs renders the fate of Rwenzururu even more lamentable – 'where have you gone?'. Below, we shall return to such variations of tone.

Many songs relate the history of the movement as the people understood it, and these songs became a major vehicle for conveying this history. In a largely non-literate society with no mass media and few other means to chronicle its history, songs were used to

record events and thus to serve as an archive. They also had educational functions. Many songs dealt with specific events such as the elections which gave the Bakonzo and Baamba representation, the demands they presented to the authorities at Entebbe, the commission of inquiry which came to their areas, and the ideas and actions of their leaders. An interesting example is a Lukonzo song which recounts some earlier conflicts involving Bakonzo and Batoro:

> *Welcome natives, Baamba/Bakonzo to visit us. Good morning,*
> *We thank God who has passed you through guns and knives safely.*
> *Let us pray God to give us courage so that we can all stick to one thing.*
> *Let us fight bravely and whatever comes, we shall succeed.*
> *We must send away the Batoro from our land.*
> *We shall never dine with a Mutoro any more. He must go away.*
> *'Goodbye'. We have refused him totally.*
> *This is the third tribal war in which many people are killed.*
> *The first one was Nyamutswa's. The second war was Kabalega's.*
> *A long time ago, we had Nyamutswa and Tibamwenda who refused*
> *   to pay the tax levied by the Batoro. Then the Batoro killed them and*
> *   buried them in one grave.*
> *Then afterwards, Isaya searched for the history of how*
> *   these people were killed.*
> *From this research, he wrote the information in many exercise books.*
> *After that there were elections in which Isaya passed through.*
> *Then he presented our views in the Rukurato.*
> *Then Isaya came and told the people about what happened*
> *   in the Rukurato.*
> *The people told him to go back and claim for our land.*
> *Do not give up, but the day you return, we shall laugh.*

Of primary interest is the use of history in this example. The reference to the Bakonzo chiefs Nyamutswa and Tibamwenda concerns a confrontation that took place in 1919, when these two Bakonzo chiefs (and a third one, Kapoli) led an uprising in resistance against the establishment of Toro authority in the Rwenzori region. This occurred after the First World War, on the basis of new boundary demarcations between the Uganda Protectorate and the Congo. In 1921, Nyamutswa, Tibamwenda and Kapoli were hanged after their appeal to the East African Court of Appeal had failed (Uganda Government 1962:3, 6). To the followers of the Rwenzururu movement, these incidents were reminders of their lost independence, and no less an exhortation to regain it. Isaya Mukirane's search for the history of his people, which he had conducted since 1954 as president of the Bakonjo Life History Research Society, was an immediate precursor to the Rwenzururu movement. This research was of no small importance; much of the information thus gathered was subsequently used to substantiate demands. It also gave rise to an incipient organisation and encouraged reflection on shared grievances.

Most songs were concerned, however, with more contemporary history. One of these, dealing with some of the events immediately leading up to the Rwenzururu movement, is called 'Akatambi' (Time):

> *When the time came, the Europeans informed us about elections.*
> *They said that we should elect our own people whom we like.*
>> *The Omuhikirwa[1] also said that we should elect reasonable people*
>> *and not lazy ones.*
>> *When elections were in action, Bakonzo elected Isaya.*
>> *Baamba elected Kawamara and Mupalya.*
>> *When the Rukurato was in session, our leaders presented our views.*
>> *They said that we were not included in the Agreement of 1900.*
>> *We should therefore make a new agreement.*
>> *Batoro refused this, but our leaders liked it. You have refused*
>> *to include us*
>> *in the Agreement, we should therefore separate.*
>> *Then, our brave leaders walked out of the Rukurato and*
>> *informed us about it.*
>> *Batoro have rejected our ideas.*
>> *The people told them to go ahead and get our Rwenzururu.*
>> *We shall not be sat upon when we have no voice in the Rukurato.*
> *When fighting started, the Central Government sent the*
>> *Commission of Inquiry*
>> *which included three people.*

This song refers to the Toro Agreement of 1900, through which the British negotiated their entry into Toro, which at that time did not include the Bakonzo and Baamba areas. In 1962, the Bakonzo and Baamba representatives in the Toro *Rukurato* asked for a new constitution which would explicitly recognise that the people of Toro were the Batoro, Bakonzo and Baamba. The rejection of this demand did much to precipitate the claims for a separate district; the Rwenzururu movement soon became a fact. It is interesting to compare this song with a presumably later version, which is virtually identical except for the deletion of the *Omuhikirwa*'s pre-election counsel in the above rendering – which probably suggested too close a reliance on advice from the Toro side – and the replacement of 'when fighting started' in the last line with 'when Kawamara started his duty': an interpretation which accords greater weight to one of the more accommodative Baamba leaders.

The historical record transmitted in these songs does not appear to be without inaccuracies. A notable element of fiction and wishful thinking has crept into their texts, with some events and actions apparently imagined and others interpreted in a fashion that seems difficult to reconcile with reality. Two examples illustrate this apparent melange of fact and fiction, the first being a song which attributes to the British a considerable measure of goodwill and partiality towards Rwenzururu aspirations:

> *The English at the Assembly in Entebbe asked Isaya what he wanted.*
> *Isaya replied that he was looking for what he had lost and that the Batoro*
>> *had taken away his land.*
>> *They encouraged him and said that the land was his – New Bukonzo.[2]*
> *Then Isaya went to Busongora[3] with a flag from Entebbe.*

The second is a verse of a song called 'Obuthoki' (Authority), which runs as follows:

> *The UNO disagreed with the statement of the Omukama of the* Batoro
>   *[author's emphasis]*
>   *that his kingdom was too small to be divided*
>   *and declared that Mukirane should take his land.*

Sadly, notwithstanding innumerable letters and memoranda, which for years Rwenzururu leaders (especially Mukirane) addressed to the United Nations and other international bodies (the Organisation of African Unity, the Pope, African heads of state, the Queen of England and others), their case never received any attention in these circles, and it is in fact doubtful whether internationally there was ever any appreciable awareness of it.

Medium and message

If songs generally offer insight into popular sentiments, this is particularly true for protest songs. Unlike, for example, the techniques of survey research, analysis of the content and form of songs cannot, of course, provide one with quantifiable 'precise' or 'hard' data. Basically unaffected by research situations or even research designs, this seemingly 'soft' evidence may actually convey more genuine reflections of popular attitudes and opinion than many a well-designed attitude survey.

Again, this in no way implies that insight is identical with historical accuracy; song in fact would be rather a poor medium through which to try and learn the history of a movement such as Rwenzururu. But it is likely that the songs will point to what local people considered key landmarks in the conflict, and, more generally, how the movement was perceived from within. Yet in the case of Rwenzururu, the songs which the movement generated are quite diverse, connoting hope as well as despair, fulfilment and defeat, favouring now one rendering of events, then conveying another interpretation.

Some aspects of this diversity have also been noted in an earlier analysis of Rwenzururu songs. Kirsten Alnaes has suggested that many such variations of tone and interpretation can be related to different phases which the movement itself has undergone – initially a dream of ultimate justice in the hereafter, followed by a phase of concrete demands for equality, then a 'crisis of action' when conflict evolved into violent rebellion, and, finally, a phase of withdrawal and return to the dream about ultimate justice (Alnaes 1969:244).

It is undoubtedly true that chronological variation is a factor of basic significance, as songs originate at different intervals and are likely to respond to different moments. However, while accepting this, we feel that a chronological scale by itself cannot fully account for the range and kinds of differences we found. Not only did we, on several occasions, listen to quite contrasting songs being sung on the same occasion (as Alnaes did), but we also came across some variations that probably should be attributed to opposing factions within the movement, others that suggested different regional origins of song content and, most significant of all, some quite different kinds of songs, composed for different purposes and expressing rather markedly different orientations

to the movement. This refers particularly to a difference between 'traditional' and 'modern' songs, composed for beer parties and school concerts respectively. To this we will return in the analysis below. Nor does it appear likely to us that the Bakonzo would have completed a full and somehow symmetrical song cycle as Alnaes has suggested – from dream through demand to crises and withdrawal and again to dream – in the ten-year period between 1959 and 1969. Though in significantly changed fashion, the Rwenzururu idea has been kept alive up to the present and in the course of time it has no doubt sponsored many novel songs, about Idi Amin and his intervention in particular, but no less about local events and frustrations, though unfortunately we are not able to relate these from firsthand evidence.

Themes and variations

The songs we have available for examination are all Lukonzo songs, collected between October 1966 and October 1967. We tape-recorded 21 songs on four different occasions. One of these events took the form of an outdoor *konsati* (concert) given for us on 31 December 1966, at Mutiti village. It had been arranged by the local head of the Rwenzururu movement and involved classes of sub-grade school children with their teachers, young men and older musicians, who gathered together from a number of villages higher up in the foothills south of Bundibugyo in Bwamba county. This region had been one of the main centres of the Rwenzururu movement since Mukirane's earliest actions. Mixed with the movement songs were other traditional items including *eluma* (stopped flute) dances, *endara* (xylophone) pieces and songs accompanied by *ekinanga* (bowharp). Six songs were recorded in Bwera and Kasese, situated at the southern end of the Rwenzori range, a second major area of Rwenzururu activity.

Another set of 21 song texts was collected and recorded without their melodies by a Mukonzo student. As several songs found their way into both sets, we feel confident that some of the most popular songs of the movement (that is, those which would be most frequently sung) are included. Translations were made and re-checked by Bakonzo students from Nyakasura Senior School in Fort Portal and the National Teachers' College in Kampala.

We have no way of establishing when these songs originated except on the basis of internal evidence, though clearly some songs must be dated earlier than others. A few examples will illustrate this, the first being a brief praise song to Mr Isaya (Mukirane):

> CHORUS: *Mr Isaya, who is very intelligent,*
> *sent away the authority of the Batoro*

> 1. *In 1961, the English told us to elect brave people*
> *who would look for our lost things.*
> CHORUS

> 2. *Then, Bakonzo elected Isaya. When he was in the*
> *Lukurato, he asked Isebika.*[4]
> CHORUS

> 3. *The* Omukama *replied that*
> *he would not give him his land.*
> *Then, Isaya went to Entebbe to attend*
> *the meeting with the Governor.*
> CHORUS

This disarmingly naive song is evidently a rather early one, since it covers no more than some of the initial declaratory skirmishes immediately preceding the emergence of the Rwenzururu movement in 1962. In contrast, the following lament is clearly of a much later date, when war and misery had shattered people's illusions.

In structure it resembles a prayer addressed to Mount Rwenzururu:

> CHORUS: *Mount Rwenzururu with its beauty,*
> *we are suffering because of Batoro.*

> 1. *Schools are closed, roads are ruined,*
> *and people are suffering.*
> CHORUS

> 2. *Many people are imprisoned, suffering,*
> *and others have moved away. Others have*
> *nowhere to go.*
> CHORUS

> 3. *We are very sorrowful about our schoolchildren. Where*
> *there are no schools there is no progress.*
> CHORUS

> 4. *Batoro did not mind about our education.*
> *They intentionally left Bakonzo behind in education.*
> CHORUS

> 5. *There is no other way we can take when*
> *schools are closed. Schools are the only*
> *important way we can take.*
> CHORUS

Thus, though we have no direct information for either of these songs as to who composed them, or when and why, it is evident that they date from different periods. However, it is no less noteworthy that songs with such different outlooks and expectations as these express were both sung at the same time – each presumably with some meaning to the people singing them. We will return to this point. Songs like these could be, and in fact were, sung at a single event, perhaps interspersed by another, highly fragmentary song like the following, with a word or phrase to suggest an idea not further elaborated:

> *Isaya is my father*
> *New Rwenzururu*
> *Ee – ba, really [or: it is true]*
> *Just only one day*

An observation is also in order as regards the regional origins of songs. The concentration of our sample on two centres of Rwenzururu involvement, and on one of these in particular (Bwamba), implies a certain disregard for other areas in which the movement was active. Such areas include the counties of Bunyangabu and Buraya, which were somewhat peripherally involved, and especially the higher Rwenzori regions controlled by the Rwenzururu kingdom proper, which were simply impractical to visit. Nonetheless, some of the songs we found were clearly of different regional origin, including several from the higher Rwenzori that had apparently found their way into the repertoire of Bakonzo living in the lower regions. Again, some examples may illustrate this. First is a song called 'Ekiro Engunga Yasyabuugha' (The day when the trumpet will sound), which expresses the suffering of people in the lowlands, Bakonzo as well as Baamba, as contrasted with those who live in the forest. This song, incidentally, alludes to the earthquake of 1966, during which much of the region sustained enormous damage, and echoes Apocalyptic anticipation.

CHORUS: *The day when the trumpet will sound*
the dead will rise
When the mountains will begin to collapse
My husband, where will you take me?
Weep, weep, weep and shed tears, tears
Weep, weep, the land will come.

1. *Much blood has been shed*
   On account of our land, Rwenzururu.
   CHORUS

2. *When the earthquake began, we people were asleep;*
   When we awoke we thought the Son of God
   had come back.
   CHORUS

3. *When the army men heard it*
   They thought the Banyambulya[5]
   were descending.
   They then loaded their guns
   And then realised it was in the ground.
   CHORUS

4. *The Baamba are not restless*
   The siege is from the forest.
   In the forest no people have died, people
   have died down here on the low land only.
   CHORUS

The second song, 'Sirikaleya ya Mukirane' (Mukirane's army) is a militant tune of Rwenzururu askaris, who often descended on raids from their camps in the higher

mountain forests to levy Rwenzururu taxes from the Bakonzo and Baamba living lower down the mountain slopes.:

> 1. *Mukirania's Army, Baba, has come*
> 2. *It has come from the forest, Baba, at Kitenga's.*
> 3. *We are children of Mukirania, Baba, we have come*
>   *We have come from the forest, Baba,*
> *From the forest, Baba, at Kitenga's.*[6]

Of songs which were sung in Bwamba, we found that one in particular, 'Ngeya ya Rwenzururu', was also popular in Bwera. This is especially noteworthy if one considers that as much as two weeks may be required to cover the distance between these areas on foot. 'Ngeya ya Rwenzururu' seemed almost to rank as a national anthem in the Rwenzururu movement. It is brief and expressive, a quality which may have stimulated its spread and popularity:

> *Ngeya, Ngeya of Rwenzururu*
> *It has a white band. Ngeya.*
>   *It is very sweet. Ngeya.*
> *Ngeya of the Bakonzo. Ngeya.*

These verses and choruses can be repeated endlessly. Rwenzururu as a country is personified in 'Ngeya'. One reason why the colobus monkey (*ngeya*) is an apt emblem for the movement is the white band on its brow, which it has in common with the snow-clad Rwenzori mountains. Besides, as the song suggests, the Bakonzo consider them both very sweet. Many young Bakonzo, indeed, wear caps of colobus skin to signify their Rwenzururu identity.[7] Of course, a single song is insufficient evidence of the existence of a common song literature throughout the Rwenzori region, but there is no reason to consider this song purely incidental. There seems a possibility, although this is not something we investigated, that a common body of Rwenzururu songs tended to develop and come into existence, no matter how heterogeneous and widely spread the sources on which they might be based. In any case, the occurrence of the same song(s) at vastly separate places indicates considerable capacity for grassroots communication within the movement, making it possible for tunes as well as messages to be disseminated over large distances. There is at least a likelihood, therefore, that the forty-odd songs collected in Bwamba are of wider significance and that, rather than finding differences in song content between places, one might anticipate roughly similar kinds of differences being repeated over larger areas.

Aside from contrasts among songs that are evidently attributable to different times of composition or places of origin, perhaps the most significant variations relate to their different orientations and the interpretations given to events and the roles of protagonists in the conflict. What is noteworthy is the array of views, reflections and expectations as conveyed through songs that could be sampled at roughly a single point in time and place. These included praise and dedication to Isaya Mukirane and the secessionist Rwenzururu Kingdom Government Movement, as well as trust in and expectations of

President Obote and the Uganda government. Also they varied in tone, from jubilation at imminent victory to plaintiveness, agony and distress.

Some examples may illustrate this mixed heritage. First, a song called 'Obote wairehe?' (Obote, where have you gone?), which expresses puzzlement at and disapproval of President Obote's policy and, with barely concealed irony, comments upon his failure to control the Bakonzo:

> *Obote, where have you gone?*
>> CHORUS: *We are with you.*
>>   *You merely shake the head, Obote!*
>
>> CHORUS
>
> *You cannot manage the Bakonzo.*
>> CHORUS
>
> *Obote, where have you gone?*
>> CHORUS
>
> *You cannot manage the Bakonzo, father.*
>> CHORUS
>
> *You merely shake the head now!*
>> CHORUS
>
> *You merely shake the head, Obote.*
>> CHORUS
>
> *Obote, where have you gone?*
>> CHORUS
>
> *You cannot manage Isaya.*
>> CHORUS

In notable contrast to this song is the following, which rather looks to Obote for support and solutions. This is particularly noteworthy because this song's signature is nonetheless that of the Rwenzururu kingdom, which had pledged to sever all relationships with the Uganda government:

> *1. Rwenzururu has its own King.*
>> CHORUS: *Bakonzo, Baamba, Rwenzururu.*
>
> *2. Batoro have their own King.*
>> CHORUS
>
> *3. Surely, friends, let us fight like men.*
>> CHORUS
>
> *4. The Batoro did not like us.*
>> CHORUS

5. Kilembe, Muhokya and Katwe products are all ours.[8]

> CHORUS

6. Let us not fear.

> CHORUS

7. Our Father, Obote, come and help us.

> CHORUS

8. Rwenzururu makes great sorrows.

> CHORUS

9. Let us fight like men.

Two other songs are even more pointedly ambivalent towards the central government of Uganda. The first one, 'Eriyalhuha' (Retiring), is a striking case of legendarisation. Historically quite erroneous, its account of early developments sounds rather like a fairy tale. It views the central government (Obote) as a fair arbiter, while the British are accused of sabotaging a just decision:

1. When Isebisika was about to retire, he did remarkable things.

> CHORUS: *He thought his period of reign was about to end.*

2. Isaya went to Entebbe to plead and then Obote sent for Isebisika.

> CHORUS

3. When they pleaded, Isaya won the case.

> CHORUS

4. But it was difficult to tell Isaya that he won the case. So the English took him to the Congo at Kihocha.

> CHORUS

5. Fathers, do not hesitate, but let us pray God, for our Rwenzururu will come.

> CHORUS

(Actually, Mukirane was in the Congo for some time around 1962, hiding out from Ugandan security forces. On orders from Obote's government, British district officers tried hard but unsuccessfully to get him into Uganda for prosecution.)

In contrast, the second song, 'Omwaka omuhya' (New Year), expresses only disillusionment with the central government. Composed for the occasion of New Year, and beginning with some well-wishing, it contains a rather tragic note, stating that there is no future to look forward to, for all ways out of the misery seem to be blocked. After its confident start, the song ends on a plaintive note, expressing fear that the people themselves may be destroyed in the pursuit of Rwenzururu aims:

1. We are glad to start a New Year
   Let us start it with new ideas so that our Rwenzururu
   develops well.

2. The central government has not helped us,
   It has neglected us. Even in the Congo, there
   are also disturbances.

3. Surely, we people, we have nowhere to go. Our
   Rwenzururu might destroy us.
   Our God, keep us safe in this New Year.

4. Rwenzururu also makes great sorrow.
   The blood of people flowed like that of goats
   which are killed for nothing. Why are we suffering?
   Because of Rwenzururu.

Other contrasted viewpoints in Rwenzururu songs developed in regard to the schisms which grew within the leadership of the government. For example, a song lauding the original three leaders, Mukirane, Kawamara and Mupalya, might on the same occasion be followed by one dramatising their differences. An example of the first variety is a song praising Mukirane for his eloquence (he is compared to a radio), at the same time expressing admiration for Kawamara's bilingual abilities, which indeed were shared by few:

1. Isaya speaks like a radio

2. Isaya speaks like a Mukonzo

3. Isaya speaks like a radio

4. Isaya speaks like a Mukonzo

5. Kawamara speaks like a Mukonzo

6. Kawamara speaks like a Mwamba

7. Isaya speaks like a radio.

8. Their words stir my heart.

The following song likewise assumes an as yet undivided leadership of the Rwenzururu movement. In its simplicity, it is typical of many others in content and composition:

1. We elected three people namely Mr Isaya, Kawamara
   and Mupalya.
   CHORUS: *They claimed the land for Bakonzo and named*
               it Rwenzururu.

2. Since we are the owners of this land Rwenzururu,
   we shall have it.
   CHORUS

3. Fathers, mothers, and friends, let us wait for our
Rwenzururu.
CHORUS

4. We are very sorrowful for the Bakolikoli who are staying in Bundibugyo.[9]
CHORUS

In contrast, the theme of the next song is the orthodoxy of Mukirane's pursuit of secession as against Kawamara's policies of compromise. It is called 'Erithebwa' (We were deceived) and leaves no doubt that the only correct course was the one followed by the '*Kibanzanga*', a title bestowed upon Mukirane which says that one day his claims will 'find him seated' as king:

1. All of you should not get worried, but we took a wrong
course and left what we wanted.

2. When we took the wrong course, Kawamara came and told
us that he had brought the claims of Baamba and
Bakonzo.

3. They said that we should pay taxes and improve
the roads because they had brought the land we
claimed for.

4. We then asked them where they had left Isaya,
since they were three.

5. They replied that Isaya had gone and that he would
find them back in happiness.

6. Then Isaya told the people that they had taken the
wrong course and left the right one.

7. Kibanzanga is the only one who did not change his
mind until today.

8. Friends, let us not be deceived again as we have
been before.

9. Only Kibanzanga, the saviour, did not change his mind until today.

This subject of the schism is further developed in other songs. One, for example, states that Kamawara and Mupalya, who at one point agreed to having the Baamba areas provisionally administered by the central government instead of a Toro government, had merely recovered the skeleton of the land while more basic claims remained unfulfilled:

1. Bakonzo are tough, having caused the coming of
the army.
CHORUS: *The Administrator has caused the deaths of*
many people.[10]

> *2. Isaya went to Entebbe.*
>
>   CHORUS
>
> *3. Bakonzo are also tough, for they have caused the*
>   *deaths of many people.*
>
>   CHORUS
>
> *4. Isaya and Mupalya went to Entebbe.*
>
>   CHORUS
>
> *5. They sent the message that they were going to*
>   *get the claimed land.*
>
>   CHORUS
>
> *6. What do fathers and mothers say about this?*
>
>   CHORUS
>
> *7. Kawamara and Mupalya brought the skeleton of*
>   *the land.*
>
>   CHORUS
>
> *8. Let us work, Rwenzururu is ours.*
>
>   CHORUS

The variety of orientations and concerns which entered Rwenzururu songs might be further illustrated by additional differences such as the party being seen as hostile, or the kind of issues which precipitated conflict. In the above songs, the Batoro, the *Omukama*, the British, the Administrator, President Obote and the Ugandan army in turn rank as the hostile agents. As regards the causes that led to conflict, matters so varied as the exclusion of the Bakonzo and Baamba from the Toro constitution, their claims to the land, the imposition of taxes upon them, the lack of recognition of their languages, and the neglect of their education, have been among the grievances advanced to justify and demand support for the Rwenzururu movement. Throughout these songs, moreover, the tone varies between the extremes of militant optimism and utter despair, while suggested or hoped-for solutions are either vastly different or absent altogether.

But though it may appear 'inconsistent' if popular orientations seem to vacillate between optimism and pessimism, expectation and doubt, one orientation and another, in the case of Rwenzururu, where conditions kept changing dramatically and rapidly, even sharp contrasts in expression are perhaps to be expected. When prospects for the immediate future are bleak and uncertain, people may well exclaim in despair and at once grab at any straw of hope. People have been known to muster courage and be joyful even when their very existence seemed threatened, and this, too, would find expression. Nor should one necessarily expect ambivalent moods to be finely balanced or coherently presented in songs. Where confusion prevails and conflict seems endemic, the body of songs to air feelings may well be shrill and chaotic. In a situation as tense and complex as that of Rwenzururu, songs composed earlier from very different perspectives may have been picked up as a medium of expression, but their diversity of origins and inspirations

may have been perfectly suited to the range of feelings and views they were intended to express. Even regarding the contrasts in the expressed loyalty to leaders, the songs may not actually have overstated the complexity of the situation. While for a long time the Rwenzururu conflict gravitated to a point where no single leader or political group was able to resolve it, people nevertheless yearned for peace and salvation. With no one to inspire all, each bidding for support and recognition, the wavering of the songs between Mukirane and Kawamara, or even between Obote and the British, may well have been as accurate a picture of popular fluctuations as one could get.

The Rwenzururu movement has been surrounded by extreme confusion, which is mirrored in its songs. If individually some of the songs are puzzling, as a collection they are profoundly meaningful. Still, if all their moods are part of Rwenzururu, whether one song or another is sung will not be entirely random. There is one general difference in the songs which explains a good deal of their differences in mood and content, and the purposes for which and the occasions at which they are sung. To analyse these, we should turn to their musical structure.

Musical form and political tone

The songs in our sample mostly fall into two major musical categories. The first group is associated with the tall bamboo *nyamulere* flute, reported by Wachsmann (Trowell and Wachsmann 1953:340) as being much favoured by the Bakonzo. There was no difficulty in locating flautists, for the *nyamulere* was frequently in use at beer parties and other kinds of informal music-making. Traditionally, it is accompanied by a regular hand clap pulse against which a rapid, continuous pattern of triplets is set, beaten with sticks on a small Ugandan-type drum, often with another player beating out the same pattern on an improvised percussion beam or on the hard rim of the same drum. This triplet rhythm lies at the core of the musical rhythms of most other types of Bakonzo music. It must be closely connected with the rhythms of the song language of the Bakonzo, for it matches the rate of flow of syllabic units in traditional songs.[11] The *nyamulere*, in the area covered by our research, has no purely instrumental repertory, all its melodies being based on song texts. When players were asked what the words of the songs they played were, they immediately sang them if bystanders had not already joined in to provide texts while they played. Apart from the verbal content, there was no noticeable musical distinction between the political songs and other songs for which the *nyamulere* is traditionally used, such as those sung at weddings and at the conclusion of healing rituals. Although this group of songs will be labelled *nyamulere* songs, it is stressed that the group contains songs which were composed by *nyamulere* players as well as popular songs in which the use of a flute is purely optional.

In contrast to this music is the other large group of political songs, performed without exception by groups of young people (eight to fifteen years old). Each song consists of a number of stanzas, each melodically identical and containing four or eight phrases, sometimes followed by an equally long refrain. They were obviously derived from European tunes: we were at first puzzled by these songs, and the origins of some of

the melodies remain a mystery. Some of the tunes had a distinct East-European ring to them; others, however, were clearly once hymn tunes, while another has been identified as 'Alpenrosen', a popular Danish folk song of Austrian origin.

At this point, it is relevant to examine the musical structure of both of these contrasting groups of songs in more detail, and, beginning with the traditional songs, to relate their form and musical content to the social situations that produce them. The traditional beer club was the time-honoured centre of adult social life on the Rwenzori, and the place where traditional *nyamulere* songs are enjoyed. The newer type of bar, where a radio or record player or even a shiny new juke-box could be heard providing an unceasing diet of westernised popular music from Zaire, Nairobi and Kampala along with the latest hits from Europe and the USA would be found only in smaller towns such as Bwera, Kasese and Bundibugyo, around the base of the mountains. The beer club is, of course, the place where people frequently meet to quench their thirst and to informally discuss matters of the day. Traditional music is often a part of the scene. The songs performed there closely mirror the informal nature of the occasion. A singer or a flautist begins a song; someone else takes a drum and joins in, others may or may not, as the mood takes them, begin singing the basic response or get up and dance for a while, or merely mark the pulse with hand claps.

Like most other Bantu dialects in southern and western Uganda, Lukonzo is a tonal language, and superficial analysis suggests that the tonal and rhythmic patterns of sung phrases of traditional songs closely match those of the corresponding spoken forms. Wachsmann, writing of Luganda song, described this feature as 'speech clothed in melody' (Wachsmann, 1954:45), while Mubangizi, a Mwiru composer from neighbouring Ankole, describes the song melodies of his area as being simply 'an embellishment of the texts' (personal communication 1969).

These traditional songs have the common antiphonal structure in which solo phrases and choral response alternate. The choral response usually remains constant throughout the song and is usually a brief phrase, sometimes a single word, that often sets the mood of the song, upon which the soloist only sketchily elaborates. Such songs seem to be both textually and musically a development and reiteration of a single idea – often expressed in terms of a small number of pithy epigrams. The text of such songs contains lines with different tonal/rhythmic patterns resulting in slight differences of melodic contour: as always it is difficult to say which is the 'standard pattern' for a song and which are the variants derived from it. Each line of the text has its own melody, and when a flautist replaces a singer the lines are still recognised by anyone who knows the song, despite the fact that good flautists tend to improvise with the given melodic framework in mind.

Figure 9.2:   Extract from a transcription of the protest
song 'Rwenzururu Mpyaka'

Example 1. Part of a nyamulere 'movement song' – 'Rwenzururu Mpyaka'

The example transcribed in Figure 9.2 is an extract from a *nyamulere* 'movement song' – 'Rwenzururu Mpyaka' (New Rwenzururu, recorded on 31 December 1966 at Mutiti; Tape PC/11/2), and illustrates how such performances develop. After a few opening phrases on the flute, played by Jeremiah Mumbera, a brother and a friend began beating out the triplet rhythms on the drum, while a dancer began to stamp out the pulse with pellet bells strapped below his right knee. Half a minute later an unknown singer threw in phrases from the song, to which the flautist responded antiphonally.

In the normal performance situation – at a beer party, for instance – often no one will bother to sing the words and it is then left to the flautist to entertain the company and, by playing recognisable melodies, to remind his fellows of the text. In this way the flute itself becomes, as it were, a political instrument, through its melodies reminding the listener of famous events and giving voice to the collective feelings of the group.

The flute itself has no special political role, nor is there any evidence that flautists played for their political Bakonzo cadres as once Bakonzo played for the *Omukama*, the king of Toro. If flautists played at political meetings it was only because such meetings tended, like other social gatherings, such as weddings and so on, to be accompanied by music, dance and beer-drinking. The *nyamulere* is usually played as a solo instrument, and even at gatherings where more than one man is present with his flute, they are unlikely to play together unless their flutes, by a happy coincidence, happen to be of the same size and tuning, for there is no standard tuning for Bakonzo flutes.

Figure 9.3:   Opening lines of 'Erighologholo'

Example 2. 'Erighologholo'

'Erighologholo' (Evening), another traditional song, is an *ekikiibi* dance song, a type popular at weddings, whose texts often deal with different aspects of marital and kinship relationships. Sung by Andrea Bwambale of Bwera, it exemplifies that process of reworking and updating which is the hallmark of oral tradition. The words of the opening lines of 'Erighologholo' (Figure 9.3) can be translated as follows:

*Being first is better than being last(*concerning birthright*)*
The evening scared the beautiful ones
   What shall I do? A slasher? A supporting stick?
   A crow is more beautiful than girls.
We praise Obote together with Izironi.

It was recorded during the official independence anniversary celebrations at the Kasese police ground on 9 October 1967. Members of the Ruwenzori Drama and Cultural Society had travelled from Bwera that day to give a public performance of *kasai* and *ekikiibi* dance songs to the accompaniment of the *endara* xylophone, drums and a little *likembe* (lamellophone) played by Bwambale, the lead singer.[12] The text of the song has traditionally been one concerned with inlaw avoidance, but Bwambale used it to express his jubilation at the then recent constitutional changes that had effected the unseating of Uganda's hereditary kings – including the *Omukama* of Toro – and the placing of a number of Bakonzo and Baamba officers in leading positions within the Toro district administration. Hence we find lines like: 'We praise Izironi together with Obote for they are the ones who have brought us independence'. Furthermore, traditional lines take on a double meaning and 'A fat woman is like a creeping plant' becomes 'We [Bakonzo] spread like a creeping plant'. The line 'A crow is more beautiful than the beautiful ones' alludes now not only to both motherinlaw and young brides, but also to Bakonzo and Batoro respectively, for Batoro girls are generally considered to be the most beautiful in Uganda.

We cannot be certain, however, whether or not such expressions of topical political comment would be made at actual wedding festivities or were composed expressly for this particular official occasion, but it illustrates in another way the manner in which concern for political events affects the whole song repertory of the Bakonzo.

There is a hint of this same process of adding to older texts in the song 'Wangagonga Omuhyana' (You beat the Batoro), where regret at the loss of their leader, Isaya, was added to a theme expressing general dislike of the Batoro. In general, however, traditional songs are usually monothematic – both musically and in the mood the words express, though it is noticeable how, in Figure 9.3, the melody line is continually modified to accommodate the varying speechtone pattern of the text lines. Such songs are the voice of the ordinary villager whose way of life has changed, slowly departing from traditional patterns. Their seemingly fragmentary, often unordered texts reflect the informality of the occasions at which they are sung.

Certain common themes emerge, however, and a single event often inspires the song – for instance, the alleged rape of Mrs Mukirane. In general, they are not the songs of political activists fired by zeal for a just cause, but simply the sad commentary of rural folk on a steadily deteriorating situation – feelings that are epitomised in the song 'Rwenzururu Yamathubugha' (Rwenzururu is making us suffer).

Songs with European-type tunes contrast vividly with the traditional ones just discussed. Alnaes (1969:251) comments briefly on this contrast between traditional patterns and that of the 'new style songs', describing the latter group as composed by:

> *young men of the Bakonzo-educated elite who put an emphasis on modern*
> *values. They therefore seem to have chosen a form of expression which cor-*
> *responds with their own outlook, rather than the traditional style of their*
> *own society.*

It is true that these songs were composed mostly by schoolteachers, sometimes (as noted by Alnaes) at the instigation of the Rwenzururu administration. One teacher we contacted said that he composed songs similar to those in our collection because he was out of work at the time and did so simply to occupy his time with what he regarded as a worthwhile task. Nearly all the songs in this section were sung under the direction of schoolteachers from the subgrade schools in the hills, and the nature of the performance typified institutional class singing. On one occasion when a young soloist forgot his lines the schoolteacher himself joined in and took over the part, but otherwise the teachers 'conducted' the performance like Europeans, with arm gestures.

At first sight it seems strange that leaders of a movement concerned with establishing the identity and true status of their own people should abandon traditional patterns of musical expression: history has shown that a nationalist movement often clings to traditional musical forms for its songs, and the repertory of the Ruwenzori Drama and Cultural Society is one manifestation of this. In the case of this second group of songs, however, their musical differences can be explained by the differences in textual content which, in turn, stem from the different purposes the songs serve.

This group of 'modern' songs, in which the detailed history of the movement, long series of events and the deeds of its leaders are recorded, have a different function from traditional songs, for they are clearly intended to socialise the younger members of Bakonzo society into Rwenzururu life. They consist of long, involved and stanzically ordered texts. Since the movement demands dedicated participation on the part of its members, it is perhaps no coincidence that the children are required to do more than just join in with a brief choral response, as they would when participating in a traditional song. Sometimes they all sing the prescribed text in its entirety or, more often, a refrain that is as long as each verse. Thus, in both content and structure the songs reflect the demands made on those for whom they were composed.

What sort of melodies would fit such texts as these? B.K. Mubangizi has written of the difficulty facing the modern African literate composer and stresses that 'composition of the text is many more times difficult than composing melodies especially when all the stanzas have to be sung to the same melody'.[13] In his own hymn book, *Mweshongorere Mukama* ('Sing to the Lord'; Mbarara, 1968), now widely used throughout the Catholic churches of Western Uganda, he took great pains to produce texts for successive stanzas which had the same basic tonal and rhythmic patterns, so that when they are set in traditional style to a single melody the close relationship of rhythm and tone between text and music is not distorted.

Mubangizi was an extremely gifted poet-musician who has devoted a lifetime to the study of the poetry of the music of his own people of Ankole and to the exceedingly careful composition of hymns in a traditional style. The Rwenzururu teacher-composers, however, chose a rough-and-ready solution, simply fitting their 'poems' to well-known European melodies. Many of the melodies are marches, which they had encountered

during their own primary school days and at teacher-training colleges. In class they had often performed physical exercises to European tunes taught by Irish and Italian priests and English and Scottish missionary teachers, while others had learnt marching melodies in the fife and drum bands on Catholic mission stations. Their class music lessons consisted mostly of singing from European Sol Fah song collections. Indeed, it was sometimes locally commented that one could recognise someone's school by the [European] songs he sang. In addition, the ubiquitous transistor radio frequently tuned to the unceasing diet of news, comment and music beamed to Africa from far-off foreign transmitters clearly provided other usable material.

Example 3. Refrain of the school song, 'Ekiro engunga yasyabuugha'

Typical of the songs that result is the refrain of the school song (Figure 9.4), 'Ekiro engunga yasyabuugha' (The day when the trumpet will sound; composed by Mikairi, Tape PC/10/13; see the translation of the words above, under 'Themes and variations'.) The first stanza, sung by all, is used as a refrain before and after all subsequent stanzas. The texts of such songs are forced into foreign isometric and melodically rigid moulds and although this distorts the natural rhythms and tonality of the words, the product is at least acceptable to the teacher/composer as well as the youthful singers and serves a vital political function. One gained the impression that the parents of these young people, although offended by these distortions of their language, accepted this type of song, if only because they felt the intentions were good and because, in any case, it seemed to them that many strange and novel ideas came out of schools. Never did we find older Bakonzo singing these songs – they were the repertory of just one section of Bakonzo society: its schoolchildren and their teachers. The children learnt these songs readily and sang them with reasonably accurate 'European' intonation because, like most school and popular music, traditional Kikonzo music is generally diatonic (containing tones and semitones) and heptatonic, not pentatonic and semitoneless like the music of almost all other ethnic groups in Uganda.

Figure 9.4:   Refrain of school song 'Ekiro engunga yasyabuugha'

It is in this category of song texts that one finds a greater diversity of viewpoints and often conflicting historical records. Again, when one considers that they are the compositions of individual teachers, each with his own set of facts, his own view of the movement's history to be transmitted to his young charges, these diverse and conflicting views are not surprising. There is, however, present in all of them a common pedagogical aim and a common musical form of expression – a convenient one for inexperienced if enthusiastic song makers. Their acculturated style is a sign that the Rwenzururu movement was essentially inspired and led by a Bakonzo 'middle class' with some education.

Figure 9.5:   Children's version of 'Rwenzururu Mpyaka'
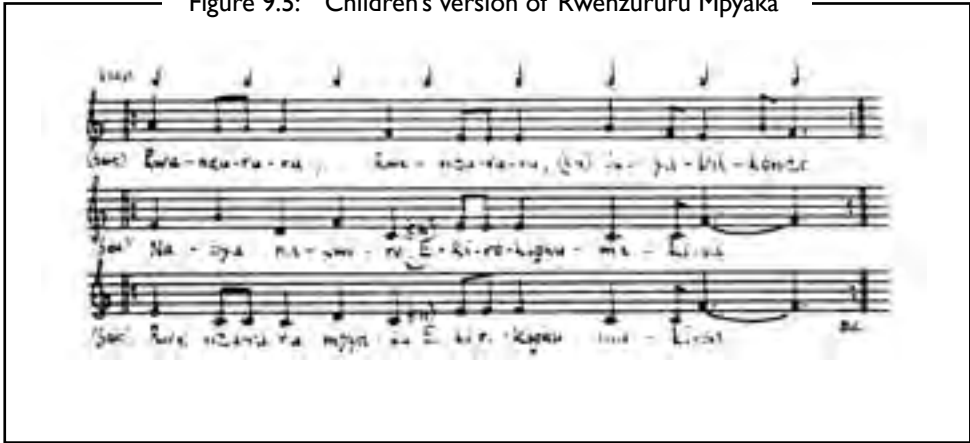
Example 4. Children's version of 'Rwenzururu Mpyaka'

Of course, there must have been some teaching of traditional songs to children but, if so, the only instance of this in the whole collection is the song 'Rwenzururu Mpyaka' (New Rwenzururu; Tape PC/10/3), known throughout the area. It can be translated as follows:

> Rwenzururu is of the Bakonzo
> I almost died, just only one day
> New Rwenzururu, just only one day

The influence of the pedagogue is noticeable if one compares this with the *nyamulere* version of the same song (Figure 9.2). The latter showed in performance the usual diffuse and informal characteristics, with a fair amount of seemingly random repetition. The children's version, however, is condensed and ordered. The three lines of the song are assembled in a logical order and each is sung twice by the soloist, all hinting at a somewhat institutionalised treatment of a traditional song. Perhaps the fact that children are not excluded from their parents' beer parties and other social gatherings means that they will already know most of the traditional songs and this knowledge renders unnecessary any further classroom teaching of any but the most important of these songs.

Figure 9.6:   Part of movement song 'Ngeya yu Rwenzururu'

Example 5. Part of movement song 'Ngeya yu Rwenzururu'

A small number of tape-recorded songs fall into neither of the two major categories discussed so far. They contain, in fact, an interesting mixture of traditional and European elements. 'Ngeya ya Rwenzururu' (Monkey of Rwenzururu), noted earlier and called by some the Rwenzururu national anthem, is one of these (Figure 9.6). It can be translated as follows:

> *Monkey, monkey of Rwenzururu*
> *It has a white band*
> *It is very sweet ...*

The melody has a characteristic European flavour in the way it marches stepwise up from the tonic of the major scale, only to march back down to it again. The syllable rhythms are more like European rhythms than those of Lukonzo; the soloist's phrases remind one of tunes based on the popular 'tonic–dominant' chord progressions of African pop guitarists, yet the whole is sung to the characteristic triplet clatter that accompanies traditional Bakonzo songs.

Example 6. Opening lines of 'Obote Wairehe?'

Slightly less obviously European is the song 'Obote Wairehe?' (Obote, where have you gone? as sung by Leo 'Youngblood' Masereka at Kasanga; Tape PC/4/23), whose text we have already discussed. (See above under the heading 'Medium and message' for a translation of the words.)

Although appearing to be based on the European major mode, the soloist's phrases, while again suggesting tonic–dominant formulae, are sung to more traditional Lukonzo rhythms and the whole fits the triplets' accompaniment more closely. The spoken response is certainly a non-European feature.

Figure 9.7:   Opening lines of 'Obote Wairehe?'

Textually and structurally, both songs resemble traditional types. Melodically, however, they suggest contact with either school music or with the growing corpus of popular guitar music. They were recorded in Bwera in October 1967 by a group of teenage boys and girls and, judging by their patriotic and aggressive sentiments and their mixed musical influences, both songs could well be part of a song repertoire belonging to the movement's askaris, the army of 'young bloods' (older brothers of our young singers) who fought in the skirmishes that periodically took place around the mountain. As will be recalled, such a force is specifically mentioned in the song Sirikaleya ya Mukirane ('Mukirane's Army'). If this is so, then indeed we have a third and smaller hybrid group of songs whose texts, just like those of the other two groups, are clearly relatable to and serve different sections of Bakonzo society.

Conclusion

This discussion of Rwenzururu songs has touched upon several points of potentially wider relevance in the analysis of protest movements, the first being the significance of song itself in offering insight into political orientations and sentiments. This chapter has further been concerned with the co-existence of a range of different attitudes and moods in the movement's song literature. In this connection the importance of the kind of context and purpose for which songs are composed has been stressed, as largely predetermining their musical structure and the general nature of their text and orientation. We found that in those songs that were based on traditional musical forms, ordinary village people (especially those of an older generation), whose frame of reference had been largely shaped by earlier colonial experiences might give expression to their agonies and bewilderment over the repercussions of the Rwenzururu conflict, whose ultimate causes they had difficulty comprehending. In contrast, the 'modern' songs, based on melodies that were European adaptations, were typically the products of 'modern' men: schoolteachers, traders and others who were deeply involved in the movement and the politicking about it, and who had begun to participate in a different set of social and economic relationships.

It was by fortunate coincidence that we, the authors of this chapter, encountered each other listening to Rwenzururu songs, though initially out of quite different intellectual interests. One had an interest in Konzo instrumental music, the other in the sources and development of the Rwenzururu movement. Our different perspectives, based in musicology and political sociology respectively, soon merged into a common interest in these Rwenzururu songs and motivated us to research the repertory and its performance context, albeit initially still with a different relevance to each of us. Before long, we found not only that we had embarked upon a joint data-gathering effort, but that the exercise was complementary in yet another respect. The varying interconnections between musical structure and political message which in turn could be traced back to differences of setting: traditional beer parties, primary school instruction and Rwenzururu soldiers' marches, appeared to be of key importance as a line of analysis. As it happened, it was one which we might not have pursued as readily without our respective interests and disciplinary backgrounds.

Nkoya royal chiefs and the Kazanga Cultural Association in Western Central Zambia today: Resilience, decline, or folklorisation?

Wim van Binsbergen[1]

Resilient chieftainship

African traditional leaders, or chiefs, were a showpiece of classic anthropology,[2] and thus revealed the links between both chiefs and anthropology and the colonial project. This may have been an important reason why these chiefs did not feature prominently in the post-colonial blueprints as worked out by constitutionalists and political scientists in the 1950s to the 1970s. The emphasis was on the unitary state with a unique source of authority: the people, whose will was expressed through the regular secret ballot. Chiefs have appeared to exist on a different plane, deriving their authority and power from sources outside the post-colonial nation-state, even if they were co-opted into the latter's institutions through subsidies, state control over procedures of appointment, recognition and demotion, membership of governmental bodies of the modern state sometimes including a House of Chiefs (comparable to a House of Lords, or Senate, in North Atlantic parliamentary democracies), and ceremonial respect shown towards them by state officials. Post-colonial African economies and systems of governance may have declined, but chiefs have often risen to new levels of recognition and power. Nevertheless their position does not systematically derive from, nor coincide with, the constitutional logic of the post-colonial state.

Chiefs in Africa[3] have managed to maintain for themselves a position of respect, as well as influence and freedom of manoeuvre in the wider national society far exceeding their formal powers as defined by post-independence constitutions. This is obviously related to the legitimation gap of a modern bureaucratically organised state based on mere legal authority (Weber 1969), in a social context where for most citizens the ideological, symbolic and cosmological appeal of such legal authority is partial and limited. Considered to be the heirs of precolonial kings, the chiefs are co-opted in order

to lend, to the central state, some of their own legitimacy and symbolic power. By virtue of occupying a pivotal position in the historic cosmology shared by large numbers of villagers and traditionally oriented urban migrants, the chiefs represent a force which modernising state elites have found difficult to bypass or obliterate.

This is only one side of a process of interpenetration of traditional and modern political organisation. It is not only the state which co-opts the chief as an additional power base. On the strength of the respect their traditional position commands, chiefs have also successfully penetrated the state's administrative and representative bodies, thus acquiring de facto power bases in the modern political sector. Of this phenomenon we shall encounter a striking example below, when we examine the many modern offices held by our protagonist, Chief Kahare of Western Zambia, beginning in the 1960s.

Approaches to African chieftainship

Various approaches have been adopted in interpreting the situation of African chiefs (cf. van Binsbergen 2003b).

One of the earliest approaches followed in an endeavour to make sense of the structure of colonial society was *dualism*, which was thought not only to inform the colonial economy for which it was first conceived, but also to apply to the political and legal structure of the colonies; these were thus depicted as *plural societies*, with a hierarchical multitude of ethnically defined socio-political and legal domains, integrated only by the colonial administration (Boeke 1930; Furnivall 1948).

Later the discipline of legal anthropology was to develop the perspective of *legal pluralism*,[4] in order to add subtlety to the concept of the plural society, trace in greater detail its implications in the legal sphere, and extend the analysis to the post-colonial situation and to North Atlantic society. It is as a result of the legal emphasis that the concept of legal pluralism has shed considerable light on the nature of the chief in modern Africa: chiefs are defined as operating at the intersection between modern and traditional systems of constitutional law, with the judiciary being one of their principal spheres of activity.

Another attempt to investigate the situatedness of the chiefs at the intersection of two apparently independent and autonomous systems has been the neo-Marxist theory of the *articulation of modes of production*, according to which each mode of production hinges on its specific logic of exploitation, underpinned by symbolic and legal institutions, while the relationship between modes of production is one of exploitative reproduction; while this approach has also been applied to African chieftainship (Beinart 1985; van Binsbergen and Geschiere 1985a:261–270) and illuminated the economic aspects this phenomenon, it has been less successful in exploring its many other facets.

Both the modes of production approach and the plural society approach have taken for granted – by the assumption of fixed boundaries between fundamentally distinct 'logics' or 'systems' – what perhaps needs most be problematised and explained: the nature of constitutional and legal dualism in modern Africa, and the way in which it is socio-culturally produced and reproduced. Are the boundaries between the traditional politics in terms of which chieftainship defines itself, and the modern state, not situational rather than absolute? Much of the practice of African chieftainship consist s

not in the strict observance but in the manipulation, crossing, even denial of these boundaries. Is the insistence on two different spheres perhaps not so much an analytical fact but an ideological construct of interested actors, waiting to be exploded by scholarly analysis? This leads, as a fourth theoretical variant, to a *transactional approach* to African chieftainship, which traces interactions and relations between the various actors (individual and collective) in the contemporary African states, and beyond the formal features and demarcations of legal systems, traces the actual forms of their material exchanges, power and influence.[5]

In the 1980s African chiefs were rediscovered as exponents of a domain of legal and political relations where the true, richly complex and contradictory nature of contemporary African states could be contrasted with the formal and restrictive models of constitutional legislators and positive political scientists. Here the details of the performance of the African states could be studied, and formal defects as well as informal remedies recognised. This resulted in a limited number of studies of African chieftainship in a transactionalist vein, highlighting the chiefs' continuing and increasing power not only outside but also within post-colonial African states.[6] Such insights also allowed us to reinterpret the position of chiefs under colonialism according to less static models (Chanock 1985; Prins 1980). In the present study the emphasis will likewise be transactionalist, although an underlying theme will be that at the background of such transactions as in fact occur we may yet discern the existence of not two but three fairly distinct socio-political domains: the post-colonial state, the indigenous political system, and civil society.[7]

The present argument

The main purpose of this chapter is to confront the thesis of the resilient chief with a limiting case from Western Central Zambia. After setting the descriptive framework we shall examine in detail the chiefs' power base and their room for manoeuvre. This power base is declining, and the chiefs are desperately experimenting with new strategies in order to survive. They are driven into the arms of new actors on the local scene, against whom they are largely defenceless. One of these new actors is an ethnic voluntary association founded and controlled by the chiefs' most successful urban subjects, often their own kinsmen. This non-governmental organisation (NGO) has been amazingly successful in creating a bridge between indigenous politics and the state through a process of ethnicisation; gradually, however, the revival of chieftainship which this NGO has brought about is turning out to lead not to resilience but to impotent folklorisation, if not annihilation, of chieftainship, and as a result tensions are mounting between chiefs and the ethnic association.

Traditional rulers in Western Central Zambia

Today there are no independent states on the fertile, well-watered, only slightly elevated lands on the Zambezi–Kafue watershed: Western Central Zambia. In around 1850 the several small-scale local states came to be politically and economically incorporated

into the expanding state system of the Kololo (militarily organised South African immigrants who had captured the Luyana state of the Lozi or Barotse, whose centre was the Zambezi flood plain between what are today the towns of Kalabo and Mongu).[8] While the Luyana state was recaptured on the Kololo in 1864, its hold on the local states persisted; it even tightened with the advent, in 1900, of the colonial state, which allowed the indigenous Lozi administration considerable freedom. Only two royal titles in the region managed to survive, as senior royal chiefs, the incorporation into the Lozi state: Mwene ('King') Kahare of the Mashasha people and Mwene Mutondo of the Nkoya Nawiko. The proper name Nkoya originally referred to a stretch of forest near the confluence of the Zambezi and Kabompo rivers, then became the name of a dynasty associated with that area; the latter in turn gave its name to the Mankoya colonial district, and finally the name became an ethnonym for all non-Lozi original (i.e. pre-1900) inhabitants of Mankoya (as from 1969, Kaoma) district. The many other royal titles were replaced by Lozi representatives. Two other royals who were closely related to the Mutondo dynasty in time moved their capitals to outside Barotseland (now Zambia's Western Province): Mwene Kabulwebulwe and Mwene Momba, who from the outset had been recognised by the colonial state in their own right.

A decisive year in the development of 'Nkoya' to a self-assertive ethnic group was 1937, when the Lozi king established, in the middle of Mankoya district, a filial branch of his own court named Naliele[9] in order to control the local chiefs, judiciary and district finance. Another such year was 1947, when Mwene Mutondo Muchayila was demoted and exiled for ten years by the Lozi king on grounds of 'restiveness'. Lozi arrogance, limited access to education and to markets, and the evangelical South African General Mission stimulated a process of ethnic awakening. From the middle of the twentieth century more and more people in eastern Barotseland and adjacent areas came to identify as 'Nkoya'. The usual pattern of migrant labour and urban–rural migration endowed this identity with an urban component, whose most successful representatives distinguished themselves from the rural Nkoya nationals in terms of education, income and active participation in national politics. While the Lozi continued to be considered as the ethnic enemies, a second major theme in Nkoya ethnicity was to emerge: *the quest for political and economic articulation with the national centre*, bypassing the Lozi, whose dominance at the district and provincial level dwindled only slowly.

Since they shared (albeit very modestly) in the Barotse subsidy, in return for which the Lozi king (and his successors, the Lozi paramount chiefs) had accepted incorporation into the colonial state in 1900 and into Zambia in 1964 (cf. Barotseland Agreement, 1964), court culture was preserved through much of the twentieth century at the capitals of Mwene Mutondo and Mwene Kahare. The complex historic organisation of their courts has continued to define such offices as the king (*Mwene*, plural *Myene*), his sisters (*Bampanda wa Mwene*), his wives (*Mahano*), princes and princesses (*Bana Mwene*, any offspring born to the incumbent *Mwene* or previous *Myene* while in office), his prime minister (*Mwanashihemi*), senior councillors with titled ranks as judicial, protocolary and military officers, priests, executioners, musicians and hunters. In addition the court houses clients, many obliquely reputed to be of slave descent. If court offices have continued to be coveted and contested until today, it is not only because they have

offered virtually unique opportunities for salaried employment in the local countryside, but also because the political and symbolic order these offices represent is still vital to the subjects of the *Myene*. As a distinctive physical structure (marked by a royal fence with pointed poles (*lilapa*), within which the *Mwene*'s palace, audience/court room, regalia shelter and royal shrine are situated), a conveniently short distance[10] from the sacred grove where the graves of earlier *Myene* are tended by the court priests, these capitals (*zinkena*, sing. *lukena*) constituted the spatial centres of Nkoya political ideas through much of the twentieth century. The main element of court culture to have disappeared from the surface of traditional politics in the area is human sacrifice, which played a prominent part in the nineteenth century. The Kazanga royal harvest festival, whose falling into disuse during the colonial period is not unrelated to the central role human sacrifice played there, was reinstated only in 1988, in greatly altered form, and not by the chiefs but by an ethnic association enlisting the chiefs' support. Formally, slavery and tribute labour (the two main sources of labour at the *zinkena* in the nineteenth century) lost their legal basis in the 1910s, and in practice they ceased to exist in the 1930s; however, the chief can and still does command inputs of free labour time when it comes to such tasks as the maintenance of the royal fence, the construction of shelters at the *lukena*, and similar productive labour undertaken in the context of development activities (erection of schools, clinics, maintenance of roads) concentrated around the *lukena*. Formal tribute (*ntupu*) is no longer levied by the *Myene*, but in practice the customary greeting of the *Mwene* by villagers and returning urban migrants tends to be accompanied by gifts (still designated *ntupu*) in the form of cash or manufactured liquor, while in local production by villagers around the *lukena* (e.g. beer brewing, the distilling of alcohol, hunting, fishing and agriculture) the *Mwene*'s prerogatives are often acknowledged through a gift of produce. However, in this cash-starved rural environment these material gestures cannot be considered anything but minimal; they no longer come close to the order of magnitude of court–village exploitation in the nineteenth century. Of the military, political, economic and ideological structure of kingship of that time, it is mainly the ideological elements which have persisted, no longer effectively supported by, nor supporting, material exploitation.

Of course, at the end of the twentieth century, it was virtually impossible for the local villagers to maintain the view – which must have correlated closely with the realities of the first half of the nineteenth century – that the *lukena*, in a largely implicit but well-developed ritual, political and economic spatial cosmology, is the hub of the universe. The present-day *Myene* have themselves been active in the outside world, usually pursuing salaried careers there before assuming royal office; and after accession their involvement with distant state institutions, organised on a very different footing from the *lukena*, make it clear that the *lukena* is now largely peripheral to them. Admittedly, most of these royal activities occur outside the gaze of the subjects. The subordination of the *Mwene*'s position is seldom made explicit, instead usually being disguised in traditionalist decorum, with plenty of respectful squatting and hand-clapping on the part of modern state officials and other visiting outsiders. As late as the 1970s many of Mwene Kahare's subjects therefore still cherished the illusion that whenever he was summoned to the national capital of Lusaka to attend a meeting of the House of Chiefs

(an advisory body to the government with hardly any formal powers), he went there 'to rule Zambia'. However, the villagers could not fail to notice that precious few benefits from this 'rule' came their way in the form of improved roads, clinics, produce markets, educational opportunities and so on.

According to a stereotype current in South Central Africa, chiefs are the focus and the leaders of an ethnic group, and guide their subjects in ethnic self-articulation. At first glance, such a situation also obtains in Western Central Zambia. On closer analysis, however, the situation is more complicated. Under the precolonial conditions of the nineteenth century, kings were often ethnic strangers (cultivating a Lunda identity by means, for example, of the Lunda language, allegiance to the Lunda king Mwatiyamvo in what is now Zaire, and circumcision; cf. Bustin 1975), heading multi-ethnic, sprawling and shifting local polities based on tribute, military force, and chief-controlled ritual. Only in the twentieth century did the emergence under the combined efforts of colonial administrators, missionaries and African Christian intellectuals of the concept of 'tribe' produce a situation where the chiefs, as heirs of the precolonial kings, were the administrative and judicial heads of the areas they administered and whose inhabitants came to be conceived as a single entity. The successive incorporation, more or less at minority status, into the wider state systems of the Kololo, Luyana and British, served to blur the cultural and structural distinctions between the 'Nkoya' court and the local villages, since now the court was no longer the exploitative 'other', but the institution from which the local population derived their ethnic name and their increasingly vocal ethnic identity in the context of the inimical and exploitative wider world. Yet the equation of ethnic group and chief was not self-evident, and therefore remained open to challenge or to being ignored by those (such as the Kazanga Cultural Association, as we shall see below) seeking to capture Nkoya ethnicity as a resource for their own political game. In the 1930s and 1940s, the local struggle against the Lozi was largely concentrated at the royal courts. In the process, however, chiefs gradually lost the initiative to church leaders and successful urban migrants – a new elite largely composed of their own junior kinsmen. An ethnic voluntary association, the Kazanga Cultural Association, emerged among successful urban migrants as the latter's main instrument of ethnicisation in the 1980s.

Before we can examine the interaction between chiefs and this NGO, and interpret it in terms of the central theme of African chiefs' performance in today's social and political landscape, let us first discuss the chiefs' power base and, in the next section, the details of the ethnic association.

The chiefs' power base today

The social dynamics relating to Nkoya chieftainship cannot in truth be characterised in terms of resilience. There are signs of attempts at active adaptation to new political and economic conditions, but these are desperate and largely unsuccessful. Often the chiefs are mere marionettes in a play staged by outsiders. This will be clear from the following detailed examination of the chiefs' power base in post-independent Zambia; we shall concentrate on the situation of Chief Mwene Kahare.

The chief among his kinsmen, including royal councillors

Among other roles, the chief is a kinsman. His kinship obligations have a dual effect: they impose upon him, as upon all other heads of families in Zambia today, the burdensome obligation of providing financial resources in a steadily declining economy; but they also remind the chief that as a kinsman he is only the equal or the junior of many of his kinsmen, and has to be heedful of the advice (*ku longesha*) they give, especially that given by those of his kinsmen who are senior headmen themselves.

The very fact that the royal successor is not determined by inflexible rules, but is elected (with candidates being chosen by senior headmen from among half a dozen or so serious contenders, all of them – not necessarily very close – bilateral consanguineal kin of previous incumbents; cf. Figure 10.2) makes the power base of these chiefs in traditional constitutional law relatively weak, and liable to factional machinations from defeated candidates. This is, incidentally, a major reason why the chiefs of this region individually welcomed the protection offered by a superior political power (be it the Lozi king, paramount chief, or the colonial and post-colonial state) from the second half of the nineteenth century.

Membership of the royal council (only its two or three most senior members are remunerated and recognised by the District Secretary) is a prerogative of certain village headmanships; incumbents of any village headmanship are selected by the village's secret council of elders, subject to recognition of a village headman by the chief as holder of the communal land.

Chiefs have always been very much aware of the dangers they are susceptible to at their own court, and it is the duty of the chief's sister to act as cup bearer, tasting all food and beer to ensure that it is not poisoned. Stories of regicide are not entirely a thing of the past.

Mwene Mutondo Chipimbi's autocratic nature

The new chief's failure to accept criticism and to stick to court protocol within a few months created such disenchantment between Mwene Mutondo Chipimbi (elected in 1991) and his councillors that his own and his wife's death within a year of his accession was readily attributed to hostility on the part of his courtiers, culminating in either sorcery or poisoning.

Chief, subjects and land tenure

In the eyes of his subjects, the chief's most obvious characteristic is his hereditary status as legitimate, elected successor to (in fact, the incarnation of) the Kahare title, which is at least 200 years old; this assures him of the unconditional support of his subjects in so far as they have no aspirations to the throne themselves. His royal status has a direct implication for his subjects' access to land as the principal agricultural resource. Despite the reform of land tenure in Zambia in the 1970s, the chief has retained the right to issue land to individuals, regardless of ethnic affiliation, residence or citizenship. This makes him the benefactor (and beneficiary of the usual, irregular, and usually very small tribute in money and alcoholic beverages) not only of his own local people identifying

today as Nkoya, but also of a considerable number of Lozi immigrants who built their village in one of the valleys under chief Kahare's authority. He was also a key figure in the creation of the massive Nkeyema agricultural scheme in 1970. In Kaoma district, agriculture is not practised purely for subsistence; the transition to the production of hybrid maize for the market was being made (albeit on a small scale) in the first decades after independence, with on the average a few bags being produced per household, but owing to the poor performance of the marketing organisation, which never pays up in time, market agriculture of maize has become increasingly unattractive – instead, many peasant farmers have diverted to other cash crops, notably tobacco.

The need to provide cash, coupled with the state's failure to provide a stable and sufficient income, may cause the chief, as the head of the extended family of royal kin (especially classificatory sisters)[11] converging on the palace, to abuse his powers in desperate egoistic acts such as large-scale issuing of land to ethnic strangers, of which we shall see a striking example below.

Judicial aspects

Shortly after independence, Kahare's customary law court was moved dozens of kilometres away from his palace and (like all other chief's courts) placed directly under the supervision of the Ministry of Justice; officially the chief merely retained the right to endorse the appointment of the members of what was henceforth called the Local Court.[12] In the late 1980s a customary court was reinstated at the palace; its members were senior councillors (the chief acting only as a distant advisor not present during the sessions), and although its jurisdiction has been limited and shady, the court has enjoyed great popularity and authority.

The other royal chief in the district

Besides the Lozi chief of Naliele, Kaoma had two royal chiefs identifying as Nkoya. The competitive nature of the relationship between these two royal chiefs meant that – following the rules of a typical zero-sum game situation – one's chief ascendance implied the other chief's decline; even if it did not (specifically, when ascendance was due to new, national-level political resources opening up, outside the district level, so that the zero-sum game situation no longer applied) it was still interpreted in these terms by either chief's subjects. This severely limited the possibility of enlarging the chiefs' power bases by inter-chief alliances.

The Lozi indigenous administration

Gwyn Prins (1980) made a name for himself in African history by proposing a transactional model of active strategy based on the last independent Lozi king, Lubosi Lewanika (1878–1916), in order to supplant the image of passive and impotent submission to the imposition of colonial rule at the turn of the twentieth century. Almost a century later, and encapsulated in the post-colonial state, Lewanika's successor, the Lozi paramount chief, was a prominent member of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church, and in all respects an example of the resilient chief found elsewhere in Africa at the time.

The constraints imposed by the Lozi traditional administration on the chieftainship of Mwene Kahare and Mwene Mutondo are clear from the fact that as from 1994 (when new incumbents acceded to both titles), both royal chiefs and their courts received no remuneration from the state owing to lack of recognition by the Lozi paramount chief: they had refused to go and prostrate themselves before him in the traditional manner. This reflected unprecedented escalation of the Lozi–Nkoya conflict (including a war of newspaper articles; occasional ethnic violence; the manufacture of the major royal drums by the new Mwene Mutondo – the Nkoya chiefs had been denied these drums since the mid-nineteenth century – and the death of chief Litia, attributed to Nkoya sorcery). Lack of recognition by the Lozi paramount chief made it impossible for the Kaoma District Secretary to confirm the new appointments and to pay out the salaries. At the Kahare capital, the musicians were no longer paid and (breaking a virtually unbroken tradition of at least two centuries)[13] they allowed the royal drums to remain silent, except for a few occasions, when a prominent visitor managed to bribe the unemployed and absent musicians to once more go through the motions, for a few minutes, of what used to be an honourable and coveted profession. This stands in sharp contrast with the situation in the early 1970s, when half an hour of ceremonial drumming and singing by the chief's orchestra, every sunrise and every sunset, was the reassuring sign that the king was alive and well. Meanwhile, the paramount chief's court, and the Naliele court, continued up to the 1990s to function as an appeal court in traditional constitutional matters and as the only court where royals could be tried (even in cases involving traditional family law). Subsequently the legitimacy of the Naliele has been called into question to such a degree by Nkoya traditional leaders and their followers that they would rather appeal to the Lozi paramount chief directly, or to representatives of the national state; ethnic and regionalist defiance of Lozi overlordship is not enough to terminate this situation, and even if it did it would leave a legal vacuum of the very sort which caused the colonial administration to create the Naliele court in the first place, in the 1930s.

The modern state

Once recognised by the Lozi paramount chief, the incumbent of the Kahare title further requires the recognition of the president of the republic, who has the new incumbent gazetted as a condition for his remuneration through the District Secretary's office. That office also recognises and pays all other court officials eligible for remuneration. With his virtual monopoly over state motor transport in the district, the District Secretary also regulates the chief's access to governmental bodies and to the outside world at large. In fact, the chief is not allowed to leave his area without formal permission from the District Secretary.

In exchange for this extreme dependence the chief receives a salary far lower than the legal minimum wage in formal sector employment. Moreover, payment of salaries has been dependent upon the availability, at the distant district capital, of cash and transport for the paymaster; arrears of several months have not been unusual. This irregularity, added to the fact that not the chief himself but the District Secretary controls remunerated court appointments has left the chief with little practical power over his

courtiers and their ceremonial and judicial activities. As a result, the chief is in constant financial crisis. His main source of cash for the upkeep of himself and considerable numbers of royal kin is from irregular tribute. In the 1970s chiefs were still heavily involved in hunting and the ivory trade – a remnant of their extensive precolonial rights over natural resources and natural species. By 1990 this source of income had entirely disappeared, owing to the extermination of game in the 1980s (not only by poaching locals but also by ethnic strangers using machine guns), and by the tightening control of the ivory trade under the CITES international treaty.

However, dependence of the chief upon the state at district level used to be only one side of the coin. Between 1960 and the 1980s Chief Kahare held the following impressive modern offices, all of them for many years in succession: he was a Trustee of the United National Independence Party (UNIP, which ruled Zambia between 1963 and 1991), a member of the House of Chiefs, a non-elected member of the Kaoma Rural Council, and a member of the Provincial Development Committee of Western Province. Unfortunately, this substantial power base in the modern state did not survive into the 1990s. The link with UNIP ceased to be an asset when this party lost to Mr Chiluba's Movement for Multi-Party Democracy (MMD) in 1991. His resignation from other modern offices reflects not only the ageing chief's gradual retreat from public life but also the effect of Lozi and Mbunda/Luvale political mobilisation against the Nkoya at the district and provincial level, despite the considerable overall political success of Nkoya ethnic politics from the late 1970s.

Chiefs desperately seeking to enlarge their scope for manoeuvre by embarking on new modes of action

All this suggests that the chief's power base is fairly limited, and declining. He does not have many options for the execution of his own authority. It is remarkable that such attempts as the Nkoya chiefs have shown in recent years to enlarge the scope of their options have all been in the field of nostalgic symbolic production. Principally this includes responses triggered by the successful emergence of the Kazanga Cultural Association; these we shall discuss below. But there were other similar responses in the course of the 1990s.

The initially eager adoption of the format for self-assertion which the Kazanga Cultural Association accorded them suggested that outside the domain of nostalgic symbolic production the chiefs had little scope for manoeuvre. This is also clear from the other initiatives they demonstrated in the mid-1990s.

Mwene Mutondo's new kettledrums (1994)

In 1994 Mwene Mutondo, who had ascended to the throne just a year previously, for the first time since approximately 1850 defied the prohibition imposed by the Lozi indigenous administration and its Kololo predecessor, and ordered major royal kettledrums (*Mawoma*) to be made. Following the surviving traditions to the letter, the drums bore the images of a lizard and a python, crudely carved because woodcarving as a craft disappeared when witchcraft eradication movements in the interbellum resulted in

the permanent removal of virtually all wooden effigies in the region (the only exception of which I am aware being the Mutondo royal shrine). In making the drums, the historic pattern was emulated, down to the sacrifice of two small children to the new drum. While other, minor royal drums are played by court musicians with client status, Mwene Mutondo took it upon himself to beat this central symbol of chieftainship. Significantly, the new drums were kept at the palace for over a year before being exposed to the public gaze at the Kazanga annual festival, organised in the district by the Kazanga Cultural Association from 1988.

Mwene Kahare Kubama sends a punitive expedition (1994)

The year 1994 saw a further emulation of a precolonial historic pattern. Mwene Kahare Kubama, a few months after his accession, was confronted with the usurpation of one of his sub-chieftainships, that of Mwene Kakumba, by a Lozi incumbent who simply ousted the original incumbent. When protests from Mwene Kahare's *Ngambela* (prime minister) were not heeded, Mwene Kahare instructed young men from around his palace to arm themselves, travel to Kakumba's village 35 kilometres away, and remove the Lozi impostor from the sub-chief's palace by force: this was the first punitive expedition (Nkoya: *nzita*; the Sotho/Lozi word *impi* is more familiar) to issue from the palace since the nineteenth century. This was also the first time that ethnic tension in the district actually led to bloodshed. The desperate and unrealistic nature of the attempt is clear from the fact that the dozens of Nkoya men involved in this violent action were arrested, and were still awaiting trial a year later. Clearly the chief could still rely on his subjects as a power base, but to little strategic avail. Yet the move was not totally rejected by the state: the Kaoma District Secretary, who as a Lunda entertained a sense of ethnic affinity with the Nkoya chiefs, issued a decree to the district's Lozi chiefs (apart from the Naliele royal chief) to the effect that they had to obey the Nkoya chiefs as their overlords – in itself a unique triumph for Nkoya anti-Lozi militancy.

That the backward-looking, nostalgic nature of these moves is not incidental, but reflects the general orientation of Nkoya traditional politics of the time, is further brought out by the following case, even though this one involves not a ruling chief, but his son.

An enterprising prince

Mr Daniel Muchayila, in his late thirties, was a son of Mwene Mutondo Muchayila, one of the main heroes of Nkoya identity. Daniel was merely a *Mwana Mwene*, a prince, and on two occasions (1991 and 1993) failed to succeed to his father's throne. This did not prevent him from taking up residence at the new festival grounds which had been created for the Kazanga annual festival, and specifically in the branch court building reserved there for the Mutondo chief and his staff. Here Daniel even tried cases for the benefit of the surrounding villagers, charging fees and fines and keeping the proceeds for himself. Not being a chief, by this action he profaned sacred nature of the Mutondo chief's court at the festival grounds, even if this constituted a totally new situation unforeseen by traditional rules. Although the prince's action had tacitly been condoned by the Mutondo court, the building had to be relinquished. During

the Kazanga festival of 1994 Chief Mutondo had to make use of either of the buildings erected for Mwene Momba and Mwene Kabulwebulwe, who had not been able to attend. It is as if the traditional external forms of the imitation royal courts at the festival grounds demanded to be filled with traditional forms of socio-political behaviour (such as holding court), endowing such forms with a deceptive appearance of reality. Against the background of twentieth-century Nkoya history the episode reminds one inevitably of the establishment, in the 1930s, of the Naliele court – the most hated symbol of Lozi suppression, a branch of the distant Lozi paramount chief's court over which Yeta III appointed his son as branch manager.[14]

Encroaching outsiders

In addition to nostalgic and ineffective ways of responding to the changing political landscape, the chieftainship of Western Central Zambia became the plaything of other categories of actors representing fields of socio-political organisation other than the indigenous political system. The most conspicuous actors in this connection are expatriate commercial farmers, the Seventh-Day Adventist Church, and, of course, the Kazanga Cultural Association.

A short-lived refuge for apartheid

In the early 1990s Mwene Kahare put himself in the debt of a dozen South African white, Afrikaans-speaking commercial farmers, to each of whom he issued a farm (a section of the people's communal land) of the general Zambian standard size of 2 500 hectares, or 25 square kilometres. After surveying this land was to be registered as freehold land in the hands of these stranger entrepreneurs, who with amazing rapidity managed to establish apartheid-style rural labour relations in Mwene Kahare's area. The local peasants were prepared to turn themselves into underpaid farm hands, despite the obsolete and racialist labour conditions offered. Small-scale subsistence and commercial farming were therefore grinding to a halt and entire villages resettled near the farms because they constituted the only source of local cash income. These short-term economic opportunities persuaded the average villagers to accept the alienation of their communal land; protests, and accusations to the effect that the chief had actually sold the land to the immigrant Boers were heard only from educated locals with a senior-ranking urban career behind them and themselves engaging in commercial farming. They realised, more than their kinsmen in the villages, that Nkoya–Lozi ethnic conflict in Zambia's Western Province is increasingly going to be a conflict over arable land as a major economic resource, so that the introduction of a third party, the stranger farmers, in the long run can only be to the detriment of the local peasants. However, despite the increasing influence of South Africa and South Africans on the Zambian economy since the demise of apartheid in the former country, this surprising episode scarcely lasted till the new millennium – compromised and ostracised, the South African adventurers left the area, where land scarcity nonetheless has continued to mount to dramatic proportions.

A paramount chief's church

Another actor on the local scene from 1990 was the Seventh-Day Adventist Church, whose close association with the Lozi paramount chief made it an unwelcome but insistent newcomer in an area in which in the 1920s to the 1950s missionary work had been conducted by the evangelical South African General Mission (from which the Evangelical Church in Zambia developed). From the 1930s a militant Watchtower movement determined the religious identity of selected local villages, where the Roman Catholic Church had also made some inroads following the 1940s, but where by and large cults of affliction and other historic forms of African religiosity constituted the dominant religious expression, extending into the second half of the twentieth century. Near Mwene Kahare's palace, the Seventh-Day Adventist Church quickly completed a self-help clinic project initiated in the late 1970s. In return, the chief, who had attended Evangelical Church in Zambia services prior to a spell of polygamy, had no option but to join the Seventh-Day Adventist Church and to allow his orchestra to be silenced on Saturdays – before the drums were finally silenced throughout the week because the musicians were not paid.

A group which significantly scarcely bothered to woo the chiefs was national and regional politicians. The end of the Kaunda/UNIP administration and the coming to power of Chiluba/MMD in 1991 further opened national opportunities for the Nkoya; they obtained one fully fledged Nkoya MP for one of the district's three wards, and one MP/junior minister (who was half Nkoya, half Mbunda) for another. The third ward was carried by a candidate representing the Luvale, Mbunda, Chokwe and Luchazi groups[15] which since the 1920s had immigrated into the district and were then numerically dominant. To campaign for votes, and to achieve a permanent following on a regional and ethnic basis, the political new men of the MMD government from 1991 made a point of visiting the chief's capitals from time to time, kneeling and clapping hands in ceremonial respect, and leaving some tribute. It was however clear to them that the key to voter support was no longer to be found at the chiefs' capitals but at the meetings of farmers' co-operatives and development committees both in the villages and at the Nkeyema agricultural scheme, and among the politically ambitious chiefs' relatives who, after successful careers in the urban formal sector, had returned to the district to be commercial farmers. The latter dominated the executive meetings and the massive annual festival arranged by the Kazanga Cultural Association, the ethnic association in which local ethnic resentment is concentrated. At the highest national level a similar attitude towards the chiefs could be discerned when, in 1993, Brigadier-General G. Miyanga, as Minister without Portfolio and occupying the third most important position in the Zambian government, went on a fact-finding mission to Kaoma district in order to ascertain the extent of Lozi–Nkoya ethnic conflict. The trip was covered extensively on Zambian television,[16] in a way which was greatly biased towards the Nkoya point of view. Chiefs' capitals were visited, but most time was spent with vocal, educated Nkoya familiar with court circles but with an open eye to the wider world, and prominent in the Kazanga Cultural Association.

The Seventh-Day Adventist Church was neither the first nor the most conspicuous NGO to encroach on the Nkoya chieftainship. With their limited and dwindling power

base, the failure of nostalgic initiatives to enlarge it, and being exploited, bullied or ignored by outside actors, the chiefs of Western Central Zambia at first welcomed the initiatives of the Kazanga Cultural Association as a possible solution to the predicament of having to adapt to current political and economic circumstances.

The Kazanga Cultural Association

The birth of the Kazanga Cultural Association

In post-colonial South Central Africa, ethnic associations have been somewhat less conspicuous than in the colonial period. The colonial state was suspicious of all forms of African self-organisation which might have political implications, and became all the more so during the struggle for independence in the 1950s and early 1960s. The post-colonial state, whose functioning was based on alliances between broad regionalist blocks, feared expressions of what was then called 'tribalism' on the ground that they might upset that delicate balance – although they were discouraged in the name not of existing ethnic relations, but of a pretended constitutional universalism which supposedly rendered all ethnic particularism anathema. In the first fifteen years of independence open expressions of ethnicity were therefore frowned upon, and if they involved a small and powerless minority such as the Nkoya, effectively discouraged. A number of factors, however, made it possible for a thinly disguised ethnic association such as the Kazanga Cultural Association to be registered in 1980s:

- the awareness that small local ethnic movements could erode far more powerful ethnic blocs (especially the Lozi) opposing the ruling ethnic alliances at the state's centre;

- the rise to prominence of one Nkoya politician, Mr J. Kalaluka, which in itself reflected the previous point;

- the growing awareness among Zambian politicians and UNIP party ideologists that controlled expression of ethnic identity could have an integrative rather than a divisive effect on the nation-state;

- the achievement of state recognition, the central goal of ethnic minority expressions, as a means of winning precious votes in a situation of political and economic decline, such as UNIP was facing in the 1980s.

For a long time the urban component of the village community was not formalised into an ethnic association. Only in 1982 did the Kazanga Cultural Association materialise as a formally registered society under the patronage of the Nkoya minister. This was an initiative of a handful of people from Kaoma district who, by the time they reached middle age, had against all odds made the grade from insecure circulatory migrant labourer to member of the capital's middle class. With the drop in copper prizes in 1975 Zambia entered into a crisis which, in essence (despite some redress in the 2000s) has lasted until today. Therefore, even the urban middle class could not ignore the economic developments which were in the meanwhile taking place in Kaoma district.

Some returned to the district forever; others started a farm there but continued to live in town. Their enthusiasm for the Nkoya identity, which became ever more clearly articulated, and whose political and (through access to rural land and labour) economic potential they more and more appreciated, brought these urbanites in close contact with the district's political elite, according them new credit in the eyes of the villagers from whom they had previously become distanced through their class position and urbanisation. From the eighteenth-century name of a forest, via that of a nineteenth-century dynasty and an early twentieth-century colonial district, the name Nkoya had developed to designate an ethnic group found in several districts, and at the same time a language, a culture, and a cultural project intended to articulate this newly emerged group at the regional and national level.

Founded in the Zambian capital, Lusaka, in 1982, the Kazanga Cultural Association provided an urban reception structure for prospective migrants, contributed to Nkoya Bible translation and the publication of ethnic history texts, championed existing and dormant local chieftainships, and within various political parties and publicity media, campaigned against the Lozi and for the Nkoya cause. The association's main achievement, however, has been the annual organisation since 1988 of the Kazanga festival, in the course of which a large audience (including Zambian national dignitaries, the four Nkoya royal chiefs, people identifying as Nkoya, and outsiders), for two days has been treated to an overview of Nkoya songs, dances and staged rituals. What we have here is a form of bricolage and invention of tradition (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983). I have described the contemporary Kazanga festival in chapter 8. In the present context, it is important to look at the association behind the festival.

The Kazanga Cultural Association as a formal organisation

The Kazanga Cultural Association is a society registered under the Zambian Societies Act, and as such is an NGO of the type so much stressed in Africanist literature of the 1990s. Its formal nature, however, is largely illusory. The association has no paying members and no membership list. Its minimal financial resources derive from voluntary individual contributions, mainly from the members of the executive themselves, who in this way gain popularity and influence. On the other hand, an executive position accords one a minimal source of income via expense accounts. The Societies Act requires an annual general meeting, which is held on the evening of the second day of the Kazanga festival. In the absence of a membership list and the payment of fees, this is in practice a meeting not of members, but merely of several dozens of interested persons. Executive elections mean that from these several dozens of interested persons groups of ten people are formed according to place of residence or of origin. Depending on which people happen to be present, such a group may comprise representatives from a few neighbouring villages, from an entire valley, from an official polling district as delineated by the Zambian state for the purpose of official elections, from a town in Line of Rail (the urban areas of central Zambia), or even from the entire Line of Rail. With greater or lesser privacy these groups cast their votes for the available candidates, the votes are counted and the result announced over the festival's intercom system, after which the departing executive leaves under a burden of scorn and shame, while the new

executive is formally installed and treats the voters to a 200-litre drum of traditional beer.

As what is in essence a self-financing clique of successful urbanites and post-urbanites, the executive of the Kazanga Cultural Association has a strong class element, which I have already stressed in my analysis of the Kazanga festival proper. Only Nkoya who are high ranking in terms of education, formal sector career, church leadership, entrepreneurship and wealth are eligible as candidates for the executive. Traditional status, including royal birth or esoteric knowledge, does not qualify. In principle all male Nkoya, regardless of status, have a right to vote for the executive, but in practice only a few score do so: these are those who have the stamina to spend another night at the festival grounds after the two days of the festival, and have cash to pay for transport home or have friends who offer to provide such transport. The class element in the Kazanga executive is further reflected in the shift, during the Kazanga annual general meeting of 1994, away from an executive dominated by respected and educated, but economically insecure urban dwellers, and towards an executive whose chairman and secretary are successful entrepreneurs who have retired to the district after a brilliant career.

The composition of the Kazanga executive

The national chairman for the period 1988 to 1991 was Mr M. Malapa, who, after an urban career as a state-registered nurse, retired to Lukulu as a peasant farmer aspiring to establish a rural barber shop. He was succeeded by Mr W. Kambita, a town-dwelling elderly lay pastor of the Evangelical Church in Zambia without a personal source of income; Mr Kambita's national secretary was Mr W. Shihenya, a town-dwelling former accountant without a permanent source of income. Both Mr Kambita's son and Mr Shihenya's wife were employed in junior positions with the Zambia Educational Publishing House, formerly the Kenneth Kaunda Foundation, and a UNIP stronghold. The election of the 1994 national executive marked not only a move from town to rural district, but also to far higher levels of career achievement (the new national chairman, Mr Mayowe, being a former managing director of a parastatal, and his national secretary, Mr Lutangu, a former District Secretary) and wealth (Mr Mayowe operated a commercial farm and a bar, and had a lucrative trade in fertiliser; Mr Lutangu owned a thriving grocery store in Kaoma township; moreover, both drew substantial pensions and earned rent from a formal-sector urban house).

The political agenda of the Kazanga Cultural Association

From all the attention to ethnic cultural production at the Kazanga festival, it is clear that the Kazanga executive has never lost sight of the fact that the festival is primarily an attempt to exchange the one resource that is locally abundant, competence in symbolic production, for political and economic power. The national dignitaries, and not the royal chiefs, let alone the audience, constitute the spatial focus of the Kazanga festival, and a large part of the programme is devoted to the dignitaries' welcome speeches and other formal addresses. Since the political arena is indeed the right place (and not

only in Zambia) to exchange symbolic production for development projects, political allocation and patronage, the harvest of the series of Kazanga festivals since 1988 is by now eminently manifest in a marked increase in Nkoya participation at the national level, in representative bodies and in the media, and in a marked decrease in the stigmatisation to which they used to be subjected under Lozi domination until well after independence. Kazanga is an example of how an ethnic group can not only articulate itself through symbolic production, but may actually improve its situation.[17]

In 1992 the state delegation to the Kazanga festival was led by the Cabinet Minister for Education, the Hon. Arthur Wina M.P., a Zambian politician of very long standing, son of a former Lozi *Ngambela*, and in the early years a member of President Chiluba's MMD cabinet. In his speech, Minister Wina explicitly joked that, with the recent shortage of water in the Zambezi flood plain (location of the Lozi paramount chief's residences), there was little point in attending the annual Lozi Kuomboka ceremony marking the paramount chief's annual move to higher ground in anticipation of the rising of the Zambezi river, and that the Kazanga festival provided an adequate alternative. This was coded language understood by the audience as a pronouncement on the limits, if not decline, of Lozi power under MMD conditions (although Mr Wina and Mbikusita-Lewanika, the grandson of a former Lozi king, were clear examples of Lozi ethnic prominence in MMD circles, dominated, however, by the Bemba ethnic coalition). Minister Wina's statement was interpreted as a sign of full acceptance of Nkoya ethnic aspirations after Mr Kaunda's political demise, and of the fact that the Kazanga leaders were taken seriously by the state.

The members of the association's executive usually had a solid urban career and, for their generation (born in the early 1940s), a fair level of education. This made them adept at manipulating bureaucracies and politicians. At the same time they tended to be the close relatives of the chiefs, usually having spent their early childhood at chiefs' capitals, and having kept up contact with the courtly milieu to a sufficient extent to be accepted and understood there. This put them in the unique position of being able to mediate between chiefs and state bureaucracies, or in general between the outside world of modern political and economic life, and the narrow horizon of the village society. Since village society contained, in addition to chiefs whose powers were evidently declining, large numbers of voters, as well as potential rural workers and clients of rural divisions of bureaucracies, politicians had an interest in honouring the invitations to the annual Kazanga festival extended to them by the Kazanga executive; moreover, the respectful treatment and the colourful ceremony awaiting them there made their trip worthwhile.

Why a formal organisation? Ethnicisation and structural bridging

Kazanga's political agenda, however, could only be conceived and executed within the wider framework of ethnic processes in Zambia, and throughout sub-Saharan Africa, in the post-colonial period.

The formula of ethnic self-presentation through an annual cultural festival built, with much bricolage, out of an historic ritual, has been generally adopted in Zambia today. The television audience is regularly reminded of a growing series (now nearly a dozen) of

regional festivals similar to Kazanga. Since all these festivals are created and maintained by ethnic associations, this reveals a recent revival of such formal organisations, which lie at the heart of current ethnicisation processes in Zambia (cf. van Binsbergen 2008).

Ethnicisation constructs ethnonyms so as to mark ethnic boundaries and pre-existing culture so as to fall within those boundaries and to offer distinctive boundary markers. The cultivated sense of a shared history makes sense of experiences of powerlessness, deprivation and estrangement, and kindles hope for improvement through ethnic self-presentation. The ethnonym and the principle of ascription governing ethnic group membership by birth then produce for the actors the image of a bounded set of people. The vulnerable individual's access to national resources, and the formal organisations (in state and industry) controlling them, become the object of group action. In post-colonial Central Africa, ethnicisation increasingly includes cultural politics. A set of people is restructured so as to become an ethnic group by designing a cultural package which in its own right constitutes a major stake in the negotiations with the outside world. One dissociates from rival ethnic groups at the local and regional level through a strategic emphasis on cultural and linguistic elements; and at the national level one competes for the state's political and economic prizes via the state's recognition of the ethnically constructed cultural package. New intra-group inequalities emerge. The mediation takes place via brokers who are in a better position than their fellow members of the ethnic group to exploit the opportunities at the interface between ethnic group and the outside world. Asserting the 'traditional', 'authentic' (but in fact newly reconstructed) culture is an important task and a source of power and income for the brokers. Ethnic associations, publications, and festivals constitute general strategies in this process.

Ethnicity displays a remarkable dialectic between inescapability and constructedness, which largely explains its great societal potential. On the one hand, as a classification system ethnicity offers a logical structure, which is further ossified through ascription and which presents itself as unconditional, bounded, inescapable and timeless. This is what caused early researchers of Central African ethnicity to stress *primordial attachments*. On the other hand, the social praxis of ethnicity as ethnicisation means flexibility, choice, constructedness and recent change. Together, these entirely contradictory aspects constitute *a device to disguise strategy as inevitability*. This dialectic renders ethnicity particularly suitable for mediating, in processes of social change, between social contexts each having a fundamentally different structure. Because of this internal contradiction, ethnicity offers the option of strategically effective particularism in a context of universalism, and hence enables individuals, as members of an ethnic group, to cross otherwise non-negotiable boundaries and to create a foothold or niche in structural contexts that would otherwise remain inaccessible; this is how recent urban immigrants (cf. urban markets of labour and housing) and citizens (cf. bureaucracies) use ethnicity.

Ethnicisation amounts to a conceptual and organisational focusing or framing, so as to make a social contradiction or conflict capable of being processed within the available technologies of communication, bureaucratic organisation, and political representation. The emergence of ethnic associations is one example at the organisational level.[18] What the Kazanga Cultural Association basically does is to provide an organisational

framework that constitutes a bridge between the state on the one hand, and indigenous politics (and the rural society that it stands for) on the other.

At this point, as we aim at structural interpretation, our analysis proceeds beyond the transactionalism that has so far guided it. We are pressed to admit that in fact the state on the one hand, and the chiefs (and the rural society they stand for) on the other, while in constant interaction (which makes for merging and blurring of boundaries in actual political and economic practice), nevertheless at a level of theoretical reflection represent fundamentally different modes of socio-political organisation. A full discussion of this point would have to go far deeper into the problem of the post-colonial African state than is possible in this chapter; suffice it to say that this central problem lies in the discrepancy between model and practice. However, this does not render a model-oriented approach irrelevant, as long as we realise that it can only set the formal framework for actual socio-political practice without describing and explaining its concrete details. The following table presents the outline of a model which sums up the structural differences between chiefs and the post-colonial state:

Table 10.1   A model contrasting chiefs and the post-colonial state

Chiefs	Postcolonial state
Traditional authority	Legal authority (the letter of the written word)
Personal	Impersonal
Particularist	Universalist
Considered as local	Imported within living memory
Considered as culturally familiar, self-evident	Culturally alien
Self-evident legitimation	Defective legitimation
Cosmological anchorage	Lack of cosmological anchorage

This model makes clear that the Kazanga executive as brokers are truly bridging two fundamentally different structures. Against the background of African ethnicity and ethnicisation, it is no surprise that they do so in an idiom of ethnicisation.

The important thing to realise is that such bridging is not only, not even primarily, effected at the conceptual level, for as a system of concepts, the model presented in Table 10.1 contrasts two domains whose differences no effort of thought or symbolising can overcome. What is needed is the negotiation of conceptual boundaries *through concrete interaction*, where objects and people are positioned at the conceptual boundaries between two systems, where they can serve as interfaces between the two. In the dialectic of social praxis, first of all conceptually different domains are drawn within such contradictory perceptions, motivations and exchanges as each single actor is capable of; second, these contradictions are to be made convergent, predictable, and persistent over time by their being imbedded in the social organisation of the individual actors. In other words, structural bridging inevitably requires, beyond conceptualisation, effective social organisation. The modern formal organisation corresponds morphologically with the organisational logic of the state; at the same time, in the field of ideology and

symbolism it can maintain as much continuity as is needed with regard to structural domains that are conceived according to a logic totally different from that of the state (such as chieftainship). Therefore the mode of mobilisation which structurally bridges state and chiefs had to take the form of a formal voluntary association.

Let us now examine what in practice came of such bridging, by considering the actual interaction between the Kazanga Cultural Association and the chiefs of Western Central Zambia.

The Chiefs and the Kazanga Cultural Association

Royal cultural revival in the Kazanga festival

Until reaching a point of disaffection, which occurred in 1995, the chiefs sought to use the Kazanga Cultural Association for their own self-presentation. However, the complementary process was even more manifest: the attempt on the part of the Kazanga Cultural Association to use, increasingly even to harness, chieftainship for its own combined purpose of ethnic articulation, access to the state, and personal ascendance in terms of political and economic power and influence on the part of the association's executive.

Kazanga's effective negotiation between the state, the chieftainship and the villagers insisted on a new symbolic and ceremonial role for all four Nkoya kings together along lines which were all bricolage and thoroughly un-historical, but which did result in restoring the kings to a level of emotional and symbolic significance perhaps unprecedented in twentieth-century Nkoya history. At the annual Kazanga festival, the chiefs grasped the opportunity to appear with all the regality they could summon and their paraphernalia could earn them. Mwene Kahare, who used to be a somewhat pathetic, stammering and alcoholic figure dressed in a faded suit with ragged shirt collar, finally, in his seventies, appeared at the 1992 Kazanga festival dressed in leopard skins and wearing a headband adorned with regal *zimpande* shell ornaments – regalia he had probably not worn since his installation in 1955 – formidably brandishing his royal axe in a solo dance that took the audience's breath away and moved them to tears. At the climax the king (for that is what he showed himself to be, in a performative revival of early nineteenth-century royal autonomy and splendour) knelt down and drank directly from a hole in the ground where beer had been poured out for his royal ancestors – the patrons of at least his part of the Nkoya nation, drawn in to share in the deeply emotional cheers from the audience.

The successful emergence of the Kazanga Cultural Association initially promised to offer the chiefs an opportunity for self-assertion that accorded with their anti-Lozi sentiments. However, the competition between the two Nkoya chiefs from Kaoma turned out to be a very severe constraint in this respect. The first few Kazanga festivals were staged at Mwene Mutondo's capital, and were thus interpreted as a sign of his seniority over Kahare and over other royal chiefs from outside Kaoma district. A truce was struck through the adoption of new, special festival grounds on the boundary between the chiefs' areas. However, this led to further complications, as the above case of Mr Daniel Muchayila demonstrates.

Gradually, Mutondo dominance over the Kazanga festival and over Nkoya ethnicisation in general dwindled. The suspiciously untimely death of Muchayila's successor, Mwene Chipimbi, in 1992 prevented Mutondo control over that year's festival (a successor is seldom installed within a year), and rendered the Mutondo *lukena* inappropriate as festival grounds during the time of mourning. Mwene Kahare's royal dance centred on a shrine situated at the hub of the festival grounds; but it was no longer the thatched shrine of the Mutondo dynasty, nor the Kahare dynasty's own wooden pole adorned with buffalo trophies, but a neutral shrub of the type found, as headman's shrine, in most Nkoya villages.

The traditionalist revival as achieved by the Kazanga Cultural Association was not limited to Nkoya circles and Western Zambia, as the following case reveals.

Kazanga, and Soli ethnic revival in Central Zambia

One of the most interesting developments relating to Kazanga occurred in Lusaka in 1995. The Kazanga band under the direction of Mr Tom Taulo, the composer and dance leader, also gave paid guest performances in beer gardens and so on in the Lusaka area. This made the band so popular that the Kazanga Cultural Association was invited to play a major advisory role in the creation of the first Soli ethnic festival at Undaunda, a hundred kilometres east of Lusaka. After extensive preparatory meetings, during which the experiences of the Kazanga Cultural Association since 1982 were lavishly shared, both the band and the executive of the association's Lusaka branch were important official guests at the actual festival in October 1995, almost a hundred years after Mwene Mutondo Wahila, in the context of a diplomatic exchange, had paid a state visit to the Soli queen Nkomeshya five hundred kilometres away. In subsequent years, mutual visiting between Nkoya and Soli at each others' annual traditional ceremony was established on a regular basis, and the notion of an alliance between distinct though kindred ethnic groups is giving way to one proclaiming Nkoya political and political precolonial presence to have extended throughout Central Zambia, including the Soli region (whose extent is commonly considered to range from the Mwembeshi River west of Lusaka to the Luangwa River separating the country's Central and Eastern Provinces). We are witnessing here the formation of a single large ethnic coalition (a 'mega-ethnic group') encompassing the whole of Central Zambia. The name 'Kafue' was suggested, not only because this is the major river in that region, but also because this was the historic name of various colonial administrative centres at various locations between Lusaka and Kaoma district.

The Kazanga Cultural Association was also instrumental in reviving royal titles which did not survive Lozi expansion around 1900: the Shakalongo title, once senior to both Kahare and Mutondo, had for many years been carried by a mere village headman, but was reinstated as that of a royal chief; and the reinstatement of Mwene Pumpola in Lukulu district has been a topic of discussion for decades. The Kazanga annual festival offered these new chiefs the opportunity to articulate themselves publicly, even if this meant that for a while they had to make do with a cosmopolitan three-piece suit instead of leopard skins and other historic paraphernalia. However, their formal recognition

and remuneration depended on the Lozi paramount, whose refusal we have already discussed above.

Interestingly, the traditionalist and *Mwene*-oriented stance of the Kazanga society enables its leaders to draw on this same reservoir of tribute-related labour for the construction and maintenance of its festival grounds, not only when these were still situated at the *lukena* of Mwene Mutondo, but also when subsequently the festival was moved to a new site equidistant from the capitals of Mutondo and Kahare – which involved the major task of clearing the new site and erecting the branch palaces and the spectators' shelters.

In the wake of the enthusiasm engendered by the first years of the Kazanga festival, it gradually became clear that the executive of the Kazanga Cultural Association sought to use chieftainship to achieve their own ends rather than furthering it as the hub of Nkoya ethnic identity, which is what the chiefs and their councillors had been led to expect. The staging of the festival was revised so as to make clear that not Mwene Mutondo, nor the royal chiefs collectively, but the association's executive was hosting the festival; by 1993 the chiefs saw themselves reduced to the status of picturesque ornaments who had to put in a ceremonial appearance, avowedly as exalted guests of honour, but in fact as the most senior *performers* at the festival, who, imprisoned in their royal shelter, next to that of the national and regional politicians, did not even have a chance to engage in conversation with the latter.

Interaction between chiefs and the Kazanga executive beyond the Kazanga festival

The interaction between the Kazanga Cultural Association and the chiefs was not limited to the Kazanga festival, but gradually extended to traditional politics at the chiefs' capitals themselves. Against the background of the post-colonial state and Zambian civil society, an extremely complex pattern emerged, whose outlines are presented in Figure 10.1.

A number of specific cases reveal that the Kazanga Cultural Association tried not only to further and revise, but actually to control chieftainship, and that this attempt was thwarted by the traditional guardians of that institution, the royal councils.

The election of Mwene Mutondo Chipimbi and its aftermath

A life-long town dweller and a middle-ranking officer with a Zambian parastatal, Mwene Mutondo Chipimbi was initially one of the founding members of the Kazanga Cultural Association in 1982. His accession to the throne in 1991 was the result of insistent campaigning by the association's executive during the royal electoral process following the death of the aged Mwene Mutondo Muchayila in 1990. As we have seen, Mwene Chipimbi's untimely death (and that of his wife around the same time, which others attributed to lack of resistance to malaria, as they had been town dwellers) was interpreted as sign that the senior headmen greatly resented this intrusion on the part of town-dwelling careerists into rural traditional politics. His death was one of the reasons why the Kazanga festival had to be moved from the Mutondo capital, where the Kazanga

Figure 10.1: Post-colonial state, indigenous political system and civil society: The background to political relations between Chief Kahare and the Kazanga Cultural Association executive
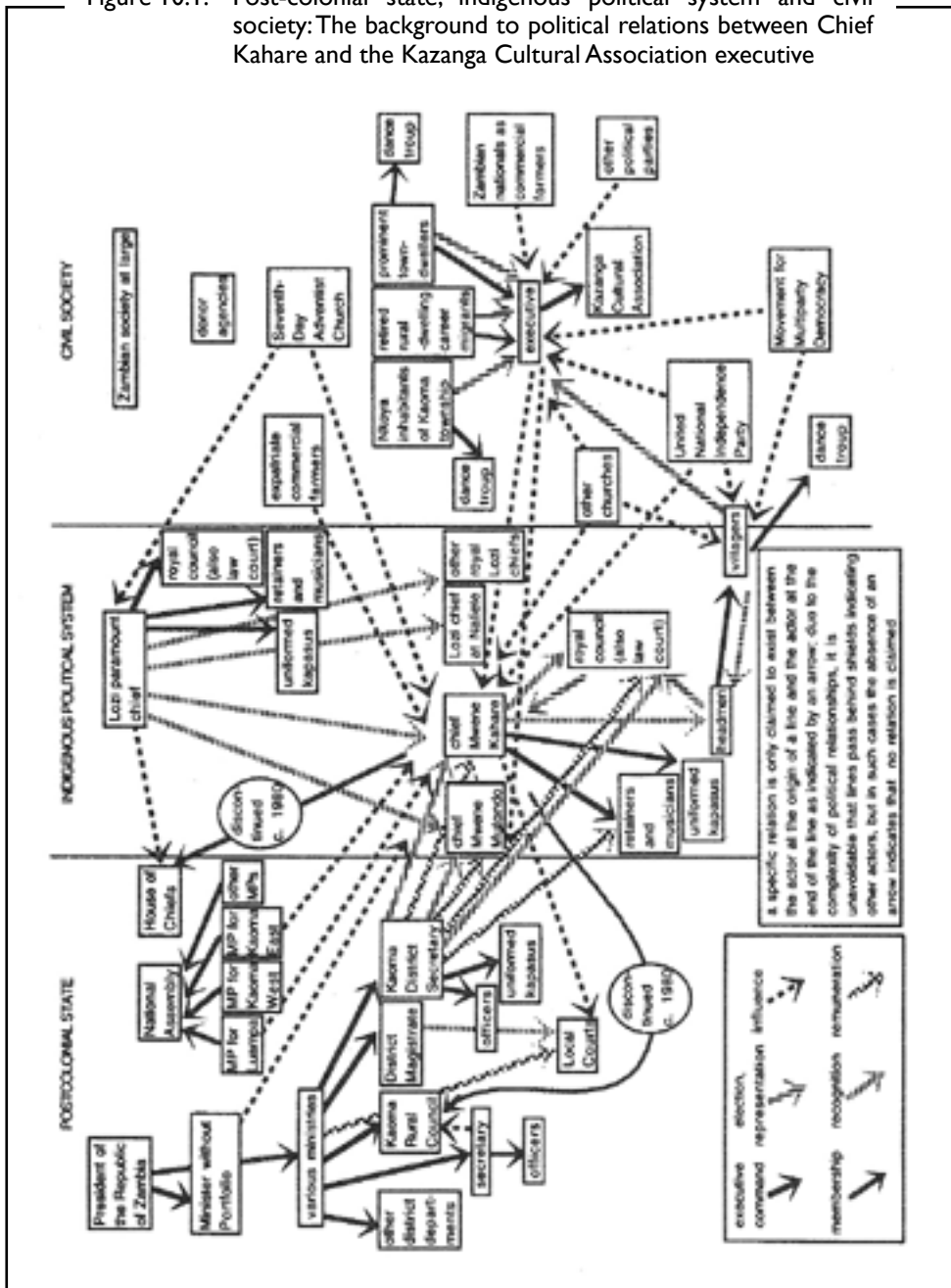
executive during unavoidable personal and official visits in 1992 to 1993 literally feared for their lives. Initially, of course, the Mutondo courtiers refused to attend Kazanga at the new festival grounds in a form which so effectively denied Mutondo hegemony. However, the Kazanga executive managed to bring a high-powered government delegation to the Kazanga festival of 1992, and made it clear to the Mutondo courtiers

that their staying away would be interpreted by the new government as an anti-MMD demonstration and might therefore have unpleasant consequences. From being a distant enemy, the state had become an ally; and from being introverted and divisive, ethnicity, at least in the form of ethnic mediation it assumed in Kazanga, came to combine inward symbolic reconstruction with confident participation in the national space. But although a success from the point of view of the Nkoya ethnicisation project, its price was that the Kazanga executive had to openly deploy their state resources against the chief's council, thus revealing the contradictions between executive and chieftainship despite the former's furthering of chieftainship on less conflictive occasions.

The Kazanga executive at the Kabulwebulwe capital

Outside Kaoma district, at the Kabulwebulwe capital in Mumbwa district, where most of the Kazanga executive were strangers, they fared much better. They played a significant part in the election of the new Chief Kabulwebulwe in Mumbwa district in 1994, and were guests of honour at both the funeral of the previous incumbent and at the installation ceremony of his successor.

In the same year the throne of Mwene Kahare had to be filled after the aged Mwene Kahare Kabambi died in December 1993, after having ruled for 39 years. Here again, as at the court of Mutondo, the Kazanga Cultural Association's campaign was intended to gain direct control over the chieftainship, but failed.

The Kazanga executive and the succession of Mwene Kahare

During the final two months of the electoral process early in 1994, the list of possible candidates had been reduced to just four names (cf. Figure 10.2):

- Mr J. Kalaluka (a former MP, former cabinet minister and former ambassador, awaiting trial for embezzlement, which forced him to leave state service; commercial farmer; son of a Lozi father but, like the other three remaining candidates, raised at the Kahare court and locally identifying as Nkoya; founding patron of the Kazanga Cultural Association);

- Mr D. Kabanga (a retired state-registered male nurse, former UNIP ward chairman in Lusaka, member of the Kazanga executive 1989–93, at the time a village farmer);

- Mr Kubama Kahare (peasant farmer from Namwala district; belonging on his mother's side to the Kambotwe/Shipungu line from the Kawanga valley, Kaoma district, who were the original owners of the Kahare royal title); and

- Mr S. Mayowe (a retired former manager of Lake Fisheries, a major parastatal; former member of the Kaoma rural council; commercial farmer; bar owner; general entrepreneur; Kaoma representative of the National Party (a Lozi-dominated opposition party); and member of the executive of the Kazanga Cultural Association).

Figure 10.2: Simplified genealogy illustrating the succession of Mwene Kahare Kabambi (1994 contenders for the chieftainship in italics; actual royal incumbents in capitals)
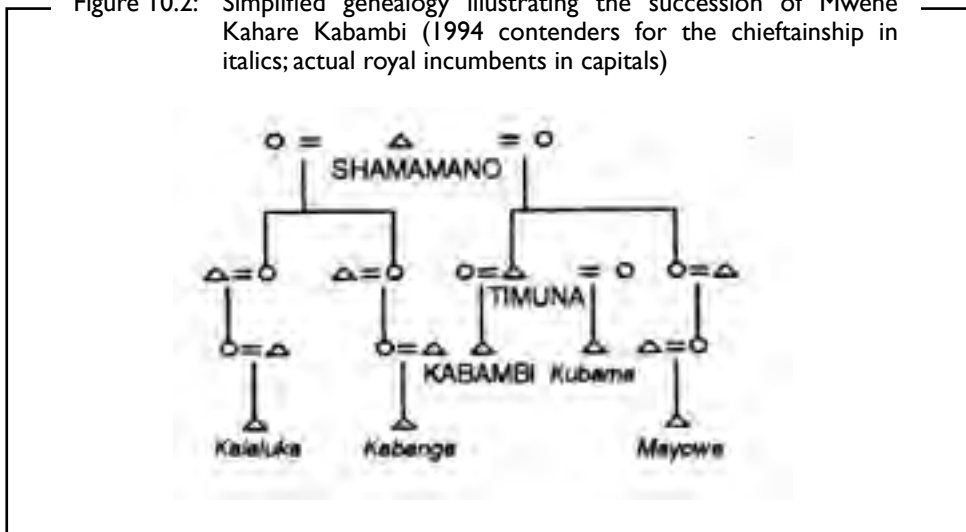
Campaigning involved conspicuous gift-giving to senior councillors and to royal women at the court, allegations of witchcraft, and so on. Mr Mayowe, accused of having caused through sorcery the death of Kabambi, with whom he had repeated quarrelled over land issues, found that he lacked support, withdrew his candidacy and openly backed Kubama as the obvious and ideal traditional choice; Mayowe thus hoped to enhance his chances of succeeding Kubama, who was already in his mid-sixties and reputed to be in poor health. Mr Kabanga was the least likely candidate of the four, for lack of wealth, ancestry and achievements. Mr Kalaluka, whose genealogical position was similar to that of Mr Kabanga, had already told his friends among the Lusaka elite that he was going to spend the rest of his life as a genuine chief, when the elders rejected him in favour of Mr Kubama. The latter lacked personal wealth, but his three sons held solid positions in government and industry, his fierce and upright character recalled that of his father, Mwene Kahare Timuna, and considering his mother's ancestry he was indisputably the rightful owner of the title, even in the eyes of those senior headmen who still resented the title's usurpation by Mwene Timuna's father, Mwene Shamamano in the 1880s. When, a few months later, Mr Mayowe was elected national chairman of the Kazanga Cultural Association it was clear that the association, while playing a major role in the election of Chief Kubama, had given up hopes of controlling the chieftainship directly, but instead had opted for a division of labour between complementary sectors of modern and traditional politics, with close kin relations and trust between the leaders on both sides.

It is interesting to note how the contradictions between the royal courts and the Kazanga Cultural Association which became manifest in the course of the 1990s also have complements in the religious and political affiliations of the people involved on either side. The MMD had a strong appeal among aspiring urbanites, the very category making up the Kazanga executive. By contrast, the chiefs' courts largely remained loyal to what over the years had emerged as their main ally in the struggle against the Lozi:

UNIP and its leader Kaunda, who in 1990 had prevented a move by the Lozi paramount chief to abolish the Nkoya chieftainships. Mr Mayowe meanwhile dabbled in opposition politics and in 1994 was the district representative of the National Party, which carried the Mongu by-elections in early 1994; this lonely political stance in a UNIP-oriented rural environment helped to tip the scales against him in the royal election. In the religious field Lozi/chief antagonism was temporarily suspended when Mwene Kahare welcomed the oppressive intervention on the part of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church; however, most of the Kazanga executive remained loyal to the Evangelical Church in Zambia, the first missionary presence in the region, since it had provided their formal education.

The breaking point in the relations between the chiefs and the Kazanga Cultural Association was reached in 1995.

The 1995 conflict between chiefs and the Kazanga executive

On the first day of the 1995 festival the chiefs refused to return to the shelter after lunch, under the pretext that the royal wives had not been accommodated with them in the royal shelter but had been seated, with other prominent commoners, on the seats provided along the perimeter of the arena, in the July mild winter sun. Both *Myene* were new incumbents, who had been installed less than two years previously, and had participated in only one Kazanga festival. In the earliest Kazanga festivals, the *Myene* were old men without formal royal wives; on the occasion of the 1991 festival, Mwene Mutondo Chipimbi had just acceded to the throne, and his wife was already seriously ill: this issue of protocol had therefore not arisen before. For most of the remaining programme the 1995 proceedings took the form of a different historic Nkoya performance: the court case. The conflict destroyed the 1995 festival; visitors left in anger.

Various contradictions can be identified:

- Gender, now beginning to be a modern political issue in this rural area, had always been an underlying current in local chieftainship: in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, all *Myene* were women.

- As originally observed in the nineteenth century, the Kazanga festival had been a celebration of viable royalty, of the kingdom, not as a mere nostalgic production of performative fragments (as the festival became under the direction of the Kazanga Cultural Association).

- Conflict between court officials and Kazanga officials, in that the court officials felt that their power over chieftainship was being usurped by the Kazanga executive, and sought to reclaim control by insisting on proper protocol.

These senior headmen may have spent many years in distant urban employment, but in middle age could afford no commitment other than the preservation of *shihemuwa shetu*, 'our custom'. Far from being a dying concern, traditional politics (even if no longer remunerated) remained an important career goal for many men from Western Central Zambia.

The interaction between the Kazanga Cultural Association and the chiefs has clearly shown that ethnicisation does not necessarily lead to the preservation of chieftainship.

In the Nkoya case it led to folklorisation: the reduction of chiefs to nostalgic ornaments of symbolic production in a festival context dominated by ethnic brokers oriented to the modern economy and the state.

In the early 1970s the Nkoya neo-traditional court culture was marked by a rigid, wholly introverted splendour. The maintenance of nostalgic historic forms of protocol and symbolic, particularly musical, production (which no longer correspond to any real power invested in the kingship under conditions of incorporation by the Barotse indigenous state and by the colonial and post-colonial central state) reflected the fact that *boundary maintenance* vis-à-vis the outside world was at its peak. All this strikingly contrasts with the laxity of court life at the *zinkena* today. The drums are no longer played. Court protocol, which used to be extremely strict and enforced through physical sanctions (only a century ago still through capital punishment), is hardly observed today. Chiefs are no longer recognised or remunerated, and expatriate commercial farmers with their racist labour relations are literally taking over the land.

Under such circumstances, Nkoya ethnicisation could lead to the virtual destruction of the chieftainships that featured so prominently as a sign of ethnic identity, ethno-historical reconstruction, and the reinvention of tradition in the context of the Kazanga festival. The near future will reveal whether and how the current Nkoya royal chiefs, both of them new incumbents although in advanced middle age, will meet these challenges.

Conclusion

In Zambia's Kaoma district today, the two royal Nkoya chiefs (Mwene Kahare and Mwene Mutondo) are reluctant senior members of the Lozi indigenous administration headed by the Lozi paramount chief. Their financial situation is miserable and leads to the further decline of chieftainship and its courtly institutions. It cannot justifiably be said that the chiefs exist on a plane outside the post-colonial state. Until recently they participated in many governing and representative bodies of the post-colonial state, and they have no formal source of income except from the state. The latter largely controls the (defective) reproduction of chieftainship. Besides indirect influence over the lowest law courts, with jurisdiction only in the field of family law and traditional political structure, the chiefs' main independent source of power is their continued control over rural land. However, this prerogative may be (and is) used destructively. Granting land to strangers hardly benefits the chief beyond covering part of his modest household expenses, but does lead to proletarianisation among the chiefs' local subjects and destroys the territorial basis of chieftainship.

Thus royal chiefs in Western Central Zambia constitute a limiting case for some of the general themes in African chieftainship today. They do not display the remarkable resilience of other African chiefs in adapting to social and political change. Their power base is small and diminishing. Whereas in the first decades of the post-colonial era they effectively expanded into formal administrative and representative bodies of the modern state, this process has now been reversed, largely as a result of regional ethnic conflict. These chiefs can certainly not afford to consider the bureaucratic logic of the African state merely as an accidental, foreign and imposed system. That they do not actually

hold such views, and in the recent past have effectively blended with state institutions, is also partly attributable to their own formal sector employment (often as court clerks or low-ranking administrative officers at the district level) prior to accession. Meanwhile they are financially dependent upon the colonial state and upon recognition by both the state and the indigenous administration under the Lozi paramount chief. Under these circumstances, chieftainship in Western Central Zambia does not emerge as an obvious focus for democratisation processes. Instead, it is subject to folklorisation, becoming a nostalgic element in an ethnicisation process which creates new inequalities (between on the one hand proletarianising peasants, and on the other successful post-migrant pensioners and other agricultural and commercial entrepreneurs), while seeking to abolish one particular form of politico-ethnic domination.

Under the circumstances, the annihilation of the particular form of chieftainship as found in Western Central Zambia is a serious possibility, which opens up further horizons of analysis. At an abstract level, the interaction between the Kazanga Cultural Association (and other formal organisations, e.g. the Seventh-Day Adventist Church) and the chiefs may ultimately have to be interpreted, not as mere *bridging* (which presupposes the continued independent existence of social contexts – chiefs and state – to be bridged), but rather as the *replacement* of one historic mode of organisation (that of the indigenous political system centring on the *lukena*) by another, formal, global mode of organisation (that of the state-registered voluntary association). Both modes organise the villagers of Western Central Zambia by trading exploitation by an elite (the chiefs, the executive) for old and new goals (the chiefs: social and cosmological order, judicial and military regulation of violence, regulation of long-distance trade; the executive: ethnic cultural self-expression, economic and political access to the wider world).

In less than a hundred years, the formal organisation established itself on African soil as the principal format for social, political, economic and religious organisation, complementing and often replacing time-honoured, historic local forms of organisation. I have often stressed[19] that from a sociological point of view, this is one of the most significant transformations of African life, and one of the greatest blind spots in African studies today. We have largely contented ourselves with demonstrating why (because of informal undercurrents, corruption, continued allegiance to older forms of organisation, lack of appreciation of legal authority etc.) the formal organisation cannot work in Africa, rather than acknowledging that defective or latent functioning of formal organisations is not peculiar to Africa, and can only be understood once the formal organisation in itself has been accepted to set the framework.

CHAPTER 11

The Ankole kingship question: Stalemate and implications

Martin Doornbos[1]

The twentieth century ended on at least one unexpected note: in various parts of the world the possible reinstatement of traditional rulers or monarchy as an 'alternative' form of government had come back onto the agenda. How exactly this was to be explained was not entirely clear, and in due course this may well become one of those numerous topics left for debate among future historians. But if the apparent revival of interest in the monarchy rested upon accurate observation, the evident question is why this was the case: was it to be explained as a reaction against 'globalisation', or disenchantment with the forms and performance of 'modern', 'secular', 'alienating' government? Was it a reflection of the end of the Cold War, or, generally, the 'postmodern condition'? Or did it constitute a search for and reassertion of identity, in culturally specific terms, or some subconscious popular longing for imaginative roles and relationships, such as that between a prince and his people? Was it perhaps simply a reflection of media interest in colourful parades and pageants (which are not nearly as impressive if they feature presidents or central committee chairmen who are not well groomed for such ceremonial events)?

Whatever the merits and demerits of these currents of thought and sentiment, the fact is that in a variety of contexts deposed monarchs or their descendants re-entered the limelight, revisited 'their' countries (often for the first time), and discreetly reminded governments and the people alike that they were 'available'. The Balkans are a notable example, though at one point the idea was floated in a context as distant and unlikely as Brazil. Only in very few cases where heir pretenders thus reappeared, however, did this lead to actual restoration. The Ugandan cases probably constituted the prime example of this happening. Close to the Ankole context, the new Tutsi-led regime in Rwanda also played with the option of reinstating the *Mwami*, the Tutsi king. Still, irrespective of

whether these trends will ultimately realise, the fact remains that monarchy once again was capturing imaginations – whether of everyone, or only of some.

Ankole constituted one of the sites where renewed attention was being given to the institution of kingship. Following the post-1986 sequence of events pertaining to the Ugandan kingships in general, which has been described elsewhere (Doornbos and Mwesigye 1994), the question of the return of Ankole kingship returned to the agenda as of the moment that restoration appeared to be an option. The question had first been looked into by the Constitutional Commission, appointed by the National Resistance Movement government that took office in 1986. Based on extensive interviews with people from all walks of life and in all regions of Uganda, the Commission advised against reopening the question of the restoration of the Ankole monarchy and the monarchies of Bunyoro and Toro. In the light of its recommendations, a phrase was inserted into the draft constitution to the effect that monarchical restoration would be possible *only if the people so wished.* With regard to the Ankole case, it appeared as though, in taking this position, the Commission was echoing the advice of the representation of Ankole elders, including the ex-*Omugabe* Gasyonga II, to President Idi Amin in 1971, which had warned that restoration of the kingship could become a seriously divisive issue (cf. Appendix I, Memorandum by the Elders of Ankole to the President, General Idi Amin Dada, on the Restoration of Kingdoms, August, 1971).

The 1995 constitution still makes reference to the 'wishes and aspirations of the people', but since the *Kabaka* of Buganda as well as the *Abakama* of Bunyoro and Toro had been reinstated in 1993 without a prior consultation procedure having been put constitutionally in place, the relevant clause (Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, Ch. 16, art. 246(2) now states different routes to restoration:

> the institution of traditional leader or cultural leader may exist in any area of Uganda in accordance with the culture, customs and traditions or *wishes and aspirations of the people to whom it applies.* [emphasis added].[2]

In the same section, it also stipulates, with apparent reference to the Ankole stalemate, that:

> [i]n any community where the issue of traditional or cultural leader has not been resolved, the issue shall be resolved by the community concerned using a method prescribed by Parliament.

By 2004, however, the Uganda parliament had not yet laid down this procedure, which possibly reflects a lack of consensus on the matter even among the national legislators concerned.

Thus, the issue of the restoration of Ankole kingship was first tabled in 1993, but it has remained unresolved since then, while continuing to engage proponents and opponents in numerous verbal battles, in the press as well as in the local and national arenas.[3] Evidently, the question aroused deeply felt sentiments for and against in Ankole, and in the process began to recreate rifts and antagonisms assumed to have previously been overcome. Kingship, which one would expect to constitute a symbol of integration and unity, in Ankole was turning out to be an instrument of division and conflict.

It is rare to see a dispute of this kind emerge at the present time. Inevitably, it gives rise to a range of questions all at once: what triggered all this, why did supporters of the idea of restoration keep pressing their case as they saw it, why did it engender such fierce resistance, and how could this controversy have been avoided, if at all? To many onlookers within Uganda and outside, these were some of the initial puzzles and questions provoked by the dispute. Some stocktaking, partly in the light of my earlier analysis in *Regalia galore*, may therefore be pertinent in the search for answers.

The restoration issue

Prima facie the proponents of restoration appeared to have quite a plausible case and argument. Ankole kingship had been abrogated in 1967 along with the three other monarchies that had until then been co-existing within independent Uganda, namely those of Buganda, Toro and Bunyoro. But whereas legitimacy was reaccorded in 1993 to the other three – mainly owing to a powerful lobby that had been actively seeking the reinstatement of the Buganda monarchy – Ankole was kept waiting.

Proponents of restoration submitted that the Ankole monarchy represented a precious 600-year-old historical institution, which was therefore worth preserving as a crucial part of Ankole's cultural heritage.[4] Also, they saw reinstitution of the monarchy as a way of recreating a sense of corporate identity that might facilitate the organisation of development projects of various kinds. Proponents could argue, as indeed they did, that the re-recognition of the legitimacy of the Ankole kingship was implied in the very act which had re-established the other kingdoms within the country. Restoration having been accepted in principle by the government and ruling political circles, this would seem to suggest that having kings in these parts of Uganda had once again become the established norm. Following the same logic, *not* having a particular king back thus went against the norm. Looked at from another angle, moreover, reinstituting three of the four monarchies, but not the fourth, would seem to leave a conspicuous and uncomfortable-looking 'empty place', which would continue to raise questions, from outsiders if not from insiders. Also, the other (restored) rulers in Uganda might wonder why their fellow-monarch from Ankole was not being allowed to join in, and perhaps would feel that his absence tended to qualify the irreversibility of their own restoration. Finally, behind these various sentiments and arguments there was no doubt also an expectation that ministerial and other roles, and indeed a whole complex of patronage relationships focused on the monarchy, could be created and recreated for the benefit of royalist supporters, as had meanwhile been happening elsewhere.

Yet, the Ankole case is a special and complex one, defying easy categorisation and resolution. It derives its complexity less from the kingship question per se than from the historic social divisions between Bahima and Bairu within which it has been embedded and from the particular ways in which the institution has been reconstructed over time, notably in the colonial period. Unsurprisingly, several of these problematic aspects were fiercely articulated in the opposition engendered by the prospect of the restoration of the monarchy. In a sense, while there had been widespread indifference and some

celebration in a few circles in response to the monarchy's abolition in 1967, by the year 2000 this indifference seemed to have been transformed into growing resistance to the idea of restoration, especially but not exclusively among Bairu. At the same time it was also evident that in the new political situation groups favouring restoration no longer felt constrained in expressing their demands and interests, and turned out to have a remarkably vocal presence.

Opponents of restoration could and did argue that Ankole's kingship was largely a colonial creation, since more than half of the Ankole district as it had been (re) constituted at the beginning of colonial rule consisted of densely populated areas which had never formed part of Nkore kingdom, Ankole's precursor entity. In fact, around 1900, Buhweju, Igara and Bunyaruguru were subdued and added to the new district of Ankole by force of arms.[5] Significantly, the 'colonial creation' argument was used to voice feelings of injustice done: other districts, such as Busoga, had similarly been colonial creations with an amalgam of different elements thrown together, but as this did not engender perceived inequalities and resentment it did not prompt the same reservation and argument. In the case of Ankole, however, this historical reservation also led to one other counter-proposition: if restoration was to be contemplated at all, the question this raised was whether it should refer to the *colonial* institution or to the *precolonial*, historical, kingdom of Nkore. In the latter case, there would also be several other theoretical candidates for restoration, notably some of the smaller kingdoms that had been included in Ankole district at the beginning of colonial rule, such as those of Buhweju, Igara and Kajara.

Proponents of restoration took it for granted that reinstatement would concern the institution as it had been inherited from colonial times, not the precolonial Nkore kingdom and possible other candidates. Opponents of restoration argued that that would mean symbolically reinstating the extension of ethnically ascribed kingship, which had been experienced as discriminatory, over regions which historically had not formed part of its domain. They also argued that in that case it would be difficult to maintain that the institution was 600 years old, as the Nkore Cultural Trust (NCT) had claimed it to be. The colonially restructured institution had lasted just a little more than 60 years, that is, from the time of the Ankole Agreement of 1901 till its abolition in 1967. And, last but not least, they voiced their objection to the equation of Ankole culture with kingship, pointing to France and other countries as examples of where culture was thriving after the termination of the monarchy.

In this connection it is significant to take note of the historical differences regarding the position of kingship in Ankole society as contrasted with that of the other Ugandan monarchies. Specifically in terms of their embeddedness in the respective clan systems, there were notable differences between the position the *Kabaka* held within Buganda society compared with that of the *Omugabe* in Nkore or Ankole. In Buganda, all Baganda in a way could consider the *Kabaka*ship 'theirs', as the *Kabaka* in principle could marry from all 52 Buganda clans and thus derive an heir from any of them. In contrast, the kings of Ankole (and historically Nkore) were recruited exclusively from a single clan, that of the Bahinda. In terms of Ankole's ethno-social structure, the Bahinda formed a minority among a minority, the Bahima, who in a number of ways were quite distinct

from the majority of Banyankore. In the light of the historic relations of social distance and inequality that had existed between the Bahima elite and the Bairu, and strictly speaking also between Bahinda and Banyankore, opponents therefore argued that reinstating Ankole's kingship in effect would mean reinstating the symbolic pinnacle of Ankole's past ethnic inequality. It is this particular aspect which evidently represented the most profound strand of misgivings among many Banyankore regarding the idea of reviving the Ankole monarchy.

Against the background of these sensitivities, both the privately arranged coronation of 'Prince' John Barigye as *Omugabe* of Ankole and its instant annulment by President Museveni in November 1993 produced immediate shock waves within Ankole society. As to the coronation itself, it seemed telling that for the possible restoration of a supposedly symbolic institution, hence in principle belonging in the public domain and in the public eye, recourse had been sought to a secretive (if not clandestine) coronation ceremony, away from popular scrutiny. The contradiction this implied in terms of what role the institution was to play, and how it was being perceived by those intimately connected with it, was quite astounding, and in the final analysis appears tragically self-defeating.

The president's annulment of the coronation was instigated by both his role as custodian of the constitutional process, especially with the Constituent Assembly elections around the corner, and by his concern for ethnic animosity emerging in his home region (which had the potential to seriously affect his own and the National Resistance Movement's home support). Initially his intervention appeared to have had the effect of reducing both the unease and expectations that had been aroused by the event. After the initial wave of consternation and relief had subsided, it seemed for a while as if the matter had been laid to rest in the face of the government's reiteration of its (constitutionally derived) position that restoration of the monarchy could be condoned only 'if the people so [wished]'. This lasted only for about a year, however. Thereafter, pressure and lobbying to try and make the government change its mind was resumed by the NCT, by Barigye himself, and by several high-ranking Ugandan army officers from the region, and became increasingly intense as time went by. Proponents of restoration protested that the phrase 'if the people so wish' was selectively applied to Ankole only, as the Constitutional Commission had not found majority support for restoration in the other ex-kingdoms outside Buganda, while the government had nonetheless allowed it to take place in Bunyoro and Toro. To add to the complexities, by having intervened prior to the Constituent Assembly's having had a chance to even consider the matter, the president henceforth also became the chief target of numerous petitions and protests for and against restoration.

The pattern of confrontation and debate which subsequently ensued and continued until almost 2004 became strongly polarised, with the NCT trying to mobilise public and political opinion in favour of restoration, and the Banyankore Cultural Foundation (BCF) determined to oppose it. The NCT, which at its foundation had given the impression that it intended to work towards a broader cultural agenda, increasingly concentrated its attention and mobilising efforts on the specific issue of kingship, in effect equating Ankole culture with kingship. As one strong restoration proponent,

Major General Salim Saleh, put it, there was 'dire need for the restoration of Obugabe because the culture of the Banyankore [is] dying fast owing to lack of a cultural leader' (Turyaguma and Mujuni 2000). One result of this narrowing of focus to the kingship issue on the part of the NCT was the alienation of some of its original members, who at the time had joined in the expectation of its addressing a wider platform of interests (Mujuni 2000). Another effect was, predictably, the encouragement of the BCF, the rival body supposedly similarly concerned with Ankole culture, though opposed to restoration, likewise into alertness and action. Both organisations had in fact been devoting most of their time to the *Obugabe* issue, and, except for the establishment of a Runyankore school by the BCF in Kampala, had spent little energy on other aspects of the promotion of Ankole culture. Thus, at the threshold of the new millennium, the two groups were identified in the press as the 'pro-*Omugabe*' and 'anti-*Omugabe*' camps respectively, and hardly a statement was issued on the matter on behalf of the one without an instant rejoinder from the other.

Significantly, though, after a one-off effort in 1998 to reach an agreement in a joint meeting between the two groups had failed, this 'dialogue' never again became a direct one; it was instead conducted indirectly, through statements to the press or representations made to the government, which would subsequently be reported in the press. Any of these would in turn be criticised, denied or debated by spokespeople for the other group. In this connection, no matter how much both organisations ostensibly had 'culture'– and presumably even largely the same culture – as their central concern and brief, it was difficult not to gain the impression that the dispute had become a highly political and politicised one. This quality seemed characteristic not just of the way the debate was being conducted, but also of the way the stakes concerned appeared to be perceived. Positions hardened rapidly and seemed to leave little room for compromise or reconciliation. Thus conceived in 'all or nothing' terms, the dispute became one in which both parties felt they had to win at all costs, the alternative being to lose outright. One question this raises is whether that conception of such extreme outcomes was strictly necessary and unavoidable.

The curious onlooker might well first ask whether it was indeed 'culture' for its own sake, and opposed interpretations of what this might entail, which the two rival associations were so fiercely debating and fighting over with respect to the former Ankole kingdom and the prospects of its restoration. If that were the case, it could safely be taken as an indication of a truly exceptional commitment to higher cultural and spiritual values on the part of both groups, rarely to be found in most other parts of Africa or Europe. While theoretically allowing for such exceptional dispositions to occur, it may be useful also to consider alternative explanations. 'Culture', or 'tradition' for that matter, can also be used as an argument to advance the claims for particular positions, and privileges, of certain sections within a society over and against those of others. What matters then is what the presentation of the culture in question seems to suggest or imply as to where the dividing lines are to be drawn, and how that particular 'culture' can be put forward as demanding recognition of certain claims or differential allocation of social prestige and power.

In Ankole, it was such competitive claims as to what the specific 'culture' would

contain that appeared to be centrally at stake. But it is well to remember that the discourse on 'culture' that emerged in Uganda in connection with the restoration of the monarchies was a direct result of the government's invention of the idea of cultural rather than political kingdoms to justify restoration and allay the fears of opponents.[6] The essentially political debate on the restoration issue in Ankole thus became couched in ostensibly 'cultural' terms, to the extent that the two groups competing with each other over the issue consistently presented themselves as 'cultural' organisations.

The final outcome of this competition, however, if it were to be resolved either one way or the other, in turn might be expected to add an aura of legitimacy to one or another way in which the local political system and process would be given further shape. Specifically, depending on what notion of 'culture' might in the end prevail, this could come to favour either a monarchy-centred patronage system of particular benefit to the 'traditionalist' Bahima elite (notably those with ties to the former Nkore) and a wider client retinue, or else a more egalitarian and open system in which entrepreneurial Banyankore of different ranks would be likely to play prominent roles.

For a glimpse of what at least one aspect of restoration might come to mean concretely in Ankole, one need only look at what happened in neighbouring Toro and Bunyoro (and of course Buganda) following the reinstatement of the monarchies there: ministers and other office-bearers were appointed, claims to land and other properties re-tabled, new sources of revenue contemplated and introduced, all to provide for the upkeep of new monarchy-oriented ministerial positions and support structures which had yet to demonstrate their value in socially relevant developmental terms. In a still somewhat fluid situation within the Great Lakes Region generally, in which the last word about state formation has not yet been said, it goes without saying that the stakes concerned are potentially very high and far-reaching.

The ostensibly 'political' quality and process characterising the *Obugabe* debate seemed to reflect a rather anomalous situation having arisen with regard to the handling of the issue. In 2004, the issue appeared to have arrived at a stalemate scarcely allowing new departures. Possibly the process could have been given a different direction only by higher political organs in the country, though in a way their hands were tied, too. One question in particular that had remained unclear arose from the fact that the constitution had not specified exactly *how* people's wishes were to be articulated, or to be represented and recorded, nor which body should make decisions in that regard. Adding to the complexity of this particular question, the NCT took the position that reinstatement of the monarchy constituted such an intrinsic part of Ankole's culture that this could never be allowed to be put up for a public vote.[7] Among other things, this position seemed a rationalisation for the secret coronation which had been staged in 1993. A variant to the proposal for a public vote, namely one in which the matter would be resolved in a collective vote by all Local Council Level III and Local Council Level V councillors and members of parliament of Ankole, had been proposed by First Deputy Premier Eriya Kategaya (himself from the region).[8] Even this met with strong resistance on the part of NCT, however. According to NCT vice-chairman George William Katatumba, this would 'amount to denying those Banyankore who adhere to a monarchical culture of their constitutional rights' (Rugyendo 2000). Evidently, therefore, this did not leave

much space to arrive at an agreement over even basic procedures. Significantly, also, the statement appeared to reveal the NCT's position as being that even if only *a section* of the population favoured a return of the monarchy, that would be sufficient for it to take place. That position, however, would seem just as problematic as the (hypothetical) suggestion that 99.99% of the population concerned would have to have expressed themselves in favour before restoration could be considered.

The Uganda government for its part had all along taken the position that 'cultural' matters, such as having traditional leaders, were not its business ('as long as the people so wish'). Yet, whether it wanted this or not, by annulling 'Prince' Barigye's coronation immediately after it took place in 1993, thus prior to the expected Constituent Assembly deliberations on the matter, it had also placed itself in the position of final arbiter in this regard. Henceforth, therefore, its principle of 'neutrality' and 'non-involvement' were likely to clash with its assumed arbiter role, and the two indeed subsequently appeared to be in constant friction. At one level, the government encouraged the two groups to try and sort out the question among themselves, which was about the last thing they were able or prepared to do. At another level, and in a situation where with regard to all kinds of issues many people are apt to first ask what the government's intentions are, there continued to be a fair amount of speculation that the government might have its own agenda on the matter. People asked, for example, whether in his public campaigns for restoration, President Museveni's younger brother Celeb Akandwanaho (more commonly known by his army nickname Salim Saleh) was merely exercising his constitutional right to hold a different opinion from that of his elder brother, or whether he was testing the water concerning a final government position on the case.

Amid all the noise and political heat to which the restoration issue gave rise in Ankole, it was striking to note that hardly any attention was paid to the functions that the kingship, if restored, would perform. Significantly, beyond the general proposition of 'cultural leadership' expected of the *Omugabe*, arguments cast in favour of restoration did *not* point to essential social or cultural functions carried over from historical times, but remaining unfulfilled in the absence of kingship. This was in marked contrast to other parts of Africa, particularly West Africa, where chiefdom (somehow the vocabulary of 'kingship' was never introduced here) has retained a notable resilience until the present day. In both francophone and anglophone West Africa, traditional chiefs continue to play significant roles as custodians of the land, in the settlement of disputes, as interpreters of customary law, in certain religious functions, as community representatives, and in other functions.[9] Some of these roles are controversial and contested, occasionally bringing the chiefs concerned into conflict with government officers or other stakeholders, yet no one would maintain that the offices concerned are 'empty' or devoid of societal functions. In the Ankole case this is different: largely as a result of the far-reaching extension and transformation of the institution during colonial times, it is no longer associated with any particular judicial, religious or other customary authoritative functions in the public mind. In this regard the absence of references to customary roles in the public debate about restoration is telling and significant. It underscores that in the final analysis the debate is about the possible return of a neo-traditionalised institution, in which new ceremonial would substitute for customary functions.

The key actors

In the light of the continuing stalemate relating to the restoration issue in Ankole, the question arises whether it might not have been possible to conceive of less zero-sum ways of handling a dispute of this kind. It may well be relevant to reflect on this question, if only to better appreciate the complexity of dimensions involved. By the same token, there could be at least a theoretical interest in exploring a possible way out of the stalemate. To this end, a useful first step might be to consider the positions adopted by each of the key actors in the dispute.

Starting with the NCT, it is of course perfectly reasonable and legitimate that an organisation that set itself the goal of striving towards restoration of the Ankole kingship should be established. After all, there had been a monarchy before, and if reinstatement depends on the wishes of the people, it would make sense for an interested 'civil society' organisation to take up this challenge and speak out in its favour. That is essentially what the NCT did, even though it did not quite seem to 'let the people speak', but rather couched its claims in terms of what Ankole 'culture' would demand. To the extent that the NCT articulated a position favoured by royalist circles in Ankole, it should not be surprising that it seemed to take its cue from history rather than trying to articulate 'popular' demands. The historical part of its name, Nkore, points in that direction, while the notion of 'trust' evidently carries a conservationist connotation. But it would also be reasonable to expect that the NCT, in taking up its role, would have appreciated the need to demonstrate broad public support for its agenda. It would be insufficient merely to reclaim the *Obugabe* as a kind of natural right and expect the government to impose or approve it, while ignoring the (constitutionally based) call for a probing of popular sentiments and preferences. Besides, it would be important for the NCT, as for all other parties for that matter, to take cognizance of other prevailing views on the matter and consider their implications for their own position.

In what had essentially been a divided society it was entirely valid for an organisation such as the BCF to have been founded in order to present an opposite and alternative agenda with regard to the question of *Obugabe*. As the first part of its name implies, it viewed itself as representing Banyankore, 'the people of Ankole'. Since no other bodies seemed inclined to take account of broadly felt popular opinions about the matter in the first place, it was quite natural that a body like the BCF would seek to give voice to them. What remains significant, though, is the fact that in contrast to the NCT, which was founded in order to advocate the concretising of a specific *interest* (and thus somehow felt less of a need to give voice to popular opinion as such), BCF's aim to try and prevent this from happening compelled it to serve as a vehicle for many amorphous feelings which in the end may be presumed to have converged in *disinterest* and opposition.

Still, while the points of departure of BCF and NCT are relatively clear, it is perhaps less clear what 'secondary' positions they should have adopted in the process. Notably, if it is unfair to expect a community strongly opposed to the reinstatement of kingship to accept the latter, it is only fair to expect that same community to recognise it as a major historical concession if the other side were to abstain from further advocacy in recognition of the strong feelings evoked in the process. In this connection, one of the insights which the original study for *Regalia galore* yielded was how much the *Obugabe*

had historically been an institution *of* and *for* the Bahima in Nkore, and thus centrally important to them. This background would seem to deserve a certain recognition by all Banyankore alike, irrespective of whether or not in the end the monarchy were restored and in what particular way.

Likewise, the NCT for its part needed to recognise that reinstatement of a *colonially* restructured institution like that of Ankole kingship was by no means as self-evident as it might have appeared to them. In a way, one might say it is the tragic fate of the *Obugabe* to have become extended so far beyond its original domain as to lose its proper historical foundation. As the original study for *Regalia galore* revealed, the monarchy's incorporation into the colonial framework caused a once meaningful institution to become largely redundant. The extension of the formal jurisdiction of the *Obugabe* during colonial times could not but leave many or most Banyankore indifferent to it, and the most vocal parts of society even indignant about the premise of inequality it entailed. Given this background, it would be difficult to expect that the domain of a kingship which could once be extended by way of a colonial administrative measure would now be voluntarily and popularly accepted. The complexity of the case is such, therefore, that any attempt at resolution, in whatever way, would require mutual recognition of the concerns of the other side. 'Victory' thinking on the part of either side would seem quite unproductive: rather, any concluding moment to all the deliberations on the issue should ideally come to figure as a high point in social and historical reconciliation (which in the end is worth more than 'winning' any social or ethnic battles).

As for the third party caught up in the complexity of the case, the Uganda government, in taking the formal position that 'kings' are 'cultural leaders' which therefore 'by definition' are not its business, it may actually have abandoned the room it could have used for a more active involvement. The government's position stemmed from its prior concern with the Buganda case, with regard to which its approach had been meant as a formula to keep the *Kabaka* out of politics.[10] However, 'political' here carries a different connotation, referring to engagement in day-to-day political processes. Deciding about having or not having kings within a larger state framework, even if this concerned a seemingly 'non-political' office, is surely a first-order political matter deserving the closest attention of a (republican) government.

With regard to the Ankole puzzle, one wonders whether a different kind of government involvement might possibly have steered the issue away from deadlock, making it possible for more creative solutions to be found. In other, perhaps more bureaucratically inclined or endowed contexts, for example, alternative avenues might have been pursued as a way of avoiding having the issue decided through competitive bargaining and campaigning. The latter tends to have the effect of polarising positions and may produce quite unpredictable outcomes. Instead, for example, a 'committee scenario' might have been adopted, involving the establishment of a committee of enquiry charged by government with the task of looking into all aspects of the matter, or being given a specific brief and questions on the basis of which it was expected to conduct its investigations and make recommendations. Such a committee would take its time, hear all parties concerned, and eventually produce a report containing its findings and recommendations.

Government in turn would discuss this and could formulate its own position on the matter, possibly in the form of a white paper. Together, these policy papers could form the basis for a more informed debate in parliament or another appropriate context, followed by final decision-making. If this seems a tedious process, which it may well be, it is worth remembering that the whole process of enquiry, reflection and structured discussion about the issues involved would be likely to have its own clarifying effects, whatever they may be. One possible positive outcome might at the very least be better and fuller information about all the relevant aspects before any final decisions are reached. A second would be that in this process one would have considered and tested all scope for flexibility to bring opposite positions closer together. With some luck, such a process and dialogue would also have its own reconciling and learning effects, which in the context of a society such as that of Ankole might well be one of its most important long-term advantages.

Clearly, the composition of any such committee of enquiry would be a matter of the utmost importance. In the present, as yet entirely hypothetical case, it would stand to reason that both the NCT and the BCF would need to be adequately represented (while indirectly also giving a fair representation of the clan structure) and might together constitute the bulk of the committee's membership. Their joint involvement in any such committee could provide for an alternative, possibly more meaningful dialogue about matters of common interest and concern than many of the present indirect exchanges via the press. In addition, some other, third party membership of the committee might be invited for their comparative expertise on particular aspects, or perhaps to facilitate the dialogue, though expressly not to tip the balance of opinion in favour of one position or another.

Guiding questions a committee of such a nature might be invited to concentrate on could run along any of the following, roughly parallel lines: Is there any 'need' to reintroduce kingship in Ankole? What role or purpose would it be expected to serve? Are there any conceivable preconditions under which restoration of kingship might come to be considered as a feasible option in Ankole society? Under what conditions, if any, could reintroduction of the *Obugabe* come to appear acceptable to the vast majority of Ankole society? What kind of restructuring of the institution of kingship would be required to make it acceptable and welcomed by the population as a whole? Or, from an even more positively constructive interest and point of departure: Could the institution of kingship in Ankole be (re)constituted in any conceivable way such that it might become a socially integrative force, overcoming rather than deepening ethnic divisions and animosities?

There could be numerous other possible questions, but the important point is that they should allow and facilitate a joint search for possible preconditions. At the present stage of impasse in the debate in Ankole, it might be reasonable to raise questions such as these. They would allow for either affirmative or negative answers, but in both cases the discussion would be furthered by a fair amount of background thinking and preparation. And in principle, in a society in which some would feel that an instrument such as kingship was needed as an *integrative* element, one should in principle expect flexible and serious efforts to come up with appropriate solutions, that is, an institution

that could be expected to play such a role. If finally the issue were nonetheless to come to a dead end, which of course remains a real possibility, at least one could say it was not for lack of careful consideration.

It must be appreciated that these kinds of questions themselves depart from an understanding of institutions of kingship in which format and constitution are not necessarily 'fixed', but are essentially flexible and adjustable, within limits, to new conditions and demands. There is nothing particularly unusual about this. It is consistent with historical practice and precedent in the case of various European monarchies, which at various times have been subject to major redefinition of their role and prerogatives. In several cases, the public debate and policy dialogue about the position of Western European royalty continues until today, often including the question of continuation, in adapted form, or termination and replacement by non-monarchical, republican representative institutions. In these debates, the underlying idea is that monarchy in the final analysis is an outdated edifice no longer fitting the requirements of the twenty-first century, though in the countries that still retain a monarchy its role is constantly being adapted to changing circumstances and demands.

Far-reaching adaptation has also already been the experience of the Ankole monarchy itself. As the earlier parts of the present study have shown, during the twentieth century the institution of Ankole kingship was drastically redefined in a number of respects, so much so that any contemplation of the institution's restructuring would in no way present a novelty. But if one were to take the position (either in propagating or opposing restoration) that there is no alternative for the institution's format than the one that 'exists', or rather, existed, that is, the pre-1966 institution, then further exploration of alternatives, if any, will make little sense.

In 2004 it was of course quite uncertain whether either the NCT or the BCF or both would be prepared to join in any such dialogue, even if there were prior agreement that the outcome would remain entirely open and contingent upon full consensus. The differences in their respective points of departure might be just too vast. Quite possibly, therefore, this would be 'a bridge too far', though it would nonetheless be interesting, and elucidating in a way, to see how each of the two organisations might respond to a proposition of this kind. At the same time, the mere existence of two rival bodies both ostensibly committed to the furtherance of Ankole culture, but presumably having quite different ideas as to what this should entail, appears indicative of serious rifts having re-emerged within the society and especially among its culturally most vocal segments. Hence, if the organisational expression of these rifts in the presence of the NCT and BCF may at first seem anomalous, it is important to realise that the underlying social divisions that resurfaced in connection with the kingship issue in Ankole constitute the really serious matter in need of attention. To rephrase: it is not so much kingship as such but the historical legacy and memory (and hence the future) of Bahima–Bairu relations which appear to be at issue in Ankole, at least to the outside observer. Clearly, it would seem in everybody's interest not to allow these to deteriorate, but rather to try and begin a new chapter of co-operation, as happened in the early days of the National Resistance Movement in Ankole.

It is precisely in this impasse, which appears reflective of this socio-political rift, that

other initiatives are conceivable which, even though not directly related to the question of kingship, might help reconcile rather than divide, and might even be more readily manageable. In the light of the very different understandings and experiences of history and culture in the Ankole region likely to be found within the NCT and the BCF, for example, it might be worth envisaging the possibility of a joint history project set up by the two organisations. Such a venture might be extremely helpful in determining the common ground as well as the major differences in their respective readings of history and historical relationships between the various ethnic communities in Ankole. Again, while the notion of the two bodies undertaking such a joint project may seem far-fetched, consider the potential interest and pay-offs: a joint history project could, first of all, be an important learning exercise for all parties concerned. If one saw oneself jointly responsible in a venture to produce, say, an authoritative history of Ankole, then by its very nature such an exercise would call for profound and extensive dialogue between participants concerning the key forces that have moulded Ankole society into its present form. One would not normally or necessarily expect this to 'resolve' various disputes, but at least to clarify them and produce better understandings of what significance others have been attaching to the same features or experiences manifested in a common context. But there must also be elements in common which it might be worth recognising as such and making explicit.

Taking this a few steps further, a joint history project for Ankole could extend into various different directions, and actually become quite an exciting project to take part in. For instance, it might look into elements of clan structure, language, and customs common among Bairu and Bahima and see where they differ and vary and where they meet. In the past, many such studies were undertaken focusing on the Bahima exclusively in particular, but some also on the Bairu, emphasising difference. Possibly, any such joint enquiry might be undertaken in the spirit of, or promote, a kind of 'historic compromise'. After all, if there were greater preparedness to consider and acknowledge what one has 'in common', parties might also more readily accept and acknowledge what is 'different': either about the other group's background and involvement or about the latter's perception of history and their role in it. 'Learning from each other's history' could constitute a lead theme in any such exercise.

If any possible joint history project were to unfold, it might at some point come to survey the kingship situation prior to colonisation: Mpororo, Buhweju, Buzimba, Igara, Nkore, and so on, mapping out the distinctiveness and similarities of each of these entities. The intention might be to show that until the end of the nineteenth century there had been a range of kingships, all of which could potentially be restored *if* the idea was to restore *pre*colonial kingship. Among other things, the project could then verify the possible claims to recognition of the dynasties of the Beenemafundo, the Beenekirenzi, the Benekihondwa, the Beeneruzira and the Beenerukari, among others, several of which are to be found in the present Ntungamo area (cf. Morris 1962:20). Moreover, a joint history project could possibly provide the proper context for examining claims that as an institution the Ankole kingship is some 600 years old. As suggested above, if the idea were to restore the colonially restructured kingship, it might be necessary to recognise that it lasted just over 60 years. At any rate, the kingship experience in the

region, from ancient times until its abrogation, would naturally constitute an extremely important aspect for any joint history enquiry to delve into.

The role of a joint history project would not necessarily be to make recommendations about any future restoration of kingship. But if such a project were to devote attention to the issue, which of course it might well do, it could well reach the conclusion that several pre-1900 entities would have valid theoretical claims to restoration. This might lead to proposals either to a) recognise them all; b) install a rotational 'chief among chiefs', as has been done in Busoga or in faraway Malaysia; or c) just let the matter rest. If on the other hand one wanted to hold on to the idea of restoring the extended post-1900 institution of Ankole kingship (on the premise that the presence of kings had once again become established as a norm in Uganda after 1993), then one should in principle accept the need for major structural adaptations which would make the institution acceptable to Ankole's population as a whole. A restructured, integrative institution of kingship with which all Banyankore could ideologically identify, for example, not unlike the way Buganda's *Kabaka* can in principle be seen to relate to all Kiganda clans, would potentially be an asset to Ankole in overcoming historic ethnic divisions. In particular, this would seem to call for reconsideration of the mode of inheritance and succession, such that in principle one could see *Abagabe* marry from any of the clans in Ankole, Bahima or Bairu, and thus produce descendants and heirs who might rightly consider themselves 'all-Ankole'. Again, however, it seems far from certain that those in favour of bringing back kingship to Ankole would be prepared to make that concession.

In this connection, while it is somewhat surprising that this particular aspect has not been taken up in the public debate, it should be noted that the precolonial Nkore kingship was not a hereditary institution. To be sure, historically contenders for succession would come from the Bahinda clan as a matter of course in Nkore, but among them there would typically be a struggle for power at the death of an *Omugabe*. The idea of inheritance was only introduced during colonial times, and began when Gasyonga succeeded Kahaya. But if the pre-1900 institution were taken as the point of departure, an appropriate present-day equivalent for its particular mode of succession could simply be election, though then from a slate of candidates who theoretically might come from any of the clans. At present, such an option may not exist: it remains to be seen whether those in favour of the restoration of the monarchy would be prepared to engage in as fundamental a rethink of the institution as might be required for it to become of relevance to the society as a whole. At the same time it remains hard to see how minority kingship, supported in practice by a relatively small body of 'adherents of monarchical culture' could at all be a viable solution. Realistically, the expectation that one must count on a continuing impasse on this score seems at least as likely as achieving any meaningful breakthrough.[11]

Towards an Ankole museum of history and culture?

If ever there were anything such as a joint history project in which the BCF and NCT might participate, one might with a great leap of imagination see this as potentially providing a platform for an even more ambitious undertaking. One truly challenging

task that might be taken up within an ongoing history project could be the construction of a museum of Ankole history and culture. Such a museum might serve many purposes, not the least of which would be to provide a concrete object for ongoing dialogue and collaboration between the BCF and NCT. Educationally, too, the creation of an imaginative museum would be of major value to the school system in Ankole and beyond. Above all, there *is* a rich culture and historical legacy in the Ankole region, which is well worth preserving and displaying for the benefit of all Banyankore as well as of visitors to the region. Traditional Bahima livelihood patterns, for example, in more than one way are unique within the wider East African context, subject as they now are to drastic transformation and facing eventual disappearance. It would be extremely important to document all this and preserve it for posterity. Similarly, various aspects of traditional Bairu life and culture would warrant documentation and representation within the context of a museum, and could be engagingly displayed by means of various advanced techniques now available for such purposes. Again, for many reasons, though above all as a focal point for people locally with an interest in the region's historical background, untold benefits could be derived from the establishment of an Ankole museum of history and culture. Last but not least, the background and history of Ankole's kingship should naturally be given ample attention and prominence within a museum of this kind. Royalty everywhere brings with it numerous records and attributes that will attract public interest, and which can be complemented by relevant collections of photographs, film and video. The museum might also provide a fitting environment in which to accommodate *Bagyendanwa*, the Nkore royal drums, together perhaps with other royal drums such as *Mashaija* from Buhweju and *Bitunta* from Buzimba.

This would in principle be a highly suitable project for joint action by the NCT and BCF, and a successful collaborative portrayal of Ankole culture in its manifold facets would constitute a monument to the role of these organisations themselves. If successful, they might eventually even come to consider a merger. Still, history and culture by their very nature are subject to multiple and malleable interpretation, and this should certainly be expected in the present case. Clearly, in any joint activity such as a shared museum project there would be numerous points on which BCF and NCT would need to compare notes and would want to register their agreement or disagreement with particular historical representations. To the degree that they would be able to resolve such issues, the pay-off would be a truly authoritative rendering of local history, in turn with substantial positive effects on socio-ethnic relations. But even if no consensus were reached on various key aspects, which, given the background history, should not be too surprising, a joint museum project could still make sense. It could allow each of the two organisations to concentrate its attention on the aspects and items it considered of primary importance from its own perspective, each working on a different floor, for example. If this involved matters invoking contrasted interpretations, a museum that would thus accommodate different perspectives on vital matters of common interest and history might still be considered a unique venture.

Reviewing the options

In the light of the above discussion, it is not entirely accidental that this chapter should have ended with a proposal for a museum project based on Ankole's history and culture.[12] It seems clear from all accounts that there is an extremely interesting story to be told and retold in connection with Ankole's kingship and its place in history and culture. A museum would seem to be the proper place for this. It could place Ankole's kingship in its specific historical and cultural context, and it could present that context with all the richness and different points of interest for which it has rightly been drawing attention. Besides, a museum project, connected to an ongoing forum for a discussion of the nature and content of Ankole culture, might possibly help to attenuate some of the social divisions which in an indirect way the institution of kingship has given rise to.

When contemplating possible ways of approaching the Ankole kingship issue, a museum project as suggested here might be viewed as one possible option, with potentially beneficial effects in terms of social reconciliation and integration among Ankole's population groups. Certainly I believe that this option deserves serious attention. Other options, as suggested above, would go in very different directions, and would each be likely to generate very different kinds of effects and political repercussions. Some of these are hardly to be recommended if one's aim is a peaceful resolution of the deadlock identified, while others may be realistic or feasible to a greater or lesser degree. In trying to identify these variations, it will be useful also to see which option would be likely to get the support of which population and political segments within Ankole society.

The first of these options would be the NCT's present line, namely, to strive for restoration of Ankole kingship, but keep this focused on the Nkore-originated institution, thus with a Bahinda-based royal dynasty as in 1967, when it was terminated. This would represent the most direct form of restoration of what there was immediately before, that is, the colonially created institution, but also the one most likely to provoke strong reactions and deepening social conflict, which on that ground seems ill-advised. This option would draw its main support from the circles now engaged with the NCT, that is, various individuals (Bahima and Bairu) who had a role in the former Ankole kingdom structure, others who might aspire to similar positions within a restored framework, in addition to members of the Bahinda elite (including a number of high-ranking army officers) who would regard themselves as having a historical claim on the kingship. It is important to note that this option would not be guaranteed of general Bahima support. Many Bahima, especially those from historical regions other than Nkore, may be disinclined to lend their support to restoration of the 'colonial' monarchical institution.

A second option would be derived from the first one, except for one radical departure: it would seek to emulate the 'Buganda model' and entail an opening up of the lines of inheritance and succession, thus expecting the *Abagabe* not only in theory but also in practice to marry from any of the other Ankole clans. If it could be achieved, this option would be likely to score fairly high in terms of prospects for the social integration of Bahinda, Bahima and Bairu in Ankole, and might thus count on fairly broad popular support. However, the problem with this option is of course that it has always been

available, but that the kings and princes concerned have never seemed much inclined to give it serious consideration. The problem reflects an even much broader issue: Bahima–Bairu intermarriage generally remaining extremely rare, a royal initiative in this respect would constitute more than a novelty and offer a truly unprecedented role model – virtually a 'revolution from above'. As things stand, though, even if it were to represent the difference between having a kingship or not, this route just does not seem realistic. Lack of flexibility on this point among the (non-)'ruling' Bahinda might seem to call for more serious consideration on their part of various alternative options.

A third, though equally theoretical, option would be restoration not just of the Nkore monarchy, but also of the kingships of Buhweju and Buzimba (in present-day Ibanda) as well as the break-away kinglets in Igara, Shema, and Ntungamo, which split off from the former Mpororo kingdom. This might remove the apprehensions and reservations about restoration among members of the royal clans of some of the other kingships incorporated into the colonial Ankole kingdom. By implication, the territorial domain of each of these (as well as of Nkore) would remain limited to that of the respective historical entities, and would not include non-kingdom areas such as Bunyaruguru. This option therefore might represent the most accurate historical reconstruction of institutions of kingship, and to some degree diminish (although not eliminate) the ethnic issue. Practically, though, it would entail a certain amount of fragmentation, and it would by no means be certain whether all the respective royal lineages would actually be interested in taking part in any such venture. While figuring fairly prominently as an argument against restoration of the Nkore kingship, this option seems unlikely to elicit much support, even among Bahima.

A fourth option would be a further variant of this, namely to consider some form of a rotating *primus inter pares* role among these various kings and kinglets, roughly along the same lines as once existed in Busoga. It would still give Ankole a kind of monarchical status, presumably with a somewhat extended range of support from the various ex-kingdoms that were once incorporated into Ankole, such as Buhweju, Igara and the various split-offs from Mpororo. It could be argued that this would be relatively more cost-effective than the third option, and to some extent constitute an antidote to potential fragmentation. It would amount to a somewhat complex arrangement, but theoretically it could be done. However, even if it might be able to count on a wider Bahima support than the 'Nkore' option, it would be unlikely to generate broad Bairu support and in that regard would still appear a basically non-viable proposition.

A fifth possibility would be that of an elective kingship, theoretically from among candidates from any of the clans within the Ankole region. In a way this would constitute the most radical as well as the most democratic form of reforming the kingship. However, it must be emphasised that historically it would by no means be without equivalent and precedent: as noted above, in precolonial Nkore and Mpororo succession took place not on a hereditary principle, but on the basis of competition between different (Bahinda) contenders. Hereditary succession formed part of the colonial invention. Extending the historical practice and privilege of competition to all the clans in a sense would appear only a relatively small step, constitutionally speaking, and might constitute one way of overcoming the ethnic divide which is now resurfacing. Competition as such could

take place with the means available in the twenty-first century rather than those of the nineteenth, that is, by ballot box rather than the spear. The principle would nonetheless remain the same. This alternative is likely to receive fairly substantial support among Bairu (and possibly from some of the Bahima who would like to see an end made to ethnic distinctions), though it is uncertain whether they would prefer this option to having no restoration of kingship whatsoever and just letting the matter rest. At the same time, whether the monarchist sections of the Bahinda elite and others allied with them would be positively disposed towards accepting this option in order to allow consideration of a more generalised kingship may remain an important question. But then, the question might well be asked whether they can be considered to 'own' the kingship and whether that can or should still be sustained in the twenty-first century. After all, the issue concerns much more than the question of kingship per se, and kingship or whatever other form of government might in the first instance be seen as an expression of how a society has chosen to organise and govern itself.

A sixth option, very similar to that of an elective kingship along the lines of clan-based competition, would be the notion of a different kind of representative ceremonial function. Again, recruitment through either direct or indirect election could be envisaged, but the key difference would be that in this case the function concerned should no longer be considered as a form of kingship. Instead, elected non-royal ceremonial office-holders would rather be and function like the Constitutional Heads installed in various districts shortly after Uganda's independence. In the neighbouring Kigezi district, for example, which had no tradition of kings, such a Constitutional Head, titled *Rutakirwa*, was installed and for some years proved quite a popular innovation. Again, this option would be more open, democratic, and 'republican' than most others before it and might appeal to larger sections of the population, especially Bairu. The main question it would leave unanswered is whether or to what extent Ankole society at the present time would feel the 'need' for a ceremonial office of this kind, and whether it would be prepared to absorb the costs of its upkeep.

The seventh and final option, then, would represent one possible answer to this last question, by simply favouring no change from the current status quo. Though probably implying a further prolongation of the stalemate involving the restoration issue, with the NCT and BCF as the main contenders for at least for some time to come, under the circumstances this may well represent the most realistic option, as well as the one most likely to occur. Again, there seems little doubt that this option would be the preferred one among many Bairu, especially among educated and entrepreneurial categories. Still, one should not assume that all Bahima would be opposed to it: not a few would rather see no change from the present situation than have the prospect of continuing social conflict about the restoration of a disputed kingship.

Leaving the matter to rest where it stands would seem to be in broad accordance with the lukewarm reactions observed at the time of the monarchy's abolition in 1967, described earlier. The apparent indifference at the time seemed to reflect the loss of a once meaningful role which the monarchy had fulfilled owing to its insertion as part of the colonial institutional framework, as well as the fact that the kingship remained far removed from the concerns and preoccupations of the vast majority of Ankole's

population. The Bairu saying, 'It does not matter who takes over, they are all kings', seemed expressive of that distance and the indifference it generated. That indifference still seems to prevail among large parts of the population, though owing to the distance just alluded to it might, when pressed, be more likely to turn into opposition than accommodation. It is striking to note that in the debate thus far over the kingship issue, this basic indifference and silence among the majority of the population has never received a response. Against the background of the Ankole monarchy's loss of institutional and symbolic relevance in the twentieth century, it is noteworthy that questions such as why one would want to have a kingship again in the first place, what it would have to offer, and what a prospective monarch would be expected to do, have simply not been taken up.

If the kingship issue in Ankole is unlikely to be brought to an end that might satisfy all interested parties, it would still seem better to approach the matter in a positive way instead of just leaving it at that. The proposal of a museum of Ankole culture and history as suggested above, though not presented here as one of the options, might possibly constitute the preferred action from the perspective of more than one of the contending parties at the present time. Perhaps it should be given a try.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we might note that in recent years, against the backdrop of failed or failing systems of governance in various parts of post-colonial Africa, there has been a wave of propositions calling for attention to a 'betting on tradition' as an alternative in different regions of the continent. The idea underlying these propositions is that the familiarity and feelings of security which would be associated with traditional institutions such as kingship or chiefship might provide a closer fit with prevailing cultural values and allow better chances for culturally specific paths of governance and development. When considering any such culturally 'authentic' alternatives for possible adoption, however, the parties concerned would do well to critically examine the powers and interests in support of the tabling of alternative propositions for governance in terms of 'tradition' and 'culture' arguments. It is only in rare cases that such arguments can be equated with the 'common good'. Also, the particular 'tradition' claimed may itself warrant some probing: not a few supposedly 'traditional' institutions had basically lost their former glory and meaning through their redefinition and incorporation into colonial structures, as my *Regalia galore* (1975) found to be true for Ankole's kingship. Instead, new claims may be laid for privileged access to public resources, power and esteem, all in the name of 'tradition' as a seemingly higher purpose and legitimisation, though actually representing the interests of only a very specific segment of the community concerned. Chances then are of serious social conflict rather than reconciliation being generated by such re-traditionalisation. Ankole could become one such case, precisely if priority is not given to improving community social relationships.

PART III

RELIGION AND STATE: AMBIGUOUS RELATIONSHIPS

INTRODUCTION TO PART III

In terms of the central theories and debates informing religious sociological research, the theoretical continuity vis-à-vis the founding fathers of the social science of religion (Durkheim, Marx, Troeltsch, Weber), and of social science *tout court*, is far more apparent in studies of the North Atlantic region than with regard to Africa. The main reason for this is social continuity. The urban, industrial class society; the formal organisation as that society's main social technology – especially in the religious field; the self-evidence of the capitalist economy in league with an effective bureaucratically organised state; and the considerable extent to which citizens (through formal education and other state-supervised experiences) entertain a societal consensus in which the rationality of the state and of the economy appear to them as virtually inescapable – more or less comprised the format of North Atlantic societies when the sociology of religion emerged from their midst a century ago. And whatever massive changes have since taken place, that format can still be made out, especially from the contrastive, distant perspective which contemporary Africa affords us. Thus the North Atlantic social scientist of religion derives confidence from the fact that the phenomena under investigation are continuous with that investigator's native social experience, and have greatly inspired his/her discipline from its inception.

In Africa, however, the generally recent (nineteenth- to twentieth-century), incomplete, ineffective, and by now eroded,[1] implantation of the North Atlantic model of state and society meant, for much of the twentieth century, that the Africanist sociologist of religion is on relatively unfamiliar ground, facing a plurality of highly fragmented and historically heterogeneous forms of ritual practice which resulted in only a precarious, partial and (to judge by the level of internal violent conflict) ineffective societal and political consensus. Moreover, these forms have largely been studied by other social sciences (notably anthropology and history), and not the sociology of religion.

Yet, over the past fifty years, the social-scientific study of religion in Africa has grown from a mere trickle to a massive undertaking, now pursuing a variety of paradigms largely unheard of at the beginning of that period. The older studies[2] concentrated on church dynamics; church independence; religious organisation as an urban adaptive mechanism; syncretism (as an unsatisfactory designation of processes of interaction between 'historic'[3] African religion on the one hand, and Islam or Christianity on the other); healing cults; prophetic movements largely interpreted as protest against the colonial state; and the parallelism or complementarity between a local society's secular and religious structural and symbolic themes. Studies along such lines have not exactly faded away, but they not longer constitute the bulk of Africanist religious studies. Instead, the following themes have come to be prominent: identity; youth; globalisation; intercontinentalisation;

commodification; multiplicity of reference; agency; complex interactions between Islam, Christianity and historic African religion;[4] fundamentalism; disorder; violence; human rights; the collapse and – hopefully – subsequent reconstruction of civil society and the state; the environment; witchcraft and modernity; divination; health implications of religious beliefs and practices; the details of Islamic social and political life in Africa, and its transcontinental connections; representation; and epistemology. Ethnicity, gender, popular culture, territorial cults, royal cults, possession and mediumship, the sacralisation of space, cosmologies, and modes of production linger on from among the themes of the 1970s to the 1990s.[5]

Meanwhile, the African continent itself has moved from relatively effective colonial domination via a period of political and economic euphoria in the first decades of independence (the 1960s to the 1970s) to economic and political decline in subsequent decades. Over the past fifty years, the trajectories of Islam, Christianity and 'historic' African religious forms – the three main pillars of Africanist religious studies – have been very different, and all three of them largely unpredictable. World-wide, the rise of Islam to a spiritual and political power complex of the first magnitude, as well as the relative decline of organised Christianity in the North Atlantic region, have constituted two processes which over the past half century have greatly influenced the dynamics of these world religions on African soil, as well as scholars' perceptions of these dynamics.

Social scientists will appreciate that the most powerful and most amazingly successful social technology implanted on African soil in the course of twentieth century was the formal, voluntary or bureaucratic organisation as defined along Weberian lines, which (despite all its malfunctioning) yet within a century almost completely transformed all spheres of African life, from the state to education and health care, and which particularly has come to provide the dominant organisational model of religious self-organisation, among Christian churches, but increasingly also in the Islamic domain and even in the domain of African historic religion.[6]

Our case studies in the present part of this book highlight the uneasy and contradictory relationship between socio-political and religious dynamics in the African context. The first study brings out the interplay between religious and political motives in the process of (re-)Islamisation around 1800, which had such a formative impact on West African Islam and society today. Contrasting the process with the Somali *jihad* of a century later, it highlights the conditions that have spurred dynamics of state formation, in this case as opposed to the failure to overcome patterns of social fragmentation in the other context. The second study, of the Zambian Lumpa rising, stresses that where modern state formation fails to establish legitimation in terms of a time-honoured symbolic cosmology, religious innovation may appear as a powerful alternative, and a formidable challenge, to the secular state under late-colonial and post-colonial conditions. With a particular focus on East Africa, the third study further develops these themes in a synthetic and theoretical direction. The fourth study (focusing on Botswana) dwells on ways in which the state's formal organisation, and the formal voluntary associations it seeks to establish and monitor in the religious field, yet may be pressed into service by actors in that field in order to maintain time-honoured ritual and cosmological concerns completely perpendicular to the formal tenets of modern statehood.

Fortunes and failures in state formation: Contrasting the *jihads* of Usman dan Fodio and Mohammed Abdulle Hassan

Martin Doornbos

In Africa as well as Asia, the period of the establishment of colonial rule is of evident importance not only for a better understanding of the processes and patterns of colonial state formation and the emerging contours of the colonial states, but particularly also for the dynamics of collaboration and resistance which it engendered. The confrontation with the West prior to and during colonisation led to an array of differentiated responses on the part of different social categories (Boele van Hensbroek 1999). During this interval, also, key figures in various African societies decided to throw their weight behind either collaboration with the colonial enterprise or opposition to it (Steinhart 1977). Either way, the results of their actions in various instances had lasting impacts on the shape and divisions of the new political configuration. Clearly, therefore, the social and political conditions and motivations that prompted such figures to play their part as well as the circumstances that either facilitated or prevented the realisation of their goals are of key interest from a perspective of the dynamics of state formation.

Pivotal figures have emerged to tip the balance in favour of either collaboration or resistance in a number of African societies, including Somalia and Uganda. Here, two men in particular, namely Mohammed Abdulle Hassan and Semei Kakungulu, stand out for the historic roles they played, though at entirely opposite ends of the spectrum, during the formative years of the respective colonial states. The careers of both have been the subject of book-length studies, coincidentally both published in 1993 in London (Abdi Sheikh-Abdi 1993; Twaddle 1993). The former became celebrated in Somalia, though only years later, as an early Somali nationalist resisting colonial intrusions by the British, the Ethiopians, and the Italians into the Somali lands, though ostensibly his primary call for unity had been in terms of religion. The latter, however, lost favour and came to be labelled a 'collaborator' in post-colonial Uganda (Twaddle 1993). Kakungulu's role had

been to act as a 'sub-imperialist agent' on behalf of the British colonisers, conquering additional territories outside the nucleus of the Buganda kingdom, with which they had first established contact, and establishing rudimentary administrations there. Mohammed Abdulle Hassan's mission to unite the Somali ended in dismal failure, however, though a magnificent statue was erected in his honour in Mogadishu during the Syad Barre years (only to be pulled down again in the violent aftermath of that regime). Kakungulu, by contrast, succeeded in his formative endeavours and played a crucial role in the creation of Uganda, subjugating and adding various areas in the north and east to the Buganda nucleus. However, a commemorative plaque commissioned by the local council of Budaka in Eastern Uganda (to mark the fact that Kagungulu had hoisted the British flag there for the first time in 1901) was subsequently relegated to a bicycle shed, as it was felt that it would be inappropriate to officially celebrate his achievements (Twaddle 1993).

Within the context of a focus on processes of state formation and degeneration in Somalia and Uganda, an account of the Somali *jihad* led by Mohammed Abdulle Hassan at the beginning of the twentieth century is pertinent as an early example of failed state formation. One question it raises is what elements in the process or context caused it to fail to reach its objectives, which has been a recurrent point of debate until virtually the present time. But though Semei Kakungulu as a British agent at more or less the same time led a state formation exercise of sorts that succeeded (Twaddle 1993), the resemblance in essence ends there, as the two had started out with very different, indeed opposing objectives. Instead, another dimension to Mohammed Abdulle Hassan's actions, namely the prominence of religious inspiration and the ensuing interplay between the variables of religion, politics and social structure, makes a different comparison analytically more interesting and appealing – that with the *jihad* of Usman dan Fodio a century earlier, which in its origins and impetus appeared to have much in common with the exploits of Mohammed Abdulle Hassan.

This chapter therefore will be concerned with the contrasted fortunes of these two *jihads*, each of which played a major role at a different time in a different part of Africa: the *jihad* of Mohammed Abdulle Hassan in Somalia at the beginning of the twentieth century, and the Fulani *jihad* of Usman dan Fodio in the area of Northern Nigeria a hundred years earlier. The question to be explored is what interplay between religious motivations and socio-political realities caused the Fulani *jihad* to result in a revolutionary take-over and the establishment of new state structures, but the Somali *jihad* to end in failure and the defeat of Mohammed Abdulle Hassan's Dervish forces. Comparing Mohammed Abdulle Hassan's *jihad* with that of Usman dan Fodio should better highlight the specific socio-political conditions in the Somali context that tended to act as a stumbling block to his state-building aspirations. As we will see, in several respects these conditions appear to remain valid until today.

Contrasting two *jihads*

In the early nineteenth century the formerly itinerant Islamic preacher, Usman dan Fodio, gave the signal for what would become one of the most dramatic religious wars in African history: the *jihad* against the Hausa kings in the area of the present northern Nigerian

states. Seeking to restore proper observance of the faith, Usman dan Fodio, a Fulani from the kingdom of Gobir, soon found he had initiated a major political revolution. This transformation took place between 1804 and 1810 and culminated in the rise of the Fulani Empire, which lasted until British rule. About a century later (1899–1920) and in a different part of Africa, a second teacher of the Koran, Mohammed Abdulle Hassan, waged a war against the infidel which was no less momentous than that of Usman dan Fodio. He, too, was concerned about the observance of Islam and sought to save it by force of arms. But in contrast to Usman dan Fodio's movement, Mohammed Abdulle Hassan's *jihad* did not inaugurate lasting change; the prolonged struggle has survived as a bitter memory among the Somali people, who in recent times have reinterpreted it as an instance of early nationalism (Touval 1963; Abdi Sheikh-Abdi 1993).

For many years these two *jihads* have attracted the interest of historians and others. In Nigeria, *jihad* studies continue to uncover hitherto neglected Arabic texts and reanalyse known sources in an attempt to understand the full course of events. In Somali studies, the *jihad* has also been frequently revisited, in part to gain a better understanding of early state–society relationships. Relying largely on early literature on the two movements, the present chapter pursues a somewhat different interest. It starts from the presupposition that the course of *jihads*, as of any other major social movement, is likely to be patterned by their situational contexts, thus being affected, if not predetermined, by structural conditions in society. Specifically, the fact that two spiritual leaders had started out with essentially similar objectives but arrived at virtually opposite positions in terms of success and failure in state formation suggests that different contextual conditions may have had something to do with the contrasted developments in these two cases. Conceived in this way, a study of historical conflict situations is relevant to ongoing concerns in political sociology, or to the study of politics more generally. In principle, these interests stand to benefit from a reconsideration of history.

Nonetheless, if we adopt such a perspective, history should not be expected to provide us with clear-cut laboratory situations. Reality, past and present, is complex, confused and full of apparent inconsistencies; one will rarely find situations which, except for one critical factor, are identical to conditions elsewhere (cf. Steinhart (1977). In the present case, for example, a comparison of the relative success of the Fulani *jihad* with the ultimate failure of the Somali Dervish war is indeed rendered more complex by the British intervention in the latter situation. Again, the Fulani revolution was more directly related to the wider Wahabi reform movement then current throughout the Islamic world (Hodgkin 1960b:38–39; Coleman 1958:175) than was the Somali *jihad*, though the latter has also been viewed as coming at the tail end of this movement (Abdi Sheikh-Abdi 1993:56–58). Moreover, Islam itself had a somewhat different quality in the two settings (Spencer Trimingham 1959:45–45). Hence, the two situations can be compared only approximately. Nonetheless, it appears that a case can be made for focusing on the contrasting social contexts of the *jihads* as a key explanatory variable for their different outcomes.

The central point of similarity between these two *jihads* appeared to be their religious inspiration, and ignition. Each of the two *mujahidin,* or reformers, deplored the abandonment in their societies of what they regarded as the essence of Islam. Like other

prophets before them, they looked back at a lost ideal and sought to retrieve and restore it. There were also significant comparable elements in their respective careers and personal development. Both Usman dan Fodio, commonly called the Shehu (also the Shaykh), and Mohammed Abdulle Hassan, styled the Mullah (from *mallam,* or religious teacher), though also often reverentially referred to as the Sayid in recognition of the nationalist aspirations attributed to his actions, were renowned as learned men and eloquent preachers. Soon after they had started their teachings each of them acquired a rapidly growing following. Upon attaining the height of their religious influence, constraints within the respective socio-political structures in both cases tended to halt the spread and realisation of their reformist objectives. These constraints, it appeared, could only be overcome by political means. Thus, in each of the two settings, a *jihad* was proclaimed with the dual objective of expelling the infidel and establishing an Islamic theocracy.

Somewhat different readings of the processes of causation have also been suggested, however. One ongoing query in regard to Mohammed Abdulle Hassan is whether his movement should be regarded as primarily a nationalist and politically motivated one or instead as basically a religiously inspired one. Abdi Sheikh-Abdi (1993), for example, suggests that Mohammed Abdulle Hassan's primary motivation may have been political and nationalistic, fed by growing misgivings about the British, Ethiopian and Italian presence in the Somali lands. In response to this increasing alien presence, according to Abdi Sheikh-Abdi, Mohammed Abdulle Hassan drew on religious inspiration and legitimation to try and expel the infidels. Again, a comparison in this respect with the *jihad* of Usman dan Fodio a century earlier may be fruitful, as a similarly complex interweaving of political and religious motivations would seem to have played a role here, and to have had a bearings on the fortunes of state building.

Whatever the exact 'original' impetus, *jihads* or other spiritually inspired movements may appear as rather incidental factors if they are considered against broader social transformations taking place, to be explained – or possibly explained away – in terms of underlying social processes which have their own, decisive momentum. Still, while there are several additional dimensions of interest to these two particular *jihads*, the specific emphasis here is on exploring the socio-political conditions that may or may not make it possible for religious goals, once declared, to be attained. In retrospect, the Shehu's and the Mullah's *jihads* are of interest from precisely this point of view. In particular, they may tell us something about the nature of state and society relationships in the two cases and their implications for the relative chances of success or failure in establishing novel political orders.

The Shehu's *jihad*

> *Yunfa fled from bare-legged herdsmen*
> *Who had neither mail nor horsemen.*
> > *We that had been chased like hares*
> > *Can now live in houses*
> > > —poetical statement by Nana, daughter of Usman dan Fodio[1]

The circumstances leading up to the Fulani *jihad* in 1804 bear a certain resemblance to the conditions which prompted the emergence of nationalist groups in various colonial countries well over a century later. This point has often been made in the voluminous literature devoted to the *jihad*.[2] By the end of the eighteenth century a variety of kingdoms, most of them in the form of city-states, existed in the area at present comprising northern Nigeria. These were primarily Hausa kingdoms such as Daura, Kano, Katsina, Zazzau and Gobir, but also some non-Hausa states, notably Bornu and Nupe. The Hausa kingdoms were basically independent polities; while they were often at war with one another, they also entered into shifting alliances for defence purposes.

Prior to 1800 there had been a gradual influx of (pastoral) Fulani into the region, a migration which had occurred over several centuries and which involved groups who were ethnically and linguistically distinct from the Hausa. These were largely pastoral herdsmen, but increasing numbers subsequently settled in Hausa and Bornu towns (Stenning 1957:57–73; 1959). Thus a basic social distinction developed between town Fulani and pastoral Fulani. It may be presumed that among the earlier town Fulani (not unlike what was to happen in Somalia many years later) were various leaders of clans in control of large herds of cattle, who not only could afford to live in towns but also, in view of taxation and other demands by the Hausa kings on their property, found it convenient to be close to the seat of power. What is crucial is that many of these Fulani apparently entered the power hierarchy in Hausa society at a relatively high level.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century the town Fulani were definitely among the higher strata of society. A good number of them were quite wealthy; some were engaged in crafts, others in the professions. Specially significant were the teachers (Fulani: *modibo*; Hausa: *mallam*), several of whom had gained influence in the Hausa courts. They constituted an intellectual class which had more extensive contacts with the outside world, especially the Mediterranean and Arabia, than had most Hausa. In terms of social and political status their role was a significant one which gained them increasing prestige and influence. Accordingly, the meaning of the name 'Fulani' changed over time: originally an ethnic designation with a linguistic basis, it came increasingly to refer to social class, the more so as Fulani intermarried with Hausa and adopted Hausa as their language. It should be noted, though, that this did not happen everywhere: apart from the pastoral Fulani, town Fulani (Fulani Gida) remained ethnically and linguistically distinct in several non-Hausa areas, such as in Adamawa Province (Kirk-Greene 1958).

Over several centuries, though not directly connected with the influx of Fulani, there had also been a gradual spread of Islam in Hausaland. This had had only a limited (and nominal) impact among Hausa farmers and commoners, but had to a greater extent involved the ruling circles. Islam was prestigious and tended to enhance the rulers' standing with the Islamic North, facilitating contacts with these neighbours. But attachment to Islam was relatively loose and mixed with various traditional beliefs; the Hausa kings' adherence to it therefore had a distinctly political motivation.

The town Fulani, however, turned out to be early and eager proselytes of Islam. It was largely they who staffed the mosques and Koran schools, and they soon also emerged as the main proselytising force in society. Through them Islam provided the town Fulani as

a whole with symbols of identity, strengthening their unity as a distinct group, expressed through the wearing of turbans and veils and the observance of Islamic rituals. Whether strictly or more loosely adhered to, Islam thus tended to be seen largely in its identity aspects.

While they constituted a minority group without direct political power, by the end of the eighteenth century the town Fulani still had many ties with the pastoral Fulani, who were not Islamised. Clan affiliations, owner-herdsman and trading contacts, along with a loose sense of ethnic affinity, underlay a certain identity of interests and orientations which were not shared by the Hausa, who outnumbered them both. In addition, the Fulani elite had also established a certain rapport with the Hausa commoners (*talakawa*), partly through proselytisation, but increasingly also through their demands for reform in administrative and other fields. These relationships, as it turned out, were very important since, as in the event of any political crisis, they might in part determine which groups would support which cause and which would remain uninvolved.

Fulani accounts generally sketch a picture of arbitrary and oppressive Hausa rule in the eighteenth century. They describe the taxation at the time as being excessive, its levying capricious, if not, as in some areas such as market taxes, illegal. *Gaisuwa*, the bribing of public officials and judges, appears to have been widespread. Fulani also resented the recruitment of Muslims into military service. More generally, Fulani sources lamented that the Hausa kingdoms had descended into decadence. Whether or to what extent this was true is difficult to evaluate, however. In fact, some caution is required in assessing the nature of Hausa rule, as the Fulani destroyed most Hausa documents during the *jihad*. Except for M.G. Smith's inventive reconstruction of a picture of Hausa government (Smith, M.G. 1960), available first-hand accounts are only by Fulani, possibly representing an early example of 'new-speak'. (On the allegedly arbitrary Hausa rule, see Crowder (1962:82); Niven (1955:78).)

Several of these conditions contributed significantly to the climate of the time, which was one of increasing social unrest and sharpening antagonism in the Hausa states of the late eighteenth century. Various Fulani grievances were later championed by the *mujahidin*. Meanwhile, an additional element was the arrival in Hausaland of leading Fulani from Timbuktu, which had fallen to the Tuareg just before the Fulani *jihad*. They, too, contributed to the shaping of the context in which the Fulani *jihad* was to occur, and had a role in its course and impact. Still, as an Islamic movement the *jihad* had its specific religious inspiration, which needs to be considered in its own right.

Usman the reformer

Among the Islamic teachers of the period, Usman dan Fodio (1754–1817) was by all accounts the most renowned scholar. He had studied with Mallam Jibril in Agades, after which he returned to teach at his hometown of Degel in Gobir, then one of the most powerful Hausa states. There he soon acquired fame as a teacher, a reputation which also reached the king of Gobir, Nafata: a special tutorial relationship with Nafata's son, Yunfa, followed. During this time Usman gained no small amount of influence.

He became a focal point for the *mallam*s throughout Gobir and more generally for the Muslim Fulani. His ideas had a profoundly religious basis. Essentially he stood for the purity of Islam, which led him to propose radical reforms wherever practice appeared to deviate from principle, as with regard to continued observances of pagan rites by Hausa Muslims. He criticised political rulings and pressed for their modification if, in his view, they were at variance with the Sharia.

Usman thus passed commentaries on a wide range of specific issues, many of which are found in his voluminous writings. Commenting on the flood of Fulani literature following the *jihad*, Thomas Hodgkin, writing at the time of Nigerian independence, significantly observed:

> like some of the revolutionary leaders of contemporary Africa ... Uthman and his associates were faced with new situations, demands, problems, which impelled them to write: the need to explain and justify their jihad; to reform government and morals; to record the past – especially their own revolutionary history; to re-educate their supporters; to develop an adequate system of internal communications. (Hodgkin 1960b:77)

Among other things, their religious concerns motivated them to advocate educational reforms – by implication making the 'intellectuals' *jihad*' a struggle against ignorance – and also to comment on the position of women in Hausa society (Hodgkin 1960a:194–195).

In 1802, Yunfa succeeded Nafata as king of Gobir. Almost from the moment of his accession, however, he appeared to resent the influence which his old teacher continued to exercise, in court circles and elsewhere, as a result of his wide-ranging reformist ideas. It is not clear to what extent Yunfa had been influenced by Hausa influentials, but presumably their role must have been significant. Yunfa in any event soon moved towards a fully fledged confrontation with the Fulani. In an effort to stop the Fulani's increasing influence, he gave orders to halt the spread of Islam. Further, in an attempt to break their unity, Yunfa forbade the display of Fulani symbols of common identity, such as their turbans and veils. In religious rituals, a resurgence of traditional 'pagan' elements was encouraged, a move which may partly have been designed to strengthen the Hausa kings' contacts with the *talakawa*. In a sense the *talakawa* were thus forced to choose between reforms plus Islam as offered by the Fulani, or status quo plus traditional religion as offered by the Hausa rulers. Yunfa's measures did not entail a wholesale abandonment of Islam, but beyond the purely theological question as to what constituted proper Islam, they revealed that the conflict centred upon a fundamental political issue. The question was whether it was the religious teachers or the king who had the right to determine the content of religion, and by implication what constituted legitimate political rule.

Inevitably, Yunfa's measures signified a critical challenge to the *mallam*s, and especially to Usman dan Fodio. Unsurprisingly, antagonism sharpened: opposite positions were made increasingly explicit in the events that followed, though perhaps one might say that this confrontation was bound to occur at some point if the Hausa rulers did not want to lose power. In any event, Usman dan Fodio was forced to leave

the court; he returned to Degel, where increasing numbers of Fulani rallied behind him. Again, Yunfa saw this gathering of Fulani as a threat to his power and made attempts to break it. (In this connection, it may be noted that some alleged attempts to kill the Shehu and the miraculous ways he is believed to have escaped this fate contributed greatly to the myth of the *jihad*.)

The conflict took a violent turn following an incident at Gimbana; it was at this moment that the *jihad* was launched. Abdussalami, a disciple of the Shehu, refused to bless passing Gobirawa troops. For this act of 'disobedience' Yunfa attacked Gimbana, had the local Fulani imprisoned, threatened to attack Degel and embarked on a persecution of the Shehu's followers more generally. According to Fulani records, it was then felt that:

> *Truly this matter has become intolerable; recourse must be had to arms. There can be no doubt that the situation demands a prince to manage our affairs, for Moslems should not be without government. (attributed to Abdullahi by Usman dan Fodio; cf. Crowder 1962:82)*

The *jihad* then was a fact, and the Shehu was elected leader of the holy war against the king of Gobir. Meanwhile, it turned out that parallel deteriorations of political relations in the other Hausa states, strongly influenced as they had been by the events in Gobir, soon led to a considerable expansion of the scale of the conflict. In short, between early 1804 and 1807 all Hausa kings were overthrown, while following these victories an expansion southwards into non-Hausa areas took place, until finally the consolidation of what was to become the Fulani empire was effected in 1810.

It is not necessary to relate here the full chain of events which took place during the *jihad*. However, the Fulani had succeeded in bringing about an early and remarkable defeat of the Gobir army. This in turn had an important bandwagon effect which contributed to the further spread of the *jihad*, if only because it demonstrated the possibility of overthrowing the regime. For some time the fortunes of war had tended to fluctuate, however, especially when the scope of the *jihad* was expanded to the other Hausa kingdoms. For example, the Fulani were initially supported by the neighbouring state of Zamfara, which at the time was in conflict with the king of Gobir, while later they lost this support.

At the time of his confrontation with Yunfa, the Shehu explained his motives to the other Hausa kings, but found them basically indifferent to his cause. Once the *jihad* began to spread and become successful, however, he sent them an ultimatum whose spirit reputedly was similar to that contained in his *Wathiqat ahl al-Sudan* (reminiscent, one might add, of early Calvinist interpretations of the circumstances in which it would be legitimate to overthrow a king):

> *that to make war against the king who is an apostate – who has not abandoned the religion of Islam so far as the professing of it is concerned, and who mingles the observances of Islam with the observances of heathendom, like the kings of Hausaland for the most part – is obligatory by assent, and that to take the government from him is obligatory by assent. (quoted in Crowder 1962:83)*

In 1805 Fulani delegations from all the Hausa states convened with the Shehu. To each of their leaders he handed a flag which was to symbolise his authority, commanding them to rid the country of the unbelievers and establish proper observance of Islam. These delegates in turn appointed lesser, vassal flag-bearers and army commanders and with their support they tried to overthrow the regimes and establish themselves as emirs in the respective Hausa states. Before long, most of them proved successful. A central armed force, meanwhile, was divided between Usman's brother, Abdullahi and his son, Muhammed Bello. The Shehu himself, who was not a military leader either by experience or inclination, resigned himself to an inspirational role, acting as the philosopher of the revolution.

In 1808 King Yunfa died in a decisive battle, which marked the end of the *jihad* in Hausaland proper. The Fulani empire which thus came to be established was divided into two sections: a western part under Abdullahi, with its capital at Gwandu; and an eastern part under Muhammed Bello, with Sokoto as its capital. Usman dan Fodio now returned fully to his studies. It is noteworthy that the Fulani retained much of the pre-existing Hausa pattern of administration – indeed not unlike the British would do a hundred years later. But a stronger sense of unity was maintained than had previously existed among the disunited and independent Hausa states. The two parts of the empire each comprised a number of vassal states, which paid annual tribute to their capitals in the form of slaves, cattle and other payment. Through a system of client arrangements, the tenure of administrative office in all subdivisions was subject to approval by each centre. Theoretically the western and eastern parts of the empire were autonomous units, though Sokoto's supremacy in spiritual affairs was recognised by all.

Religious versus political motivations

As it turned out, Fulani rule did not live up to the promises by which and for which it had been established. Instead, it was increasingly haunted by a spectre of degeneration not unlike that which it had itself sought to abolish. This became particularly manifest after the middle of the nineteenth century, though even during the course of the *jihad* itself some developments already began to render the realisation of its religious objectives problematic. In the end it became evident that the Fulani *jihad* had fallen short of establishing the enduring Islamic theocracy it had purported to create. Instead, a major discrepancy between its political and its religious achievements became apparent. In essence, the

> failure of the attempt to found a theocracy in Hausaland was due to the power of this structure (of the city state with its elaborate hierarchy and class system) which captured reforming clerics. (Spencer Trimingham 1962:46)

Basically, this failure was rooted in the problematic relationship between religious objectives and political means. To understand this, we should note that it was a complex of both religious and socio-political conflicts that had led to the rise of the *jihad*. Nonetheless, there is ample ground to assume that when the *jihad* was proclaimed, its

leadership was motivated primarily by spiritual objectives. The ideas and background of Usman dan Fodio provide one key indication in this regard. Usman hardly emerges from the record as a man interested in designing a revolution, or in seizing power for its own sake. Rather, it seems clear that he acted to this effect when he felt compelled to do so on religious grounds. Again, the primacy of his religious motivation was manifested later when he lamented and criticised the corruption of the initial spiritual basis of the *jihad*; that he was not in a position to check such deviations is beside the point. A similar disenchantment with the turn of events caused the withdrawal of at least one of his early disciples, Abdussalami, from the movement.

A primacy of religious as opposed to ethno-political motivations also seemed in evidence in other ways. One indication was the appointment of several non-Fulani Muslims as flag-bearers, such as the future emir of Bauchi. More generally, when considering the religious and political inspirations of the revolution, the obviously important impact of the Shehu's strict Islamic teaching on the *jihad* as a whole should be assigned considerable weight. Nonetheless, one might want to qualify this reading by noting that in the Fulani–Hausa confrontation arguments in terms of ethnicity would hardly have weighed as heavily as religious arguments, which might transcend ethnic divisions. Besides, as a minority the Fulani would not have stood very favourable chances if the confrontation had been played out in terms of ethnicity. Unconsciously or deliberately, for the Fulani it was clearly advantageous to play down the ethnic dimension.

Still, the *jihad* could hardly have been won by a small core of spiritually motivated *mallam*s. Other Fulani had also, though perhaps to a lesser degree, been drawn into conflict with the Hausa rulers and it was only on the basis of a wider engagement that the *jihad* could be carried to a victory. The inevitable price, however, was a dilution of religious objectives, as against more plainly political ones. Indeed, the evidence suggests that an increasing number of participants saw the *jihad* as a road to power rather than to the purity of religious practice. Not surprisingly, it was especially after the initial military successes that the two strands of motivations came to rank high, and to clash. In the end, it can be argued, religious motivations tended in fact to be eclipsed by more worldly political interests and pursuits.

The Fulani's seizure of power in the Hausa capitals was not necessarily at variance with their religious aspirations. But there was conflict in cases where towns and villages were indiscriminately attacked and raided irrespective of whether they were Muslim or not. Similarly, subsequent though unsuccessful attacks on the kingdom of Bornu, which shortly before had been 'Islamised', suggests greater prominence of political than of religious ends. Not least, there was growing inconsistency between the declared objective of purifying and upholding Islam wherever it had fallen into disregard and the inroads against non-Islamic kingdoms such as Nupe and Ilorin. In these cases the jihad was no longer a religiously precipitated power reversal by the Fulani substratum, as it had been in the Hausa states, but essentially constituted 'imperialist' conquest. The conflict with Bornu gave rise to significant correspondence between Muhammed Bello and El Kanemi; discussing whether the attacks on Bornu were justified, their exchange soon came to revolve around the question as to what should be considered proper Islam (cf. Hodgkin 1960a:198–205).

Thus, over time a whole series of aberrations occurred with regard to the primacy of the religious reformation as it had been set forth by the *mallam*s and the Shehu's early disciples. These departures were almost certainly related to the growing part played by additional groups with their own motivations in the *jihad*, as well as to the broader socio-political configuration within which it took place. Thus, for an understanding of the *jihad's* course of development it is useful to further consider these different strands of motivations.

A profile of actors

When trying to reconstruct who played what part in the *jihad*, it first seems quite plausible that the actions of the *mallam*s were based primarily on a desire for religious reform, with relative disregard for the political consequences this might have. In contrast to the Hausa rulers, whose religious orientations seemed partly determined by political motivations, the *mallam*s more clearly adhered to Islam in its own right. To be sure, their role as religious teachers – and as Fulani – had made this adherence perfectly understandable. But as a distinctive and prestigious group they were doubtless also interested in preserving their influence and privileges, if not in enhancing them. Besides, it should be recalled that they favoured various pragmatic administrative and educational reforms.

The kind of involvement of the rest of the Fulani elite in the *jihad* may have been somewhat less unequivocal. Though there does not appear to be too much specific information on their role, it seems certain that not all of them participated in the *jihad*, or at least not during its early stages. Unsurprisingly, positions were taken partly on grounds of risk calculus. As wealthy Fulani were subjected to increasingly excessive demands on their resources from the Hausa kings, their motivations to support the *jihad* naturally became all the stronger. Undoubtedly, several strategically placed Fulani merchants played key roles throughout the whole series of engagements. Of special importance are likely to have been various Fulani pastoralist leaders cum livestock owners who were in a position to direct men to places of armed confrontation. Some other members of the Fulani elite, moreover, especially those who had enjoyed an intimate relationship with their particular Hausa king, were more inclined to stay away from involvement in the *jihad*, or even to oppose it.

Some of the choices thus made were recognisable in terms of the way options have been exercised elsewhere. People of wealth in many situations have opted for the status quo in preference to the vagaries of a revolutionary regime, and Hausaland in the early 1800s does not appear to have been an exception. However, it was not exceptional that many switches of allegiance began to be made as the revolution appeared to be successful and as the conflict progressively widened to one that was perceived to include all Fulani against the Hausa. In the latter sense, the *jihad* thus figured as a forerunner to many instances of ethnic reductionism that were to follow on the continent. In terms of the potential for mobilisation, at any rate, a factor that worked to the advantage of the Fulani's rallying together was their sense of unity and identity as a minority scattered

throughout Hausaland. This factor stood in marked contrast to that of the Hausa kings and their followers, who had long been divided among themselves.

As regards the Hausa commoners or *talakawa* (other than those enlisted as soldiers), again the picture appears to have been a mixed one. Some certainly took part (a few probably even on the Fulani side), though most do not seem to have been directly involved but rather, deliberately perhaps, to have refrained from taking sides. Their position in the conflict was, at any rate, ambivalent. Their most basic concern may not have been the purity of Islamic observances per se, but they may nonetheless have found the *mallams*' proposals for pragmatic reforms to have had their merits. Several of the proposed reforms, notably in the field of administration and education, may have been of particular interest to them. In other respects, however, patronage and other connections probably made them feel closer to the Hausa establishment. But then, even a relative 'neutrality' on the part of the *talakawa* was significant strategically, as it tended to diminish the potential Hausa strength which could be mobilised against the Fulani *mujahidin*.

The extent of participation of the pastoral Fulani in the *jihad* has been a matter of extended debate. Authors such as Bovill (1958), Stenning (1959) and Temple (1922) have doubted whether the pastoral Fulani had any part in the *jihad*. Crowder and Niven, among others, on the contrary hold their participation to have been one of the main causes of its success, while Spencer Trimingham submits that while some did participate, they were most unreliable. To be sure, in a period when 'total' warfare was still almost unknown, not more than a minority may have been actively involved – though an important one nevertheless. Even with the contemporary devastating wars that have been raging in different parts of the continent, it has sometimes been surprising to note how pastoralists have managed to adjust their coping mechanisms to attain at least a minimum of continuity in their livelihood strategies. Moreover, pastoralists in the more recent Somali and Uganda contexts, for example, have at times played decisive roles determining the fate of local wars. To the pastoral Fulani, at any rate, the *jihad* did not present itself primarily in terms of its religious appeal or significance, as by and large they were not Muslims at the time. Rather, the war to them was essentially a Fulani affair. Among the factors motivating them were their specific connections and identification with the wider Fulani community, and quite certainly also their expectations of better protection and less excessive taxation under a possible Fulani regime. In any event, strategically they appear to have played a significant role. As nomadic minorities who were constantly on the move, they were used to defending themselves against marauders and to shifting camp as the situation demanded. These skills did not perhaps contribute a fully fledged, ready-made military force to the *jihad*, but certainly helped them, according to some authors, to do admirably against the much heavier Hausa cavalry (Crowder 1962:87). Closely related again was the substantial communications advantage the Fulani had in the *jihad*, a result in part of their mobility and their minority status in an often hostile environment. (As a matter of fact, the pastoral Fulani appear to have been much less divided among themselves than were the nomadic Somali, who were always in a 'majority', no matter where they went.)

There is not much information as to what role the slaves played, or were made to play, in the *jihad*. They were however a significant element in the society, since the economy,

both agricultural and commercial, was largely based on slave labour and slave trade. But this situation obtained both before and after the *jihad*, which goes to suggest that slaves cannot possibly have been a factor of much consequence. It should be kept in mind that the Koran did not forbid slavery and that the Shehu seems to have raised no objections to their status. It is most likely therefore that the slaves – some of whom occupied very high-ranking positions – simply followed their lords' stand in the conflict, whether Hausa or Fulani.

It seems quite evident, therefore, that a whole range of different groups and individuals entered into the *jihad*, each with their own specific interests and incentives. In several cases the roles played can be largely understood as a function of the social positions people occupied, while in others this is more difficult to determine. In other instances, again, no direct sociological relationships appear to have existed. Much of the indiscriminate marauding which occurred during the *jihad*, for instance, can hardly be identified with any particular pre-existing social component, except with that which so often emerges in the context of socio-political crisis and transformations.

What is certain, however, is that the inspiration and manifestation of the *jihad* changed with the new and wider involvements that it attracted – from originally an essentially religiously to increasingly a politically (and economically) motivated movement. Thus, to set it in the local context, the Fulani *jihad* bore a certain resemblance to a caravan: having started out as a small party led by a core of religiously inspired leaders, at various intersections additional units hooked on, adding new expectations and new destinations to the collective enterprise. Whatever had been its original itinerary, by the time it reached its destination it had achieved a major political revolution.

Alternative perspectives

To be sure, when trying to understand a movement such as the Fulani *jihad*, the 'observer' entering the scene some 200 years later is apt to focus attention on more or less regular, 'predictable' phenomena. Even then, however, there is more than one way in which the collective interactions which came together in the *jihad* could conceivably make sense. Notably, one interpretation could start from the common assumption that the pre-*jihad* Fulani elite, especially the intellectuals, tended to move up in influence and prestige – again, in a way which may not have been dissimilar to that of nationalist elites in colonial countries. This may well have been what actually happened, and much of the literature on the *jihad* has seemed to depart from that premise. In that case, the actions of Usman dan Fodio and the early *jihad* more generally – irrespective of how much or how genuinely they were religiously inspired – could be regarded as precipitants of a confrontation and a transition which was bound to occur at some point. In a slightly different situation another precipitant might then have triggered off the same revolution; here it just 'happened' to be a religious one.

But if the premise of an underlying trend towards upward social and political mobility of the Fulani Gida were questionable, the picture naturally changes considerably and needs to make place for another perspective. Such a possibility should indeed be considered, for, as has happened elsewhere, it is not inconceivable that social change in terms of

relative rankings may have been read back retrospectively into the *jihad* situation. If the social context of the time was socially less mobile than has often been presumed, then the *mallam*s may have accidentally started a bush fire, metaphorically speaking, which might have occurred at any point in time and not necessarily in connection with the frictions of 1804. One might speculate, for example, as to what (if anything) might have evolved if the *mallam*s had been left in peace in Gobir; conceivably they might have been quite content with their role and status and their teaching engagements. One point that speaks for this hypothesis is that they did not seem to have *planned* the overthrow of the regimes, but rather appear to have been provoked into their action.

These questions are obviously pertinent; yet in one respect there need not be an essential difference. For in either pattern a religious impetus not only acted as a spark, but spiritual goals necessarily called for political action of some kind if they were to become anywhere near successful. Structural conditions and possibilities in the Hausa states of the time – namely, the seizure of power – facilitated the realisation of these political goals. But, ironically, the pursuit of shorter-term political interests which became a predominant feature of the *jihad* increasingly rendered the fulfilment of the ultimate religious ideal of establishing an Islamic polity futile. Thus, while the Fulani *jihad* became a 'success', it was hardly so in terms of its declared objectives.

The Mullah's *jihad*

> *Have I not put my prayer-mat on this sea to join together the Muslims who were not brothers?*
> —Mohammed Abdulle Hassan

The outcome of the Mullah's *jihad* was vastly different from that of the Shehu's. But so was the setting in which it occurred. In sharp contrast to Hausaland, where the majority of the population was sedentary and engaged in agriculture, with only a minority of (Fulani) pastoralists and Fulani Gida, in Somalia the vast majority of the population was engaged in nomadic pastoralism, as to a large extent it still is. A relative minority of sedentary Somali cultivators were located mainly in the fertile area between the Juba and Shebelle rivers in the southern part of the country. Mohammed Abdulle Hassan, however, operated mainly in the predominantly pastoral areas which at the time became divided into British Somaliland, the Ogaden region under Ethiopian control and Italian-ruled Somalia.

The second key difference was one of political organisation: except for some sultanates in the south which could be considered embryonic state entities (Luling 2002), basically no centralised political authority existed in the Somali context. As I.M. Lewis put it years ago,

> *few societies can so conspicuously lack those judicial, administrative and political procedures which lie at the heart of the Western conception of government ... The barren terrain in which nomadic pastoralism is the prevailing economy does little to foster, and indeed actively mitigates against the formation of stable territorial groups (Lewis 1961:1–2).*

Thus, to better understand the Mullah's *jihad*, a brief outline of the historical Somali socio-political structure will be essential. It may be noted in this connection that several competing paradigms have emerged for the interpretation of subsequent social transformations initiated during colonial times in Somalia (Doornbos 2001). Nonetheless, a baseline picture of the socio-political setting as it prevailed in the beginning of the twentieth century can be usefully derived from the works of Lewis (in particular 1961; 1980).

According to Lewis, kinship, more than in many other societies, was the key to traditional Somali political organisation. In this tradition, Somali traced their descent to common ancestors, from whom they derived corporate names. Thus, at different levels of a genealogical tree increasingly inclusive groups were identified. Political affiliation also rested on criteria of common agnatic descent, with political divisions corresponding to differences in agnatic origin. Fluctuations in this respect tended to be determined by the need to join forces, especially in situations of a common threat. Since matters such as personal rights, access to grazing land and water and so on were ultimately decided by superior force of arms, feuds between relatively close kinship groups could be temporarily suspended to allow a joint defence against more distant lineages. Alliances thus formed were based on contract (*heer*), a complementary principle to kinship which superimposed explicit obligations and rights over the implicit bonds of (closer) kinship connections (Lewis 1961).

Essentially segmentary, pastoral Somali society historically knew little of social inequality. Typologically, traditional Somali society would rank with the Nuer and Tallensi in the 'stateless' category of political systems first advanced by M. Fortes and E.E. Evans-Pritchard in their *African political systems* (1969/1940), and often modified since. It had a profoundly egalitarian basis, as was manifested, among other ways, in the *shir*, or lineage-council. These councils operated at various levels of political segmentation, but even though wealth or prestige might enhance their members' influence, there were no officially recognised positions of authority. Instead all male adults in principle had an equal say in them. The exception was the small groups of Midgaan, Tamaal and Yibir bondsmen, who were of a different ethnic origin and did not adhere to Islam. Traditionally they were considered outcasts, attached to small pastoral lineage groups for which they practised specialised crafts such as metal- and leather-working, hunting and hairdressing. For a nationalist appraisal of the *shir*, see Ali (1961). The absence of a special cadre of agents charged with rule enforcement (bureaucracy, police) enhanced the need for mutual consent and turned the traditional clan or lineage head into a *primus inter pares*, the *shir* into a kind of Weberian gerontocracy.

The Somali have always been divided into six main clusters of clans, or clan-families, each comprising a number of related clans. Membership of different clan-families has the potential to markedly influence political relationships. However, these clan-families, at the upper limits of clanship, were generally too large and too widely dispersed to be able to function as corporate groups. Instead, while lineages were the most clearly marked descent groups, the clans generally constituted the highest level of corporate political action. Some of these were led by a sultan, though in the case of several of the larger clans, such as the Dulbahante, there was no clan-head, but instead their immediate subdivisions (sub-clans) were headed by a sultan.

Four clan-families, the Daarood, Hawiye, Isaaq and Dir, were, and are, in the majority pastoral nomads. In contrast, the Digil and Rahanwiin clan-families have been mostly cultivators. Concentrated in the southern river area, the latter also differed in linguistic and ethnic respects and in political organisation from the pastoral clan-families. Nonetheless, all six clan-families have been represented in a comprehensive genealogy of the Somali; while the pastoralists traced their descent to their ancestor Samaale, all cultivators recognised Sab as their common ancestor. Ultimately, according to Lewis, all Somali, both Samaale and Sab, claimed descent from Aqiil Abuu Taalib, a cousin of the Prophet.

This fictive origin thus linked all Somali to Islam and provided them with one potential source of unity. But while their descent has been a matter of great pride to the Somali, their unity and their adherence to the Sharia has often been quite nominal, especially among the pastoral nomads. There was, however, a second link to Islam, and thus to potential unity, which ran through the religious congregations (*jama'a*) of holy men (*wadad*). A distinction had developed among the pastoralists between the *wadad,* usually sheiks, and *waranleh,* or warriors. *Wadad* customarily did not hold positions of secular authority. In addition to their preaching, they usually ran a small Koran school. During colonial times, some also became government *khadis* with jurisdiction in matters of personal status, whether under British, Italian or the earlier Egyptian administration. Nonetheless, their most important role in the traditional political system was undoubtedly the mediation of conflicts. The *wadad's* role was essentially to prepare the ground for the settlement of disputes, while final decisions would be taken by the elders. In recent times, this role has been picked up again in a limited way in several of the regional political arenas into which the Somali state framework has fragmented.

Through fictional adoption, the *jama'a* were incorporated into the Somali system of lineage groups. In the sedentary south, however, several developed into relatively autonomous cultivating communities or *tariiqa*, which often had a maximum of freedom from clan obligations. They frequently acted as a buffer between rival clan groups, in a physical as well as a conciliatory sense, though others became 'small theocratic polities engaged in strife with surrounding Somali clans' (Lewis 1958:249). In the pastoral north there was less scope for the development of such autonomous religious groups. Instead, the *jama'a* tended to remain coterminous with the lineage groups. But even here the *jama'a* at times operated as independent warring communities and their sheiks frequently interfered with clan politics or tried to impinge upon the chiefs' role.

This role ambivalence was reinforced by another set of relationships. The four Sufist orders which had established themselves among the Somali (the Qadiriyah, Ahmadiyah, Salihiyah and Rifaiyah) all pledged their members to the doctrine of the Brotherhood of the Faithful and the promotion of Muslim solidarity, notwithstanding different interpretations of religious principles and different functions and customs. These commitments do not appear always to have been followed across clans (if only because the orders were in frequent conflict with one another, usually along clan division lines), but they did strongly bear upon the *wadad's* role within clans. They often found themselves in an ambiguous position, as their lineage expected them to be partisan

in disputes and to intercede with Allah on their behalf, while on the other hand 'they (were) the champions of the Religious Law as opposed to clan custom, and where the two conflict ... they should stand on the side of the Shariah' (Lewis 1958:249). Thus, while the mediating role of the sheiks in disputes was a key one, it was not without problems. While it clearly filled a 'structural' need and provided a political safety valve in the absence of central organisation, the institution of the *wadad* could hardly bear all the conflicting pressures which were exerted upon it. That dilemma has also been exemplified more recently in Somalia's renewed 'stateless' situation. Again, this should also be kept in mind when considering the origins and development of the Mullah's *jihad*.

In short, the late nineteenth-century Somali society in which Mohammed Abdulle Hassan's *jihad* was to emerge was one with minimal social stratification or social mobility and with no centralised or otherwise overarching government structures. Instead, clans and lineages engaged in continuously shifting alliances for the control of pastures and other purposes and in the final analysis political influence appeared a highly variable matter. In addition, there was inherent tension between clan custom and the Shariah, which among other things was reflected in rather nominal individual adherence to Islam on the one hand and the sheiks' dedication to religious purity on the other. Thus, rather than constituting a situation in which broad social transitions might culminate in a religious articulation of social conflict, as has been a common explanation for what happened in Hausaland, from the outset the potential for religious strife and the rise of reform movements in the Somali context lay more intrinsically in the fragmented structure of society itself. Theoretically, while a *jihad* in such a context might occur at any time, it would always remain contingent on circumstances such as the motivation and background of its leadership and changes taking place in the broader context. However, British, Italian and Ethiopian colonisers had meanwhile appeared on the scene, with the British attempting to lay down order and the Ethiopians keen to raid livestock. Though their role initially remained rather nominal, especially in the case of the British, they evidently represented new and alien elements which could easily provoke negative reactions. Thus, at least a trigger effect may be attributed to this alien presence.

Mohammed Abdulle Hassan

Mohammed Abdulle Hassan was undoubtedly the most remarkable religious leader to arise among the Somali at the time. Born around 1860 among the Bagheri in the Ogaden area, he made several pilgrimages to Mecca, from the last of which he returned in 1895 an ardent follower of Sayid Muhammed Salih, the founder of the Salihiyah order. On his return he began to proselytise on behalf of this order, which demanded more austerity in the lifestyle of its adherents than did the other orders. Mohammed Abdulle Hassan first preached in the town of Berbera, on the coast, though with limited success. He then moved into the interior among the Dulbahante, where his popularity and following soon waxed.

By the standards of the time he was a very learned man, skilful in the Somali art of impromptu poetry and an eloquent preacher. He was widely respected and often succeeded in using his influence in the settlement of disputes between warring parties. This role, moreover, brought him in increasingly frequent contact with the British, who had been in nominal authority over the area for about a decade and saw their role as limited to maintaining order. Their interest was not in Somaliland itself but in Aden, across the Red Sea, where they had a garrison. British Somaliland supplied the livestock for the meat provisions of these troops. For several years Mohammed Abdulle Hassan collaborated with the British and occasionally sent down some prisoners to them. Conceivably he may initially have derived increased powers over rival clan groups from these contacts with the British. Subsequently, however, he radically shifted from collaboration to resistance.

In 1899, there was an abrupt change in Mohammed Abdulle Hassan's relationship with the British, for reasons which continue to be debated and which are directly related to the question of whether his *jihad* should primarily be seen as a religiously or as a nationalistically inspired movement. In that year the British vice-consul at Berbera wrote to him in connection with a man who had stolen a rifle and who was believed to have taken it to the Mullah. Asked whether it could be sent back to the consulate, Mohammed Abdulle Hassan replied curtly:

> *There is no God but Allah, and Mohammed is his Messenger. Nought have I stolen from you or from anyone. Seek what you want from him who robbed you. Serve him whom you have chosen to serve. This and salaams. (quoted in Jardine 1923:40).*

Whether it was this exchange between the Mullah and the vice-consul which lay at the root of the conflict that erupted is uncertain, if not unlikely, though poor formulation, poor reading or both may have contributed to the misunderstandings. But it was definitely a first indication of division between Mohammed Abdulle Hassan and the British, which would rapidly grow. Soon after this incident the Mullah was reported to be collecting arms. In August 1899 he gathered his followers at Bura'o, declared himself the Mahdi and proclaimed the *jihad* against the infidels, Somali, British and Ethiopian. Mohammed Abdulle Hassan would go down in history as the 'Mad' Mullah. This is unfortunate, if not malicious: notwithstanding euphemistic suggestions that the epithet is derived from 'Mahdi', the origin of this epithet lies in highly partisan writings about his *jihad*, in which he was depicted as insane.

For the next twenty-one years Mohammed Abdulle Hassan's *jihad* dominated events in the Northern Somali territories, as has been documented by a range of authors.[3] In terms of operations it mainly involved raids by the Mullah's forces on hostile clans and *tariiqa* which refused to submit to him and to the Salihiyah order. Significantly, Mohammed Abdulle Hassan never attacked the British, though perhaps he might have done so had he succeeded in rallying the divided Somali behind him. The British for their part raised a series of largely unsuccessful expeditions against him. However, while these strongly reduced the Mullah's forces, they were not able to defeat him decisively. By 1910 these failures caused the British to withdraw altogether from the interior and

for a prolonged period the British resigned themselves to handing out arms for self defence to clans which felt threatened by the Mullah. Inevitably, these supplies caused a considerable flare-up of hostilities.

The Mullah himself was obviously the principal target of direct and indirect British operations, but time and again he successfully escaped and invariably turned up with fresh forces at other locations. The drama finally reached its climax and end in 1920. With an unprecedented display of power, the British in that year staged joint air force, navy and army operations with the Italians and Ethiopians to conquer the fortress which the Mullah had built at Taleh. The fortress was captured, but again Mohammed Abdulle Hassan fled with a small following to the Ogaden; he probably would have built up another force had he not died of influenza later in the same year. His death marked the end of the *jihad*, leaving considerable havoc throughout the Northern Somali region. Rivalry among the Somali pastoralists continued.

Reinterpretations

The confrontation with the British is important for an understanding of the *jihad*'s end, if not of its beginning. The British presence no doubt had been an important propelling factor: conceivably, for instance, the Mullah had begun to resent British attempts to extend their authority into the interior, one effect of which was to turn him from a co-operative *wadad* into an integral tool of colonial administration. Also, notwithstanding the increased power which the Mullah drew from his early collaboration with the British, quite possibly this role met with increasing disapproval from his environment, which he tried to quell and instead turn to his advantage by an abrupt shift in orientation. Any such motivation will indeed have given the *jihad* a quality of incipient nationalism, as has increasingly been its interpretation in Somali studies. Saadia Touval, for example, stated that 'Mohamed ibn Abdullah Hassan is the Somali symbol [of its national struggle]' (Touval 1963:60).

Now, it is true that the ideal of Muslim solidarity which was the Mullah's aim, together with that of pan-Somali unity, at intervals has been potentially one of the strongest common values among the Somali people. During one such interval, that is, the post-independence years when Somali unification stood high on the agenda, the Mullah thus stood ready as an over-arching national symbol and became more commonly referred to as the Sayid. However, in his pursuit of traditional *jama'a* values he also represented a strand of thought which tended to be rather at odds with that of the modern nationalists and the secular national unity they were trying to create. Significantly, against the background of the collapse of the Somali state, in recent years it has sometimes been speculated that only a religious, possibly a 'fundamentalist' movement might succeed in reuniting the Somalis, and Somalia. Current divisions within the various fragments of the former state system suggest, however, that the 'warlords' and the new breed of political figures now setting the tone would not readily support a role for religious leaders that would go beyond a purely reconciliatory one.

Nonetheless, another way of interpreting the *jihad* is to understand it primarily in the light of what has been called the perennial Somali value conflict between clan solidarity

and Islamic unity (Cerulli 1957b:155). Among other things, such an interpretation is suggested by the development of the Mullah's religious objectives. As has been noted, when he first preached among the Dulbahante on behalf of the Salihiyah order, he met there with a rapidly increasing popularity. In turn he was induced to embrace the more ambitious goal of trying to gain spiritual leadership over all Somali. This, however, involved trying to make the ties of common faith prevail over clanship bonds, thus realising a long-fostered *jama'a* ideal. To achieve this, the Mullah increasingly needed to place himself on a strictly religious basis. This development may itself have been compelling enough to prompt a call for the *jihad* against the infidel – which inevitably included the British. Strategically, moreover, the Mullah may well have reckoned that a convenient way of rallying the Somali to unity for Islam would be to have their mutual hostilities diverted towards the British as a common enemy. In that sense the traditional tension between *jama'a* and clan was fuelled as the former immediately seized upon a new element in the situation, the British presence, in their conflict with the clans.

Had the Mullah launched his *jihad* some decades later, he might have found a more receptive climate for colonial opposition among the Somali. At the end of the nineteenth century, however, British rule was still by and large nominal and its impact upon Somali society consequently minimal. Thus the British presence could hardly have been an effective instrument to overcome the division between *wadad* and *warenleh,* or that among the clans. As it happened, the Mullah found his initial support mainly among the Dulbahante and the Ogaden, with both of whom he had kinship connections and both of which were part of the Daarood clan-family. He was not successful, however, in winning over the Isaaq, who had been traditionally hostile to the Daarood. For the Dulbahante, on the other hand, the *jihad* provided an additional avenue for contention with the Isaaq. Thus, as long as it offered these possibilities the *jihad* was primarily perceived, and conducted, within the context of clan rivalries. But already the warfare increasingly tended to place the Mullah in control over the Dulbahante, probably more so than its elders were prepared to accept. Thus when the Mullah moved more deeply into Isaaq territory with his forces, his Dulbahante support waned. With their defection, the Mullah in a sense was set back as a *wadad* versus the *waranleh,* or at least as far as the Dulbahante were concerned. Meanwhile, Mohammed Abdulle Hassan kept closer relationships with the Ogaden lineage groups. From their perspective the movement provided a ready support in the conflict with the Ethiopians, whose government at one point joined British and Italian forces in a major expedition against the Mullah. In turn, it was in the Ethiopian-occupied Ogaden region that the *jihad* found one of its more enduring bases of support, which is not too surprising when one considers that the (Christian) Ethiopians in the years before had begun to take possession of their newly conquered Somali territories.

Clearly, therefore, the range of motivations for which groups supported or resisted the *jihad* soon became manifold and complex, and related to different levels of traditional disputes, of which religious conflict was only one. Still, within the religious sphere, additional complexities arose. One set of parameters to the *jihad*'s course of development resulted from the rivalry among the religious orders, particularly the Qadiriyah and Salihiyah. One of the Mullah's first actions was to conduct a raid on a Qadiriyah *tariiqa,*

which thus turned a potentially neutral order into a declared enemy. At a later stage the Mullah suffered an even more severe setback, when Muhammed Salih, the leader of the Salihiyah, decided to excommunicate him from his own order. Muhammed Salih ruled that the looting and raiding committed by the Mullah's followers were against the principles of his order. It has been suggested that he had had British encouragement for the Mullah's dismissal (Cerulli 1957a:154). Even if this were true, however, it is difficult to see how the leader of a religious order could have continued confirming a follower who had declared himself to be the Mahdi, and thus was challenging his supremacy.

In the course of time, these various developments caused the Mullah considerable loss of influence, support and appeal. While he persisted in the idea of a spiritually motivated *jihad*, it became increasingly difficult for him to live up to this claim. Before long Mohammed Abdulle Hassan began to recruit followers of whom he demanded unflinching loyalty to himself alone. He insisted that these, the Dervishes, completely sever their clan affiliations and be solely inspired by their religious faith. At times their ranks included as many as several thousand men, though these figures were liable to considerable fluctuation. Many indeed had an unconditional faith in their leader; they were fierce if not fanatical fighters, allegedly believing that the Mullah would turn bullets into water. Nonetheless, not a few of them were attracted to the Mullah's army by the prospects of loot rather than by his religious ideas. The holy army inevitably was also a refuge for whoever had reason to fear revenge or punishment in other quarters. In this way, too, the *jihad* suffered a loss of credibility; not unlike the Shehu, the Mullah was often heard criticising his Dervishes and complaining that they did not obey him.

Events might have taken a different turn if time and again the British had not inflicted losses on the Mullah's forces. As it was, the Mullah's army never attained the strength that would have been necessary to unite the Somali by force, if this had ever been possible (nor would it have had the cadres for administering such a political entity). Ironically, therefore, the Dervishes increasingly resembled the political divisions which their leader strove to replace: as a warring community they usually raided more and herded less than ordinary pastoral groups, but like them they became a group which stood apart in a largely hostile environment, at basically the same level of segmentation. In terms of societal context alone it would simply be inconceivable for a group thus situated to succeed in establishing brotherhood among the faithful.

Thus the Mullah's balance-sheet increasingly became a mixed one. As has been shown, he first succeeded in transforming the divisions among the Dulbahante between *wadad* and *waranleh* and *jama'a* and lineage, to the advantage of the former. Then, with further support from some of the other Daarood clans, he sought to establish Muslim solidarity in opposition to the British regime. Eventually, however, he became caught in the web of clan divisions and was restricted to engaging in warfare within basically the context of clan rivalries. Then, even in this position he began to lose his leadership over some of the kinship groups on his side, which compromised his strategy even further. Thus thrown back to the position of *wadad* versus *waranleh,* his leadership was also thwarted by clerics of his own as well as of other orders. Finally, though physically powerful, the *jama'a* he founded lacked the religious commitment that would have been essential for the fulfilment of his mission and also could not succeed after the Mullah's earlier

attempts to breakthrough the political structure had failed. Again, therefore, though for quite different reasons from the Hausa situation, it could be argued that here, too, 'the failure of the attempt to found a theocracy ... was due to the power of this structure ... which captured reforming clerics' (Spencer Trimingham 1962:46).

Concluding remarks

We noted that two spiritual leaders, Usman dan Fodio and Mohammed Abdulle Hassan, had set out with essentially the same objective – to (re-)establish Islamic rule in their respective countries – but that neither attained these religious ambitions as they stranded on adverse conditions within the social and political structures. Yet the Shehu's *jihad* inaugurated a major political transformation, while the Mullah's did not. To be sure, there may have been more than structural conditions alone to account for this difference. It might be argued, for instance, that if the king of Gobir had had more troops, or had employed them more skilfully, the Fulani might never have won; or that the Mullah, too, might have seen a different conclusion to the conflict with a different British posture, and so on. Many more plausible arguments of this kind are conceivable. But it could be argued with equal validity that structural factors in and of themselves would in any event have constituted a powerful impetus bringing about the contrasted outcomes in their respective directions. In conclusion, let us briefly consider this.

The Fulani found a major source of strength in their relative unity across Hausaland. The divided Hausa kings had failed to join forces against them so that in each of their states the Fulani could seize power from within on the basis of mutual support. The Mullah had no way of doing that. Once his all-Somali call for Muslim solidarity had failed, at each of the next levels of strategy at which he operated – that of clan support, later the Dervishes – his forces came to stand *outside* the political units he sought to unite, or subdue. There was only one avenue which might have put him in a remotely comparable situation to that of the Fulani – namely, to operate through his own and other *jama'a*; unfortunately, he lost this chance by antagonising both of them against his cause.

In turn, these differences can be related to the fact that, although pastoral nomads organised on a clan basis were involved in both situations, the Fulani's minority status induced greater unity among them against the Hausa kings than could be achieved in the Somali case. Traditional divisions among the 'majority' Somali proved an insurmountable obstacle to the spread of the *jihad*. The British or Ethiopian presence and oppression had not (yet) assumed the depth and magnitude that would more easily call for united action on the part of the various clans. Moreover, another contrast also follows from these differences. The Fulani *jihad* was essentially a collective undertaking, so much so that Usman dan Fodio could stay away from most of the immediate engagements. Mohammed Abdulle Hassan's *jihad*, on the other hand, remained largely a one-man undertaking throughout. Significantly, when the Mullah died the Somali *jihad* was over – an inconceivable turn in the event of the Shehu's death.

These differences are even more significant if one considers that the Fulani–Hausa confrontation, in today's terms, was also based on different ethnicities. Indeed, it is

striking that the Fulani *jihad* has not become discussed much more in terms of ethnicity but mainly in terms of religion, and also that the ethnic dimension does not appear to have made a crucial difference. Part of the explanation must be that many of the Hausa *talakawa* became supportive of the *jihad* owing to the oppressive rule they had been subjected to from their own rulers. In Somalia, by contrast, the confrontation engaged in was one of Islamic (and Somali) unity versus clan solidarities.

The contrast can also be stated in other, more general terms. Once the Fulani had taken power they left, and were able to leave, the underlying socio-political structure largely unaffected. Their ascendance was based on a replacement of ruling strata. In the Somali case, however, where kinship rather than stratification was the key to the social structure, the Mullah implicitly took it upon himself to transform the social basis of pastoral divisions, trying to substitute the brotherhood of the faithful for clan solidarity. From the outset this was an impossible task to realise, yet the Mullah had virtually no alternative but to embark on this road. Unlike in the Hausaland situation, lineage in the Somali pattern at the time was the basic, if not terminal, social and political unit; it was also the unit that finally stood in the way of Islamic solidarity. Thus a religious transformation could not take place without simultaneous change of the social and political structure; hence the Mullah's logical but futile attempt at this.

Central to these points was, finally, the absence of special political and administrative institutions in the Somali case, as opposed to the Hausa states. The Fulani could not only leave the social structure basically untouched (on condition that it did not conflict with their political goals), but they were also able to exercise control through the institutional arrangements of the former Hausa kings. To put it plainly, when they aspired to gaining political power there was a state structure that could be seized: incumbents of offices changed but the institutional structure itself remained intact. For the same reasons, although the Fulani's ascendance involved a political revolution, they did not need to revolutionise the entire society. Indeed, in this regard their *jihad* bore a closer resemblance to the French Revolution, which had taken place a few years earlier, than to the Russian, with which the Mullah's happened to coincide. For the latter, again, no seizure of power was possible, for the simple reason that at all levels of Somali political segmentation, authority was dispersed among the male elders. Just as the leaders of any unit needed to obtain their fellows' consent for their actions, so the Mullah's leadership also would have to be based on appeals for compliance – which he made in his pleas for solidarity and initially for adoption of Salihiyah rules, albeit without much success.

One conclusion thus demonstrated by these two *jihads* is that it is easier to seize and establish power in a state than in a stateless society. This lesson seems to be borne out again today in the abortive efforts to re-establish a central Somali state. But of no less interest in this regard is what the contrasting developments of the two movements suggest about the relationship between spiritual and worldly, political objectives. In both, as we have seen, there was a certain primacy of religious incentives at the very beginning of the *jihads*, though in the course of time political and religious motivations had become progressively and profoundly mixed. Besides, it is indeed plausible that in both cases the *jihads*' religious goals themselves had stemmed from political motivations to begin with. Again, in both situations religious objectives in the end failed to be realised.

Nonetheless, it is possible to suggest that in view of the basic structure of Somali society, the Mullah's *jihad* would have required a religious victory – spiritual brotherhood – for his political ambition of attaining Somali unity to be achieved. The Fulani, on the other hand, again owing to structural conditions, could have their political victory without the prior fulfilment of the Shehu's religious objective, the establishment of an Islamic theocracy.

Religious innovation and political conflict in Zambia: The Lumpa rising

Wim van Binsbergen[1]

The Lumpa problem[2]

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 reactivated the dormant state of emergency that had been declared in July 1964 by the then Governor of Northern Rhodesia in connection with the rising of Alice Lenshina's separatist church, commonly called 'Lumpa'. In the rural areas of north-eastern Zambia the fighting between state troops and the Lumpa church's members had ceased in October 1964, leaving an estimated death toll of about 1 500.[3] However, the state of emergency (implying increased powers for the government executive) was allowed to continue. It was renewed every six months and continued through both the attainment of territorial independence in October 1964 and the creation in December 1972 of the Second Republic under the exclusive leadership of Kaunda's United National Independence Party (UNIP). The aftermath of the Lumpa rising, including the continued presence of thousands of Lumpa refugees in Zaire just across the Zambian border, was repeatedly cited as a reason for its continuation.[4]

It is not only in this respect that the Lumpa rising at the dawn of independence appears key for an understanding of 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:[5]

> *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.*

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, carry 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.[6] The use of Lumpa as a reference point, and the comparison between Lumpa and Watchtower, have become so commonplace that the Zambian historian Meebelo,[7] himself a government official, somewhat anachronistically reaches for the Lumpa example (1963–64) in order to stress features of early Watchtower in 1918.[8] Likewise, reference to the Lumpa events played an important role in the discussion, within the Zambian government, that led to the final banning of the Zambian wing of the Zaire-founded Church of Christ on Earth through Simon Kimbangu.

The most typical response to the Lumpa episode among the Zambian elite, however, was one of embarrassment and silence. One has the impression of a home truth that no-one was 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 the Lumpa foundress, Lenshina. Kaunda and Lenshina had attended the same school. Robert Kaunda, the president's elder brother, was a top-ranking Lumpa leader, while their mother, the late Mrs Helen Kaunda, was reported as having been 'close to the movement'.[9] 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'.[10]

The long and hard struggle for independence had seemed over with the January 1964 election, which gave what was then Northern Rhodesia its first African party government under UNIP.[11] 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',[12] 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 occurred. It resulted in a death toll far exceeding that of the general clashes (commonly called 'Chachacha') between the colonial government and the nationalists in 1961.[13] The uprising revealed 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 Kaunda in particular, had through tremendous efforts fairly successfully attempted to keep the rank and file of their party membership from violent anti-white agitation; now, however, the Lumpa rising forced an African government to direct a

predominantly African military force against fellow-Africans. Kaunda was compelled to suspend his Gandhist 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 members as were, from the beginning, recognised as constituting part of its cause.[14] 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 racists 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 face of the terrible dilemma, it was soon realised that reconciliation, not retaliation, was the only solution. Whilst Lumpa's alleged fanaticism, criminality and heresies were vehemently condemned, measures were taken to limit the number 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 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 north-eastern Zambia. Because of difficulties associated with resettling in their home areas, among people against whom they had fought, a gradual exodus to Zaire took place. In the years 1965 to 1968 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.[15] The Lumpas in exile have continued to form a reminder of what, by the mid-70s, had assumed the proportions of a major trauma of the Zambian nationalist dream. The main other reminder consisted of the occasional trials of individuals who within Zambia were caught in the act of reviving the Lumpa Church's organisation and ritual (revolving particularly around Lenshina's hymns). These trials,[16] in which again a reconciliatory attitude prevailed, were held in small numbers throughout the 1960s and early 1970s. The final gesture of reconciliation was Lenshina's release in December 1975.[17]

The extent to which the Lumpa rising and its aftermath 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, justifying state action, 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[18] 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.[19] 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, are still considered topics too sensitive for research within Zambia.

Thus in this time of rapidly expanding insights into African religious innovation, our knowledge of and insight into the Lumpa episode remains somewhat stagnant. At present, the literature on the subject consists mainly of the following categories of publications:[20]

1. Exploratory scholarly studies of the Lumpa Church as an independent church in colonial Northern Rhodesia, written before the final conflict broke out;[21]

2. A host of journalistic pieces covering the events of the 1964 rising;

3. 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 in (1) above;[22]

4. A few scholarly publications in which the available material, including some unpublished data, is synthesised, and attempts are made at more comprehensive interpretation.[23]

The empirical basis is still rather scanty, and so far there is no accomplished full-size study[24] interpreting the Lumpa episode within a widely acceptable theoretical framework. Yet the literature is sufficiently voluminous for the Lumpa Church to have become a standard reference in Africanist writing over the past decades. To give a few instances: Lumpa is cited as an institutionalised witchcraft-eradication movement;[25] as a case in point for the claim that independent churches re-enact traditional opportunities for female leadership;[26] as an example of the religious expression of nationalism;[27] as a 'stark corrective [of the view that] all anti-administration movements were forerunners of mass nationalism';[28] and, finally, as an example of the post-colonial rivalry between state and church.[29]

As this selection of contradictory references makes clear, the relations between the Lumpa Church and the power structure of Zambian society, both before and after independence, constitute a major interpretational difficulty. It is in this respect that Lumpa forms a key to the understanding of contemporary Zambia.

My claim regarding Lumpa's significance is somewhat at variance with the attention given to the rising in the two main studies of Zambian politics.[30] Both studies summarise the basic facts concerning the rising and its aftermath. However, in their interpretation they are rather reserved.

Pettman writes:[31]

> Subnational threats to Zambia's unity and security are not only seen in trib-
> alism, 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 superficial. In what respect were such primarily religious phenomena as Lumpa and Watchtower political? Why did they represent a threat to the political establishment and why was the latter's perception of this threat sufficient reason for suppression and violence? These are some of the questions Pettman ignores, and to which the present chapter attempts to give an answer.

In Tordoff's book, *Politics in Zambia*, Molteno's brief discussion of Lumpa and Watchtower[32] revolves around the question: what cleavages existed in Zambian society of the day that could have been a basis for the mobilisation of political conflict within the existing, formal party organisation 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'.[33] 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 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'.[34]

Is Molteno suggesting that if there had been more Lumpa adherents, 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, as defined by the political elite themselves, as its exclusive frame of reference. This would deny us the possibility of exploring the limits of that system, and of identifying such social groups and institutions as, peripheral to or outside the formal political system, may legitimate it, challenge it, or opt out of it. 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 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 refused to be drawn into the post-colonial state, and rejected its claims to legitimate power. Studying the Zambian political system from this angle helps one to acknowledge its dynamic, even precarious nature instead of taking this system for granted as an established and self-contained fact.

As compared with, for instance, the millennia-old history of kingship on African soil, the Zambian formal political system at the national and regional level is of relatively recent date (imposition of colonial rule in 1900, national independence and independence constitution 1964). 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 chapter, to interpret Lumpa's relations with nationalism and the state against the background of

the process of class formation. Such an approach is meaningful only if a number of related problems are discussed at the same time. Because of what structural conditions might the post-colonial state experience difficulties of incorporation and legitimation, particularly with regard to peasants in remote rural areas? The rural adherents of Lumpa formed only a small part of the large class of Zambian peasants; and difficulties similar to Lumpa existed elsewhere in rural Zambia, although without the specific Lumpa features of a large, rural-based independent church and armed mass resistance.[35] 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 was only one in a long series of religious innovations to have occurred in Central Africa during the past centuries. In recent decades our insight into these religious innovations, their interconnectedness, and their causes has grown considerably. What new light does this emerging, comprehensive analysis of Central African religious innovation shed upon the Lumpa movement?

As my argument develops, it will become clear that these problems are closely 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 rearranges the pieces in a way that may be helpful towards a future solution.

Reserving 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; finally, after a discussion of its confrontation with nationalism, I shall deal with the problems of incorporation and legitimation of the Zambian state from a more general point of view.

The background of religious innovation in Zambia

Superstructural 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 are studied by structural and cognitive anthropology. The overall arrangement of these elements can be called the symbolic order, or the superstructure. The superstructure 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 superstructure 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 superstructure also, on the level of action, patterns behaviour in recognised, predictable units (roles), which the participants learn in the course of their socialisation. Thus the superstructure provides the participants with a sense of meaningfulness and competence in their

dealings with one another and with the non-human world. Ritual and ceremonies, as well as internalisation in the personality structure of individual members of society, reinforce the superstructure and allow it to persist over time.

On the other hand, every society has what we could call an infrastructure: the organisation 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 superstructure and infrastructure. The problem is particularly manifest in the study of religious innovation, political ideology and mass mobilisation. When studied in some concrete setting, it is often possible to determine the infrastructural conditions accompanying these phenomena; yet superstructural 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, as in a relatively stable situation infrastructure and superstructure are likely to be attuned to each other. The superstructure conveys meaning and competence, which are ultimately derived from the way in which the superstructure expresses, reinforces and legitimates the infrastructure. In situations of rapid change, however, the relative autonomy of infrastructure and superstructure becomes more pronounced. As the infrastructure undergoes profound changes, the superstructure no longer has a grip on, is no longer fundamentally relevant to, the practical experience of participants in economic life. The superstructure therefore ceases to convey meaning and competence. Participants experience existential problems in consequence: the subjective experience of alienation. For these problems two solutions exist. Upon the debris of an obsolete superstructure, the participants may try to construct a new superstructure that is more in line with the altered relations of production; I shall call this superstructural reconstruction. Alternatively, participants may attack the alienation problem on the infrastructural 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 superstructure, which has remained virtually unaltered.

A dialectical relationship exists between such infrastructural reconstruction and the superstructural solution. Infrastructural reconstruction requires the co-ordinated action of a large number of individuals; to make this possible, new superstructural elements (ideology, new roles within new groups) have to be created. On the other hand, participants take to superstructural 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 infrastructure; in other words, the new ideas the participants produce derive at first from the symbolic order and do not necessarily correspond closely with the altered infrastructure. Therefore, their experiments with new ideas, even if ultimately called forth by infrastructural change, may often miss the mark and, failing to restore the correspondence between superstructure and infrastructure, may instead lead on to a new symbolic order that is just as remote as their old superstructure from current infrastructural conditions.

The emergence of a new superstructure is a highly creative process. It requires 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 infrastructure and superstructure. Therefore, an innovator's proposal of a new superstructure (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 therefore likely to be adopted at first. On the subjective level, it may give psychological relief, as long as the participants are confident that the longed-for solution has been found. But whether the proposed superstructural innovation actually does or does not correspond more closely than the old superstructure with the altered infrastructure will not be immediately clear. The participants will find this out gradually, by on the one hand living through their superstructural innovation, and on the other continuing to participate in the altered relations of production. In most cases the superstructural 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 relate to the actually prevailing structure of production. Sometimes, however, superstructural innovation may accord with the altered relations of production, and in this way the subjective experience of alienation may be dissolved. A truly revolutionary situation occurs when superstructural innovation at the same time stipulates such infrastructural changes as curb alienation at the infrastructural level, that is, in terms of expropriation and control. In such an instance, lasting change within the society becomes possible.

Meanwhile, in order to work at all, even if only for a short time, attempts at superstructural 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 infrastructure 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 superstructural reconstruction may be predominantly religious (eg Lumpa), political (eg Zambian nationalism), or presumably take some other course; what is essential, in all these cases, is that the central symbols appear absolute to the participants.

Second, superstructural 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 (such as have been conducted by UNIP members in Zambia). It is important that participants are brought to look upon such action as bringing about the new, desired social order in which their alienation problems will no longer exist. At the same time these actions translate the movement's central symbols into the context of tangible, lived reality, thus reinforcing them.

Finally, attempts at superstructural 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 (eg restructured rural communities, churches, political parties) within which the participants can lead their new lives once their alienation problems have been solved subjectively. The agents of superstructural reconstruction will have to present recruitment into these new groups as the solution to the alienation problems of individual people. Expansion of the new group is often considered the main method to create a new society.

Religious innovation in Zambia as superstructural reconstruction

As Vansina points out,[36] throughout Central Africa a fairly similar superstructure prevailed before (with the advent of the colonial state, the capitalist mode of production, and their ideological complements such as Christianity and formal education) the recent, globalising processes of social change made their impact as from just over a century ago. On the infrastructural level, two major changes occurred following the eighteenth century. The first consisted in the increasing involvement of local farming, fishing and hunting communities (which until then had been largely self-contained) 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, partly as a result of such trade.

The second major infrastructural 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 increasingly their life as a whole, to the consumption of manufactured commodities; and, in selected areas, to embark on small-scale capitalist agricultural production. Indirectly, the infrastructural accommodation of capitalism was promoted by the colonial state, for example 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; and the occasional promotion of African commercial farming. Admittedly, the relations between the colonial state and capitalism are rather more complex than suggested here, and failure to work out these relations in detail is one of the shortcomings of my argument.

The emergence of the trade-tribute mode of production and the expansion of capitalism both constituted infrastructural changes of sufficient scope to provide test cases for my provisional theory of superstructural reconstruction. There is no a priori reason why disjunction between an altered infrastructure and an old superstructure should lead to predominantly religious superstructural reconstruction. Historical evidence on Central Africa is still rather scanty for the precolonial period, but fairly abundant for the colonial era. From this evidence one gets the impression that religious innovation for a long time constituted the main response to recent infrastructural change. Only after the Second World War did mass nationalism appear as a political form of superstructural reconstruction, in addition to current religious innovation. There may be systematic reasons for this preponderance of religious superstructural reconstruction which a more developed theory could identify in future.

An important ad hoc explanation seems to lie in the fact that among twentieth-century Zambians the concepts of politics as a distinct sector of society was a recent innovation. The modern concept of politics, 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. However, sections of the rural population have continued to be uneasy with this differentiated view of politics; instead they have largely retained a fairly holistic notion of society, in which religious, political and economic power merge to a considerable extent.[37] In this respect many peasants retained the basic outlook of the old superstructure, in which religious and non-religious aspects appear to have merged almost entirely.

In the old superstructure, the link with the local dead was the main legitimation for residence, for political office, and for a variety of specialist roles such as divining, healing, hunting, iron-working and musical crafts. Through residence, veneration of the local dead, and ritual focusing 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 such as agriculture, fishing, hunting and gathering. The participant's view of the society and of an individual's career organised village life, the economic process, politics and ritual into a single comprehensive framework in which each part had meaning through 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 legitimise their political and economic power in terms of this same view of society. Chiefly cults emerged which enabled the chiefs to claim ritual power over the fertility of the land, either through ritual links with deceased predecessors, or through non-royal priests or councillors representing the original 'owners of the land'.[38] Thus, as a result of infrastructural change, symbolic themes already present in the superstructure were redefined; a new power distribution was acknowledged in the superstructure; and a pattern that in the old superstructure referred purely to local conditions was now applied to extensive regional political structures which often comprised more than one ethnic group. However, in this altered superstructure 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 precolonial period and to the infrastructural changes then occurring: the appearance of prophets and the emergence 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 specific spirit; treatment consists mainly of initiation as a member of the cult venerating that spirit. Central African prophets and the movements they inspire fall into three subtypes: the ecological prophet, whose main concern is with fertility and the land; the eschatological prophet, who predicts the imminent end of the world as his audience knows it; and the affliction prophet, who establishes a new, regionally organised 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[39] and my own work.[40] Prophetic cults of these subtypes and cults of affliction have

continued to emerge in Central Africa during the colonial period, and still represent major forms of religion among the Central African peasants. In addition, however, 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 also 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 in 1900, but started to gain momentum much later.

Let us first consider all these cases of religious innovation as superstructural experiments, which propounded a new symbolic order.

Despite their differences in idiom, ritual and organisational structure, it is amazing to see how the same few trends in symbolic development dominate them all.[41] All struggle with the conception of time. The cyclical present implicit in the old superstructure (highlighting agriculture, hunting, and gathering on the scale of the small village community) becomes obsolete. In the course of these religious innovations, it gives way to a linear time perspective[42] that emphasises personal careers and historical development, even to the extent of interpreting history as a process of salvation in the Christian sense. In some of these religious innovations, the linear perspective is again supplanted by the eschatological: the acute sense of time drawing to an end. Moreover, almost all these innovations try to move away from the 'ecological' concern for the land and fertility that dominated the old superstructure. 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 archetypical form, as the 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 superstructure 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 those indicated by sorcery. Most of the other innovations continue to accept the reality of sorcery but try to eradicate it once and for all so as to make the new, transformed community possible.

The constant occurrence of these themes throughout twentieth-century religious innovation in Central Africa suggests that underneath the several types, each representing scores of individual religious movements, one overall and persistent process of superstructural change took place, in which the same symbolic material was manipulated within fairly narrow limits.

When we try to relate these superstructural experiments to infrastructural change, it becomes necessary to distinguish between two main streams of superstructural

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 could provisionally call the 'intensive contact situation'. This comprises the places of work which attracted labour migrants from throughout Central Africa (mines, farms and towns) and 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 during the First World War. 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 rural–urban division. However, the following argument will reveal that much more is involved than a purely geographical or demographic criterion. This justifies my classification of such countryside 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. State expansion (before and after the imposition of colonial rule) and the impact of capitalism have infringed on their local autonomy, depleting their products and labour force (through slave-raiding, tribute, forced labour and urbanisation) and encroaching on their rights to local land, hunting and fishing (eg by the creation of chiefs' hunting reserves, and later by the founding of commercial farms, town, mines, native reserves and forest reserves). The infrastructure of their local society has been deeply affected by these developments. From being 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 physical 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 (by 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 directly the outside forces responsible for their expropriation. One does not expect strongly anti-colonial responses in this context. A precondition for such responses would have been acquisition by the peasants of some explicit assessment of the power situation in the wider society in so far as this affected their situation – and their preparedness to challenge these structures. But, as Gluckman points out in one of his most comprehensive analyses of political change in Southern and Central Africa:[43]

> *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.*

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 superstructure. The innovators' messages and their ritual, though explicable from the predicament of 'peasantisation', 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 reference to 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 superstructural level), the various prophetic cults went further; they aimed at ushering the local population into a radically new community. Usually this community was conceived entirely in ritual terms. Most prophetic cults did not attempt to work out the infrastructural requirements, in terms of relations of production, by which such a new community might really have formed a lasting answer to the predicament of peasantisation. Lumpa was an important exception to this. Divorced from a production base, in other words based entirely on an illusion, most cults of affliction and prophetic cults soon lost their vigour. Their idiom remained attractive, however: in many regions we see a succession of such cults, at intervals of a few years or decades. The second stream of superstructural 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 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 or less close links with their rural kin. Yet they had entered into a different class position, or were on their way to 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 organisations, 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 proletarian, even though the majority attempted to keep the lines back into the village open, and still had rights to rural land should they return home.

The forces of the state and capitalism, which 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 found a personified manifestation in concrete people: white employers, foremen, administrative officers and missionaries. Exploitation, economic insecurity, humiliation and racial intimidation were the specific forms in which the causes of the African predicament were visibly driven home in this situation.

Essentially all this applies equally to the rural Christian missions. I do not deny that the flavour of human relations in the missions may have been somewhat more humanitarian than at the migrants' places of work. However, infrastructurally the missions represented a social setting very similar to the latter, in such terms as formal, bureaucratic forms of organisation and control; race relations; and the predominance of capitalism, as manifested in exclusive land rights, wage labour and distribution of manufactured commodities.[44]

Africans in the intensive contact situation were experiencing problems of alienation fairly similar to those of their kinsmen in the village, but their response had to be different. Well advanced in the process of proletarianisation, 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 reconstruction of the wider society and particularly of those manifest (albeit often secondary) aspects of the power distribution therein that had caused their most bitter experiences.

For many thousands of people in colonial Zambia, mission-propagated Christianity seemed to provide the solution they were looking for. This religious innovation promised a new life and a new society. Its organisational 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 simply added a new dimension to it. A substantial proportion of independent Christian churches in Zambia were founded as a result of African converts realising that joining a mission church had by no means offered them the solution to the problems engendered by the intensive contact situation.

In this 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 paralleled each other closely, initially merging to a considerable degree. African Watchtower and other independent churches (along with the black-controlled African Methodist Episcopal Church, as introduced from North America via South Africa) are the more predominantly religious manifestations of the second, non-rural stream of superstructural reconstruction. The political manifestations led through welfare societies and labour agitation at the Copperbelt to the nationalist movement, which assumed concrete form after the Second World War.

Given the fact of circulatory labour migration, in which a large proportion of the Central African male population was involved, the two streams of superstructural reconstruction could not remain entirely screened off from each other. Significant exchanges took place between the superstructural responses of peasantisation and those of proletarianisation. The introduction of peasant cults of affliction into the intensive contact situation is a common phenomenon in Central Africa.[45] Alternatively, the 'proletarian' superstructural responses were soon propagated in the rural areas as well. As the social settings of proletarianisation and peasantisation 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 proletarianisation, could take on a formal organisational structure and develop into a fully fledged and exceptionally successful independent church.

The case of African Watchtower shows the opposite process, by which a religious innovation properly belonging to the proletarian context was greatly transformed so as to fit the context of peasantisation.[46] In the late 1920s and the 1930s Watchtower was propagated in the rural areas of Central Africa on a very large scale. The proletarian

preachers and dippers expressed anti-colonial attitudes, and as a result attracted state persecution. 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 emphasise selectively the eschatological and witch-cleansing elements in the preachers' messages. The latter were happy to oblige. A case in point is the rapid transformation of Tomo Nyirenda ('Mwana Lesa') from an orthodox Watchtower adherent in the typical intensive contact situation to a self-styled rural witch-finder whose lethal efficiency cost scores of lives (and finally his own).[47]

Nyirenda's case appears to have been 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 superstructural 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 peasantisation, and had originally triggered 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-singing, or the use of a Bible and other material paraphernalia for the identification and cleansing of sorcerers) without identifying themselves as belonging to any specific movement. Many claimed to belong or were regarded as belonging to the Mchape movement, which from Malawi spread over Central Africa from the 1920s onwards. Several other such movements have been described for Zambia and the surrounding areas.[48]

Willis[49] has aptly summed up the common purpose of all these rural movements in the phrase 'instant millennium'. Unlike cargo cults and many other millenarian movements, these Central African witch-cleansing 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 this new society about. 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 the removal of all sorcery from the community amounts to nothing less than the promise of a realm of eternal bliss, and the creation of a community that belongs to a totally different order of existence. Mary Douglas[50] suggests that recurrent witch-cleansing 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[51] on the methodological difficulties involved in the hypothesis that modern social change had led to an increase in sorcery and sorcery accusation discourages any further argument along that line. 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 witch-cleansing. 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 superstructure, sorcery constituted the central moral issue. The necessity of controlling sorcery and exposing and eliminating sorcerers was fully acknowledged. These functions were the prerogative of those exercising political and religious authority, or were largely controlled by the latter. The battle against sorcery was unending, and formed a major test of the degree 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 superstructure is likewise incompatible with the idea of an 'instant millennium'. These millenarian expectations, the recruitment of witch-cleansing agents from among 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 the populations of entire villages and regions step forward, hand in their sorcery apparatus, and become cleansed are all suggestive not of a recurrent 'traditional' phenomenon, but of a dramatic attempt at superstructural reconstruction that properly belongs to the chapter of recent religious innovation in Central Africa.

Superstructural reconstruction, class struggle and the state

On the descriptive level I have now prepared the ground for an interpretation of Lumpa against the general background of twentieth-century religious and political movements in Central Africa. 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, as I am rushing in where angels fear to tread, the following ideas are offered as being extremely tentative.

I have argued that the various superstructural reconstruction movements were peculiar to the two specific class situations of peasantisation and proletarianisation. However, they were much more than mere subcultural traits contributing to the lifestyle of a social class (such as diet, fashion in clothing, and patterns of recreation). Directly springing from the predicament of alienation, and trying to solve it, these movements should be recognised as manifestations of class struggle.

Here again the broad distinction between the peasant stream and the proletarian stream is relevant. The various peasant responses reveal the attempt to reconstruct a whole, self-supporting, autonomous rural community. Trapped as they usually were in superstructural illusions, ignoring the infrastructural requirements (in terms of relations of production) for such a reconstruction, most of these attempts were unrealistic and failed entirely. Yet in essence they were extremely radical in that they attempted to reverse the process of peasantisation by denying the rural community's encapsulation in a wider colonial and capitalist system. By contrast, the 'urban' responses were decidedly less radical, as they took for granted the fundamental structure of capitalism, and aimed not at an overthrow of capitalist relations of production, but at the material and

psychological improvement of the proletarian experience within this overall structure. Thus in Zambia the proletarian class struggle in the trappings of African nationalism was fought within the terms of the very structure that had brought about the process of proletarianisation; it was reformist, not revolutionary. Thus Zambian nationalism, having emerged as the main response to proletarianisation,[52] entirely lost its class struggle aspect. After UNIP brought about territorial independence, this nationalist party and its leaders instead greatly enhanced state control as a means to consolidate the capitalist structure of Zambian society. The capitalist infrastructure was left intact, and after the replacement of this structure's white executive personnel with blacks, its further expansion was stimulated. The growth of UNIP in the rural areas, where the party increasingly implemented and controlled state-promoted 'rural development' projects, 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 of production: 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, was able to resist the peasants' redefinition of its idiom in terms of witch-cleansing, and enduring Watchtower communities emerged.[53] 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.

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 and organisationally weak, and lacked infrastructural 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 superstructural reconstruction, the possibility of infrastructural reconstruction.

Incorporation of rural communities in a system of state control under capitalist conditions is not only an infrastructural problem. The superstructural innovations discussed here emphasised the importance of people's conceptualisation of their society, and of their own place in it. It is impossible to build a state on sheer coercion alone, and in any event the Zambian post-independence leaders have seemed to 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 extremely important 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 content to have only a distant hold on rural villages, and concentrated its efforts in the bomas and in the urban centres. The post-colonial state has, from its very inception, been struggling for both

effective domination and acceptance right down to the grassroots level of the remotest villages. Expansion of the party and of other rural foci of state control (schools, clinics, agricultural extension and courts) in itself cannot take away the fact that the state has not yet entirely legitimated itself 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 levelled at their power and legitimacy. Of this Lumpa, again, offers an example.

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 superstructural 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: a broad outline will therefore be sufficient here. Lenshina was born around 1920, the daughter of a Bemba villager who had fought against the Germans near the Tanzanian border, and who later became a boma messenger. Though growing up near Lubwa mission, Lenshina was not a baptised Christian when she received her first visions in 1953. Her husband had been a carpenter at Lubwa mission, but by that time was no longer employed there. Lenshina went 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 (at which time she was given the name Alice), and encouraged her to give testimony of her experiences at church gatherings. When this missionary went on leave abroad, and Alice began to develop ritual initiatives on her own, even receiving money for them, the black minister in charge felt that she could no longer be accommodated within the mission church.

From 1955 onwards Lenshina spread her message on her own, thus founding an independent church. She acquired a phenomenal following, which by 1958 was estimated at about 65 000.[54] 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 (meaning 'excelling beyond all others'). An organisational framework was set up in which Lenshina's husband, Petros Chitankwa, and other male senior deacons held the topmost positions. 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, becoming one of the largest 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. The rural membership of the Lumpa church[55] began to drop in the late 1950s from about 70 per cent to about 10 per cent of the local population. 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 signalled 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. It 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 became very dominant only in the few months preceding the final conflict. Lenshina assumed ritual ecological functions such as distributing seed that had been blessed and calling rain, but on the other hand imposed taboos on common foods such as beer. The Lumpa church's idiom highlighted God and Jesus, while denouncing ancestors, deceased chiefs and affliction-causing spirits as objects of veneration. The Lumpa church aimed also at the creation of a new, predominantly rural society – but this time not only by the ritual means of witch-cleansing, 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 infrastructural change. In this last aspect 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' or the 'rural' stream of superstructural 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 of the missionaries, the whites and colonialism were initially quite strong in Lumpa. Lenshina's first visions occurred around the time that the Central African Federation was created, a controversial step 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-1950s). Many of the early senior leaders of Lumpa were nationalists 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.[56] Lumpa seemed to develop into a textbook demonstration of Balandier's well-known view that independent churches are 'at the origin of nationalisms which are still unsophisticated but unequivocal in their expression'.[57]

Lumpa's closeness to the nationalist movement was emphasised by the authors of the most authoritative early studies of Lumpa.[58] On the basis of their fieldwork, which was carried out in the late 1950s, these researchers were entirely unable to predict Lumpa's clash with UNIP in the early 1960s.

From the very beginning, however, the symbolic idiom in which Lenshina expressed her message belonged not to the stream of proletarianisation, but to that of peasantisation. This is clear from her emphasis on ecological ritual (which in the 1950s must have been considered 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 north-eastern Zambia, these peasant elements became more and more dominant. Lumpa became primarily a means to overcome the

predicament of peasantisation. In its emphasis on the creation of a new, local society, Lumpa was not interested in modifying and improving the incorporation of that society in the wider structures of capitalism and the colonial state (the frame of reference of the proletarianisation response, including nationalism); instead, the entire reality of this incorporation came to be denied within Lumpa. Whereas it could be maintained that Lumpa initially straddled both the urban and the rural streams of superstructural reconstruction, it gradually went through a process of accommodating the peasant outlook. This was somewhat analogous to the rural transformation of Watchtower a quarter of a century earlier. The constitution of the Lumpa Church, drawn up in 1957, foreshadows the outcome of this process: in it the Lumpa church is presented as non-racial, not a political party and not opposed to the laws of the country, thus opting out of the nationalist position.[59]

By becoming more and more specifically a peasant movement, Lumpa could no longer accommodate those of its members whose experiences at rural missions and bomas and in town were more deeply rooted in the proletarianisation process. This partly explains the decline of Lumpa in north-eastern Zambia following the late 1950s. By that time many of the Lumpa adherents had returned to their mission churches, while 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 developments in the Lumpa church in Chinsali district. While their relation to nationalism remains a subject for further study, it is clear that the urban branches did dissociate themselves from rural Lumpa in the latter's final conflict with the state.[60]

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

On the level of sorcery 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.[61] In many respects, moreover, Lumpa tried to revive the old superstructure, in which concern for the land and fertility, protection against sorcery, general morality, and political and economic power had all combined to form a single, holistic conception of the rural society. However, the new society was to be a theocratic one, in which all authority had to derive from God and his prophetess, Lenshina. The boma, chiefs and 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, for instance by means of pilgrimage and the continuous circulation of church choirs around the countryside. Under these conditions the creation of an alternative, church-administered authority structure was no illusion, but a workable reality. Two comprehensive studies of Lumpa[62] emphasise 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 independent 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'; 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 on a much smaller scale geographically.

The superstructural achievements would have been meaningless, even impossible, without some infrastructural 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 not only used for Lenshina's household and retinue, but were also put 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 of outside control.

Further examples bear out Lumpa's experiments with economic relations that were widely at variance with capitalism and that are much more reminiscent of the economic ideals of the old village society. The huge Lumpa cathedral was built in the years 1956 to 1958 by the various church branches through tribute labour, with no outside assistance. The continuous circulation of pilgrims and choir-members through the countryside of north-eastern 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 infrastructure involved land and land rights, as befits a peasant movement. In this context it is important to note that for the population of north-eastern Zambia the process of peasantisation started not with the imposition of colonial rule, but with the formation of the Bemba state, in the eighteenth century.[63] Chiefs occupying 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 colonial state is clear from the fact that this conflict of 'unauthorised' settlement led to the first violent clashes between Lumpa and the police

in 1959.[64] 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 infrastructure. Soon Lenshina tried to purchase land, an action which was greatly opposed and resented by the chiefs and by the increasingly non-Lumpa population. As UNIP–Lumpa tensions mounted, Lumpa adherents withdrew into a number of exclusively Lumpa villages, which were again 'unauthorised' from the point of view of the chiefs and the state. In July 1964 Kaunda's ultimatum to abandon these villages expired. Police officers on patrol visited one such village; the inhabitants allegedly understood that they had come to demolish the village, and killed them. This started the final conflict, whose outcome included the demolition of all Lumpa villages and the Lumpa cathedral.

The conflict with the chiefs over land shows 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 mobilise the forces of the colonial state against Lumpa. Ordinary villagers who were opposed to Lumpa were not in such a position. If they did not want to join Lumpa, strong social pressure was brought to bear on them: foremost was the allegation that they were sorcerers and for that reason shunned a church concentrating on sorcery eradication; also, occasionally, they were subjected to downright violence directed at them by Lumpa.[65] The obligations (in terms of time, money and commitment) imposed by the church were increasingly felt by many joiners to be a burden; but while Lumpa was still strong these dissenters risked serious conflicts and ostracism if they defected to the mission churches or the nationalist party.

Besides the chiefs, a group which successfully mobilised the colonial state against Lumpa was the Roman Catholic Church. This Church had been the first to establish missions in the area, and was by far the largest Christian denomination in north-eastern Zambia on the eve of Lenshina's appearance as a prophet. Lenshina initially operated in a Protestant environment, whose strong anti-Catholic feelings had not yet given way to the ecumenism of later decades. Moreover, Lumpa was opposed to sorcery and to all ritual objects that could be considered sorcery apparatus; therefore it found far greater fault with the very elaborate Roman Catholic devotional paraphernalia than with the austere, mainly verbal Protestant worship.[66] 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 a black Catholic priest, on 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), and the offending party was detained at the district headquarters. 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, Lenshina's husband, being sentenced to two years' imprisonment with hard labour.[67]

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. In response, she adopted a very strong stance. In 1962 she forbade Lumpa adherents to join UNIP, publicly burned party cards, and instead issued Lumpa membership tickets, which could be regarded as the counterpart of party cards. She was even reported as saying 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 13.1.[68]

Resettlement in exclusively Lumpa villages was no longer the creation of a viable territorial basis for the new society. Instead, 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 adherents. They prepared to defend whatever was left of their short-lived new world, erecting stockades around their villages, manufacturing simple weapons, and preparing magical substances intended to make themselves invulnerable. There were repeated attempts by the UNIP top leadership to bring about a reconciliation between their local rank and file and Lumpa, but these proved unsuccessful. When fighting between 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.

Table 13.1   Official figures concerning UNIP–Lumpa feuding in north-eastern Zambia prior to the final conflict

Nature of incident	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
Serious assaults	22	no information
Intimidation cases	22	no information
Cattle kraals destroyed by arson	1	no information
Goats burned	18	no information

Source: Report (1965b) as quoted in *Times of Zambia*, 22 September 1965

Why did Lumpa at first accommodate nationalism, only to reject it later on, and engaging in bitter feuding with local nationalists, which eventually lead to Lumpa's virtual extermination? The answer given by Roberts,[69] and with which Ranger agrees,[70] 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 exclusively peasant movement, Lumpa had gradually shed 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 into 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), could no longer find a place in the Lumpa world view. Alternatively, nationalism, as a response to the proletarian situation, had found a final outcome in UNIP. In 1959 UNIP accepted the basic infrastructural conditions 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 for 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 north-eastern Zambia.

I have argued that the proletarian response is not confined to places of migrant work, but may also be found in specific rural settings: missions, bomas or military campaigns. Could the UNIP–Lumpa opposition reflect a class difference within the rural population of Chinsali district in terms of which the staunch Lumpa adherents were more truly peasants, whereas those who filled the ranks of the rural UNIP branches were more involved in the process of proletarianisation? 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.[71] We must conclude that in the early 1960s Lumpa and UNIP represented rival options for social reconstruction among 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 within a peasant population. Let us recall the process of accommodation of the peasant class situation, 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 of this. 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 millenarian effervescence similar to that of more specifically peasant responses such as sorcery-eradication and Lumpa. Years before the new nationalist order was realised on a national scale (with the attainment of territorial independence), UNIP produced what Roberts called a 'cultural revival' in the villages.[72] Thus, like Watchtower and Lumpa, UNIP seems to have yielded to the model, so persistent among Central African peasants, of superstructural reconstruction at the local level of the rural community. If this were a correct assessment, the peasants siding with Lumpa would have had a

great deal in common with those siding with UNIP; they would have acted on the basis of the same inspiration of rural reconstruction, and Roberts's explanation would be basically correct. According to this line of argument, the explanation of the feud between UNIP and Lumpa would lie in the alleged fact that both were rival attempts at rural superstructural 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 meaning and competence. The solution that each of the feuding groups was propounding would have had the power to convince its adherents only as long as it remained, in the latter's eyes, absolute and without alternatives. People on neither side could afford to yield, as in doing so they would be asserting, and defending, the very meaning they were giving to their lives.[73]

This approach to the 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 or proletarian responses would have to be immaterial: both would have to be transformed to serve a strictly local peasant response. Second, UNIP in Chinsali district in the early 1960s would not have functioned primarily as a nationalist movement aiming at territorial independence; rather, it would have adopted the nationalist symbolism and idiom merely to serve some peasant movement of local scope. Third, 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 for us to maintain Roberts's explanation wholesale. The crucial issue is the mobilisation 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's analysis in a way that takes the above implications into account.

Let us grant that UNIP in Chinsali district initially contained an element of superstructural reconstruction at the purely local level, thus to some degree accommodating the typical peasant response. However, this element may soon have eroded away, as it became clear that UNIP aimed at intensifying, rather than counteracting, wider incorporation, and therefore that UNIP was a powerful mechanism in the very process of peasantisation which the peasants were anxious to reverse. Is it then not more realistic to explain UNIP–Lumpa feuding from the fact that Lumpa, as fairly successfully realising a local, rural reconstruction of both superstructure and infrastructure, in north-eastern Zambia represented 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, and 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 to a degree compatible with UNIP's basic orientation. With UNIP rural aggression heavily outweighing Lumpa's (Table 13.1, 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 emphasise 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 were prepared to accept UNIP control. However, the necessity of exterminating Lumpa, and movements like it, is at the root of UNIP and similar reformist nationalist movements, irrespective of 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, both the feuding and the final conflict were more or less inevitable.

Religion and the state in modern Zambia: The problem of legitimation

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

In my introduction to this chapter I pointed out that the Lumpa rising was a bitter disappointment for the Zambian nationalists, and a threat to their international public image. We have subsequently 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 itself. Although declining and greatly harassed by conflicts with other groups in north-eastern Zambia, Lumpa represented to the end a successful peasant movement, comprising many thousands of people and binding them together as part of an effective organisation that radically rejected state control and that was beginning to define its own infrastructure. Over time rural Lumpa did not settle down as a tolerant denomination attuned to the institutions of the wider society. Here Lumpa differs from most rural Watchtower communities founded before the Second World War. Under the mounting attacks by rural UNIP, Lumpa became increasingly intransigent vis-à-vis the outside world. Short of giving up the modern conception of the national state, or at least embarking upon a fundamental discussion of it, the logic of the state left no option but to break the power of Lumpa once and for all, which is indeed 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 been. A major justification for the deployment of government troops was that the Lumpa adherents, in trying to create 'a state within the state', had become criminals.[74] 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 Zaire. So far the evidence for this allegation has been slight.[75] It seems difficult to bring such political manoeuvring in line with the situation of the Lumpa Church, which in the years 1963 to 1964 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 on 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 by 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 had the following to say:[76]

> 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 realise 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.

In the context of modern Zambian society there can be little doubt that here Kaunda is describing the Lumpa adherents as sorcerers, and endeavouring to mobilise 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 members to be cleansed (as in the witch-cleansing movements so popular in twentieth-century Central Africa) before they can return to human society:[77]

When they have surrendered and look back at their actions, some of these people realise 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.

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 had a very strong appeal among the great majority of the Zambian population of the day. By invoking them, Kaunda is in fact implicitly claiming a supreme moral and religious legitimation for his government. Yet his government already had, 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 owing 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)'.[78]

But 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 organisations based upon it, virtually have no meaning, and 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 was launched along such lines as political mobilisation; a youth movement; a women's movement; specific school curricula incorporating training for citizenship; and rural development. Populism, here in the form of the ideology of Zambian humanism, emerged as an attempt to overcome, if not to ignore, the fundamental contradictions 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, contrast strikingly with the position assigned to chiefs in the Lumpa blueprint for society) constitute an attempt to incorporate rural, local foci of authority into the central government structure, so as to let the government benefit from the additional legitimation which this link with traditional authority may offer. Where this attempt fails, the state curtails the chiefs' privileges,[79] 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 or explicit, to the supremacy of the state, are likewise denounced by the ruling 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 post-colonial national state. Lumpa antagonised precisely those grassroots processes by which the post-colonial state expects to solve its problem of incomplete legitimation.

For a national elite who to a great extent find 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 uncomfortable indeed, for the extermination of Lumpa by no means solved the much wider problem of the incorporation of peasants into the Zambian state. New peasant movements[80] are likely to emerge which, like Lumpa, may employ a religious idiom in an attempt to regain local control and to challenge wider incorporation.

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 fairly widespread and homogeneous cultural substratum, similar religious innovations (of the kinds I have discussed above) occurred throughout Central Africa. Sorcery beliefs and the prominence of the High God form the two main constants in the emerging supra-ethnic religious systems of modern Zambia. These two religious elements are subscribed to by virtually the entire African population of the country, no matter what various specific ritual forms and organisations the people adhere to. The process of secularisation, so marked in North Atlantic society, has not replicated itself in Central Africa – yet. Therefore, some form of appeal to this shared religious framework could provide extensive legitimation for present-day authority structures,[81] 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 employed a religious idiom to underpin their own authority and that of the state bureaucracy they represent. The situation is complicated by the existence of, besides the party and the state, specifically religious organisations, mainly in the form of Christian churches. These churches, having reached various stages in the process of the routinisation of charisma,[82] have fairly direct access to religious legitimation. They generate a considerable social power through their large number of adherents, and through the latter's effective organisation, loyalty, and above-average standards of education and income. Of course, the churches have used 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 (the Roman Catholic Church, United Church of Zambia, Reformed Church in Zambia, Anglican Church and so on) and the Zambian state[83] a not always easy, but on the whole productive, symbiosis has developed and has been maintained ever since independence. The churches lend both their expertise and their legitimating potential to the government, in exchange for considerable autonomy in the religious field. The settings in which this interaction takes shape include public ceremonies in which political and religious leaders participate 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 which, 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 organisations, which may thus come to represent, through a feedback process, 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 noticeable among Zambian intellectuals). 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 African Independent churches the situation tends to be more acutely difficult. These independent churches seem to cater typically for Zambians in the early stages of proletarianisation. The independent churches are most in evidence at the local level: the bomas and the urban compounds. The superstructural reconstruction they offer their adherents, and the extensive extra-religious impact they make on the latter's lives (eg in the spheres of recreation, marriage, domestic conflict, illness, death and burial) not infrequently clash with the local party organisation, which often works along similar lines. Despite instances of felicitous co-operation between independent church and party at the local level,[84] conflict remotely 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 legitimating 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 organisational and interpretative experiments going on in the Zambian African Independent churches have represented a significant form of superstructural reconstruction, with presumably profound repercussions for the state and the nationalist movement.

Conclusion

This chapter 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 unique in its scope and historical development, and why did it occur precisely among the Bemba of north-eastern Zambia? Another important problem that can shed light on both Lumpa and 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 organised a rehabilitation mission right into the areas of combat, and afterwards the United Church of Zambia (with 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.

Even though today half a century separates us from the Lumpa episode, many essential data are still lacking. The sociology of contemporary Zambian religion still largely remains to be written. The whole Lumpa tragedy and its aftermath remains the 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.

Postscript: J.-L. Calmettes's contribution to Lumpa studies

The interpretation of the Lumpa rising as advanced in this chapter has been subjected to a careful re-analysis by Jean-Loup Calmettes, in his MSc Econ. thesis submitted to the University College of Wales.[85] As a Roman Catholic missionary working in north-eastern Zambia in the late 1960s and early 1970s, Calmettes was fortunate to have virtually unlimited access to three sources of data which had until then been lacking in the study of the Lumpa Church: extensive oral-historical evidence; missionary documents and missionary publications of limited circulation; and an almost complete set of Lumpa hymns. Calmettes must be congratulated on the competent way in which he has used and presented these new materials.[86] Particularly on the descriptive side his work goes a long way towards resolving some of the major puzzles of the Lumpa Church. However, I must resist the temptation to quote extensively from his text, although I would like to refer to those passages in Calmettes's thesis which explicitly criticise my own Lumpa analysis: this critique is contained in the concluding ten pages of his work.

While Calmettes does agree with the main thrust of my argument, his specific emphasis is substantially different. In the light of his analysis I can now see that my argument tried to explain the Lumpa crisis largely as the confrontation between two monolithic protagonists: on the one hand the state (in the liminal stage between the colonial and the post-colonial phase) and UNIP, which at the time of the rising held a majority in the Zambian transitional government; and on the other hand the Lumpa Church, which in the years 1963 to 1964 consisted of Lenshina, the senior church leaders, including her husband, and about 20 000 faithful followers: all that had remained after about four-fifths of the membership of the late 1950s had defected. According to my analysis, Lumpa had increasingly defined itself as a peasant movement defying peasantisation, that is, incorporation (both economically through capitalist relations of production, and politically through UNIP) into the wider capitalist order and the nationalist state. The basic force behind the Lumpa uprising, I claimed, was the peasants' class struggle. The logic of capitalism, as mediated through the state, left no option but to confront this struggle violently by military means. Put thus crudely, it is certainly somewhat too simplistic, and I am grateful to Calmettes for providing the elements with which we may yet arrive at a somewhat more penetrating analysis.

Towards new relations of production

In my analysis I stressed how Lumpa was an exception among Central African forms of religious innovation, but not because of its size, ritual or beliefs. As a form of 'superstructural reconstruction', Lumpa showed a combination of themes of religious innovation which to the student of Central African religious change are familiar: witchcraft eradication, millenarian fervour, a certain concern for ecological ritual, and so on. What was exceptional in Lumpa, I claimed, was its ability to move towards the creation of alternative relations of production which could serve as a negation of the capitalist relations into which the population of north-eastern Zambia had increasingly been drawn. In other words, for the alienation produced by incorporation, Lumpa tried to provide not only ideological and ritual, but also infrastructural remedies – a state of affairs which I called revolutionary.[87]

Calmettes writes: 'I agree with Van Binsbergen's insistence on the significance of the creation of new relations of production'.[88] However, he is critical of the way in which I worked this out in detail, and claims that I give a partly false picture of Lumpa attempts at redefinition of relations of production prevailing in the countryside of north-eastern Zambia around 1960; moreover, he feels that I exaggerate the significance of these attempts.

Thus he denies that the resettlement of a considerable Lumpa membership around Sioni, without formal permission from the chiefs, constituted the challenge to the rural production system I claimed it to be; tribute labour to chiefs, Calmettes tells us, had fallen into disuse several decades before the Lumpa church was established. I must reject Calmettes's point here. I did not say that unauthorised resettlement of peasants upset a tribute-labour system which clearly no longer existed. I said it challenged fundamental property rights to land, which ever since the rise of the Bemba chiefly dynasties had been vested in the chiefs. Colonial administration would of course infringe on these rights in the interests of itself and allied outsiders (claiming sites for administrative premises, missions or the odd European settler), but vis-à-vis local peasants the colonial state would uphold the chiefs' control over land.

Creation of new villages, or individual changes of residence from one chief's area to another, was subject to the formal approval of the chiefs involved. Clearly this constitutes a major aspect of the articulation between the domestic community in north-eastern Zambia and the capitalist mode of production as mediated through the colonial state. By underpinning chieftainship (which could be termed an encapsulated, neo-traditional tributary mode of production), the colonial state backed a system of chiefly power and prerogatives which to a considerable extent denied the peasants control over their main means of production: land. It remains to be analysed how precisely this system of rural control was instrumental in forcing a considerable portion of the labour force in the domestic communities of north-eastern Zambia to be involved in labour migration. In the light of Rey's analysis of similar processes elsewhere in Africa,[89] it seems very likely that the class alliance between those European classes controlling the colonial state (white settlers, metropolitan capitalists, etc.) and local chiefs enabled the system of circulatory migration to impose itself on the countryside of north-eastern Zambia. Although I admit that I should have spelled this out in my main arguments, this is

what I meant by the phrase 'rural production system'. In this rural context, much as in the numerous squatter settlements around the Zambian Line of Rail, unauthorised settlement means, essentially, a form of active class struggle.

Calmettes goes on to point out that Lenshina never attempted to purchase land, as I wrote, but that she merely applied for a lease on a piece of land. Calmettes adds[90] that he does 'not think that she wanted to buy a huge estate on which she would have regrouped her thousands of shifting cultivators'. I am grateful to Calmettes for pointing out this monstrous slip of the pen. The main source on this point[91] mentions 'lease', not 'purchase'. Given the legal structure of land tenure in north-eastern Zambia around 1960, it would in any event have been almost inconceivable that Lenshina could have bought land. I would nevertheless maintain that from the point of view of Lumpa's attempt at redefining existing relations of production, the difference between purchase and lease may not be all that important. What is essential is that the Lumpa Church attempted to gain autonomous control over land, and this, as Roberts writes,[92]

> was taken as proof that she wished to set up a kingdom of her own. Whatever the political implications of her request [for land WvB], there can be little doubt that its rejection had important economic implications: her followers now felt that their livelihood as well as their religious and political autonomy was threatened.

Calmettes is likewise critical of my claim that the final conflict developed out of another aspect of the land theme in the Lumpa drama: the refusal to demolish the stockaded villages into which the Lumpa membership had retreated in 1963. Here again I think there is no need to give in too readily to Calmettes's criticism. The instruction to abandon these 'illegal settlements' was a central issue in all negotiations between the Lumpa Church, the UNIP leadership and the state in the months preceding the final conflict. An eye-witness to the Lumpa final conflict in Lundazi began his account of the Lumpa episode thus:[93]

> It was ironic that the 'independence' constitution should grant the right of every lawful inhabitant of Northern Rhodesia to reside where he wished. The members of the 'Lumpa' Sect, followers of Alice Lenshina, exercised this right with results to themselves that will be described.

In the light of all this I would still maintain that, particularly in the context of land and relations of production focusing on land, my analysis essentially (although not in all details) holds up against Calmettes's criticism.

Let us now turn to those other indications of what I claimed to be Lumpa's experimentation with new relations of production alternative to the form of capitalist relations of production to which the local peasants were then subjected. Rightly, Calmettes points out that in the Lumpa Church, tribute labour was revived not only for the building of the Lumpa cathedral (as mentioned in my chapter), but also for agricultural work in Lenshina's gardens; the produce she sold. She also received tribute in kind.[94] Calmettes agrees that this is a form of production which opts out of the relations of production as defined by the chiefs, modern industry, or the state. While a

Marxist analysis would tend to stress production over circulation and distribution, we should also look at the latter aspect. Here Calmettes helps us to detect a fundamental contradiction within the Lumpa Church, although in his own re-analysis this remains only implicit. Whereas the Lumpa adherents as direct producers were joining in new, alternative relations of production as defined by the Lumpa Church, in the sphere of distribution the contradiction between them and the Lumpa leadership became very marked and took on class-like elements.

In my earlier analysis I stressed how the continuous circulation of multitudes of choir members and pilgrims throughout the Lumpa countryside imposed upon local villagers the obligation to feed and accommodate these outsiders. The Lumpa Church, as an organisation, thus created a structure through which a local surplus was extracted and was made to benefit Lumpa members from elsewhere. If all Lumpa members had had the opportunity to tour the countryside in this way, the inequalities thus created might have levelled out. In practice, it seems that some groups (those living around Sioni, the church's headquarters; those in younger age cohorts) were more likely to be on the receiving end of this regional distribution system. Their continuous parasitism certainly did create resentment. However, most surplus extraction by the Lumpa organisation benefited not the rank and file of the church, but its leadership.

In addition, of course, much was invested in prestigious and ritual objects, such as the Lumpa cathedral. The purchase of two lorries, bought from similar sources, is very interesting since on the one hand they served the circulation of choirs and thus the regional extraction process in the interest of the rank and file (in addition to the strengthening of ritual ties throughout the region), while on the other they served the entrepreneurial interests of the church leadership, through trips to the Copperbelt where produce would be sold.[95] Calmettes provides the answer to my earlier queries concerning the economic network the Lumpa Church could maintain with the aid of these trucks. Rather than creating 'a chain of rural stores', as 'a move to create a self-sufficient distribution system as independent as possible from outside control', the trucks turned out to represent what I suggested as the alternative possibility: 'merely the attempt of Lumpa leaders to launch themselves as entrepreneurs'.[96]

Before Calmettes's thesis, we had to accept as authoritative Roberts's resigned statement that '[t]here is very little information of any kind on the internal organization of the Lumpa church – a most important subject which perhaps will never properly be elucidated.[97]

Against this background I was tempted, perhaps justifiably, to treat Lumpa as a monolithic whole. But it is here that the strength of Calmettes's work lies. The evolving relations between leaders and followers within the Lumpa Church, and between the leaders themselves, are now for the first time discussed in terms that are no longer hazy and conjectural.

It was possible to identify the deficiencies in my earlier interpretation on theoretical grounds. If we accept that the impetus behind Lumpa, up to and including the final conflict, was a peasants' class struggle against incorporation, then it should have been clear that their experimenting with new, alternative relations of production did not amount to a dissolution of all class-like relations. Only then could Lumpa have been

treated as a monolith. But what we should have expected, instead, was the creation of a new type of class-like relations: contradictions and patterns of expropriation and control which, at least initially and at least for the Lumpa followers themselves, would be hidden from the eye by the theocratic assumptions of the Lumpa organisation and beliefs. This is precisely what happened. Lumpa channelled peasants' rejection of current relations of production, offering them a form of superstructural reconstruction by which to battle against the alienation springing from current conditions. However, by involving these peasants in new Lumpa-defined relations of production (such as tribute in labour and kind, resettlement in Lumpa-controlled settlements, and circulation of pilgrims and choirs), the Lumpa leadership themselves began to act as an exploiting class.

In this light many aspects which my earlier analysis could not accommodate fall into their proper place. Lumpa imposed what could be termed a theocratic mode of production; or perhaps, in line with a theoretical development hallmarked by the publication of the Association of Social Anthropologists of the UK and Commonwealth (ASA) monograph entitled *Regional cults*,[98] a regional-cultic mode of production. The internal structure of expropriation and control hinged on the contradiction between sect leaders and followers. This emergent, cultic mode of production, whose outlines are now becoming much clearer thanks to the work of Calmettes, defined itself vis-à-vis the other modes of production represented in the area. Unauthorised settlement, claims to judicial powers and to tribute challenged the tributary mode; through unauthorised settlement again, opposition to polygamy, the mobilisation of labour for tribute work and ritual activities, and financial contributions, the Lumpa organisation made significant inroads into what by the 1950s was left of the domestic mode of production.

While the desire for superstructural reconstruction as felt among the peasants may ultimately have been the main inspiration of the Lumpa beliefs, I must agree with the suggestion contained in Calmettes's work that the Lumpa leadership was not fundamentally opposed to the capitalist mode of production, as long as it was in line with their own perceived material interests. Lumpa did not issue pronouncements against wage labour or migrancy. On the contrary, it set up Lumpa branches in the industrial areas along the distant Line of Rail, persuaded migrants to make the pilgrimage to Sioni, and maintained profitable relations with the thoroughly capitalist Copperbelt commodity markets. While I would still maintain that the original inspiration of Lumpa, and the continuing orientation of its rank and file, was against incorporation into capitalist relations of production, the conclusion is now forced upon us that the Lumpa leadership struck a class alliance with the forces of capitalism as dominant along the Line of Rail. Lumpa became a structure of rural extraction, and the Lumpa leadership acquired material privileges worth defending.

There is much to be said for Calmettes's view that the leaders' struggle to defend privileges as derived from the internal set-up of the Lumpa Church was an important factor in the feuding which arose in north-eastern Zambia between Lumpa and UNIP. Just as the increasingly oppressive nature of the Lumpa organisation caused up to 80 per cent of the original membership to defect in the early 1960s (so that these peasants had little reason left to resist UNIP pressure to join the party), the fear among the Lumpa leadership of a further erosion of their privileges seems to have suggested the strong

anti-UNIP pronouncements made by this leadership as from 1962. In fact, the Lumpa leaders had changed their attitude vis-à-vis nationalism and the colonial state much earlier than this: after having served as a nationalist platform for some years, the 1957 Lumpa constitution virtually pledged allegiance to the colonial state.[99] I would suggest that by that time the Lumpa leadership had come to understand that, in upholding the status quo, the colonial state (as the expression, and protection, of the totality of class contradictions existing within its territory)[100] would be an essential factor in the continuation of the very privileges the sect leaders were building up by means of the Lumpa organisation.

Thus it could be claimed that in the final conflict leaders and followers were fighting the same enemy, but for very different reasons. The peasant rank and file were still, with remarkable courage as well as occasional atrocity, fighting the destruction of their reconstructed new society; the Lumpa leadership, which de facto had acquired the status of a local religious bourgeoisie, was fighting against the annihilation of their privileges. The complexities of this situation are perhaps reflected in the fact that Lenshina and her top leadership took little or no part in the actual battles, and were in a remarkably confused state when finally apprehended.

In the light of this reinterpretation, it does not seem as if I exaggerated the significance of Lumpa's striving towards new relations of production. Of course, even these new relations of production never reached maturity; I never claimed that they did, and in a context of international dependency it is extremely unlikely that a relatively small peasant movement could ever succeed in escaping a structure of peripheral capitalism controlled from powerful metropoles. Notwithstanding all this, Lumpa's attempts at new relations of production were both even more complex and more fundamental to Lumpa's development than I claimed in my original argument.

Having criticised my analysis of Lumpa attempts at creating new relations of production, and having (correctly) pointed out that my analysis is only partial, Calmettes goes on to overstress the significance of the internal cleavage within Lumpa. He completely downplays the struggle for both superstructural and infrastructural reconstruction, which I continue to see as the main inspiration of the Lumpa rank and file, up to and throughout the final conflict. For him, 'The conflict resembles more the wars which took place when the Bemba chiefs defended their privileges'.[101]

Following the line of Lehmann's early analysis,[102] Calmettes considers Lenshina to be a self-styled female Bemba chief. Calmettes does not see the fact that she surrounded herself with tribute labour and claimed judicial powers as the selective borrowing of redefined historical institutions into a totally new set of relations of production, social relations and ritual relations: instead, he considers it a return to the past,[103] in other words an attempt to revive the tributary mode of production – an attempt which, without much conceptual discussion, he refers to as the action of a 'messianic sect'. Thus he becomes the victim of his own, in itself illuminating, emphasis on the internal dynamics of the Lumpa Church.[104]

I would rather insist on the implications of the type of relations of production which had evolved within the sect itself. I think that they explain the ideology of the leadership of the sect and the final conflict.

After what I have said above I do not think we need a detailed spelling out of the tributary mode of production in Bembaland in the two or three centuries of its precolonial existence[105] or in its encapsulated neo-traditional colonial form[106] to make the point convincingly that the essence of the Lumpa Church was not a revival of the tributary mode of production. Moreover, the final conflict was between the Lumpa Church (with all its internal contradictions) and an outside enemy, and cannot be adequately explained by reference to the Lumpa internal structure alone.

UNIP and the state

Calmettes's criticism has thus helped us to deepen our understanding of Lumpa in terms of relations of production, even though we cannot accept his own alternative analysis. Let us now proceed to re-examine the other quasi-monolithic block in my original argument: that of UNIP and the state, in an attempt to reinterpret both the nature and the timing of the final conflict that led to Lumpa's annihilation.

We would do well to heed Cross's warning in the context of the clashes between the Jehovah's Witnesses and the state in Zambia and other African countries. In his view:[107]

> The course of events would appear to be determined more by the kings of the State than by the state of the Kingdom.... The clashes and restrictions may be more accurately explained by an examination of the particular demands of politicians.

Towards an understanding of the party side in the conflict Calmettes has very little to contribute. He promises[108] to provide an analysis of the class base of UNIP in north-eastern Zambia in what could have been an answer to an urgent question I had raised:[109]

> The crucial issue is the mobilisation process by which UNIP established itself among the peasants of Chinsali district. But ... no new, detailed material is available on this point.

Calmettes reflects[110] on a handful of educated and politically-minded activists who passed through Lumpa (in its pro-nationalist phase), only to opt out of that organisation when it could no longer identify with the nationalist cause and/or serve their personal interests. But he has hardly anything to say concerning the thousands of uneducated peasants whose allegiance shifted from Lumpa to UNIP without, apparently, any significant class differences between them and faithful Lumpa adherents being involved.

Studies of class formation in Africa,[111] against the background of a renewed interest in the theory of the state among Marxist general theorists,[112] have stressed how in modern Africa the struggle between classes over the control of the post-colonial state has become the major form of class conflict. This state of affairs is attributed to such factors as the expansion of state control in all sectors of economic and social life; the decline or removal, after independence, of those classes which had firmly controlled the colonial state; and the fact that after independence the state has become political, in other words, susceptible to processes of mass mobilisation, factional strife and representational government. This insight may prove helpful for an understanding of the timing and impetus of the final Lumpa conflict. Thus we might be able to proceed

beyond the idealist, Weberian approach as pursued in my original Lumpa study, which appears to attribute too much weight to the problem of the legitimation of the post-colonial state as if this were an independent input in the development of political processes in the Third World (or anywhere else).

From the point of view of Lumpa members experiencing violent persecution in rural north-eastern Zambia, the feuding as waged by local branches of UNIP and the final battles with state troops armed with automatic weapons may all have been part of the same process of escalating violence. UNIP's president, Dr Kaunda, was leading the UNIP transition government when negotiations to give up the fortified villages broke off, and the order for military action was given. But in fact the state and UNIP had only very recently merged into one force confronting Lumpa. Nor did formal authority over the government executive and the armed forces mean that UNIP had yet gained de facto control over the entire state. The civil service was still largely staffed with people who, until very shortly before that, had opposed the nationalist movement and had assisted in its repression. Among them, anti

Lumpa feelings may not have been so very strong. Thus, police officers in Lundazi (as a Lumpa area surpassed only by Chinsali district) ate their 1963 Christmas dinner inside a Lumpa stockaded village, where they were stationed in order to protect it against violent attacks from the local UNIP branch.[113] Short's claim[114] that Lumpa 'relations with the Police were good, as they spent much time protecting them from attack' may only apply to Lundazi.

In any case, UNIP's attainment of political supremacy with the creation of the transitional government must have tipped the balance of UNIP–Lumpa feuding in a decisive way. Lumpa could no longer look to the state for protection against UNIP. State officers now had to obey orders given by leading UNIP politicians (Kaunda and Kapwepwe) who, while not themselves involved in the UNIP–Lumpa feuding, yet had an emotional stake in the matter in so far as they hailed from Chinsali district and politically could not afford to disavow the violence of their Chinsali UNIP branches. On the other hand, UNIP now had access to mobilisation methods (state troops and their automatic weapons) which before they could not have brought to bear on Lumpa. While these methods did not prove to be persuasive (1 500 deaths and 20 000 emigrations bear witness to this), they were effective nonetheless.

Clearly, Lumpa leaders were not competing with the nationalist petty bourgeoisie that constituted UNIP's leadership for control of the entire Northern Rhodesian or Zambian state. However, on a more limited geographical scale, Lumpa's rejection of UNIP in north-eastern Zambia certainly amounted to a serious challenge of that bourgeoisie's position. My re-analysis in the light of Calmettes's criticism has shown how overall rejection of peasant incorporation, stressed as a sole factor in my earlier analysis, may have been only one side of Lumpa. The struggle of the Lumpa leadership to safeguard its own privileged position (which depended on the continued functioning of the structure of domination that Lumpa, as a regional-cultic mode of production, had imposed upon the countryside) may be another side. If so, another dimension of class conflict in Lumpa is revealed which has found little mention in the literature on class formation in modern Africa: the struggle between a secular bourgeoisie and a religious

bourgeoisie. The issue at stake was not directly control of the state, but on the one hand a network of economic, political and social relations as existing in a significant part of the state's territory, and on the other, the self-esteem and credibility of a political petty bourgeoisie uncertain of its recent hold on the state. Lumpa represented a threat to processes of mass mobilisation at grassroots level, so crucial for a bourgeoisie aspiring to control the post-colonial state; at the same time, the state contained the military means to exterminate such threats. Therefore, once having secured a considerable degree of control over the state, the secular protagonist in this conflict was able effectively to crush its religious adversary.

CHAPTER 14

Church and state in Eastern Africa: Some unresolved questions

Martin Doornbos

'Guess what we talk about most of the time?' my friend asked as he ushered us into the house. Not waiting for an answer, he continued: 'Trying to find out what we are doing here.' I had not seen him for a few years, a Roman Catholic missionary in an out-of-the-way Ugandan parish. Now there was a difference. On the occasion of my last visit, there had been a sense of purpose about the mission, inspired by a feeling that the station could provide needed aspects in terms of social care, rudimentary education and other relief work. At the time of this visit, in the early 1970s, although these welfare activities were being continued, the air of purposefulness had waned: the two priests at the mission felt that their contacts with the people had often been more apparent than real, and they had realised how foreign an element the church was in its present environment.

During most of the weekend we talked about little else other than what it was they were doing there. The problems they faced related not so much to the fact that the area was difficult practically. The parish they served was situated in a no-man's-land between regular government control and a rebellious movement, a situation demanding considerable tact and understanding in dealing with all sides. If anything, that fact should have helped a search for meaningful involvements, and to some extent it had done so. But, precisely because the area offered a seemingly ample but in fact unfulfilled scope for church engagement, the two priests not only derived a sense of inadequacy from their failure to be more relevant, but were in a position to perceive the broader dilemmas of the missionary situation more sharply than many of their colleagues elsewhere.

The predicament they perceived was cultural, institutional, religious and also personal, made more complex by the fact that the larger transitional problems of the Roman Catholic Church were added to the specific difficulties of this particular situation. The cultural aspect entailed frustration that communication and genuine involvement had

not been forthcoming, notwithstanding enthusiastic effort and tolerant, if not positive, responses initially. The priests had found it difficult to relate to the population, in church affairs as well as in other matters – in their opinion, people often said one thing but did another. This was itself not an unusual judgement, except that the establishment of the parish – in the early 1950s – had perhaps left fresher expectations among its servants. Disappointments on this score were ultimately reflective of a meeting of two different worlds, a reality as easily overlooked as overestimated. Equally easy to overlook (but not to overestimate) was that the exotic element in this confrontation was formed by the Roman Catholic Church rather than by the African social setting.

Institutional dilemmas exacerbated the cultural deadlock. Even if the cultural gap could be successfully bridged, what then? The small numbers of people who had been in contact with the mission, particularly school-age children who had been taught and fed for periods of about half a year, would return home to find no follow-up whatsoever to their training. There would be insufficient clergy to satisfy any curiosity aroused by the church's teaching and any embryonic religious interest would thus be left unnurtured – resulting in potential psychological frustration for the initiated. 'It's not just that we don't seem to solve anything; we may actually be adding to the problems,' one of the priests observed. One alternative, largely followed at this particular mission, was to abandon most proselytising ambitions – at any rate of the conventional soul-winning kind – and do relief work to whatever extent possible. This, too, raised questions, however. Not only did church policy demand a certain *acte de presence*, and hence the creation of some visible religious identity, but sooner or later one would still have to ask oneself why one had chosen certain tasks and by what criteria these had to be evaluated. Concentration on welfare work was not only unlikely to result in any actual impact, but its net effect might be that one merely took over government responsibilities and perhaps inadvertently caused the stillbirth of local initiatives aimed at improving conditions. Did the immediate needs of the situation outweigh these considerations?

In addition, there were questions about the nature of religious involvement. Vatican II had had a greater influence on some priests than others; for some, it was merely a belated and incomplete codification of what they had long felt to be the proper course of action. More profoundly even than in Europe, the reorientation involved raised questions about the kind of message that should be conveyed to the non- or newly initiated about the role of the priesthood and about religion itself. 'Look at those nuns,' one of the priests said, 'they're Pavlovian. At the sound of the bell they come out for prayers, next they are back to reading, and so forth. To what purpose? Why are we doing that to these people?'

Critique and reconsideration

The questions raised in one parish are echoed in many others. Introspective and retrospective, the concerns are and were shared ones – often with a profoundly personal dimension. More intensely than at any earlier moment, including independence, missionaries in Africa during the second half of the twentieth century were reconsidering

assumptions and achievements that were no longer self-evident; it was another soul-searching, but of a different kind. There was a sense of urgency, as processes of Africanisation and changes within the Roman Catholic Church at large combined to induce a critical stocktaking. 'We've talked them into it, now we have to talk them out of it,' some expatriate priests remarked. Dismayed at the inadequacy of a church structure allowed to grow into a hierarchical, status-conscious and liturgy-oriented edifice, they feared that it had encouraged seminarists and African clergy to adopt a style of living that was not just exotic, but increasingly antiquated and socially irrelevant. A 'penguin in the savanna', as the Roman Catholic Church in Africa has at times been called, with its white-robed officers, its somewhat mysterious aura and strange rites, it was perhaps not an unsympathetic creature, but at least a little out of place.

While many of the church's problems were recognised, dissected and theorised upon, their solution was complicated as a result of policies and principles. Some of these difficulties could be readily understood when considering the clerical manpower situation. It is difficult to deny the anachronism that, many years after independence, two-thirds of all priests in many African countries were Europeans or Americans. The necessity of replacing expatriate clergy was generally acknowledged. Nonetheless, disinclination to withdraw was not the issue. By the early 1980s most missionaries in Africa were of an older generation whose retirement within a few years was virtually automatic. (At that time, quite a few parish churches had essentially become retirement homes for those who had come to identify fully with their adopted country; of the three priests in one Ugandan parish I visited in the late 1960s and early 1970s, for instance, one had arrived in 1912 and the two others in the 1920s.) At the bottom of the age pyramid, only very few, perhaps one or two per cent, of the expatriates were fresh seminarians, the interest in priesthood and missionary work having shrunk to an unprecedented low. Finally, at the intermediate age levels many priests opted out, either because of disillusionment or lack of confidence or in recognition of changed circumstances, often turning to marriage and other worldly pursuits.

Consequently, notwithstanding the continued European predominance, the issue was not one of a resistant rearguard unwilling to make room. If the expatriate presence alone had been the problem, it would have solved itself. The point was rather that the structure could hardly maintain its form following their departure. For one thing, seminary training was too long, the intake and interest too low and the student drop-out rate too high to produce anywhere near the required number of African priests to replace the expatriate element in any foreseeable future. Besides, with the phasing out of foreign priests, a good deal of financial assistance was likely to dry up: at the time, some African churches were already preparing themselves for 'self-reliance', engaging in reassessments of what local groups could contribute toward clerical maintenance. One implication of this was that, in future, African priests would have to be content with more modest amenities than had been enjoyed by their predecessors.

In one form or another, continuity was desired in many quarters. With the withdrawal of expatriates imminent in the late 1960s and early 1970s and the lack of replacements, however, continuity could be secured only if some major reorientation were made. Discussions in this regard focused on the need to diversify the priesthood, through the

lifting of celibacy, delegating priestly functions to catechists and lay members of the church, introducing worker priests and reorienting and reducing the content of seminary training – all different propositions to help fill a gap and to ensure a continued and viable church leadership. Immediately linked to this was the need for increased relevance of the church to current problems of development in Africa. A sense of crisis in church circles thus stimulated a critical rethinking of what the church should do and be. However, virtually all suggested innovations encountered formidable obstacles at opposite extremes of the church structure. At one end, many proposed reforms stranded on key church rulings. Married clergy and increased responsibilities of catechists, two of the most strategic ways of alleviating the manpower problem, conflicted with basic policies and had no chance of early and officially sanctioned adoption. Reform or recruitment and training sufficiently drastic to meet the demands of the situation similarly clashed with universals. Papal representatives with African churches left no doubt that some of these topics were off limits, and usually their warnings were heeded. Nonetheless, although a source of considerable delay in the search for effective adaptations, these barriers were not altogether insurmountable. Some meaningful experiments with a redistribution of tasks were conducted in various areas. It was anticipated that if these proved successful, the universal church might well at some point find it necessary to accept changes effected from within. Sooner or later, the ties with Rome themselves were bound to be subjected to reconsideration, and this too might facilitate the granting of concessions.

At the other end, obstacles to change were potentially more tenacious. Any institution, church or otherwise, which is ingrained in society has a certain image that extends to all those involved in it. Profound reorientations may occur at the centre, or wherever innovation originates from, while the general image may not change or may change only after some delay. At the original time of writing, this pattern applied particularly to the Catholic Church in Africa.

The generation gap

Although caught up in the same situation, different categories of priests reacted to it in different ways. Somewhat arbitrarily, contrasting orientations could be distinguished between various age groups of European priests (arbitrarily, because other factors, such as membership of different orders and personal backgrounds, played a role in either reducing or reinforcing the importance of the age factor). At the original time of writing, the older generation's perception of its social environment was usually given shape during an earlier decade, and often its members continued to act accordingly. Emotionally, some were probably closer to the pioneering days than to the second half of the twentieth century. They did not necessarily constitute a stumbling block to change, in the sense of actively militating against it, but commonly constituted a dead weight in discussions of basic reforms – augmenting the 'revolutionary' self-image held by their younger colleagues. Rethinking of the church situation appeared to occur particularly among those aged 30 to 40. If age figured here as a variable, this was not in the last place due to the fact that this category was involved in a profoundly

personal sense: its members were confronted with the church's predicaments at an age at which their chosen career must be found either meaningful or not. Often with enough experience and influence to carry weight, but without the burdens of officialdom that might hold them back, individuals within this bracket largely carried the debate, the experimentation and the demands. Their difficulty was not only to find new ways in the midst of dilemmas. It was also the growing recognition that they were strangers in a situation which was not their own that increasingly raised the question as to what right they had to push for change, no matter in what direction.

This dilemma was of more than purely academic interest. Turning to perceptions and attitudes among African clergy, two broad categories could again be roughly distinguished, also partly based on age, though less markedly so than on the European side. One of these was the group that had reached seniority, holding office as parish priests or bishops or other positions of authority. Most of them had persevered through a rigorous educational system at a time when it offered a manifestly different culture, infusing a Latin socialisation in spirit if not in fact. To be sure, there were a number of exceptional people among them whose personalities would carry weight in any culture or situation.

Nonetheless, the fact that this group moved up in the system just as the Catholic Church reached full bloom in the 1950s and 1960s did not fail to leave its imprint. Not surprisingly, it tended to be the church of that period they represented, and which they defended in the face of any challenges. This attitude entailed a considerable deference towards Rome and a barely concealed appreciation of the symbolic and ceremonial sides of church life. Also involved was a taste for the prestige traditionally due to the church and its priests, often still seen as an intrinsic quality of religious leadership resting on command and status relationships.

It was particularly among their juniors, still in or just out of seminary, that different orientations were found. Some of these, who had studied in Rome or elsewhere, were noted for holding more critical views on the role of the church in African life than could be found in almost any other quarter. Partly, perhaps, their 'Young Turk' sentiments were a familiar concomitant of studentship, wearing off as they passed through subsequent states in life. Nonetheless, it must be noted that in the 1980s they were being confronted with the need to scrutinise the church's role at a radically different stage from that of the 1970s or earlier, a stage in which the social relevance of the church, hence also its involvement and structure, were raised as prime issues. It was to be expected that these concerns would figure more significantly once these younger African priests came to take their turn at leadership.

By the early 1980s, the double generation gap had resulted in a stalemate. If, on the European side, the older missionaries were phasing out while the younger ones were trying to carry the ball, the older African clergy were increasingly gaining control while their juniors were still without effective voice. Mutual relationships and perceptions were marked accordingly. At the far ends, resignation and impatience were characteristic; the tension occurred in the middle. Expatriate activists feared that African clergy would assume exactly the type of role they were trying to discard. 'The Archbishop?' a militant in one East African country exclaimed, 'He is useless. He is concerned with trivialities,

like raising money for an altar, altogether oblivious of the key issues we are facing.' Bitterly, they cited examples of African priests who sat reading on their porches, not to be disturbed by people who came to ask for help with rural development projects. They claimed that some of the African clergy opposed reforms, particularly in the nature of the priesthood, because it would devalue the status positions they had reached after prolonged sacrifice. Also, they felt that not a few African bishops were blind to the collapse that was imminent unless timely adjustments were made. In part, these criticisms might be explained by the fact that many expatriates kept closely in touch with new currents within Roman Catholicism at large, which their counterparts were often not in a position to do. Only the younger African priests were supportive of these views, frequently in even more outspoken fashion.

At this time the older African clergy's view of the expatriates was equally inimical. They were wary of people who kept pressing for reform and tended to consider this as interference with the authority accorded to them. They felt that they had a better insight into what was proper and called for in African society than Europeans and Americans could ever hope to develop, and viewed the repeated insistence on change as a new form of paternalism through which expatriate missionaries were burdening the African church with their own frustrations. 'Our people here are united in Christ and the task of the priest is to bring them light and lead them in worship. He is their spokesman before God' was often their time-honoured but elusive position. Through their bishops and cardinals, African priests tended to maintain a strong orientation to Rome, and they often sought support in papal directives to counter back-door strategies of expatriate experimental change. 'The Church is not owned by the Europeans, or didn't they mean that in the first place?' Not surprisingly, then, in the second half of the twentieth century calls were frequently made for the rapid decolonisation of the church – but with different meanings. To the African cadre, decolonisation meant the early withdrawal of European staff, so that the African churches might assume their rightful place among the churches of the world. To the expatriates, it meant undoing a structure which they wished had not developed, and trying to adjust it instead to African conditions. Debates on these issues, at conferences and study seminars, brought out these positions. On such occasions, a cardinal was likely to be brought in to support the African side, while the expatriates might try to use a modernist Roman prelate as a weapon. Joint declarations were commonly adopted about the role the church should play in nationbuilding, and a European contribution might well have been (and on occasion was) the insertion of a congratulatory clause about the fact that 'we are bringing Negritude into the universal Church'.

Beyond the declaratory stage, however, definition of that role awaited the breaking of an impasse. With the number of its adherents estimated at between fifty and one hundred and fifty million in the late 1960s and early 1970s, an important record in education, health and additional fields and, not least, considerable resources in manpower, expertise on local conditions and preparedness to contribute, the Roman Catholic Church in Africa was one of the largest and relatively better-equipped institutional bodies to take part in development efforts; often, in fact, it was second only to government in terms of capacity. Theoretically, at least, it should have been possible to reach a formula whereby

its resources could be more fully mobilised for development, an objective which few could argue would clash with religious imperatives. One prerequisite, however, was longer-term planning – not primarily focused on maintaining the number of converts or even gaining new ones, but rather of a type concerned with phasing out from certain fields and reorientation in others. If this were given timely consideration, major breakdowns might be averted. However, any such strategy would have required a larger degree of resolution in the decision-making processes, a characteristic which, for all its hierarchical features, the Catholic Church involved in Africa did not appear to enjoy.

Church, state and society

The future position of the African church cannot be considered in isolation from the evolution of the state system in Africa. The relationship between church and state is one which needs to be 'sorted out' over and over again, anywhere. Whereas the post-colonial African state just as, indeed, the church itself, was still developing its profile, it stood to reason that its relationship to the church(es) would sooner or later come up for more explicit scrutiny. At such a juncture their respective record and social role and significance would no doubt prove to be of considerable consequence.

In the early 1980s it was useful to view the then current dilemmas in and around the Roman Catholic church from the perspective of this reassessment and position identification. In a sense, they might well have represented a prediction of them. The careful, and at times overly cautious, way in which the African clergy often defined its position vis-à-vis controversial socio-political issues might in fact not have been unrelated to a fairly basic sense of insecurity as to both its own role and position and the expected evolution and posture of the state system.

As regards the church's own role and position, what was of inescapable importance was the awareness that its leadership referred to an inherited complex structure which in essence in the second half of the twentieth century was still being viewed as foreign. There was a relatively acute awareness that it would not be able to continue to rely on its erstwhile European support structure, while at the same time it remained insufficiently rooted to be genuinely sustained on the basis of African support, and in African style.

Beyond this, there was a lingering expectation that the understanding and working relations with the colonial state which had been gradually established would sooner or later be subjected to critical reappraisal. Moreover, it was felt that, while the relationship to the post-colonial state would need to be worked out afresh, perhaps even from scratch, for the time being there was only a kind of status quo and a relative tolerance of church activities by those in political power. The latter themselves were often still relatively 'new' and insecure as to their own position and might not have been able to avoid an element of suspicion of anything that might signify an autonomous basis and political stronghold among the population.

Not surprisingly, therefore, the attitude of various political leaders vis-à-vis the role of the church was manifestly ambivalent; they acknowledged the church's commitment and input as a significant potential contribution towards national development, but

they were nonetheless alert to what could be 'withdrawn' from the state in terms of political loyalty. In turn, this might well have strengthened, and been strengthened by, feelings ranging from mild jealousy to straightforward xenophobia in the extreme case. This 'strange duck' syndrome can be particularly pronounced in situations where efforts are made to emphasise 'authentic' cultural identities, such as happened at the time in Zaire. If politics opted for a narrowly nationalistic path as a way to create a new political identity, then few things would seem more plausible than to regard the church as essentially a residual colonial legacy, a recurrent intruder or an unwanted interferer. None of these allegations needed to be voiced aloud in order to be of some consequence. Latent feelings and insecurities reciprocally might contribute to an a priori attitude, particularly on the part of the church, which would seek to avoid conflict and try to give as little provocation as possible. This could lead to – at times, too large – a measure of circumspection, if not silence, especially as regards political issues but also in connection with human rights and wider social problems. More generally, it could imply a concentration on spiritual instead of worldly matters. Quite literally, as well as symbolically, this might amount to a withdrawal within a protective bastion, and to the nurturing of a kind of 'shell' complex.

It would not be too difficult to point to various factors inducing such defensive attitudes. The closed, rather introvert atmosphere of many Catholic centres was one of them. That characteristic itself had something self-perpetuating about it. The lack of a tradition of militancy vis-à-vis social injustice was definitely another one. On questions of arbitrary state action, violation of human rights, poverty, violence and inequality, the church had been silent too long or too often. As a tradition of protest in this regard was evidently not established during the colonial period, or only very incidentally, in the second half of the twentieth century it became much more difficult to create it. At the same time, it had to be recognised that the church's own, inevitably durable, contacts and ideological ties with Europe, no matter how much these might also have constituted a direct source of support and security, unmistakably acted as a disincentive to any readiness and alertness to engage in the African political and national-cultural arena.

Finally, the shell complex could perpetuate itself in yet other ways. It might imply insufficient familiarity with what was at issue within the wider context in social and political terms. In turn, this might lead to a lack of alertness in reacting to specific situations (and possibly to losing the right moment for action), and perhaps to a tendency to abandon oneself to a frustrated rejectionism *tout court*. Conversely, it might mean that, if one did embark upon any social or political action, it might be conducted in a rather clumsy fashion, create adverse effects, and finally only add to the feelings of frustration which lay at its basis to begin with. Yet it was also, or precisely, the church's inclination to keep aloof from Africa's social problematics which continued to raise questions and criticism. In Africa, too, particularly during times of social crises, a fundamental social commitment, which is to contribute to the regaining of moral self-confidence and social stability, would be expected of virtually any religious current and religious institution.

In that respect, the societal dislocation and crisis situation in many parts of Africa in the twentieth century could definitely be identified as acute. In the absence of a close engagement with the problems concerned, the ecclesiastical institutional infrastructure

ran the danger of losing its inspiration and, in the end, its credibility. New religious movements at the grassroots level would increasingly come to take on a role in this regard, thus underscoring how much the adaptation in the post-colonial era of a Western into an African church seemed to fail.

At the time of writing, the contours of the options open to the Catholic Church in Africa were increasingly being delineated. If the transformation to an African institution was to have any chance of success, then it would be crucial to find openings and establish linkages with religious renewal movements emerging at the grassroots level.

Actually, the protective community which the Catholic Church forms in many situations might well serve as a point of departure, if not as a launching pad, for new social action. To be sure, such reorientations may very well entail friction with Rome, as well as conflict with the state: friction with Rome, because in Africa, perhaps even more than elsewhere, the question as to what is or what should be universally binding, and what not, undoubtedly would be tested and fought over to the utmost limit. Sooner or later, a confrontation with the state might be expected in any event, and it would by no means be 'cushioned' by an independent posture and social activism on the part of the church. The extent to which that should be a reason for a continued authority-abiding circumspection, particularly in cases involving regimes which themselves could hardly claim legitimacy, presented itself as a cardinal question. This question at once implied the choice with which the church and its different components would find itself confronted: between continuing a cautious status quo policy on the one hand, with all the uncertain certainties it involved and in the end also a chance that it might lose touch with firm ground altogether, and on the other adopting a more militant orientation and closer identification with the African social world and its problematics, even though doing so meant risking collisions with the state, as well as friction with Rome as to what would still be permissible in terms of universal norms.

How these choices would be made and with what results are was yet far from certain. What was clear, however, was who will make them: the younger generation of African priests and laymen.

African Independent churches and the state in Botswana

Wim van Binsbergen

The Botswana post-colonial state between coercion and consensus[1]

One of the principal puzzles in the analysis of the state, in whatever context, lies in the relationship between power and consensus: in the dialectics between on the one hand the exercise of power – often of a coercive and physically violent nature – by an elite who have appropriated state power and serve their own parochial interests by means of the state, and on the other the inclusive, superpersonal nature of the state, which allows it (by ideological, symbolic and ceremonial means, as well as by extending concrete services and benefits outside the immediate elite circle) to be perceived by the general population of state subjects as worthy of support and identification. In this context, study of the post-colonial Botswana state is very interesting in view of the all-pervading and (especially in the first two decades of independence) quite successful insistence on consensus,[2] and a level of coercion and physical violence which, for contemporary African states and especially for the Southern African subcontinent, is reassuringly low, especially for a country that shares a long border with one of the most violent states of the modern world, the Republic of South Africa. In Botswana, structures of consultation and arbitration are present and active at all levels of public and private life, and where they do not exist they can be seen to emerge almost by *generatio spontanea*. It is common for such structures to cut across socio-political, cultural, ethnic and religious boundaries, so that the formal structure of political life is often dissolved in complementary opposition, where complementarity is stressed at least as much as opposition.[3] Open all-out confrontation goes against the grain of Botswana public life – and the prevalence of sorcery beliefs and sorcery practices among the Batswana today suggests that this trait is reflected in the private and domestic sphere.

'Peacefulness' is very much part of the Batswana's public self-image, and is claimed to have been so since precolonial times. However, it is unrealistic to attribute the unmistakably consensual orientation in the Botswana state and politics primarily to a hypothetical persistence of precolonial cultural patterns. Before such a claim could be made we would need a thorough assessment of social transformations in Botswana over the past hundred and fifty years: eighty-one years of Protectorate status, a longer existence as a South African labour reserve, the successful management of Tswana ethnic and linguistic hegemony in the colonial and post-colonial context, the vast opportunities for capital accumulation and mass consumption associated with the diamond and cattle industries since independence in 1966, and the strategies of the state elite aimed at inconspicuously serving their interests under a populist idiom of austerity, integrity, rural emphasis, pastoralism and development. While such an assessment is clearly outside our present scope, it is likely to reveal contemporary emphasis on consensus in Botswana as an active (and increasingly disputed) response to twentieth-century concerns rather than as precolonial continuity.

In this connection not only alleged historical continuity but also an alleged rural and traditionalist orientation play an important role in Botswana's official self-image, as propagated in countless government statements at home and abroad. Botswana is seen as an essentially rural and pastoral, traditionalist country. The economic boom after independence, caused by such factors as the diamond and meat industries, the customs union with South Africa and hence opportunities for sanctions-dodging industry, and finally the economic opportunities that opened up after the end of the war of liberation upon Zimbabwe's independence in 1980, has created impressive affluence in the country. Class formation is at an advanced stage and the state's liberalist and capitalist inclinations further this process; on the other hand, the same state's populist and democratic orientations have so far ensured that a substantial portion of national wealth is used for the benefit of the general population – not so much in the form of individual salaries and purchasing power, but in that of collective state services, especially in the medical and educational spheres. Urbanisation is frowned upon as somehow going against the grain of the national ideal of an integrated, stable rural society, but again the rule of law (specifically freedom of movement, as guaranteed under section II.14 of the Constitution of Botswana),[4] and the forbidding example of nearby South Africa, with whose socio-political conditions many, if not most, adult Batswana[5] have first-hand experience, have prevented the institution of effective urbanisation-curbing measures. Botswana used to be exceptional among African countries in that concentrated, ethnically not entirely homogeneous towns comprising thousands of inhabitants were a feature of precolonial society during the nineteenth century. However, even the so-called 'tribal capitals', which under colonial indirect rule retained many of their precolonial functions, have continued to be regarded as largely rural and to form a central part of the traditionalist self-image. Today, this self-image is very far from social reality. Not only have new towns emerged (including the country's two largest towns of Gaborone and Francistown, and mining towns such as Selebi-Phikwe, Orapa and Jwaneng), but also the tribal capitals by recent influx of immigrants and changes in their administrative and economic functions have taken on more and more urban features in the ordinary sense.

Through its popular support, through its symbols and ceremonies, its institutions and their legal basis, its personnel and material assets, the state generates and exercises massive power. But it is not the only institution in society to do so, and while part of the state's ideology is that it sees itself at the top of a pyramid of organisation and control which theoretically encompasses all of society, it in fact often has to engage in interaction and negotiation with other foci of power which are generated in the local civil society and which, far from immediately and wholeheartedly giving in to the presumptions of state supremacy, engage the state in a complex and fascinating process of negotiation, legitimation, co-optation, challenge, manipulation, exploitation, conditional support, and whatever other options human politics may entail.[6]

By virtue of having internalised the ideals concerning statehood and consensus as sketched above, but perhaps primarily as a strategy aimed at perpetuating popular support and outside international acclaim and donor support, the Botswana state elite in its interaction with other, potentially rival foci of power outside the state, enters this game with a serious handicap: the more oppressive, openly undemocratic, violent options are largely barred. What remains is consultation; insistent and authoritarian persuasion; co-optation in exchange for substantial material and immaterial gains; a legalistic emphasis on laws, rules and procedures which because of the legal authority (in the Weberian sense; Weber 1969:324f) they carry – in this highly literate and salaried society – seem to derive from an objective, impersonal source transcending individual and class power; the production and monopolising of consensus-generating symbolism and discourses, for example in terms of development, the common good, the future, freedom, independence; and the adoption of such symbolic and ceremonial material as may already be available in the civil society, where it serves as condensation cores for the crystallisation of non-statal power – images of parental authority derived from rural kinship patterns, of royal authority derived from traditional political authority (which has remained of considerable importance in Botswana), of communality, decency, purity and redemption as are available in traditional and Christian religious idioms such as in complex interplay dominate the consciousness of the citizens of modern Botswana.

Christian churches are only one of the non-statal foci of power, along with chiefs, trade unions, traditional diviner/priests and their organisations, other professional and recreational organisations, the specialists at symbolic production in such fields as literature, the arts, the university and the media, village elders, and so on.

Viewed in this light, as indicated by the social scientist Picard, the situation of the independent churches in Botswana is one piece the jigsaw puzzle:[7]

> *Much is made of the fact that Botswana is one of the few remaining multi-party states in Africa. Its formal pattern of political competition closely resembles that in North America and Western Europe and suggests a uniqueness to political developments in this small southern African country that is only partially warranted.... What I am suggesting is the need to go beyond the formal assumptions of a multiparty political system in order to understand how the ruling BDP [Botswana Democratic Party] uses the advantages of its incumbency and the administrative mechanisms of the state to maintain its predominant political position within the country (Picard 1987:172–173 [emphasis added]).*

A sophisticated study of the post-colonial state in Botswana would look not only at its formal organisation, legal structure, class interests, and structures of participation and decision in the sphere which is explicitly defined as that of politics – it would also, and perhaps primarily, seek to study the processes of accommodation and confrontation between the state and non-statal foci.

Several dangers beset such a study. That of reification is perennial, and can be overcome only once we realise that the state must be both a class instrument (the antidote to reification) and an expression of class-transcendent unity and legitimacy at the same time (the aspect which allows us to speak of 'the state' without having constantly to apologise for our reification). Another is that the presumptions of state power are so contagious that one is often tempted to view the non-statal foci as essentially secondary to the state, so that they can be studied only in a context of politics and state hegemony. Much of the social science of Africa in the 1980s can be reviewed in the light of this political overstatement, which fails to appreciate the relative autonomy of the non-statal foci as well as the potentially very different nature of their power and power bases, as compared with the state; at the same time such a review would reveal (for instance by reference to the work of Bayart or Geschiere)[8] the tremendous heuristic power of precisely this overstatement.

This sets the framework for the present study, which seeks to illuminate the interaction between one category of churches, the African Independent churches, and the post-Independence Botswana state, concentrating (as Lagerwerf (1982) did) on one particular locus which the state has defined specifically for that purpose: the institution of the Registrar of Societies, as defined under the Botswana Societies Act of 1972.[9]

In the social-scientific and historical literature on Southern Africa, studies of churches have formed a prominent topic ever since Bengt Sundkler in 1949 published his classic *Bantu prophets in South Africa*.[10] Such themes as social change in the subcontinent; its specific forms of labour migration, urbanisation, participation in capitalist relations of production, and the growth of political protest; the African population's ideological and organisational responses to these processes in a fascinating variety of Christian and Christian-inspired idioms – primarily in the form of African Independent churches and the formulation of Black Theology and African Theology; the selective incorporation and transformation of historical religious forms in the context of Christianity; the confrontation, acquiescence and co-optation, as the case may be, between these religious forms and the precolonial, colonial, post-colonial and minority-regime states of the subcontinent all come together in what must be one of the world's most exciting regions for the study of the interaction between 'power' and 'prayer'.

Many of the general concepts and emerging conclusions of this vast literature would seem to apply to Botswana, which, however, in itself has received only partial coverage in this respect.[11]

Churches are societies in the sense of the Societies Act, which was enacted in Botswana in 1972, and all churches operating within the Botswana are required to apply for registration or for exemption from registration, as the case may be. In the process basic data on these societies are collected and stored in the office of the Registrar of Societies in the Botswana capital of Gaborone, were they are in principle by law open to public consultation.[12]

The juridical regime applying to churches in Botswana under the Societies Act (this Act is reminiscent of similar ones in operation throughout anglophone Africa) must be appreciated against the background of the constitutional provision for the 'protection of freedom of conscience', as set out in section II.11 of the constitution of Botswana (Republic of Botswana 1983).[13]

It should be borne in mind, meanwhile, that state–church interaction in Botswana did not begin with the adoption of the Constitution or the Societies Act. The history of the African Independent churches in Botswana[14] has largely been the history of confrontation between these churches and the encapsulated neo-traditional tribal administrations seeking to uphold the monopoly of the one brand of cosmopolitan Christianity they had allowed within their territory, and considering church independency as an act of political subversion oriented not so much against the colonial state but against the *kgotla* (tribal headquarters). Even though the legal basis has become totally different under post-colonial conditions, the Registrar of Societies has unmistakably continued to operate within the authoritarian and restrictive tradition of these colonial precedents.

In the late 1960s, Barrett summarised the situation in Botswana with regard to African Independent churches in the following terms:

> *Until recently most independent movements in Bechuanaland had origi-*
> *nated in South Africa, being imported by migrant labourers from outside*
> *and by returning workers. Various types of prophet and Zionist churches*
> *flourished among the Bamangwato, Bakwena and the southern tribes; but*
> *few large tribal secessions of the type frequent elsewhere have occurred here.*
> *Soon after 1960, several new bodies arose in the north of the territory, being*
> *mainly healing sects of Zionist type. Although in 1966 [the year Botswana*
> *gained territorial independence] independents [as a church type] in Botswa-*
> *na only numbered some ten thousand, their size and influence were growing*
> *daily (Barrett 1968:24).*

There is general agreement that in the past half century, African Independent churches in Botswana have seen a most remarkable growth. Yet that growth proved difficult to measure in concrete numerical terms. Although studies such as those by Werbner (1985) and Lagerwerf (1982) deal with categories of churches rather than with any one church in particular, there was no study which reliably and convincingly oversaw the entire field on the basis of quantitative data. Elsewhere, therefore, I present a quantitative analysis of Botswana African Independent churches and their interaction with the state, specifically in the context of the Societies Act (van Binsbergen 1993a). That analysis offers us a basic profile of the Botswana African Independent churches: their large number; their range of membership with the general tendency towards small, especially urban, churches of only one congregation; some elements of comparison with regard to cosmopolitan and other churches in the country; and their behaviour in the face of the Societies Act. The figures cited (233 African Independent churches, having on average fewer than 800 members each) show the extreme *organisational fragmentation* of these religious organisations, which certainly invites analysis (e.g. in terms of leaders' ritual and organisational entrepreneurship, and of group dynamics among the adherents) but does not in itself preclude the convergence of these many

differently named churches in matters of theology, liturgy, healing, functioning in the wider society (their co-operation at funerals is particularly manifest) and perception by the general public. One very important finding is that *the Botswana state does not have complete control of these churches*: dozens of them were never registered, yet function on a modest scale; a similar number saw their registration cancelled, yet some of these, too, can be assumed to continue functioning outside the law.

Pastors and bureaucrats: Interaction in the context of the Societies Act

Co-optation and state use of a non-statal idiom circulating in civil society

One example out of many is the speech which the Minister of Social Welfare, Culture and Registration, under whose department the Registrar of Societies falls, delivered in his official capacity on the occasion of the opening of the nineteenth branch of the Spiritual Healing Church in Tutume (North Central district) in July 1987, at the invitation of the church's archbishop, Revd Motswasele. The cabinet minister having arbitrated in a series of conflicts involving this church in previous years, relations between himself and the archbishop would appear to have become quite cordial. The cabinet minister's speech reads as an inside account, and a PR statement (on behalf not of the state, but of the church) at that. After sketching the history of the church since its inception in the village of Matsiloje, near Francistown, in 1950 with the emergence of the prophet Mokaleng Jacob Motswasele (cf. Lagerwerf 1982), the cabinet minister claimed that in 1986 the church had 18 000 members.[15]:

> *To me, Chairman, this is an indication of the church's accomplishment in bringing souls to Christ. It is also an indication of good progress under good management.*[16]

The cabinet minister then proceeds to sum up the socially beneficial projects of the church, including the Boikango Bible Training Institute, an inexpensive day care centre in Mahalapye ('and yet in other Day Care Centres parents pay P60 or more per month!'),[17] Paje Primary School, and a mothers' union started by the mother of the then archbishop, in which connection 'I was gratified to learn of the active involvement of the church in the society beyond the spreading of the gospel'.[18] Typical (since it reflects a standard insistence, on the part of the registrar's office, with regard to unhealthy conditions of baptism which ought to be avoided)[19] is the cabinet minister's praise of the church's baptism pools:[20]

> *On realising the number of reported deaths due to drowning during baptism, and also I presume as a response to health campaigns, the church decided to build baptism pools in Mochudi, Mahalapye and Mmadinare. The Mahalapye pool, not surprisingly [church headquarters are located there] is the most up-to-date with dress rooms for women and men.*

The cabinet minister ends, not with a statement on how the state sees its relationship with the African Independent churches, but with a minute's silence for those founding members of the church, including the prophet, who died in the years 1964 to 1983.

Bureaucratic interference beyond the letter of the law

A totally uncritical, pious statement such as the cabinet minister's would little suggest that at less public and festive occasions, in the familiar recesses of the bureaucracy, another state official, the Registrar of Societies, imposes the most far-reaching demands on churches, particularly during the phase when they are still applying for registration. At this stage, and under the sanction of non-registration,[21] a host of conditions are imposed which often are far more specific than the Societies Act stipulates. St Anna's Church is a case in point.

By the late 1980s, St Anna's Church was a well-established African Independent church in Francistown's Donga township. The church applied for registration in 1979, enlisting from the start the services of the local law firm of Mosojane and Partners. In addition to the usual technical-legal criticism of the draft constitution, the following objections were put forward by the Registrar:[22]

> (a) *Clause 9 which is about spiritual healers. I would be grateful if you could remove this clause from the constitution. The healing of [sic] churches is greatly causing concern to medical authorities in this country for such reasons that [sic]*
>   (i)   *there is proved risk that such churches through their healing activities may delay ill people to seek competent medical advice while there is still time*
>   (ii) *that the constitutions of healing churches never specify who to be held liable in case of death.*

Healing is practised in virtually all African Independent churches in Botswana (Staugård 1985; 1986), and traditional healers' associations in Botswana are highly regarded by the government. Somewhat to my surprise, therefore, the law firm accepted the point on healing, but their reply is not without an edge; with regard to liability they point out that 'We have enough laws in this country which adequately cover such situations'.[23] Further points are made in subsequent correspondence, in which the law firm, on their client's behalf, seeks to recover some of the ground that the Registrar has claimed as falling under his competence:[24]

> *We also observe that you require that the Bishop should be a person capable of performing the duties imposed by the Societies Act. Is this a necessary provision in the Constitution of a Church? Do you seriously require that before a man become a Bishop he should first of all have studied the Societies Act?*

And again eight months later, when (hardly surprisingly, after such letters) registration is still not forthcoming:[25]

> *our clients as well as ourselves are not satisfied that we understood what is really required, for instance, we do not know what qualifications for a Bishop*

are acceptable to you. No minimum qualifications have been laid down in
the law. Freedom of worship is enshrined in our constitution not only for the
educated but also for the illiterate.

In order to appreciate the obstinate and sarcastic stance adopted by the lawyer involved, it is useful to know that not only was he a Kalanga ethnic activist finding pleasure in the kind of confrontations that the Batswana abhor, but also a high-ranking politician in the Botswana People's Party (BPP), a major opposition party for which he was presidential candidate in the 1984 elections. He had a keen understanding of the authoritarian consensuality of the Botswana state, and sought to challenge it on all possible occasions, often through a very witty choice of words. His case was not the only one. Challenges to the authoritarian and unfounded actions of the Registrar of Societies regarding the African Independent churches can be found in the correspondence of other law firms on behalf of their clients. Mosojane's attitude may owe something to that of his predecessor in the BPP, party founder Matante, who shortly before his death referred to the Permanent Secretary of the relevant Ministry: [26]

complaining that the Registrar of Societies was interfering in the internal
matters of the church. He was objecting to the acceptance of the new consti-
tution submitted by Mr Molapisi.

Finally, on 14 January 1981, St Anna's Church was registered, two and a half years after its first application. No separate clause on healing is retained in the constitution, but under the aims and objectives we still read:[27]

(d) *Spiritual Healing through the Powers of the Lord Jesus Christ.*

In other words, the Registrar did not succeed in suppressing the church's healing concern from the public record. However, two other newly added clauses among the aims and objectives suggest that the contact with the Registrar of Societies did not remain without impact:

(e) *to protect all members of the Church from all forms of exploitation.*[28]

(f) *to work together with other organizations such as Village Development*
     Committees, Parent–Teachers Associations etc. and hand-in-hand with
     the Government.[29]

Eager-to-please phrases like the latter crop up time and again in constitutions of African Independent churches. Thus the first clause of the constitution of the Guta Ra Jehova church (GRJ) reads:[30]

1. *A person entering Guta Ra Jehova should produce his Passport,*
    Registration Certificate or Identity Card and Marriage Certificate.
    GRJ co-operates with the Government. Single women should bring
    their Father's or Guardian's Identity Card for recording. After this, each
    should confess his or her sins to God. You then go and sit in line. Guta
    Ra Jehova sings for you.

Clearly, accommodation of the state – and the desire to be seen to accommodate the state – is one of the effects of the registration procedure. Probably, however, these phrases should not be taken as signs of actual submission to the state, but as verbal attempts to create, through lip service, as much freedom from state intervention for the church as its leadership feels is necessary. In the case of Guta Ra Jehova this did not really help: the church saw its registration cancelled, partly as a result of failure to submit annual returns. In other cases, when co-operation between church and state is put to the test of protracted arbitration procedures and the division of church property after schisms, tempers may flare and threats may be exchanged between the Registrar and the clergy: threats of being declared an unlawful society on the part of the former,[31] and of being punished by the divine powers or sorcery attacks by the religious leaders on the part of the latter.

The issues emanating from the registration of St Anna's Church are typical, and repeated in many of the files of the office of the Registrar of Societies. Despite Mr Mosojane's protestations, the Registrar's insistence on minimum qualifications for the clergy of African Independent churches assumed the appearance of a formal requirement when (beyond the letter of the Act) it was included in a guidance letter by means of which the Registrar sought to reduce correspondence on church registration by offering what came close to a model constitution for African Independent churches – an extreme example of the alien imposition of a bureaucratic logic.[32] There, the guidance volunteered by the Registrar of Societies is a strange – but for Botswana fairly usual – mixture of paternalistic meddling and sound practical advice. For instance:[33]

> 2. *Churches are also advised to undertake measures to ensure that members are not baptised in ponds, dams or rivers which are polluted. Stagnant water should be purified with proper chemicals by those who know when and how they are used. Measures should be taken to ensure that what is given to the sick causes no harm. There has been a number of cases reported about people who died as a result of administering harmful things to them or giving over [sic] doses.*
>
> 3. *Hand over the property or whatever has been acquired in the name of the former Church if you are breaking away.*
>
> 4. *Choose a different name from the names of the registered Societies. No new name should resemble the name of any registered Society in any way.*
>
> *When you submit your application please ensure that you bring along with you or send the certificate of your clergymen showing their theological or bible training. Please send certificates under registered cover.*

Controlling the nomenclature of churches

Churches and other societies are registered under a particular name, and on this label depend all other juridical aspects of the interaction between churches and the state, or between churches and members of the public. The bureaucratic logic requires names

of organisations to be clearly distinct and free from possible confusion.[34] As a result, the registration process often involves an alteration of the name of a church on the instruction of the Registrar.

Let me cite one illuminating example from among the many that are available in my notes. At the far traditional end of the Botswana Independent churches exists the Hosanna Religious and Traditional Association, registered on 16 April 1981.[35] In a first response to this association's application the Registrar of Societies replied: 'Your society is a religious one and that should be reflected in the name'.[36]

Within three weeks this suggestion was adopted by the society, offering as the new name 'Mwali Religious Traditional Hosanna Association',[37] but registration was to meet with further conditions. In a long letter the Registrar of Societies cites a great many technical legal objections against the self-styled constitution which had accompanied the application – incidentally, along with letters of recommendation from headmen in the North-East district – but the principal objection lies not there:

> *Your constitution is not in order due to the following: – (1) Your preamble has no relevance to your society. You will recall that during our long discussion in my office, you reiterated that although your Association believes in the miracles of divine Mwali, you also practice customs handed down by the ancestors. This explains why your society is religious (although it is not a Christian society) and traditional. You can leave out the word Mwali and call your association 'Hosanna Religious and Traditional Association'.*

The point may seem slight, but it is of the greatest importance: without any reference to powers conferred by the law, the Registrar of Societies succeeds in deleting the crucial catchword, Mwali, from the society's name, and offers advice on the society's interpretation of its own goals and orientation. In a context of Tswana (particularly Ngwato) cultural hegemony in Botswana, where the sizeable Kalanga language group and the associated ethnic identity are constantly on the defensive, this deletion is highly significant: it excises, along with the word 'Mwali', a major symbol of Kalanga traditional convergence and of multi-ethnic identification across the Botswana–Zimbabwe border. The Registrar of Societies uses his prerogatives to prevent a minority ethnic identity in Botswana from manifesting itself publicly at the national level and gaining respectability and recognition there. Of course, one has to realise that 1978 signalled the height of the Zimbabwean war of liberation, when border communities were considerably harassed as a result of hostilities spilling over from the Zimbabwean side; at the time, relations between the Mwali cult and the freedom fighters were close.[38]

In the end the society had to enlist the – no doubt expensive – professional services of Mr Richard Lyons, Attorney, Notary and Conveyancer. After further correspondence in which the Registrar of Societies insisted that, in the society's draft constitution, the provision for the management of property was insufficient, the society was finally registered in 1981. With the exception of 1983, when a reminder had to be sent by the Registrar of Societies, it duly submitted its annual returns, and the file reflects no further difficulties between the office and the association.

Although the underlying ethnic and political element in the registration of this

society is unmistakable, its being mixed with traditional and international concerns may have been at least as important as its involving the Kalanga. For in a politically apparently far more sensitive case, registration – this time of a cultural association – did not meet with much objection. The case involves the Society for the Promotion of the Ikalanga Language,[39] an initiative of students at the University of Botswana, and following its inception a source of heated debate at both the national and at the regional, Francistown level. In a letter dated 19 September 1983, the Registrar of Societies requested specific cosmetic changes that did not affect the society's obvious nature as a focus of ethnic mobilisation. In response to a clause on the teaching of Kalanga in schools, he commented: [40]

> *According to the present government policy on education only Setswana and English languages are taught in schools and used over the radio. Could you please[41]amend this clause to ensure that it is in line with the spirit of the present government policy.*

And while the constitution of this ethnic association wisely opened the membership to 'all Batswana',[42] the Registrar, as in ethnic collusion with the applicants, comments sweetly: [43]

> *Could you substitute the word Batswana with Citizen of Botswana to avoid any misinterpretation. May I be informed why the membership is not extended to any interested person.*

This contrasting evidence on the handling of ethnic aspects of voluntary associations would suggest that the strategy of the state via the Registrar of Societies was *not so much to prohibit as to control*: to exercise influence upon these associations precisely by encapsulating them in a bureaucratic structure rather than debarring them from the sort of recognition, stable internal structure and outside accessibility that functioning under the Societies Act might produce.

After this ethnic excursion, let us return to the African Independent churches. That there are so very many of them, each with a distinct name which is often very similar to that of others, is partly a result of the churches' being captured within a bureaucratic logic, where each church through its name can occupy only one fixed and unequivocal niche in the 'nomenclatural space'.

In their use of the same few elements such as 'in Zion' and 'Apostolic', or the name of a biblical figure preceded by the epithet 'Saint' or 'St', the names of the African Independent churches show that these churches largely draw from a common pool of imagery and identity reference which is more specific than just Christian. A strikingly permutational logic appears to be at work when we review the complete list of African Independent churches in Botswana: often distinctiveness in nomenclature (and hence as an organisational body) is achieved through the insertion of additional naming elements which give the impression of a productive series, as shown in Table 15.1.

Table 15.1   Three examples of church nomenclature

Church name	Formal representation of that name
Africa[n] Gospel Church	B+A
Africa[n] Born Full Gospel Church	B+C+D+A
After the Birth of Christ Full Gospel Church	E+D+A
Where A = Gospel Church; B = Africa[n]; C = Born; D = Full; E = After the Birth; [...] optional addition	
Note: Formally speaking, C and E could be regarded as transformations of each other.	

This example could be augmented by dozens more. One is strongly reminded of the logic of group differentiation by the binary opposition of group-associated symbols (names of groups; names of deities, saints, totems, animal species; food taboos associated with each group) which has played such a large role in the analysis of social organisation (cf. Lévi-Strauss 1962a; van Binsbergen 1985e). Even such frequently used elements as 'Zion', 'in Zion' and 'Apostolic', which are apparently saturated with in Table 15.1theological meaning and which have played such a major (but often misleading) role in the classification of African Independent churches, can often be seen to be used in just this sense of differentiation between groups which otherwise, in nomenclature, membership, doctrine and history, would appear to be adjacent. One major point of interaction between these churches and the state lies precisely in this contrasting nomenclature, and reinforces the permutational tendencies signalled here.

Thus the nomenclature of the African Independent churches should not be viewed exclusively from a point of view of specific content. There is the tendency among analysts to take the church name as a deliberate statement of the group's location within a broad spectrum of church types, of doctrinal and organisational variation: 'Zionist', 'Apostolic' and so on. A closer examination of the hundreds of African Independent churches in Botswana would suggest that the use of these broad inclusive labels in the church name is often ornamental, and is hardly indicative of specific doctrine and liturgy. The church's specific, contrasting identification through its often highly complex name serves not so much to situate that church in a *broad* category encompassing scores of churches, but to offset it against *adjacent*, *very similar* churches, with which that particular church often has a parent–child or sibling–sibling relationship in the context of church fission. In this respect the church name serves the same function as the specific church uniforms, church flags, the specific combinations of colours featuring in these textile artefacts, badges,[44] emphasis on cotton threads of specific colours to be used in healing, and imposition of food taboos on certain animal and plant species. All these are devices to mark group identity and group boundaries, in a context where (because of the relative absence of doctrinal and liturgical differences, the considerable 'shopping around' of peripheral members, and the fissiparous activities of the church leadership) boundaries between churches are weak and need to be constantly reconstituted. The cultivation

of distinctiveness within secure symbolic boundaries is the central feature of African Independent churches. It reflects not only the desired (but selective, and transformative) continuity of historic ritual forms and symbols, but also, and probably much more importantly, the creation of difference within, and as a necessary aspect of, peripheral capitalism in the course of contemporary globalisation processes (Comaroff 1985; Jameson 1984, 1988; van Binsbergen 1994/1995, 1997). Control of church nomenclature (and thus of inter-church boundaries) by the state converges with the churches' internal, adverse responses to globalisation, and reinforces them.

The imposition of an alien bureaucratic logic, and its social gains

Registration involves the church in a process of accommodation vis-à-vis the state in which, as a condition for registration, the state manages to impose upon the churches a bureaucratic logic that is often irrelevant and alien to their original orientation. Names chosen for such good reasons as personal preference, a prophet's dreams, their time-honoured emotional and symbolic power, and distance from yet recognisable association with a parent body from which one has broken away, are put to the test of bureaucratic adequacy, ethnic and linguistic acceptability, and juridically unequivocal identification. Offices, election to which is supposed to be governed by divine inspiration or hereditary succession, have to be redefined so as to fit in with, for example, 'the democratic ethic of Botswana'.[45] Conflicts which – from the point of view of the enthusiastic members of a new church seeking registration – would be unspeakable, and inconceivable in a living, inspired church, now have to be considered and provided for, in the church constitution, long before they inevitably do arise. Covert or overt aspirations to capital accumulation through religious entrepreneurship are confronted by the Registrar's insistence on provisions for the management of movable and immovable assets. The widow's penny collected at church gatherings has to be subjected to audited accounts.

But the result is not just an encroachment upon charismatic authority and informal, 'traditional' forms of organisation. The power which is being generated in African Independent churches in Botswana is not only a diffuse orientation in the wider society, offering people subjectively meaningful alternatives and prohibitions in such fields as worship, healing, consumption of food and drink, and patterns of recreation and reproduction. We are also, and primarily, looking at a highly successful mode of generating spiritual, therapeutic, financial and often also sexual power within the internal circle of the church, between leaders and adherents. Like all structures of power in any human society, the African Independent churches of Botswana are potential structures of internal extraction and exploitation. Perusal of numerous files of correspondence at the office of the Registrar of Societies as well as personal interviews with the government officials involved have convinced me that they see the state's responsibility largely on this point.[46]

We may be critical of the authoritarian way in which clear, standard, legally sound formulae are imposed also in situations where the churches' own draft constitutions, however conspicuous as the work of legal laymen, might yet be adequate while retaining the essential flavour of original expressions of identity. But at the same time exploitation and conflict do occur within these churches, with a regularity and a vehemence which

makes it difficult to see the Registrar's insistence on good legal handiwork as a sinister attempt at state encroachment.

Moreover, such insistence is in the professional and personal interest of this officer since, under the Societies Act, he and his Minister (of Social Welfare, Culture and Registration) are responsible for adjudication, and the allocation of assets, should an association be torn apart by severe conflict. It is not only the registration of new churches that takes up the time of the Registrar's office, and that the exponential growth of the African Independent churches has created a considerable backlog of pending applications; perhaps as much time is spent on the handling of minor and major conflicts.

The extent to which financial and symbolic power are generated in Botswana African Independent churches can be gauged from the example of the Guta Ra Mwari (City of God)[47] church (GRM), which was registered in 1974, soon after the enactment of the Societies Act.

Guta Ra Mwari (City of God)[48]

This church, originally established in Francistown as a branch of a Zimbabwe organisation founded by the prophet T. Tayali in 1961, is one of the African Independent churches in Botswana whose assets have rapidly grown to impressive heights. The church first applied for registration in 1973 and its audited accounts first appeared in the Registrar of Societies files in 1975. From the start the church laid considerable emphasis on the financial offerings members were to make. Upon confession, the sum of R9.20 had to be paid, [49]

> and this confirms your confession. And you are allowed to offer some thanks-giving offering thereafter and God will give you according to your power in return.

These gifts were offered instead of Sunday collections.[50] In a later draft constitution the financial aspect is spelled out in a way reminiscent of a commercial enterprise – a road show perhaps:

> On your confession you have to fulfill the will of God, the Creator,[51] by offering as follows:
> – a couple $ 10.00 [added in ballpoint: R10., -][52]
> – when a husband or wife comes later, $1.20 per month
> – single adults $10
> – children over 16 year of age accompanied by parents $1.20 (R 1.20) and under 16 free
> – children under 16 years without the company of their parents $10 (R10)
>
> b. There is no credit on reception and all offerings will not be refunded.[53]

The church claims a monopoly of healing as far as the adherents are concerned, although the draft constitution leaves them a nominal freedom to visit the hospital ('when they are not within the reach of GRM services').[54]

After an apparently minor revision of the constitution (the main alteration was the cancellation of a clause concerning the annual examination of under-age members for virginity)[55] the church was registered in 1974. In 1975, church takings amounted to R566.58, with R351.20 cash in the bank. Already in 1976, with R500 offertory, harvest gathering fees of R294.45 and R727.84 cash in the bank, the church could afford to make a donation to the celebration of national Independence Day – no doubt to make up for its foreign, Zimbabwean connotations at a time that the Francistown region was greatly troubled by the war in Zimbabwe. The annual revenue steadily rose and was duly recorded as (in 1982): total offertory (in Pula) of P20 071.12 and cash at bank of P12 986.82, assets in the form of furniture and fittings assessed at P1 600.46; church equipments P441.34; building P3 120.20, and motor vehicle at P9 000. In the 1985 financial year the capital amounted to P62 321,44.[56]

While the church was in full expansion, financially and in terms of membership,[57] it came under a cloud: Guta Ra Mwari became embroiled in widespread allegations of sorcery and ritual murder,[58] reputed to be particularly popular among businessmen, who find in the church the means of enhancing their professional success. Popular rumour has it that such success is brought about through the sacrifice of one's children, preferably a first-born son, who is to be killed in a staged car accident. Similar popular beliefs concerning success medicine of commercial and ritual entrepreneurs extend all over the subcontinent to at least the Zambian Copperbelt; and with regard to Zambia at least, they were not entirely unfounded.[59] The original constitution and other materials do contain a few sinister hints, for example on learning to accept death as the 'second stage', the first being birth.[60] Moreover, such clauses as:

11. *Congregation will bear responsibilities for burial matters of registered members of G.R.M.*[61]
    Members are not allowed to wear mourning clothes.[62]

begin to take on a different implication.

It was only in 1987 that the Registrar of Societies confronted the church, largely on legal-technical flaws in the constitution which his office had accepted thirteen years earlier, in the first years of the Societies Act. However, official concern did not stop at legal technicalities, but showed concern about the financial burden the church placed on its members.[63] A new constitution was drafted, but this time the Registrar was not so easily satisfied:[64]

The proposed revised constitution which you have submitted very recently in compliance with our letter of 19 September 1988 was not drafted on a democratic basis – it is therefore not in keeping with the democratic ethic of Botswana.

Within a few months a detailed critique of the earlier draft was offered to the church's General Secretary. It was pointed out that the church had no provision for discipline, settlement of disputes, procedures for meetings, voting, or removal from office.[65] The reply to this criticism took the form of a sophisticated and elegant letter,[66] accompanied by a proposed new constitution. There, the lively details of the earlier constitution, on

healing, liturgy, fees, sex, marriage, virginity, and so on have been entirely replaced by a legally competent blueprint of what looks like a well-oiled modern organisation. The Registrar of Societies remained far from convinced,[67] reproaching the church for the absence of democratic procedures, of an annual general meeting, and of a special annual general meeting.[68] The matter is further complicated by the fact that Guta Ra Mwari asked the Social Justice Officer, a senior official in the same Ministry, to intervene; he found the amendments to the earlier constitution acceptable.

Meanwhile, however, the real issue turned out not to involve legal technicalities or even financial exploitation of adherents. The general rumours concerning the church appear for the first time on official paper, albeit undated (c. 1987): [69]

> We have gathered from unconfirmed sources that the Guta Ra Mwari society is not a religious organization as such. It is believed that they are an organisation that practises healing, bringing riches to those who aspire for it, or making it possible for those who wish to be married [sic]. When the treatment has been administered and the miracles realised, human sacrifice is a matter of must. The society was registered in 1975, and one wonders how many people have been sacrificed.
>
> Also it is alleged that once you join the society you cannot [original emphasis] leave, if you do so, a lot of mishaps strike your family.
>
> Despite the fact that I do not have full evidence to substantiate the allegations I am worried as we have received applications for appointment as marriage officers from some Ministers of GRM.... I do not think such a responsibility should be passed onto individuals who purpote [sic] to be Christians, when their deeds are highly questionable.

The file does not contain any written reaction to these uncommonly serious allegations. Personal questioning revealed that the matter had been allowed to lapse: where was the civil servant who dared confront an organisation so sinister and powerful? On the one occasion on which one feels the Registrar of Societies had every reason to declare a society unlawful, such action was not even officially contemplated.

This means that here we have reached one of the limits of state control over African Independent churches: when the idioms of power they represent are considered to be superior to state power, or to belong to a realm where such protection as the state may extend to its officers is not considered adequate. Mystical powers of manipulation, acquisition and destruction – sorcery – cannot be confronted under the Societies Act; and even if the Registrar tries to substitute insistence on technical-legal provisions instead, the state power she can muster proves insufficient. This also means that in this case at least, the good intentions of protecting the masses against African Independent churches as an exploitative structure failed utterly. The bureaucratic forms of church organisation as demanded by the Registrar become empty formulae, which are easily exchanged for others; behind them a totally different process goes on inside the church, not only completely uncontrolled by the state, but even sanctioned by the respect and protection state recognition affords.

Meanwhile our statistical analysis has brought out some of the other limits of state control over the churches: inconspicuousness (because of small size and/or recent

emergence), and – at the other end of the spectrum – established status as a cosmopolitan church.

Conclusion: Beyond acquiescence

Sundkler rejected the narrowly political perspective (in the sense of the churches' allegedly challenging the state) with regard to the African Independent churches in Southern Africa. His pronouncements on this point have formed the starting point for much subsequent perceptive research.[70] Writing on the Rolong Tshidi, who straddle the Botswana–South African border and whose ethnic cousins are the Rolong of Matsiloje and Moroka – the cradles of independency in the Francistown area – Jean Comaroff in her *Body of power, spirit of resistance*, added a new note to this discussion. In a manner not unrelated to my own analysis of the Lumpa church and Zambian religious change in general (van Binsbergen 1981b; this volume, chapter 13), she situated the specific local form of the ZCC in the context of overall symbolic change under the impact of capitalism and the modern state.[71] Her attention to symbolic reconstruction and its undercurrent of political and class struggle will be intuitively appreciated as illuminating and profound. However, the matter must be even more complicated than that, for Comaroff's reading of the churches as symbolic protest would politically amount to a rejection of the state and the modern economy, of which very little can be found in the material brought together in the present chapter. Her analysis immediately invoked the critical reaction of another writer on Botswana churches, Richard Werbner (1986), who pointed out that in actual practice the Zionist churches' tacit support of the apartheid state constituted a major hindrance to socio-political reform in Southern Africa during apartheid minority rule. Werbner's views converge with those of Matthew Schoffeleers (1991) in the Netherlands.

Schoffeleers views the relationship between the African Independent churches and the state from the perspective of political acquiescence,[72] claiming that these churches' emphasis on healing would direct the actors' attention away from the national and political to the individual plane when it comes to their conceptualisation and redressing of sources of evil in life and society. The present argument complements this approach, by looking at the organisational and legal aspects of church–state interaction. By concentrating, as the acquiescence perspective does, on the *world view* propounded by the African Independent churches, we risk overlooking the fact that the *bureaucratic organisational form* of these churches requires serious study in its own right. Having grown up and functioning in a society where formal bureaucratic organisations are the principal structural format of society, North Atlantic academic observers may be accused of myopia when they have, with few exceptions, failed to problematise the successful implantation, rapid spread, and creative adaptation and transformation of the imported model of the formal bureaucratic organisation on African soil since the end of the nineteenth century, both in a state context (the colonial and post-colonial state, its executive apparatus, and state-controlled institutions such as schools, hospitals and marketing boards) and outside the state (voluntary organisations including

churches, recreational and professional bodies). These fundamental societal forms, which so revolutionised the pattern of social organisation existing in Africa before the colonial period, ought not to be taken for granted. They are not the mere organisational vehicles for power and ideology generated elsewhere, outside their scope: they are the increasingly widening foundations of social life in Africa, where power and ideology are being generated in their own right, as a reflection or a result of organisational processes rather than as an external influence upon such processes.

The emerging picture turns out to be somewhat more complex and less uniform than the acquiescence approach would lead us to suggest. The African Independent churches appear to form what Sally Moore (1978) so aptly called a 'semi-autonomous field' with regard to the state, and our data suggest a number of possible ways in which this field can be linked to the state. Those emphasising acquiescence and seeking to explain it in terms of individual healing emphasis are primarily interested in how the churches interfere, or rather do not interfere, with the state. Throughout my present argument my emphasis, alternatively, has been on how the state interferes, or fails to interfere, with the churches. However, these two questions are but two sides of the same coin.

The state, with its universalist legal apparatus, on the abstract level takes for granted that the churches fall under its control, and on the practical political level seeks to bring the churches under its hegemony. Yet in fact it is clear that the power of the state over the churches is far more limited. When it comes to the larger cosmopolitan churches, their early registration and easy exemption suggest an eagerness, on the part of the state, to co-opt the support of these formidable, internationally well-connected organisational bodies, which constitute such a vital part of civil society. But also with regard to the larger African Independent churches we have seen how the state – for instance in the case of the Spiritual Healing Church – readily adopts a Christian idiom of expression, so that in a secular constitutional democracy like Botswana a high-ranking government official offers a formal governmental statement which sounds like a fully fledged sermon. Here the state seeks to co-opt non-state-derived organisational powers in society without the slightest insistence on its own prerogatives or hegemony. A term like 'acquiescence' would not quite do justice to this form of interaction, since it is not the church which keeps aloof from the state, but the state which adopts an extremely accommodating attitude vis-à-vis the church.

Taken to its extremes, we have the situation of Guta Ra Mwari, where the state fails to confront even suspected criminal acts, and practically admits its inability to impose control. The case makes it clear that ultimately the legal, bureaucratic authority as embodied in the state (in other words, a secular, impersonal and democratically controlled premise of power) is defeated in confrontation with a historic premise of power that revolves on notions of supernatural intervention and election, sorcery, secrecy, and the manipulation of humans for economic gain – provided this premise is articulated in an effective organisational form whose public manifestations (feign to) emulate the very forms of formal bureaucratic organisation which the state has itself assumed and which the state seeks to impose on churches. Superficially one might characterise the Guta Ra Mwari position as acquiescent – after all, the state is not openly challenged, but simply ignored, from a position of secure, non-state-derived power. But

in fact the position of this church is far too cynical and manipulative vis-à-vis the state to be called 'acquiescent'. Nor is this a case of nativistic or traditionalistic withdrawal: in its emphasis on ritual means allegedly ensuring entrepreneurial success in a thriving modernising economy, the church seems to be largely an attempt to generate power independently from the state, and thus to organise modern life along modern goals, but bypassing the state. This position is reminiscent of that of such writers as Bayart (1988) and Geschiere (1986; 1990; Geschiere with Fisiy 1995), who see in contemporary sorcery in Africa – largely outside formal church contexts – a popular mode of political action, in which the post-colonial state is challenged. Guta Ra Mwari for years engendered a great deal of fear and avoidance among the majority of the people in Francistown (the non-members). The case does not really appear to be all that unique. Besides healing and the need for spiritual advice, the pursuit of economic gain through drastic 'magical' means constitutes one of the main concerns of clients consulting non-Christian ritual specialists in contemporary Botswana; one would therefore be surprised if Guta Ra Mwari were the only example of this concern spilling over into the domain of the African Independent churches. In my Francistown fieldwork I encountered several similar cases. Perhaps we should make a more rigid distinction, in this connection, between healing, on the one hand, and intercession for economic success on the other; although Guta Ra Mwari professes to offer healing along the same lines as other African Independent churches, its manifest concentration on success intercession might be interpreted as a departure from the healing idiom which would render the acquiescence-through-healing argument inapplicable.

The amazing success of Guta Ra Mwari, in terms of membership, economic assets and arrogance in the face of the state law, shows that state–church dynamics in Botswana must be understood in part as a dialogue concerning premises of power and their effective organisational articulation in civil society. In this dialogue the state can afford to occasionally adopt the idiom of established churches and larger African Independent churches such as the Spiritual Healing Church: their basic premises of power (articulated in formal bureaucratic organisation) converge, and whatever theocratic inspiration the church may have nurtured originally is given up in exchange for formal state recognition and protection, which makes it possible for these churches to appeal to the state when they need arbitration in their own ranks, and when they seek to expand in the wider society in terms of assets (such as church plots, raffles and training institutes) which only the state can provide or legitimate.

In independent Botswana, new African Independent churches typically emerge in a penumbra beyond direct state interference, and extensive statistical analysis (van Binsbergen 1990b) has shown that as long as they remain very small and do not seek a more than minimal and local impact on society, they may subsequently wax and wane without the state's even noticing. The majority of these churches, however, move out of this penumbra towards the state centre, seek registration, and in the process (against the background of an authoritarian attitude towards African Independent churches dating back to the colonial era) are subjected to far greater state interference with regard to their doctrine, organisation and therapeutic practices than would be stipulated by the letter of the law. Are they on their way to join the cosmopolitan churches and the

more established African Independent churches? Or are many more only seeking cover under the appearances of acquiescence, while in fact following a path that would bring them closer to the Guta Ra Mwari position? Or is there, in addition to this symbolic challenge, under the cover of bureaucratic dissimulation yet another trajectory, which leads to open challenge of a theocratic or even military nature – as in the well-known case of the Zambian Lumpa church?[73] The acquiescence perspective would suggest that in the course of such a development churches would have to discard healing for a more political, theocratic conception of good and evil; but then, even in the Lumpa church healing was a central concern.

There is yet another dimension to state–church interaction in the context of African Independent churches in Botswana. Our statistical analysis highlighted the strong overrepresentation of urban congregations. Although many rural congregations exist, independency is the expression par excellence of people in the process of urbanisation and, by implication, of extensive involvement in the capitalist mode of production. In a continent where uncontrolled urban masses have constituted the main nightmare of colonial and post-colonial governments, the urban bias in Botswana independency must constitute a significant factor in the state's attempts to control these churches and force a formal bureaucratic logic upon them.

Finally, the example of the Hosanna Religious and Traditional Association brings out another aspect of the limitations of state control over religious organisations through the Societies Act. Underneath the somewhat surprising adoption of a modern state-defined juridical form, such an organisation is concerned primarily with historic continuity: it seeks to safeguard the Mwali cult in the modern age. The state-registered association is only one facet of the cult today, and in addition (as closer observation and participation reveals), parallel to the bureaucratic mode, it retains – in historic and institutionalised ways set out by Werbner (1989) – the cultic territorial organisation, circulation of cult leaders, pilgrims and money, and the cult's symbolic and ritual repertoire, which are not at all stipulated by the formal constitution as deposited with the Registrar of Societies. *The partial adoption of a new bureaucratic form is only an attempt to ensure that one can go on doing what one has been doing for, literally, centuries.* The same could be said for Botswana's several associations of traditional healers,[74] one of which, the Kwame (Legwame) Traditional Association of Botswana, in fact constitutes the modern face of another branch of the Mwali cult, having its Botswana headquarters not in Ramagwebana (like the Hosanna Traditional and Religious Association) but in Nata, 200km north-west of Francistown.[75] In these cases, as in those of many independent churches, the adoption of a state-defined bureaucratic form allows religious leaders and therapists (through the acquisition of bank accounts, plots and buildings, motor vehicles, shops etc.) to expand into a modern economy whose conditions are largely set and controlled by the state, without fundamentally altering the premises under which leadership is gained and exercised, and under which the cult is organised. Here modernity and continuity go hand in hand in a way which is typical for present-day Botswana, and which may well help to explain the country's peculiar cultural and political stability.

These are some of the questions for further research. A note of caution, meanwhile, is in order with regard to the role of the church leadership. I have far from escaped the

usual tendencies towards reification, and spoken of the state and the churches as if they were actors in themselves. Instead, of course, what we witness is the interaction between state officials and church leaders. To the extent that churches form a semi-autonomous field vis-à-vis the state, church leaders can be said to have a foot in both structural domains, and by their activities as ritual and organisational entrepreneurs or brokers determine the dynamics of their mutual relationship. Church leaders not only seek to further the collective interests of their church through the formal means provided by the state; they also have their personal agendas, and not infrequently church assets end up being appropriated by individual church leaders. As a wide range of case material indicates, the leaders' balancing of perceived individual and group organisational interests, and the way this management is supported or challenged by the subaltern leadership and the followers at large, enables us to trace, and to a large extent explain, the trajectory of individual churches in their relationship to the state. The occurrence of many non-registered churches, on the other hand, shows that for these churches, and their leaders, the services the state could offer are not all that essential for their spiritual and material orientation.

In order to study these specific trajectories and strategies we would have to leave the aggregate approach to the present study, and return to detailed case studies. The latter will provide explanations for the patterns which the quantitative study merely brought out but cannot begin to explain: why – beyond the effect of state support through registration, which I discussed in the context of factor analysis above – do some of these churches grow so fast, while others do not? Why do some soon disintegrate while others manage to retain their unity without fragmenting into smaller breakaway church bodies? Why do some adjacent African Independent churches co-exist in considerable harmony and spiritual fellowship, while others are at daggers drawn? Some of the most important questions that should be asked with regard to the African Independent churches in Botswana cannot be answered from the perspective of state–church interaction alone. The extensive literature available on church dynamics in other countries in Southern Africa, and particularly Daneel's (1971; 1974; 1988) monumental study of southern Shona churches in Zimbabwe, creates a favourable background for such further research. In this wider context of the subcontinent as a whole, further study should also explore the extent to which the perception of state–church relations in Zimbabwe and particularly South Africa has influenced Botswana state officials, and particularly the Registrar of Societies, to adopt particular attitudes vis-à-vis African Independent churches in Botswana, particularly those (like many of the larger ones) which originate from those countries. One would suppose that the acquiescence argument would not quite work out the same way in a totalitarian South Africa of the 1970s and 1980s, in the democratising South Africa of the 1990s, in UDI Rhodesia, in independent Zimbabwe, and in the populist democracy of Botswana since 1966, even if the legal instruments for state interventions might be shown to be similar.

Finally, is the churches' accommodation of the state merely a strategy to create freedom from further state interference? Are those which do register perhaps not very different, in their political and social aspirations, from those that escape registration? The test lies in the extent to which the churches not only, inevitably, generate social

power outside the state, but also aspire to have this power extended to fields of social life monopolised by the state. Being reticent and populist, the Botswana state's claims in this respect are far less expansive than those of many other African states, where before the massive wave of democratisation of the early 1990s, every case of student protest or every minor administrative row may automatically have been interpreted as a challenge of the state and invoked state action (a repeated theme in the works of Bayart and Geschiere). To judge from their constitutions, theocratic tendencies are hardly developed among African Independent churches in Botswana; but then, we have to realise that these constitutions are primarily formal instruments meant to function in a context of church–state interaction. For an adequate assessment of theocratic orientation, which would pose challenges even the Botswana state cannot afford to ignore, we have to look elsewhere. And as the studied peacefulness characterising Botswana public life in the first decades after independence (1966) was slowly eroded away by public riots and state violence (which showed that the careful texture of consensus was being rent by mounting class conflict, party-political conflict and anomie), August 1990 saw church leaders being imprisoned for failure to respect national symbols such as the flag and the anthem.

The peculiar emphasis on consensus in Botswana socio-political structure has prevented the dilemmas, cleavages and contradictions typical of peripheral capitalism from finding explicit political expressions and solutions. The exponential growth of the African Independent churches must be understood in this context: offering symbolic, organisational, financial and therapeutic responses for existential problems engendered by modern conditions but hardly confronted by the state, for instance in its educational and cultural policies. It is probable that the present aloofness and accommodation displayed by the African Independent churches towards the Botswana state is only a passing phase, and that ultimately the demands of symbolic reconstruction which Comaroff so rightly stresses will lead to more extensive and possibly violent confrontation.

PART IV

CONSTRUCTING
NATIONAL POLITICS

INTRODUCTION TO PART IV

As post-independence African state trajectories continue to unfold, the early 1960s in retrospect manifest themselves as a spell of innocence and expectation in various countries – albeit a notably brief one. At the time of independence, many of Africa's new state leaders made their entry on international platforms, receiving friendly receptions in a whole range of global forums. The air on such occasions was congratulatory, the outlook focused on the futures and horizons for the new states concerned. Newly designed flags were hoisted, national anthems sung, and grand plans for national development and state construction were the order of the day.

When looking back at this episode, it seems striking how 'self-evident' it appeared at the time that 'new nationalist elites' were standing ready to assume the historic tasks of 'nation-building', hardly seeming to shrink back from the momentous implications the proposition on closer consideration would entail. A sense of optimism fuelling such generalised understandings of the scenarios for development and change tended to be shared by former colonial powers, by the prospective new ruling groups as well as by many academic and journalist onlookers. Still, in a number of cases the departing colonial powers concerned may well have quietly drawn some comfort from the idea of such a rosy exit path presenting itself to them. Internally, meanwhile, the prospects of self-governance and independence of the 'new nations' had been leading to something of a rush among aspirant elites to become part of the new scheme of things – though by no means all affected groups succeeded in time in doing this or sufficiently realised the apparent significance of safeguarding positions at the centre. Instead, not a few risked falling by the wayside, and did.

Inevitably, the new ruling elites were soon confronted with a good deal of 'unfinished business' left by the colonial powers. As prospective state systems, the colonial states in many cases constituted a kind of half-product, with some constituent mechanisms in working order but other parts still under construction or completely absent. In this regard, while it would have been unrealistic, if not absurd, to have expected colonial powers to deliver fully integrated state systems, uneven colonial development inevitably had left many situations with marked social, economic and political discontinuities and potential conflicts in many spheres, all somehow in need of being evened out. Some newly independent states such as Senegal or Tanzania were fortunate to see a visionary type of leadership emerging from the nationalist struggle, engaging in genuine attempts to lead a process of national development and integration. But more often than not the new leaders' perspective on matters of internal discrepancies soon began to differ significantly from that of their predecessors, who had often been able to pose in the role

of distant arbiter, albeit for the sake of preserving territorial stability, and thus out of selfish interest more than from a profound respect for local situations. In not a few cases, the new cohorts who had won the race felt they had every right to recognition for that. Besides, unlike colonial rulers in most cases, they had their own constituencies to take into account. Conscious in a way of the fragility of inherited institutional arrangements, they often tended to assign these an absolute value and status if to them that seemed called for. If others wanted to join or belatedly articulate unfulfilled demands, or else questioned the new leaders' understanding of the role of state institutions, they risked being met with growing impatience. Thus a saga of confrontations and counter measures unfolded in not a few contexts – with waves of oppression and attempts at regime overthrow as recurrent elements. For some time the Cold War and the state clientelist structures it nurtured veiled internal dissent while inducing contrasted paths to state-led development – guided by different global patrons. On both sides of the then global divide authoritarian regimes became the rule, suppressing dissent in true postcolonial style and laying the basis for what came to be called (first by critics from the left, later from the right) the 'overdeveloped' African state.

Following the end of the Cold War, neo-liberalism and the hegemonic role of international financial institutions profoundly eroded the powers of the central state. Dynamics of state formation henceforth took off from the discovery of 'civil society', the promotion of the role of non-governmental organisations, the heralding of grassroots democratisation, and the unquestioned launching of decentralisation and 'good governance' agendas, among other things. In other situations state power was challenged by deepening dissent and violent conflict, if not outright civil war. These various developments not only led to continuing volatile situations with pervasive ramifications in many different directions, but were often critical and decisive for the turn-over and shifting bases of legitimacy of ruling elites. In conjunction with these tendencies analytical perspectives also changed. Today, the sobering experience of state formation dynamics in many countries allows for less naïvely optimistic expectations than tended to be entertained at independence. Some have given in to a mood of Afro-pessimism. More imaginatively, others have called instead for a focus on ongoing contestation and negotiation at various levels, out of which novel forms of statehood may or may not be emerging. African statehood is thus viewed as a dynamic construct, subject to continuous renegotiation and with major implications for the meaning and manifestation of 'power' and 'identity' in numerous situations.

In this light our focus in this, the final part of the book, is on different national-level dynamics which have been shaping and are being shaped through the interplay of the realities and perceptions of power and identity. We pursue this interest at several distinct levels: that of the construction and significance of formal constitutional provisions with a bearing on political identity, of the realities and contradictions of 'democratisation' as perceived on the ground, and through tracing the broader historical sweeps that have manifested themselves with regard to the gaining and loss of popular legitimacy by power-holders in some specific countries.

Symbolically, the nexus between power and identity in principle is very close in the texts of the constitutional preambles we review in the first chapter of part IV. By

their very nature such 'We, the people' texts, more than virtually any other official state document, are expected to embody an expression of collective 'national' identity while at the same time – again, symbolically – laying down ultimate sources of power. However, as the chapter reveals, while several such African constitutional preambles did indeed extol national virtues and identities, in other instances the (francophone) independence constitutions concerned appeared rather to avoid a mission to define a national identity, instead referring to universal human rights declarations as a substitute (or superior?) source of inspiration.

The second chapter in this part of the book looks at dynamics of democracy and democratisation in Zambia and Botswana on the ground, exploring aspects of political culture at the grassroots level. The chapter problematises the notion of democracy as it has recently been introduced in various African countries, and in particular brings up the problem of popular perceptions torn between the demands of democratisation and of ethnicity. The third chapter examines the changing political fortunes that have befallen various power-holders in Eastern Africa (Uganda, Tanzania, Somalia and Eritrea specifically) in the postcolonial period, searching for explanations for the frequently meteoric rises in popularity and 'power' they came to enjoy as well as the equally abrupt losses of legitimacy they often subsequently experienced. These various experiences, by no means uncommon for other African state systems, raise and illuminate complex questions about the emerging shape of state–society relations, about the prospects for democratisation consistent with popular aspirations, and about the scope for negotiating and constructing meaningful political domains. They illustrate the numerous ways in which and channels through which power and identity constitute dialectical relationships influencing designs for African statehood as well as their contestation.

CHAPTER 16

Form and ideology in first-generation constitutional preambles: Some francophone African examples

Martin Doornbos, Wim van Binsbergen & Gerti Hesseling[1]

We, the Zairean People, assembled in the Popular Movement of the Revolution:

Guided by Mobutism:

Committed to the basic options defined in the Manifeste de la N'Sele;

Conscious that only a genuine appeal will permit us to affirm our personality, realise our objectives, and contribute effectively to universal civilisation;

Moved by a desire to guarantee unity and territorial integrity, to assure the material well-being of each citizen and to create conditions favourable to the moral and spiritual growth of all Zaireans;

Convinced that only mass mobilisation, under the aegis of the Popular Movement of the Revolution, will permit the Zairean people to guarantee its political, economic, social and cultural independence;

Convinced that only through African unity will the peoples of Africa be free of foreign domination;

Proclaiming our adherence to the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Man;

Conscious of our responsibilities before God, our ancestors, Africa and the World;

We solemnly adopt this Constitution.

> —Annex to Law no. 78010 of 15 February 1978, revising the constitution of June 24, 1967

The above text, taken from the preamble to the revised constitution of Zaire, adopted on 15 February 1978, is exemplary in more than one respect. As a text, it is eloquent and solemn, it contains lofty ideas and ideals, and in the final analysis it has little to do with realities on the ground. As such it is just one example of many that form the

introductory sections of many modern constitutions all over the world. More than two-thirds of all 142 constitutions actually in force in the mid-1970s contained introductory parts not unsimilar to the Zairean preamble cited here (van Maarseveen and van der Tang 1978:86), though a further, even cursory inspection of such texts would reveal substantial variety in both their form and content.

Two points, however, are striking, and together they inform our present interest. First, while some limited systematic attention has been paid by constitutional lawyers and some political scientists to texts of this nature, their specifically ideological content has by and large remained unanalysed. Sophisticated analyses of the form, content and function of constitutional preambles are rare at best. This relative blind spot contrasts strikingly with our second point: even a superficial inspection of a constitutional preamble such as the Zairean one suggests intriguing possibilities for research into the sources and expression of national self-identity.

Thus, in the Zairean preamble the very source of legitimate authority is explicitly mentioned, granting force of law to the whole constitution which is to follow; this is because preambles theoretically have a crucial, legitimating function in the constitutional process. Moreover, this particular preamble locates the adoption of a new constitution at a dramatic moment in the history of the Zairean nation, when tremendous tasks of nation-building, revolution, and the attainment of African unity seemed to lie ahead. Finally, the preamble sets the scene for the more specific institutions and rights that are to be set forth in the main body of the constitution by making reference to such underlying, more general principles as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the African personality, history, the world, the ancestors and God. In this respect, the preamble could be taken as a core formulation of a nation's identity, as an ideological text around which much of a nation's self-image revolves. Such texts therefore deserve scholarly attention, even if their analysis poses major problems of definition, comparison and textual critique, or may make us wonder about the relationship between such high-sounding idealist formulas and the social, economic and political reality within which they have been generated.

Researchers addressing this problematic face widespread prejudice concerning the social relevance of African constitutions in general and their abstract, philosophical preambles in particular. And indeed, it is easy to point to the vast discrepancy between the lofty ideals and principles expounded in texts of this nature, and the often depressing reality of modern African states. Yet, rather than precluding research, it remains of intrinsic interest to explore *what* is propounded as the essence of an emerging nation's self-identity, and *how* this is done.

Constitutional preambles: Forms and functions

Preambles form an integral part of constitutional texts, and any sophisticated analysis should take into account a whole body of theoretical literature on constitutional law, political science and history.[2] This chapter will examine some variations in form and content of African preambles, focusing on independence or post-independence constitutions of African states, in particular of some of the francophone states.

In the African case, there is a distinction to be made between the constitutional heritage of francophone and anglophone states.[3] Their respective constitutional arrangements are reflections of more general political-cultural differences between these two categories of states. In fact, one key difference concerns the use of preambles. In francophone Africa they have been in general use, whereas in anglophone Africa they were exceptional at the time of independence. At subsequent changes of regimes, and constitutions, however, preambles have usually been introduced in the latter group of countries.

A casual look at francophone and anglophone constitutions reveals wide differences. A francophone constitution is shorter, but more important than that (although a related point), it is more of a political document than an anglophone constitution. The latter will read more like an administrative regulation; it is immediate, detailed law (e.g. it tends to spell out civil rights far more extensively than its francophone counterpart), and it has the appearance of a manual that one would consult when needed for a specific point. It looks solid and reliable. A francophone constitution, in contrast, on the face of it appears more academic. It will look like one of the things that matter, or which ought to be read and discussed. Clearly, then, a preamble is more fitting within the context of a francophone African constitution than of an anglophone one.

Beyond this, of course, is a more important matter: the place of a constitution in the political-cultural life of a country, or a group of countries within the same metropolitan tradition. To take again the French and British patterns, in France the supreme symbol of the regime is the constitution; spiritually it is supposed to be at the centre of the political system, and it is expected to be read, debated or to have political battles fought about it. Even the alterations or total replacements of such texts, one might argue, should be understood within the context of such preoccupations. A preamble, therefore, written in the vein of 'We, The People Who Make the Constitution', seems somehow more appropriate and self-evident in the French tradition than in anglophone constitutions. In the latter, even if unconsciously, there has most likely been an overflow of British inclinations to formally place the crown at the centre of the political edifice. It seems quite possible that as a result of the exposure to British influences, anglophone African constitutions were also placed in a somewhat less central position, formally less conspicuous, and consequently less in need of an ornamental preamble than was the case for their francophone counterparts. Whatever the exact reasons, the fact is that of all anglophone independence constitutions in Africa, only the Tanzanian one had a preamble.

Gifis (1975:157) defines a preamble as:

> *an introductory clause in a constitution, statute, or other legal instrument which states the intent of that instrument; a prefatory statement or explanation or a finding of facts by the power making it, purporting to state the purpose, reason, or occasion for making the law to which it is prefixed.*

A constitution of a political entity such as the state, however, does not function within an established legal-political framework, but is meant to lay it down. Thus, even if a constitutional preamble conveys the intentions for what follows (which is not

necessarily the case), its significance and 'real' purpose would rather be to legitimise the constitution it introduces, and, through this constitution, the political framework which is being established.

What sort of an explanation of motives would one expect a legislator to give at the dramatic moment of transition to a new constitutional period? First, an evocation of the historical conditions under which the new constitution is adopted: the attainment of independence, the national revolution, the return to civil rule, and so on. Secondly, the legislator would expound the guiding principles that underlie this new constitution, and that are particularly thrown in relief at this historical moment: after a period of colonial humiliation, a new constitution may be adopted in which, among other fundamental rights, racial equality and protection from state violence are stressed; after a period of economic decline and national divisiveness such principles as national reconstruction, development and unity are likely to be highlighted. References, however scanty, to such historical conditions and guiding principles can be found in the African preambles we will consider, and we are inclined to view such references as crucial elements in any constitutional preamble. Preambles seek to convey, in a nutshell, the 'essence' of the nation. They do so through a blending of abstract and historical language, concerned with the roots of existence of the 'nation', the principles on which it is built and those which it intends to pursue, and, quite often, some national 'virtues'. The particular blend of 'history' and 'principles' (as indeed the specific selection of principles and the specific interpretation given to history) may depend on the nature and style of the political regime and the leading ideology, but may on the other hand follow certain stylistic conventions in the writing of preambles which may be similarly adopted in widely different circumstances under widely different regimes.

It is however not by reference to these principles and historical conditions that constitutions, or any ordinary piece of legislation, acquire force of law. For this, a proper enacting clause is often deemed necessary: a statement defining the ultimate source of legal authority (the people, God Almighty, and so on), as well as the very act by which this authority adopts the legislation in question: 'We, the..., herewith adopt...'. Or, in terms of Gifis's definition (1975:69): 'the preamble of a statute, or that part which identifies the statute as a legislative act and authorises it as law.' Such enacting clauses frequently appear in ordinary legislation. In African constitutional preambles, however, the central source of authority is usually stated, but the act of proclaiming is often not explicitly referred to. The 1978 constitution of Zaire contains a full enacting clause, but many other constitutions do not, as we will see below.

Our present analysis comprises the preambles of the following constitutions: Niger (1960), Cameroon (1972), Senegal (1960), Mali (1974), Zaire (1964) and Zaire (1978). A number of loosely applied considerations informed this selection. First, we decided to limit our initial analysis to French-language constitutions, partly for the reason just mentioned, namely that they tend to be more evocative of the aspirations of the nation. But also, just like the various systems of civil law which have been grouped by René David (1973) into a limited number of 'families' sharing historical and ideological connections, constitutions also might be said to come in families. Thus the constitutions of the various Latin American countries have so much in common that they would

appear to form one family as compared with, for instance, the former socialist constitutions of Eastern Europe, or French-language ones (cf. Fitzgerald 1968; Triska 1968). Again, African constitutions, particularly independence constitutions, have been formulated in an intellectual climate largely determined by the former metropole. Thus it is likely that constitutions in former French African countries constitute more or less one family as against former British ones. If our sample were to include constitutions from both the French and the English family, many of the differences we would find between constitutions might just boil down to a general difference between French and British constitutional culture, and would therefore teach us very little about the nature and variation of preambles as such.

Having opted for the French constitutional family in Africa, our specific choice of Niger, Cameroon, Senegal and Mali may seem fairly arbitrary; however, there have been some additional considerations. Within the French African constitutional family, a specific subfamily may be distinguished, namely that of the former Entente countries – Niger, Togo, Upper Volta (now Burkina Faso), Ivory Coast and Dahomey (now Benin) – whose commitment, at the time of gaining independence, to close co-operation was reflected in the adoption of fairly similar independence constitutions. Inclusion of Niger in our sample covers this subfamily. Other considerations include the fact that Niger suspended its original 1960 constitution in 1974, that Cameroon saw a transition from a federal to a unitary state (we could not select the Cameroon 1961 federal constitution because it had no preamble); that the Mali 1974 constitution was adopted under a military regime; and that Senegal has known constitutional and political continuity since 1960. However, we have also included Zaire as a borderline case: francophone, but in view of its Belgian colonial past not directly a member of the French constitutional family. The capricious constitutional history of modern Zaire would render it useful to include both the 1964 and the 1978 preamble (Durieux 1963:859–883; Lavroff 1976:391–400; Vanderlinden 1975), and in principle to extend this analysis to the 1980s.

Historical conditions

From an interest in crucial historical conditions and lofty general principles one might in the first place want to look at the preambles of the constitutions adopted by African countries at their attainment of independence. For it would be precisely at that point in their history that these aspects of preambles would be utilised to their full potential, marking the transition to a new society. Still, if we wish to capture the way other historic moments are perceived and made part of a country's politico-cultural heritage, we should of course not stop short at independence constitutions but also include, as we have done in our sample, constitutions of later vintage. What we have in mind here is subsequent historical references of a grander nature, sketching such dramatic events as the transition to a new form of the state, the beginning of a new era, and so on.

However, surprisingly perhaps, examination of our sample reveals that if they appear at all, such evocations of historic moments tend to be rather cursory. Historical references are altogether absent from the preambles of Niger (1960) and Mali (1974). In the Mali case, however, the phrase 'adopted by the constitutional referendum of June 2,

1974' appears, mentioning not only a date but also a historical condition (a referendum under a military regime), which might be considered far from commonplace (Jouve 1980:42; Lavroff 1975). It was only implicitly, and on the basis of additional information concerning Cameroon's constitutional history, that the following phrase in that country's 1972 constitution could be interpreted as a reference to the historical transition from federal to unitary state – as effected by that very constitution: 'The people of Cameroon... solemnly declares that it constitutes one and the same nation'.[4] Other cases were not very spectacular either. Historical conditions were hinted at (rather than explicitly stated) in the case of Senegal (1960), namely with the transition to a different form of the state and the proclamation of full independence after the dissolution of the short-lived Mali Federation – a dissolution which certainly constituted a dramatic event (Gandolfi 1960:881–906; Hesseling 1982:141; Milcent 1965:67ff; Sosolo 1981). Similarly, the 1964 first-ever formal constitution of Zaire (following a *loi fondamentale* of 1960, which had been adopted by the Belgian parliament) referred to a section of the constitution pointing to dangers confronting the nation and measures aimed at countering them, but did not make much of it in the preamble (Cameroon 1972; Zaire 1964, 1978).[5]

For more interesting examples of constitutionally inspired historical evocations we should turn elsewhere, first of all to the Algerian independence constitution of 1963. The only former African French colony to gain its independence through armed struggle, its preamble highlights this historical condition very eloquently (Bensalah 1979:92–93; *Annuaire de l'Afrique du nord* 1963:852). A further example is the 1960 independence constitution of the Central African Republic:

> *Préambule*
> *Le peuple oubanguin proclame solennellement son attachement aux Droits de l'Homme, aux principes de la démocratie et de la libre détermination des peuples. Par son vote du 28 septembre 1958, il a librement adopté la Constitution de la Communauté fondée sur l'égalité et la solidarité des peuples qui la composent. Le 1er décembre 1958, par une libre et unanime décision des représentants élus du peuple, l'OubanguiChari a choisi de se constituer en 'République centrafricaine', État membre de la Communauté. Enfin, le 13 août 1960, la République centrafricaine proclamait son indépendance....*

The Central African Republic preamble is interesting not because of an inclusion of fundamental rights, but because of the elaborate evocation of historical conditions (Lavroff and Peiser 1961a; Kalck 1971).

Incidentally, its litany of sacred dates suggests what appears to be a typically French disposition to numerical quasi-exactness. The French, more than any other society, have numbered their kings, their emperors, as well as their republics. Again, not unlike the number of their republics, dates and years take a special significance within the context of French history (14 July, 18 May 1958, and so on). It is as if to the French the mere mentioning of a date gives concrete evidence and validation that something has taken place. It is also through the citation of dates that continuity of legitimation is suggested and established, whereas in other legal-cultural traditions the merits of the principles put forward, even if largely continuous with earlier formulations, may rather be phrased anew and independently from the latter.

It should however not be overlooked that the basis of these symbolic, almost mythical dates lies in the simple fact that in the French legal tradition, statutes and other pieces of legislation tend to be referred to by their date of enactment rather than by specific title. If a constitutional text refers to and builds upon earlier texts, such references by means of dates may give a suggestion of historical evocation, whereas in fact it is not a historical event that is being emphasised, but the content of the legislation then adopted. This is particularly the case when reference is being made to such famous catalogues of fundamental rights as are contained in the 1789 Declaration of Human Rights and the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Principles

Statements of principle predominate in texts of African constitutional preambles. These principles include fundamental rights, general principles of justice, statements concerning national identity and pan-Africanism, a cluster of politico-ideological principles referring to the values underlying the state and the specific form of state organisation, and finally a cluster of principles summarising the economic ideology adopted by the country in question.

Fundamental rights

Fundamental rights form a major topic in constitutional law in general and in the assessment of African states in particular. The performance of these states with regard to fundamental rights has been the subject of passionate international debate,[6] but must fall outside our present scope. Examination of our sample reveals a number of interesting patterns. First, constitutions differ considerably as to their explicit attention to fundamental rights. An extreme case is Niger (1960), whose constitution hardly mentions any specific fundamental rights at all, with the exception of 'political rights in general' (subsumed by the reference to the famous 1789 and 1948 texts), and some implicit reference to 'freedom of association and assembly'. As previously mentioned, Niger belonged to the Entente subfamily of African French-language constitutions, and the other members of this group (not included in our sample) refrained from specific enumeration of fundamental rights, but instead referred to the 1789 and 1948 declarations. Niger stands in strong contrast with such countries as Cameroon and Zaire, whose constitutions are very explicit and remarkably complete in their enumeration of fundamental rights. Cameroon and Zaire, moreover, are each other's opposites in that Cameroon places almost all its fundamental rights in the preamble, whereas Zaire (in both the 1964 and 1978 constitutions) discusses them in the main body of the constitution. A middle position is occupied by Senegal, whose constitution covers, in terms of fundamental rights, virtually the same, extensive, grounds as Cameroon and Zaire, but with more of a balanced distribution of fundamental rights over preamble and main text. A similar balance is found in the Mali constitution, which however is more limited as far as the number of different fundamental rights is concerned.

A striking feature of the Senegalese treatment of fundamental rights is that considerable overlap and repetition occur between preamble and main text: 'political

rights in general', 'freedom of religion', 'freedom of trade unions' and 'right to property' explicitly appear in both sections of the constitutional text; in addition 'freedom of movement', 'freedom of expression', 'freedom of association and assembly', and 'right to work' are doubled in more implicit ways. A similar redundancy can be detected to a lesser extent in the constitutions of Mali (with four repetitions, of which one implicit), and Zaire 1978 (one repetition: 'right to personal growth').

Looking at the total set of fundamental rights as present in our sample (and with all due reservation in view of the fact that ours is an ad hoc selection, still to be compared with more general catalogues of human rights), it is interesting to note that all six constitutions contain some provision with regard to 'political rights in general' – which should not be surprising, since the regulation of political processes is a main objective of constitutions (Finer 1979:15).

Likewise, our six constitutions pay much more attention to classic fundamental rights than to social ones, for which two possible explanations would seem to suggest themselves. First, classic fundamental rights have a much longer history in constitutional law – the first constitutional document in which such rights were formulated dates back to 1215 (the English Magna Carta; Bos 1976). Second, the significant economic constraints to which contemporary African states are subject would preclude the explicit adoption of social fundamental rights stipulating expensive tasks for the state to perform: general employment, educational facilities and so on. The relative emphasis, however, on such classic fundamental rights as 'freedom of expression', 'freedom of religion' and 'freedom of association and assembly', stipulating non-interference without great direct expenditure for the state treasury, might in principle engender ideological and political challenges to the state, whose control may in the long run prove to be far more costly than any facilities created on the basis of social fundamental rights. One obvious solution to this dilemma would be to make light of the classic fundamental rights as stated in the constitution – but an analysis along such lines would already take us to a discussion of constitutional preambles in their social and political context. Suffice it to say that fundamental rights in African constitutional preambles are not always and not exclusively weighed against their economic payoff.[7] A case in point is Senegal, whose human rights record is comparatively clean despite its great economic problems. This country, whose first president enjoyed a reputation as a poet and philosopher, even managed to introduce among the fundamental rights in its preamble 'des libertés philosophiques' – an item which one would seek in vain in the fundamental rights catalogues of the economically more developed countries in the world.

If fundamental rights appear now in the preamble, now in the main text of a constitution, we would like to better understand what governs this placement. Constitutions are written by people (constitutional assemblies, often assisted by scholarly advisors, and sometimes dominated by prominent political personalities). One way of answering our question would be to trace the manifest and hidden motives of these legislators. Here, however, sources are usually scarce or even non-existent. The minutes of constitutional committee meetings are usually secret – if they are taken at all. The best we can do is try and reconstruct possible motives, on the basis of our own examination of the resulting patterns as manifest in the published constitutional texts.

We have started out with the preconception that the preamble would be more general, the main text more specific and detailed. As far as the placement of fundamental rights in either preamble or main text is concerned, the variation in our limited sample shows already that (contrary to our preconception) there is little in the nature of fundamental rights or in that of preambles which would dictate a particular placement. In this respect the constitution of Senegal is most instructive, for here we see a balanced distribution between both parts of the text. In this connection, one should note again the strong reliance of most francophone independence constitutions on French models and styles. For both options of placement there are French precedents. The constitution of the Fourth Republic has a lengthy social rights preamble, whereas the constitution of the Fifth Republic has not. So, in a sense, the metropolitan French tradition offered incentives for either.

But would this suggest that the placement is completely arbitrary? Abstracting from the specific African cases, one could see the placement of fundamental rights as the result of two irreducible and possibly conflicting factors. From a logical or philosophical point of view, one would like to place first those constitutional elements which would be considered to be of eminent importance. It can be argued that fundamental rights are more essential even than the part of the constitution which deal with the formal framework of the state; a kind of bill of rights which will retain its validity whatever changes in the state structure are adopted. This logical, perhaps even stylistic point should not be over-stressed; fundamental rights are, of course, eminently important, but one could hardly maintain that legislators who opt to deal with them at length in the main body of a constitution take them in any sense less seriously than their colleagues who place them in the preamble. A second factor, therefore, would appear to be much more decisive: the extent to which a constitutional preamble has, or has not, legal force. In the history of French constitutional law, preambles have for a long time been considered to have a less binding force than the main body of a constitution.[8] Under such circumstances, a legislator taking fundamental rights seriously would place them in the main text, whereas they would be relegated to the preamble in the case when their implementation would be deemed an unwelcome and unnecessary burden to the state. It would appear, of course, as if this idea is in direct opposition to the point just made, namely that fundamental rights provisions are so fundamental that they should not be part of the constitution, but ought to precede it. However, this may be one of those rare cases where one can have one's cake and eat it. These two contrasting views could coincide if there is a general ambiguity concerning the legal force of preambles.

We are not in a position to suggest that the legislators of the six constitutions in our sample were guided by either the logical, or the judicial consideration mentioned here, when they decided to adopt a particular placement of fundamental rights in the constitutions they drafted. What is more important here is that the ambiguity has often been resolved in favour of the unequivocal legal force of the preamble and such fundamental rights as it may contain. On the one hand, a 1971 constitutional verdict in France[9] placed the legal force of the constitutional preamble at the same level as that of the main body of the constitution; francophone African countries are likely to take this French decision into account when reviewing national constitutional cases.

A more direct and final solution of the ambiguity is created when in the constitution a special clause is incorporated in effect explicitly granting the preamble legal force. In our sample, a case in point is the constitution of Cameroon, whose preamble ends: 'The state guarantees to all citizens of either sex the rights and freedoms set out in the preamble of the Constitution'. A similar clause is found in the Chad constitution of 1962. This constitution replaced the earlier one of 1960. It adopted a different placement of fundamental rights, but while putting them in the preamble asserted their legal force explicitly.

Further research into actual constitutional practices, jurisprudence and so on would make it possible to assess the extent to which fundamental rights as propounded in African constitutional preambles would have legal force also in those cases where such clauses as the above are absent, and where the current French constitutional views are not closely followed.

General principles of justice

Closely associated with the fundamental human rights are the 'general principles of justice', stating and specifying the state of law prevailing in a country. A well-known catalogue of such principles is to be found in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights; it contains such items as the nulla poena principle, the restriction that the law can never be applied retrospectively (art. 11), the principle that everyone is equal before the law (art. 7), that everyone has the right to a fair trial (art. 10), and so on. Subscription to these general principles of law is, in the view of the United Nations, the hallmark of every civilised nation; therefore, all countries that have been accepted as members of this international body implicitly are taken as subscribing to these principles.[10] Some countries, however, have included, in their constitutions, explicit statements to this effect. Of the six constitutions in our sample, this most clearly applies in the case of Cameroon, whose preamble sums up some of the most crucial principles of justice (cf. Table 16.1). Less complete explicit statements are to be found in the preambles of Mali (1974) and Zaire (1964), whereas no specific mention of general principles of justice is made in the preambles of Zaire (1978) and Senegal (1960), nor in the very short preamble of Niger (1960) – although, again, this topic can be considered to be implicitly covered by the reference to the 1789 en 1948 texts. Since all African states, by virtue of their membership of the United Nations, implicitly subscribe to these general principles of justice, a further analysis of this point would seem to be of limited value.

National Identity and pan-Africanism

In addition to such legal principles as discussed above, the ideological content of preambles is likely to include statements concerning the specific social context in which the political order established by the constitution is to function. What are the specific features of the nation that is going to be the carrier of that order? What factors, historical, cultural and otherwise, bind the people within the national boundaries so as to form a nation? What are the relations between that nation and the outside world?[11]

In modern Africa, these questions are usually subsumed under the overall heading of 'unity' – in its first form national unity, not as a source of legitimation for the state and

its institutions nor as a firm point of departure for the internal political process within the country, but as a problematic desideratum whose attainment (against the odds of arbitrary boundaries imposed by colonial metropoles,[12] extreme ethnic and linguistic diversity,[13] and underdeveloped infrastructure of communications) is to be furthered by whatever means, including constitutional provisions; and in its second form African unity, the ultimate realisation of the pan-Africanist dreams of DuBois, Nkrumah and other leaders of the period around independence. Potentially, the relationship between these two forms of unity is strained: the assertion of national unity, based on some historical, cultural and political identity, to some extent implies a retreat within the national boundaries, and dissociation from whatever lies beyond them. But one could also view national unity as a necessary stepping stone on which to build towards continental unity – particular if the latter is to materialise in the form as advocated by the Organisation of African Unity, that is, fully respecting the integrity of existing national territorial boundaries (Chukwura 1975:5681).

A clear illustration of the fact that, in the modern African context, national unity is a goal rather than a reality (and as such constitutes one of the principles guiding the legislator when drafting the constitution) is to be found in the Cameroon 1972 preamble – which expresses the transition from federal to unitary state as one particular way of handling the problem of national diversity and integration:

> *The people of Cameroon,*
>
> *Proud of its cultural and linguistic diversity, a feature of its national person-ality which it is helping (...) to enrich but profoundly aware of the imperative need to achieve complete unity, solemnly declares that it constitutes one and the same Nation...*

In the face of the enormous problems posed by ethnicity, regionalism and so on in modern African countries, this passage could be read as a bold frontal attack on sub-national loyalties, acknowledging rather than dissimulating the current weak state of nationhood (Bayart 1979; Joseph 1977; Prouzet 1974).

Other African constitutions tend to be rather more reticent on this point. With the exception of Zaire, none of the other texts in our sample deal with the problem in their preambles; the main texts of Senegal (1960) (art I.4), Niger (1960) (art. I.6) and Mali (1974) (art. I.6), however, prohibit ethnic propaganda, stressing the negative side of national diversity and trying to repress it.

A position not unlike Cameroon's is taken in the Zairean constitutions; the constitutional histories of these two countries moreover display marked parallels: the transition from a federal to a united republic, and the early repression of secessionist tendencies.[14] The Zairean preamble of 1964 not only mentions national diversity and emphasises the necessity of national unity (going on at great length, in the main text, to describe the extant territorial subdivision and their prerogatives), but also stresses the conservation of Zairean values – obviously in the hope that these would form a basis for nationhood. This attempt at what could be called cultural mobilisation was much further developed in the 1978 Zairean preamble (quoted at the beginning of this chapter), where the political philosophy of Mobutism is presented as a national ideology

propounding a return to traditional authenticity, in which national values, ancestors and the African personality are all invoked as fundaments of national unity (MacGaffey 1982:87–105). This allegedly authentic cultural basis is to provide legitimacy not only for the constitution, but also for the political party that claims to be its only guardian and the focus of all authority within the state. To the extent to which this cultural basis is in fact a neo-traditional invention involving the manipulation of isolated historical forms selected so as to take on new functions in a new socio-political environment, the 1978 Zairean preamble hardly solves the problem of legitimation of the state and the constitution, but rather obscures it by making it subservient to the actual power exercised by the Popular Movement of the Revolution, and its leader (Kamitatu-Massamba 1971; 1977).

A cursory inspection of African constitutions outside our sample would confirm the impression that these texts tend to be remarkably taciturn on what seems to be, after all, one of the most pressing problems of modern African states: national unity. Nor do expressions of nationalism prevail in these texts.

In this respect there is a notable contrast between francophone African preambles and those of the former Eastern European socialist states, which likewise came to be established after the Second World War. A priori one might have imagined that the preambles of francophone African states, as symbolic expressions of a nationalist struggle against colonial rule, would have extolled the particular features of nationhood, the nationalist movement and other aspects of national identity.[15] At the same time, one might have assumed that preambles of socialist constitutions would not be concerned with such topics as nationality and national history (which from a Marxist point of view might easily be dismissed as mystifications); rather, one might have expected them to deal with international working-class solidarity and other doctrines of alleged universal validity. In fact, however, the respective preambles largely were far removed from these assumptions. To be sure, socialist preambles did make mention of the working classes, and other points of socialist ideology and theory. Likewise, francophone African independence preambles did refer to, for instance, '*le peuple sénégalais*'. However, in Eastern European socialist preambles (now no doubt all replaced), the struggle against capitalism and imperialism was usually mentioned within a very specific national context. In generally lengthy, declaration-type preambles the national dimensions of the socio-political context tended to assume a dominant position, inter alia acting as parameters within which the transition towards socialism was seen to take place. Moreover, each particular revolutionary history in Eastern Europe was in principle treated as a unique and isolated case, notwithstanding the tribute paid at times to the co-operation of the Red Army and the leadership of the Soviet Union (which country, incidentally, was exceptional in having a constitution without preamble).[16]

Returning to the African scene, we should perhaps not have expected to find strong evocations of national identity and nationalism. Especially in francophone Africa there was, towards the end of the colonial era, little as yet distinctly national to be found in the states created at independence by a partition of French West Africa and of French Equatorial Africa. Among the local elite, strong orientations towards French metropolitan culture prevailed. However, this point should not be exaggerated. The

Table 16.1   Overview of juridical and definitional properties of constitutional preambles of six francophone African countries

	Niger (1960)	Cameroon (1972)	Senegal (1960)	Mali (1974)	Zaire (1964)	Zaire (1978)
Definition						
Introductory text present	+	+	+	+	+	+
Historical conditions evoked	–	+	+	–	+	+
Principles evoked	+	+	+	+	+	+
Source of authority explicitly stated	+	+	+	+	+	+
Formal properties						
Introductory text called 'Preamble'	+	+	+	+	+	+
Length of introductory text	short	long	medium	medium	medium	medium
No. of words in introductory text	70	670	100-300	100-300	100-300	100-300
Historical conditions						
Historical conditions evoked	–	+	+	–	+	+
As transition to different form of the state	–	N.E.	+	–	+	–
As dangers confronting the nation, with counter measures	–	+	–	–	+	+
Fundamental rights						
Reference to fundamental rights	+	+	+	+	+	+
Exhaustive enumeration of fundamental rights	–	+	–	–	–	–
Reference to Declaration of 1789	+	–	+	–	–	–
Reference to Universal Declaration, 1948	+	+	+	+	+	+
Preamble explicitly presented as guarantee of fundamental rights	+	+	+	+	+	+ §
Reference to specific fundamental rights	–	+	NE	+	–	–
Classic fundamental rights						
Right to personal growth	–	–	0	+	–	+
Political rights in general	NE+	NE+	+	NE+	0	0
Freedom of movement	–	0	NE+	–	0	0
Freedom of religion (broader sense)	–	0	+	0	0	0
Freedom of expression	–	0	NE+	–	0	0
Freedom of association and assembly	– 0	0	NE+	+	0	0
Freedom of trade unions	–	0	+	+	– 0	0
Rights to property	–	0	+	0	0	0
Inviolability of domicile	–	0	NE+	–	0	0
Confidentiality of correspondence	–	0	NE+	–	0	0
Social fundamental rights						
Right to material wellbeing	–	–	–	–	+_	0
Right to work	–	0	NE+	+	–	–
Right to leisure	–	–	–	+	–	–
Social right to individual economic development	–	+	–	0	–	–
Right to education	–	0	NE+	0	0	0

	Niger (1960)	Cameroon (1972)	Senegal (1960)	Mali (1974)	Zaire (1964)	Zaire (1978)
General principles of justice						
General principles of justice	–	+	–	+	+	–
Nulla poena principle	–	+	–	–	–	–
Law never retrospective	–	+	–	–	–	–
State of law	–	+	–	+	+	–
Principle of equality	–	+	NE	–	–	–
National identity and Pan-Africanism						
Mention of national diversity	–	+	–	–	+	–
Emphasis on necessity/conservation of national unity	–	+	–	–	+	+
Own (national) values	–	–	–	–	+	+
Reference to ancestors	–	–	–	–	–	+
A specific national ideology presented	–	–	–	–	–	+
Return to authenticity	–	–	–	–	–	+
Mention is made of the African personality	–	–	+	+	–	+
Reference to other states/nations in general	+	+	+	+	+	+
Reference to African nations/states	–	+	+	+	+	+
Explicit reference to desirability of African unity	–	+	+	+	–	+
Politico-ideological position						
Politicoideological principles mentioned	+	+	+	–	NE	+
Affirmation of principle of democracy	+	NE	NE+	0	0	0
Reference to sovereignty	0	+	0	0	0	0
Reference to independence	0	0	0	–	–	0
Form of the state defined?	0	0	0	+	0	0
Reference to political parties	0	0	0	0	0	+
Conservation of universal values	–	–	–	–	–	0
The family as the basis of society	–	+	0	–	+	0
Secularity	0	+	0	0	0	0
Reference to God	–	–	–	–	+	0
Economic ideology						
Taxation commensurate to income	–	+	–	–	–	–
Emphasis on economic independence	–	–	–	–	–	+
Emphasis on international economic cooperation	–	+	–	–	–	–
Collective property respected	–	–	+	–	–	–
Source of authority						
Source of authority is the people	+	+	+	+	+	+
That source explicitly enacts the following main body of the constitution	–	–	–	–	+	+

LEGEND

+	Explicitly in main text.	–	Not in main text.	NA	Not applicable.
0	Not explicitly in main text.	NE	Not explicitly in preamble.	Yes	In preamble.

§ This point is somewhat charged, since such guarantee may usually only be implied by reference to the Universal Declaration of 1948.

colonial administrative divisions did, after all, long before independence, create separate units within a wider political and administrative arena, and among these units (the later francophone nation-states) competition for scarce resources had already begun to create an awareness of distinct identity – as is clear, for example, from the fact that independence movements and their leaders had a certain local focus, on either Senegal, Ivory Coast or Mali; it is particularly the allegiance to a local constituency that precluded the realisation of pan-African dreams at independence.[17]

African unity turns out to be a major concern in African preambles, both within and outside our sample. It should be recalled that the first African constitutions were drafted at a time (around 1960) when African unity was very much en vogue. A decisive date in this respect was 1963, when the Organisation of African Unity was founded. Although little was achieved, in subsequent years, in terms of the realisation of a viable political and economic African unity across the continent, the ideal obviously continued to appeal to African legislators; in our sample, the 1972 constitution of Cameroon and the 1978 constitution of Zaire bear witness to this.

Outside our sample, a truly dedicated position as far as African unity is concerned is clear from the Mali (1960) preamble:

> *Le peuple malien, conscient des impératifs historiques, moraux et maté-riels qui unissent les Etats d'Afrique, soucieux de réaliser l'unité politique, économique et sociale indispensable à l'affirmation de la personnalité afric-aine, affirme sa détermination de poursuivre son oeuvre en vue de la réalisa-tion de l'unité africaine.*

A similar case is Guinea (1958), whose preamble contains the following passage:

> *Il [le peuple de Guinée] soutient sans réserve toute politique tendant à la création des État-Unis d'Afrique, à la sauvegarde, à la consolidation de la paix dans le monde.*

The Mali preamble is reminiscent of that of Senegal (1960); both speak of 'des impératifs historiques' uniting African countries. Somewhat ironically though, Senegal and Mali happened, for a couple of months in 1960, to be united in the Mali Federation – hence perhaps their still rather parallel preambles; but in their case, it appeared that 'des impératifs historiques', far from leading to further unification, drove the two partners apart (cf. Hesseling 1982).

The declarations of Guinea and Mali in favour of African unity were further strengthened by the constitutional provisions which both included with regard to the possibility of abolishing national sovereignty. Guinea and Mali appear to have been the only francophone African states to adopt this provision. The respective articles were identical:

> *Mali, art. 48 (cf. Guinea, art. 34):*
> *La République peut conclure avec tout État africain des accords d'association ou de communauté, comprenant abandon partiel ou total de souveraineté en vue de réaliser l'unité africaine.*

The preamble of the Senegal constitution showed traces of regret about a lost opportunity to unite francophone West Africa, and also a determination to keep trying:[18]

> *Le peuple sénégalais, soucieux de préparer la voie de l'unité des Etats de l'Afrique et d'assurer les perspectives que comporte cette unité; Conscient de la nécessité d'une unité politique, culturelle, économique et sociale, indispensable à l'affirmation de la personnalité africaine; Conscient des impératifs historiques, moraux et matériels qui unissent les Etats de l'Ouest africain.*

The last sentence, however, introduces an alternative to pan-African unity à la Nkrumah: the formation, at a less than continental scale, of regional interstatal forms of co-operation, for the sake of customs, monetary structures, scientific exchange, communications and so on. Their success has been rather more substantial than that of pan-Africanist attempts, although here, too, the post-independence period has seen some significant disappointments.[19]

Politico-ideological position

While statements of national identity, such as have been discussed in the preceding section, served to define the nation which was to be the carrier of the political order set out in the constitution, one could well imagine that the specific form which this order was to take was subjected to further philosophical or ideological reflection (Copans 1978; Goulbourne 1978). If a constitutional preamble is the place to propound underlying principles, one would expect to find here statements as to the democratic nature of the state, matters of sovereignty and independence, the weight that is to be given to religious authority in the affairs of the state, and so on.

Inspection of our sample in this light reveals again the arbitrary nature of the distinction between preamble and main text. No constitutional text could do without at least a summary treatment of the politico-ideological position from which the legislator departs. However, much of this position turns out to be expounded not in preambles, but in the main body of the text, and particularly in a first title of the constitution. The Mali (1974) preamble does not even hint at a politico-ideological position, although such matters as democracy, the secular nature of the state, and its sovereignty, are in fact discussed elsewhere in the constitution. A similar situation applies in the case of Zaire (1964). In the other cases the preamble may be more explicit as to politico-ideological position, but also there we find that these principles are more extensively dealt with outside the preamble. In this respect, the preamble seems to fall short, somehow, of fulfilling the function of statement of underlying principles which has often been assigned to it. With the exception of Mali (1974) and Zaire (1964), all preambles in our sample do in fact contain some discussion of politico-ideological principles. In only one case (Niger 1960) this includes an explicit affirmation of the principles of democracy – which principles, however, once again do appear in the main texts of four other constitutions in our sample.

Only one constitution, namely that of Zaire (1978), emphasises the conservation of universal values in general. In a continent where kinship relations have been acknowledged as an important principle in the organisation of social life, it is hardly

surprising that constitutions contain, as part of their ideological content, statements to this effect; the family is presented as the basis of society in four constitutions in our sample, in two cases (Cameroon 1972 and Zaire 1964) in the preamble and in the other two cases in the main text.

More fundamental in a constitutional text defining the nature of the national political order is, of course, the explicit reference to sovereignty, which is present in all our six sample texts; however, in only one of them (Cameroon 1972) was the preamble considered the appropriate place to expound this principle; in the others it is dealt with at the beginning of the main text. Within the historical context of twentieth-century Africa, the attainment of independence from a former metropole is a crucial element in the sovereign nature of the state; in this respect it is remarkable that nowhere in their constitutions do Mali (1974) and Zaire (1964) explicitly refer to their national independence, and instead limit themselves to a more general statement of sovereignty. In the Zairean case, this state of affairs was altered fourteen years later, when the 1978 preamble came to include a very explicit reference to national independence, not only at the political level, but also socially, economically and culturally. This reflects the fact that it is particularly the ideological dimension of constitutional texts which has received extensive elaboration in the 1978 Zairean constitution, under the aegis of Mobutism.

The limited extent, in general, to which constitutional preambles have been used by African legislators in order to deal with matters of political ideology is reflected in the fact that the preambles in our sample hardly contain specific statements as to the form and organisation of the states they refer to. These matters are almost exclusively dealt with in the main bodies of the constitutions, and then often at considerable length. Two interesting exceptions are Mali (1974), which, in its preamble, defines the form of the state as being that of a republic; and Zaire (1978), where both the preamble and the main text deal at length with the one national political party. By and large the Zairean (1978) constitution is an exceptional case, not so much because of its emphasis on its one-party system[20] (which is also found in the other countries in our sample, with the exception of Senegal), but because of its very strong ideological elaboration which would seem to be at the expense of the more organisational dimension of constitutional legislation.

At first glance African constitutions would appear to contain, in their mottoes, a more rewarding source of information as to their politico-ideological position. All constitutions in our sample (and virtually all francophone African constitutions outside our sample) contain, in the first title of the main text, mottoes which seem to subsume, in a rather hermetic and symbolic nutshell, the political ideology of the country.[21] These mottoes are very similar in form and content. All consist (in various overlapping combinations) of three abstract nouns mostly denoting virtues, such as 'fraternity' or 'discipline', or entities which form the object of virtues (such as 'unity' – to be attained by solidarity, or 'fatherland' – the object of patriotism). Table 16.2 provides an overview of the mottoes of sixteen francophone African countries.

Table 16.2   Distribution of mottoes of sixteen independent African states[a]

	Freedom	Equality	Brotherhood	Peace	Work	Fatherland	Unity	Discipline	Justice	Progress	Solidarity	Honour	Dignity
Cameroon				■	■	■							
Ivory Coast					■		■	■					
Dahomey (now Benin)			■		■				■				
Upper Volta (now Burkina Fasso)					■		■		■				
Niger			■		■					■			
Gabon					■		■		■				
Guinea					■				■		■		
Madagascar	■					■				■			
Mali[b]							▨						
Senegal[c]							▨						
Mauritania			■						■			■	
Togo	■				■	■							
Central African Republic					■		■						■
Congo(-Brazzaville)[d]					■		■			■			
Chad[e]					■		■			■			
Zaire				■	■				■				
France (1789)	■	■	■										

NOTES

a   The black fields indicate the mottoes actually selected by individual countries.

b   Identical to Senegal. No specific virtues mentioned, but three evocations of national unity.

c   Identical to Mali. No specific virtues mentioned, but three evocations of national unity.

d   Identical to Chad.

e   Identical to Congo(-Brazzaville).

On closer inspection, however, the specific ideological content of these mottoes appears to be far less important than their signalling function as distinctive labels, comparable with coats of arms (in which, incidentally, they feature), national flags, and national anthems. For each country, the specific permutation of three elements selected from the apparently limited range available internationally would seem largely to serve heraldic preoccupations; it could hardly be maintained that the choice of a particular motto reflects the peculiar history or social structure of the country in any significant way. Some items are preferred: twelve countries include 'work' in their mottoes, six 'unity', and six again 'justice'. It would be foolish to compare countries on the basis of

these mottoes, and try and assess what regularities in their constitutional and political system might account for the specific selection of any such permutation. Free variation of form, such as in art or in linguistics, seems to be the overall explanation of the pattern of distribution as found in Table 16.2. However, the fact that all these francophone constitutions include mottoes and select them from a common pool bears out the extent to which these texts do in fact constitute one and the same constitutional family.[22]

Family resemblances are manifest also when constitutions explicitly define the relation between statal and religious authority – a topic which in French constitutional law is generally dealt with under the heading of *laïcité*, secularity (Trotabas 1961). Many francophone African states have a predominantly Muslim population and, since the late 1970s, have been facing a resurgence of Islamic fundamentalism which in principle challenges the authority of the secular state. In general one of the most pressing questions in the contemporary Muslim world is: Can Islam form the foundation for a modern state? A draft Islamic constitution was proposed in about 1980 (Al-Ghazali 1981:153– 168), foreshadowing the many movements towards the Islamisation of African states in subsequent decades. In Africa, both north and south of the Sahara, the influence of Islam on politics, constitutional law and law in the broader sense, is increasing.[23] In this connection it is significant that (in addition to such items as sovereignty and democracy, which would be indispensable in a constitutional text anyway), secularity is the only item explicitly dealt with in all six texts making up our sample. In the best French constitutional tradition, these francophone African constitutions take the line that the state should be secular. Within our sample, Senegal can be considered as a country where – despite the constitutional insistence on secularity – Islamic leaders continue to play a decisive role in state politics (Behrman 1977; Coulon 1979; Hesseling 1982). Outside our sample, Mauritania and the Comores – both having adopted Islam as a state religion – would be the only exceptions in francophone Africa. Christianity also raises controversies in the field of church–state relations in black Africa.[24]

In our sample, only the two Zairean preambles make any mention of God,[25] and none of the six texts propound the Supreme Being as the fundamental source of authority.[26] This again reveals these African constitutions as members of a common family, as against, for instance, Latin American constitutions, in whose preambles reference is made to God either as the supreme authority of the universe or, at least, as the protector of the respective constituent assemblies.[27]

Economic ideology

Disappointingly little as constitutional preambles contain in the way of explicit statements of political ideology, they are virtually silent on the point of economic ideology. This is all the more remarkable in that economic under-development and the desire to alter that situation has ever since independence been a dominant concern of all African governments, in importance to be matched only by national stability and integration.[28] Looking at the preambles in our sample we find that only the long preamble of Cameroon (1972) contains some reference to the national economy: the principle is stated of taxation commensurate to a citizen's income, and international co-operation is presented as a means towards national economic development, in the following terms:

> [the people of Cameroon], resolved to exploit its natural wealth in order to ensure the well-being of every citizen by the raising of living standards, proclaims its rights to development as well as its determination to devote all its efforts to that end and declares that it is ready to co-operate with all states desirous of participating in this national enterprise in respect for its sovereignty and the independence of the Cameroonian State.

It is remarkable that this formulation in the 1972 federal preamble is rather more reticent than its predecessor in the 1960 preamble of formerly French East Cameroon, which bluntly spoke of the protection and desirability of foreign investment in the following terms:

> *La liberté de constitution, de gestion et d'exploitation, d'investissement ainsi que la non-discrimination en matière juridique, financière, fiscale et commerciale sont reconnues à tous dans les conditions fixées par la loi.*

And especially:

> *L'Etat du Cameroun conscient de l'importance d'un développement de son économie dans la liberté, et de la nécessité d'une participation de capitaux de toutes origines à ce développement, est soucieux de prévoir dans ses institutions l'existence de codes, conventions et contrats aussi propres que possible à lui en assurer le concours. Il entend rechercher dès maintenant, en accord avec les pays et les organismes internationaux intéressés tous moyens de créer les meilleures conditions possibles aux capitaux désireux de s'investir dans des réalisations profitables aux deux parties.*

If earlier we noted a strong reliance on French metropolitan traditions in the formulation of particular preoccupations, then here certainly is an example of innovation in the drafting of constitutional preambles. Particularly the encouragement in the latter paragraph had little to do with the constitution as such, and nothing whatsoever with the social rights among which it was listed. It was not a statement directed to the people of Cameroon, nor an expression that in any way could be attributed to them. Yet it was familiar language; conceivably it could have been lifted straight from a brochure on investment opportunities in Cameroon.[29] Evidently, these provisions were formulated with an eye on foreign investors. As compared with the 1960 phrasing, the 1972 text is remarkable in that it confines international co-operation to the state level, and no longer holds up the image of a (private) investor's paradise. International criticism of multinational corporations and their activities in the Third World first gained momentum in the late 1960s; however, in a follow-up study a closer inspection of Cameroon history for the decades around independence might well suggest additional local reasons for the more reserved position taken in 1972.[30]

But even in 1972 the Cameroon preamble is a very far cry from that of Zaire (1978), which strongly stresses economic independence – an ideological statement in the double sense of the word, since it is hardly in line with the neo-colonial realities of Zaire under Mobutu.[31]

Finally, on economic ideology we note, in the 1960 Senegal preamble, the explicit recognition of collective property – a peculiarity to be deleted when the Senegalese constitution was revised in 1963 (Hesseling 1982:199).

Source of authority

In our discussion of the functions of constitutional preambles we have given virtually equal weight to (a) the evocation of historical conditions, (b) the propounding of fundamental legal and politico-philosophical principles, and (c) the final enacting clause by which the constitution acquires formal force of law under some explicitly stated authority. Our examination of a number of African constitutional preambles has shown that these vary considerably as to their treatment of historical conditions and underlying principles. However, the constitutions in our sample are rather more uniform when it comes to our third major element, the statement of the source of authority.

All six constitutions explicitly state their source of authority, and this is invariably 'the people'. Here these constitutions reveal themselves once again not only as members of one family on the African continent, but also as closely related to the eighteenth-century constitutional traditions initiated by the French Revolution and the United States Declaration of independence. At the same time, the link between the people as the fundamental source of authority and the constitutional text at hand often remains implicit in that a specific enacting clause is absent in four of the six constitutions in our sample. The Zaire (1964) and Zaire (1978) constitutions do contain such a clause. The 1960 Niger constitution that features in our sample lacks an enacting clause, but in its 1965 modification (Decheix 1966) the following text precedes the preamble:

> *REPUBLIC OF NIGER*
>
> *Constitution*
> *November 8, 1960*
> *modified by laws*
>
> *6125 of July 12, 1961*
> *6401 of March 14, 1964*
> *6428 of August 14, 1964*
> *6534 of September 7, 1965*
>
> *The National Assembly of the Republic of Niger deliberated and adopted in its plenary session of November 8, 1960; the President of the Council of Ministers promulgates the following Constitutional law…*

Contrary to what one might have expected, the preambles do not reflect the dramatic historical conditions under which they were drafted on the eve of national independence: the colonial state had given way to the local African people as a source of authority for the state and its constitution – but nothing in these preambles (or in the main texts for that matter) evokes this transition which, in a constitutional and ideological sense, must yet be considered a crucial one. This lack of elaboration (which is also noticeable in the absence of explicit enacting clauses) may be indicative of some embarrassment

on the part of African legislators: in the light of international constitutional history they had no alternative but to propound the people as the source of authority, but at the same time legislative practice as well as the subsequent constitutional functioning of the independent African states reveal that the actual state power was exercised not by the mobilised masses of the nation, but by some national elite having usurped the people's authority while continuing to pay lip service to it.[32] If anything, the ideological potential of preambles could be said to have been underutilised or misused.

Constitutional preambles and socio-political realities

The above review suggests that constitutional preambles essentially contain texts whose formal, abstract nature may be much further removed from the actual socio-political reality in which they are drafted than those parts of a constitution that deal with the concrete, organisational features of the state and its institutions.[33] In this respect much preambular content may be comparable with the emblematic, almost literary nature of the constitutional mottoes discussed above – even if the latter do not normally appear in preambles themselves. When constitutional statements attain a sufficient level of specificity and concreteness and imply specific action or the abstinence from such action (such as is the case in fundamental rights, rules governing eligibility to public office etc.), then some degree of empirical assessment of the extent to which these statements are actually observed in reality, violated, or ignored becomes possible. Preambular texts may contain such statements, for instance in the form of fundamental rights. An empirical study of the observance or violation of such rights in African states would be interesting, but would teach us more about fundamental rights and African states than about preambles as such. However, most of the content of preambles is so general, ideological or philosophical that it is extremely difficult to pinpoint, in the socio-political reality, specific institutions, activities, or policies that could be seen as either resulting from or being at variance with preambular content.

So while preambles may be of considerable comparative interest to the constitutional lawyer or the student of esoteric symbolic idioms, we should not overestimate the extent to which they can be of direct relevance to the political scientist or the sociologist. This is all the more true since preambles (at least those included in our sample) can hardly be said to fully realise even the potential we have attributed to them: as statements of, for example, fundamental rights, of dramatic historical conditions attending constitutional change, of national identity, of pan-African commitment, or of political philosophy, African constitutional preambles turn out to be less than exhaustive. When it comes to fundamental rights or the organisation of the state, the main body of the constitution is normally a better source than the preamble. When we want to get a picture of a country's political and social philosophy, again there are other texts (normally not of a constitutional nature) that provide much deeper insight. Fascinating as preambles may be, they remain phenomena of rather limited scope.

When we try to explain why African francophone constitutional preambles, despite all variation, have so much of their form and content in common, a literary analogy may be illuminating. Preambles can be regarded as one literary genre of legislative writing;

and as a genre they display various conventions which a writer would not normally violate: a particular style, conventional elements such as the evocation of the people as source of authority, and references to pan-Africanism, to fundamental rights, and so on. Historically, the origin of this genre can be identified as French (Hesseling 1982; Kliesch 1967) or even international constitutional culture (van Maarseveen and van der Tang 1978:2021), in which all people involved in the drafting of these constitutional texts were very deeply immersed – with typical African elements such as pan-Africanism and the emphasis on the family as the basis of society thrown in for couleur locale. As a literary genre, more or less professional conventions may have been a more dominant concern than any direct reference of current socio-political reality. In fact, since membership of the international community of states, and acceptance as member of, for example, the United Nations, to some extent depended on writing the 'right' kind of constitutions, these texts and their preambles might well be called international visitor's cards, and their form might be just as predictable as the conventions that govern such cards.

Yet the extra-judicial reality manages to break through to the texts, and we suggest this could be analysed at three different levels. First, whether or not explicitly highlighted in the preambular texts, the truth is that they were drafted at dramatic moments in the national history – the transition to a new political system; without these events reshaping the national socio-political reality, the preambles would not even exist. Second, the legislators, far from actively associating with the masses of the African people, were in the position of an acculturated bourgeoisie, which (while deeply concerned with the discovery and formulation of their own class identity) had to derive legitimacy from reference to the people, without wanting to be hindered by excessive political participation by the people. In their choice of language and style, their occasional evocations of national identity, the dilemma of enacting clauses featuring the people rather than the ruling bourgeoisie, some of this class background can be detected. Third, as a literary genre, preambles may belong to the realm of storytelling rather than realism, yet their closest analogy seems to be with a variety of folk literature encompassing magical incantations and other ritual formulae. The preamble as genre can be said to have a specific social function: that of attending a major ritual passage in the political life of a country. As in all ritual texts, in preambles meaning and symbolism may abound, yet their main function is to match the public conventions of the occasion. This also explains why preambles do not describe an existing society, but set forth an image or blueprint of an ideal society yet to come into being: one saturated with national identity and unity, international co-operation, and individual integrity. There is no point in trying to assess whether such images correspond with the actual society in which they were formulated – just as works of art are not primarily or exclusively judged according to their minute and successful copying of reality. It would be relevant, however, to ascertain whether the hope and inspiration that these texts emanate actually filtered through to the society at large.

Not only as a ritual text articulating a unique constitutional transition in the history of a country, but also as abstractions from the realities of society (presenting a mobilising ideal rather at variance with that reality), preambles may after all be more innovative than our discussion of them as a conventional literary genre would suggest.

In our sample, the one francophone preamble that departs rather originally from the conventions of the genre (the Zairean one of 1978), happened to be drafted in a society that also in other respects forms an extreme case in our sample: there the gap between constitutional provisions and actual socio-political functioning or non-functioning is wider than in any of the other countries examined. Here particularly the ideological content propounded in the preamble might be said to obscure or dissimulate existing conditions, rather than altering them.

While our discussion so far may throw some light on the adoption of preambles in francophone constitutional texts in general (and in independence constitutions in particular), we might now ask what changes in the wider socio-political environment actually come to be reflected in the way of alterations to preambles. In our overview we have already encountered a number of examples of such processes. In Niger, the termination of civil rule by the 1974 coup led, at the constitutional level, to the suspension of the entire constitution, including, of course, the preamble.[34] Incidentally, the proclamation by which this was effected oddly resembles a preamble in style and content, and even comes closer to our ideal than many actual preambles:

> *Proclamation of Lieutenant Colonel Seyni Kountché in the name of the Supreme Military Council:*
>
> *Citizens of Niger, today, April 15, 1974, the army decided to assume its responsibilities by putting an end to the regime with which you were familiar. After fifteen years of a reign marked by injustice, corruption, selfishness and indifference toward the people whose happiness it claimed to ensure, we could no longer tolerate the continued existence of this oligarchy.*
>
> *In my capacity as General Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces, I have decided to proclaim the suspension of the Constitution, the dissolution of the National Assembly, and the abolition of all political and para-political organisations.*
>
> *I reaffirm our membership in all African and international organisations as well as our respect for all previous commitments, provided that they consider the interests and dignity of our people.*
>
> *We shall assume this responsibility in order, justice, and solidarity.*
>
> *Therefore, the military and civilian authorities will unfailingly ensure the maintenance of order and the protection of persons and property in their areas of responsibility.*
>
> *Niger citizens, my brothers, in the face of this most dramatic situation now facing our country, I know that I can rely on you so that Niger may live long.*

Our other examples of preambular process are less drastic. We have already referred to the shift, in the Zairean preamble of 1978 as compared to the 1964 one, to statements of an ideological and mobilising nature – possibly in an attempt to conceal the breakdown of the specific institutions of the state during the period indicated. Of lesser scope are the changes in preambles in statements of economic ideology in Senegal 1964 (where, as compared with the 1960 preamble, collective property was deprived of its constitution backing – a reflection of the political defeat of the left-wing prime minister M. Dia at the end of 1962), and in the federal Cameroon preamble, where

private foreign investment was no longer explicitly encouraged as it had been in the 1960 East Cameroon independence preamble.

Thus, even when conceived as a rather hermetic and abstract literary genre, constitutional preambles cannot entirely resist the pressures of a changing socio-political reality. We might observe that it is remarkable that at times certain major socio-political changes have come to be encoded in preambular texts, as if the legislators at least believe in the efficacy and social relevance of these texts. But again, they reflect these changes in only a very indirect way, which therefore hardly makes preambles an important primary source for political analysis.

Aspects of democracy and democratisation in Zambia and Botswana: Exploring African political culture at the grassroots

Wim van Binsbergen[1]

In this chapter, I shall draw attention to background aspects of democracy and democratisation in two African countries, Zambia and Botswana, by exploring not the topical developments on the national political scene (a task for which others are much better qualified), but the political culture at the grassroots, to which my prolonged participant observation as an anthropologist has given me access. Before we arrive at the specific ethnography, I shall raise a number of methodological and theoretical points without which, I feel, my argument would remain in the air. This takes us to a discussion of democracy, globalisation and the dangers of Eurocentrism, and leads us to distinguish, in the next section, three modes of defining democracy. Only after having identified constitutional democracy as just one particular variant among several, and as an item of political culture which has been relatively recently introduced to Africa, will we discuss the post-colonial democratic positions and processes among the people of Kaoma district, Zambia, and of the medium-sized town of Francistown, Botswana. The purpose of the chapter is, beyond a descriptive one, to help define the wider setting and the boundary conditions within which the more specific discussion of the democratisation process in Africa following the late 1980s can be situated; that discussion itself however, to which our African colleagues have made such major contributions, remains outside my present scope.[2]

Democracy, globalisation and possible Eurocentrism

Our social and political life is involved in an ever-accelerating process of globalisation.[3] Through formal education and literacy, through electronic media, which, in addition to spoken and written language, have developed their own lingua franca of images more

Figure 17.1:   South Central and Southern
Africa

or less understood wherever there is media reception, and through mass consumption, whose trade flows spread across the globe the silent language of standardised manufactured objects packed with meanings, globalisation has produced a situation where a fair if varying percentage of the inhabitants of all continents are familiar with and situationally adopt the global discourse, with its particular selection of symbols and meaning. In the process, the discourses specific to their local, regional and national socio-cultural environments are far from lost, but are situationally adapted (with varying degrees of integration, conflict, subordination or dominance) to the global discourse.

In the contemporary global discourse, 'democracy' has come to occupy an important place. It often carries deep emotional significance. It has acquired great mobilising power. In the course of the twentieth century, many thousands of people were prepared to die in struggles legitimated by reference to this symbol; many more people admired others making such sacrifices in the name of democracy, and spurred them on. Democracy has become a major export item of the USA and NATO. Ideologically (without denying the economic, power, political, religious and ethnic factors involved) the globalising concept of democracy was the force that breached the Berlin Wall and exploded the communist empire of Eastern Europe and North Asia. The global percolation of media images documenting this process has also contributed to the current democratisation movement in many parts of Africa.

The social scientist or historian reflecting on this African movement faces dilemmas that, phrased only slightly differently, are only too familiar from the study of world religions, mass consumption, styles of trade unionism, formal legislation by the nation-state, cosmopolitan medicine, and so many other aspects of the twentieth-century transformation of the African continent. These dilemmas relate to the extent to which North Atlantic models are able to acquire global relevance, and force us to explore the

limitations of both Eurocentrism (which claims only one model to be valid) and cultural relativism (which claims all possible models, including those found outside the North Atlantic, to be equally valid and equally worth preserving for the future).

1. The dilemma of *cultural imperialism*: Is the institution of democracy, which we have seen spreading all over Africa, merely a *submission to alien* (North Atlantic) *forms* which therefore will only fit like the proverbial square peg in the round hole of African cultures and societies; or is it, on the contrary, the awakening to *a universal heritage of humankind*, which has outgrown its being tied to a specific culture of origin (West European, North American, and so on), so that Africans adopting it are merely coming into their own? In this light, the post-colonial vicissitudes of democracy in Africa would not imply any qualitative disability for democracy on the part of African societies and their members, but would be equivalent to the (much longer) formative stage of the same institution in the North Atlantic region itself (see below).

2. The dilemma of *localisation*: Even if considered global or universal, institutions invariably develop a local form; who is to say whether that local form is a regrettable deviation from abstract global standards?

3. The dilemma of wrongly claimed universality: Given the distribution of economic and military power in the modern world (a fundamental datum which the very paradigm of globalisation may be criticised for obscuring under an illusion of cultural convergence and equality), could members of a relatively powerful nation-state resist the temptation to claim that their own culture-specific institutions have in fact supra-local, global relevance and truth? African democratisation gains interest and support outside Africa since it appears to liberate local African populations from the poor constitutional and economic performance of the post-colonial states in that continent. But if this amounts to furthering the North Atlantic model of formal democracy (disguised as universal), does it not at the same time imply the superiority of the North, and reinforce the subordinative relations which have existed between North and South since the nineteenth century? Could democratisation mean that local African communities rid themselves of a failing state, but at the same time are more effectively subjugated (ideologically, institutionally, and – since local democratic performance is increasingly a consideration in intercontinental donor relations – even economically) to unequal global power relations under northern hegemony? Is that the hidden agenda of the democratisation process?

4. The *social price of relativism*: As social scientists we can afford to distance ourselves from, for instance, the Christianity of our ancestors (a North Atlantic institution whose spread outside Europe is comparable to that of democracy), but we make ourselves unpopular and politically suspect in our own socio-political environment if we try to adopt the same stance with regard to democracy.[4] After all, who would not hope (especially in a secularising world of fragmented meaning, when absurdity became the stock in trade of twentieth-century philosophy, art and literature) that

such democratic principles as human rights and general elections, far from being culture-specific, would turn out to be universally applicable, to be 'true'? With the contestation by students and workers in Western Europe and North America in the late 1960s, the semantics of 'democracy' have developed so as to include not only the constitutional level of the nation-state, but also participation, responsibility, initiative and competence in one's *immediate micro-political environment* – shop floor, institutional (part-)organisation, urban residential area. Democracy has become an important standard of evaluation for the legitimate managing of *all* power relations in which we are involved, and by implication for the propriety and meaning of *all* social action. The production of knowledge about democracy therefore is much more subject to social control (and thus far more prone to Eurocentrism) than many other respectable fields of cross-cultural social enquiry, for instance, concerning weaning practices, conflict resolution in polygamous households, or manuring techniques in peasant agriculture.

As an anthropological fieldworker I have participated for long periods, and with as much existential commitment as I could summon, in four African societies[5] I was not born in, and there I have often encountered – and have lived – principles and procedures for the exercise of social power very different from the democratic ideas of my home (Dutch urban) society; in the latter, however, I consider myself a democrat. Against this background I cannot offer easy solutions for the dilemmas listed here. Meanwhile it is my contention that the current discussion on democratisation in Africa sometimes runs the risk of becoming myopic and Eurocentric in not paying sufficient attention to the analytical and methodological implications of cultural imperialism, localisation, wrongly claimed universality, and the social price of relativism – all of which are not exactly conducive to our objectivity as analysts.

Three modes of defining democracy

We also need to sharpen our conceptual tools and bring them into historical perspective. Democracy is a number of things at the same time, so the term 'democratisation', as it refers to the process of bringing about or enhancing democracy, may denote distinct and quite different phenomena. I propose to distinguish three modes, designated A, B and C.

Philosophically, 'democracy' denotes a specific answer to the question as to the source, within a collectivity of human beings, of the legitimate exercise of power through legal and political institutions: in the case of democracy, that source is not a supernatural being, a king, an aristocracy, a specific gender or age group, a priestly caste, a revealed unchangeable text or shrine, but 'the people' (A). Statements about 'the people' are sufficiently flexible and gratuitous to allow the philosophical label of democracy to be applied in numerous settings where in fact, through complex symbolic, ideological, legal and military means, voluntary or forced representation and usurpation have dramatically narrowed down the range of those who actually exercise the power. Examples would include not only the dismantled oligarchy of the German *Democratic*

Republic, but also classical Athens – where women, slaves, children and young people of both sexes, resident migrants (metoikoι), and citizens banned to abroad, could not participate in the 'democratic' process.[6] After a succession of imperial, monarchical and theocratic options in the course of two millennia, democracy once more became the dominant legal-philosophical concept in the European tradition, and was pruned of its biases of inequality, in the North American Declaration of Independence and subsequently the French Revolution, in the eighteenth century; the lists of basic human rights formulated in that context still constitute the basis for the legal philosophy of democracy today.[7]

What marked these developments subsequent to the Enlightenment was the translation of the legal philosophy of democracy into constitutional and organisational arrangements that stipulate, in controllable and enforceable detail, the specific practical steps through which the ideal source of power is converted to concrete actions, offices, and personnel. It is these *constitutional* arrangements, rather than their philosophical elaboration, which have since characterised modern democracy (B).

Direct democracy through a plenary meeting (for which a pro diem was paid) with secret ballot was the ancient Greek formula at one stage, and archaeologists have pondered over the potsherds and the curious, many-slotted stone slabs (anticipating our ballot computers of today) used in the process. Plenary meetings with formal voting procedures (or oath-taking, or other communication methods aimed at consensus) occurred in many other historic societies, around the Mediterranean and beyond, organised on the basis of relatively small-scale local communities. For instance, the democratic thrust of the Dutch struggle for independence from Spain in the sixteenth century derived inspiration not only from philosophical, or rather theological, reflection on the ultimate source of legitimate power by early Protestant thinkers, but also from a much older tradition of village communities collectively administering their irrigation works (polders and dykes).

It is important to appreciate the factor of scale. Village communities conducive to direct political participation at the local level still exist all over the world. Moreover, a broadly comparable level of face-to-face interaction and ensuing direct interests on a day-to-day basis is, paradoxically, found among many members of urban mass society, in so far as they spend much of their working and leisure time in relatively small operational groups as defined within formal organisations and institutions (schools, churches, factories, government departments, sport clubs etc.); here the issues tend to be concrete and immediately appealing, and the often informal structures for individual participation in the decision-making process may assume far greater relevance, in the people's consciousness, than the formal and infrequently used constitutional arrangements for democracy at the national level.

Contemporary mass society as organised in nation-states at the national level no longer allows for direct democracy (although the current state of technology would make this a dated position, now that telephone lines and other electronic information carriers capable of instantaneous two-way communication extend into the majority of residential areas and households). The standard formula has of course become that of representative delegation of 'the power of the people' through individual secret ballot

by each eligible citizen registered as a voter. This is so much the accepted pattern that the organisation and international inspection of general elections has become the test par excellence of democracy; in discussions of democratisation in Africa democracy is often equated with the presence of these very specific formal requirements.

The lexical and philosophical roots of the concept of democracy are far older than the specific accepted constitutional practical arrangements of democracy. In current discussions about democratisation in Africa we often forget that *the constitutional form of democracy as representative government empowered through general elections is only a recent phenomenon in the North,* and had far from materialised in its present form by the time of the scramble for Africa which started the colonial period. *For most West European countries which effectively colonised most of Africa from the late nineteenth century, the colonial period in part coincided, domestically, with a prolonged struggle for democratic rights on the part of the middle classes, workers, women, and the youth.*[8]

The constitutional rights (summed up by the maxim 'one man (person) one vote') which Africans came to demand for themselves in the 1950s thus belong to a package of modernity which, also in Western Europe, is twentieth- rather than nineteenth-century, let alone earlier.

Meanwhile the formal constitutional model of democracy has certain built-in features which would be self-defeating unless other, less formal additional arrangements come to its rescue. For the distance between the voter and the resulting national government in terms of this model is so great, and the intervening stages and procedures so complex, that the constitutional procedures of formal democracy may in themselves scarcely foster, in ordinary voters, a sense of political competence, of actively shaping the present and future of their lives by participating in the decisions that most affect them; indeed, if they still have such a sense of participation, it is often based on illusion.

The negative effects of this distance can, however, be reduced in a number of ways, including:

- active participation in political parties organised on a mass basis

- the development of a political culture of information and accountability, where citizens are aware of their constitutional rights and duties and where formal constitutional rights and politicians' performance are effectively tested by independent courts

- the development, both in a formal bureaucratic form and through networks of lobbying, canvassing and opinion-making, of transparent links between the realms of direct participation at the grassroots level (not necessarily in political parties, but also in schools, churches, development committees, tenants' committees, co-operatives, union branches etc.) and the national political centre. People do not necessarily apply the same norms and procedures to both their immediate day-to-day environment and more distant national issues, and whereas a rigid divide between the local and the national (in terms of political participation and identification) would amount to withdrawal, disenchantment and estrangement of individuals vis-à-vis the political centre, a properly democratic system would succeed in effectively linking the local and the national

- direct personal accessibility of those in power through networks of patronage, nepotism, regionalism, ethnicity and co-religionism; this is not exactly an option stipulated by the global democratic model, but it happens to be the only one that is found all over Africa

- the existence of an open and general political discussion in the wider society, furthered by the overall accessibility of the written and electronic media, freedom of the press, widespread literacy, and a level of affluence enabling people to access the media.

All this amounts to a comprehensive political culture of democracy, which cannot be reduced to an abstract legal formula, 'the source of all legitimate power is the people' (A), nor to the specific constitutional procedures including general elections (B). Its essence would appear to be that *people actively and responsibly participate, and have the sense of participating, in the major decisions that affect their present and future, in such a way that they see their major values and premises respected and reinforced, in a political process that links the local and the national* (C).

To sum up, we have identified a philosophical (A), a constitutional (B) and a sociological (C) definition of democracy. All three agree that democracy is 'something of the people'. As an anthropologist I flatter myself that I have learnt something of the ordinary life and the private world view of 'the people' who were my research participants; however, working through participant observation in local settings of face-to-face relations I have obtained only glimpses of the national level to the extent to which that national level happens to effectively interpenetrate and link up with the local level. Since the 1970s anthropologists have struggled, and not vainly, to incorporate the state and the global political economy into their discourse; therefore, if from the local level the national political centre becomes visible in no more than a fragmented and problematic way, I submit that this is because the local–national relations are in fact problematic in the local situations under study, and not because anthropology has difficulty in addressing such situations. All the same, while local–national relations will be highlighted in my discussion of democratisation among peasants (generally identifying under the ethnic label of 'Nkoya') from Kaoma district in Zambia's Western Province (formerly Barotseland), and among working-class townsmen (most of whom identify ethnically as 'Kalanga' or as belonging to any of the various Tswana groups, mainly 'Ngwato', 'Kwena', 'Ngwaketse', 'Kgatla') from Francistown, Botswana,[9] my actual research was conceived in such a way that it does not enable me to make valid general pronouncements concerning democratisation in these countries at the national level.

But before we turn to the ethnographic detail there is one more general hurdle to clear. If constitutional democracy (B) has sprung from the dynamics of the North Atlantic societies, how should we visualise its reception in African societies? The wave of democratisation in Africa in the late 1980s and the 1990s appealed to, and sought to restore, constitutional rights and procedures which allegedly have gone dormant under the failing performance of the post-colonial nation-states. But when and how where they planted on African soil in the first place?

Constitutional democracy (B) as a recently introduced item of political culture in Africa

At independence, African post-colonial states emerged as the continuation of the bureaucratic apparatus of the colonial state, but now increasingly staffed with African personnel, and defined by a national constitution. The constitution was, initially at least, highly reminiscent of that of the former colonial metropole. The exercise of state power by this bureaucratic apparatus was legitimated by constitutionally well-defined patterns of popular participation through the general franchise; in the background, the constitutional process would be supported by international and intercontinental treaties ensuring the post-independent nation-state of a respected place among the world's nations upholding fundamental human rights. Usually these rights were specifically summed up in the constitution.

The specific constitutional pattern thus stipulated in the new nation-states of Africa in the 1960s could boast only shallow roots in the African soil. The roles, statuses, rights and organisational forms, the concrete procedures of candidacy, individual vote, loyal opposition and so on, as defined by that pattern, were alien to the indigenous structures of legitimate political power which had prevailed in most parts of Africa through most of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; in other words, the pattern was not in continuity with modes of participation and legitimation which Africans from a village background would spontaneously apply in their immediate face-to-face social environment. If constitutional democratic features were already part of the political culture of the colonial metropole, the colonial state was built on the principle that they should not be extended to the vast majority of African 'subjects'.

How did this essentially alien and imported political culture take root in the minds, actions and institutions of twentieth-century Africans?

Conversion to world religions, especially Christianity, the concomitant access to literacy and formal education, and the adoption of positions as workers, foremen and clerks within capitalist relations of colonial production, made Africans share in aspects of the same societal experience (in Africa as in the North typically embedded within formal organisations: schools, churches, mines, manufacturing enterprises, the police, the army, local government) that had prompted the democratic process in the North Atlantic region up to about half a century earlier.

The African experience was not just one of humiliation, although there certainly was an infuriating amount of that. Participating in a missionary organisation as an African evangelist, in a local government structure as a *boma* (district administration) messenger, in a school as a junior teacher, in a mine as a driller or 'boss-boy', also involved (precisely while being humiliated) learning about the exercise and manipulation of power in a context of formal organisations; learning about an impersonal legal authority that derived not from God or from personal charisma through birth or achievement (e.g. kingship), but from the abstract written word of law and regulation; and learning about rigid and intricate patterns of the organisation of time and space which had come in the trappings of colonialism and peripheral capitalism, but which even more fundamentally defined the twentieth-century societal experience both in the North and

in the South. In the latter part of the world they were manifested in the layout of the residential space – segregated in terms of 'race' and status – and the rhythm of time between work and off-duty, Christian Sunday and secular weekday, not to mention the legally defined periods of time involved in the payment of poll tax, of notice when fired, and the contractual spells of migrant labour. All this against the background of a hidden premise of West European modernity (which settlers and other colonialists struggled in vain to prevent from seeping through to the colonised subjects): the human individual as essentially equal to other individuals, that is, as interchangeable in a manner similar to manufactured products (and workers) in the Industrial Revolution; but also, more positively, in the sense that each human individual could be taken as exemplary in the manner of biological species, chemical elements and physical laws which post-Renaissance natural science had come to define; essentially equal, despite differences in status and power (related to class and race), and as equals converging theologically in the original sin and the Christian salvation of mankind according to the missionaries' preachings; and, in a secularising society increasingly organised along bureaucratic lines, equal before the letter of impersonal legal authority. Under the circumstances it could only be a matter of time until such premises of equality were also applied in the constitutional sphere, in the sense of universal franchise for Africans restored to competence and initiative over the political and social institutions that governed their lives.

In the struggle for decolonisation and independence a crucial role was played by varieties of *self-organisation* (trade unions, political parties, welfare societies, burial societies, rotating credit associations, ethnic and dancing groups, women's movements, and such churches as welcomed popular participation and initiative) which were soon to be patterned after the same model of formal organisation. Until quite late in the colonial period, however, only a minority of the African population was sufficiently deeply involved in imported organisational structures to internalise the attitudes and values that would make them into articulate democrats in the global, constitutional sense.

The African independence movement of the 1950s was not only about a vocal and educated African elite wrenching constitutional power from the hands of the colonialists, but also about *a broad social transformation which, through communication, mobilisation and mass organisation, made the tenets of constitutional democracy come to life for large numbers of Africans irrespective of their mode of livelihood, urban or rural residence, level of education or religious creed.* The leaders of the struggle for independence were political brokers canvassing for position, and planning a new nation-state; they were also the prophets, at least temporarily honoured in their own lands, of a brand-new democratic political culture.

They were not the only ones to offer a blueprint of a meaningful and attainable future to African populations which had seen their cosmologically structured, coherent universe fall apart in the turmoil of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As pedlars of meaning, organisational structure and restored competence through effective action, the independence politicians with their secular and constitutional message were in stark, often violent, competition for their following among the African masses

with witch-finders, prophets and church leaders who, locally or on a grander scale, offered their own interpretations of current misery and future redress.[10] In many of these attempts at symbolic or ritual salvation, there was a large amount of bricolage, the various distinct movements arriving at specific recombinations of elements derived from the traditional world view as well as from Christianity. The democratic movement around independence sought mainly to explore the mobilising potential of the common people's experiences of peripheral capitalism and colonialism in the propagation of a democratic and constitutional political culture which – certainly in the 1950s – was West European far more than it had already become localised and African; by contrast, the religiously oriented alternatives to the democratic movement showed far greater continuity vis-à-vis the ideological and organisational orientation that had largely informed African life in the nineteenth century, and that was still a formidable force in the rural areas and in the kin networks of migrant workers in town. From one point of view there was, between the various political and ideological options at the time, a struggle for or against continuity of the village-based traditional world view; from another, complementary viewpoint, various contesting categories within the changing local society manipulated alternative world views so as to redefine the political and economic interrelations between these social categories. Chiefs, headmen, and elders in general derived much of their power over young men and over women from a traditional world view that made these elderly men the main intermediaries between the villagers and cosmological forces (ancestors, spirits of the wild, the High God, royal spirits), and as such the indispensable mediators even in the relations (sexual, conjugal, judicial) between young men and women. For young men, particularly, this world view hardly answered the existential questions related to their experience as migrant workers, and it denied such independence from elders as they had aspired to and often actually enjoyed at their distant places of work; the youth's adoption of new secular political or Christian ideologies helped them to take a relative view of the elders who had thus far dominated their lives.[11]

Thus the continuity of a cosmologically anchored local world view with its own conceptions of legitimate political power and procedure; the interaction between on the one hand traditional leaders and, on the other, those of their subjects pursuing modern careers outside the village settings; the prominence of religious alternatives for the symbolic restructuring of local society; the explicit formulation, and the transmutation, of democratic political values in the mobilisation process of an independence struggle; and the specific relations to develop between local and national level at, and since, independence – all these would seem to be important factors in the production of a democratic political culture in the global sense. With this in mind, let us now turn to our two ethnographic examples.

Democracy versus ethnicity in Kaoma district, Zambia

The dynamics of democracy and democratisation in Kaoma district, Zambia, must be understood against the background of its traditional and neo-traditional political structure and its colonial experience.

The fertile, well-watered lands of Nkoya (now largely coinciding with the Kaoma district, on the Zambezi–Kafue watershed, at roughly the same latitude as Zambia's capital Lusaka but four hundred kilometres west) was home to dispersed communities of hunters, fishermen and agriculturalists organised on a basis of localised clans, when, from the middle of the eighteenth century, a number of kingdoms emerged here under the influence of long-distance trading opportunities and of political ideas derived from the Lunda empire in southern Zaire. Around 1850 most of these kingdoms became incorporated in the Kololo/Luyana state, which subsequently became known as Barotseland, with the Barotse or Lozi as dominant ethnic group; Barotseland became the Protectorate of North-western Rhodesia in 1900, and even after Zambia's independence maintained a special status within the new republic until 1969 (Caplan 1970). Under the Lozi king, whose official title is *Litunga*, only two Nkoya royal titles (Mwene Kahare and Mwene Mutondo) managed to survive through the colonial period, as recognised and subsidised senior members of the Lozi aristocracy.[12] Nkoya traditional politics, concentrated on the Kahare and Mutondo capitals, has displayed a highly articulate ceremonial culture, involving, in addition to the royal family, a prime minister (*Mwanashihemi*); other titled court officials, including judges; and court priests, musicians, executioners and slaves (the latter two statuses have been redefined in more recent times). Along with the senior court officials, about a dozen senior village headmen constituted the *Mwene*'s royal council,[13] where cases involving royal matters and matters of protocol were dealt with; land was issued to locals and strangers who so requested; and the *Mwene*'s diplomatic relations with other *Myene*, with the *Litunga*, and the colonial, subsequently post-colonial, government were deliberated. In exceptionally important situations (e.g. death of a *Mwene* or election of a successor, the visit of a major outside official, or cases involving accusations of witchcraft directed at royals or otherwise reflecting on the entire kingdom) the council's session would be held not in the *Mwene*'s audience hall but outside; on such occasions all subjects of the *Mwene* (regardless of gender and age) had the right to attend, and mature men (well over forty years of age) and – but rarely – women of the same age group would take the floor, displaying their skills in formal Nkoya rhetoric. A strong sense of protocol and procedure permeates Nkoya traditional politics and constitutional law. The *Mwanashihemi* is usually co-opted (by the *Mwene* and the royal council) from another kingdom so as to ensure impartial application of these rules.

Traditional political office is within the reach of many, and coveted. The bilateral kinship system, with its endogamous tendencies, results in the frequent merging of lines of descent, as a result of which kin groups are defined by ad hoc micropolitical dynamics hinging on co-residence. It is these kin groups of shifting composition which own titles of kingship and village headmanship – the proper names or praise-names of their ancestors – and whose senior male members after secret deliberations confer a vacant title upon a candidate of their choice by a ritual of name inheritance called *ushwana*. The honoured title of headman is therefore within the reach of many men who live to attain middle age, and even the pool out of which royal candidates could be selected used to be quite large until, under Lozi and colonial influence, patrilineal descent was imposed from the early twentieth century onwards; but even so, there are

still a number of rival royal candidates at every succession. Competition for offices as headman, senior headman and *Mwene* (far from being considered obsolete) is still very lively, occasionally violent, and sometimes (in a society where poison and sorcery are commonplace) even deadly – these offices have continued to represent the highest form of career achievement, not only for those who have spent most of their lives in the village, but also for labour migrants who have returned to the rural areas after living in town for decades and attaining stable and even senior positions there.

The *Mwene* ultimately derives descent from the demiurge Mvula, or Rain,[14] and while Mvula's relationship to the High God Nyambi is not totally clear, the kingship is explicitly legitimated by reference to Nyambi's status as the first *Mwene* and as Mwene of the Sky. In terms of symbolic legitimation Nkoya kingship presents a Janus face: on the one hand the *Mwene* represents celestial beings, and as such is the incarnation of the cosmic order on earth; on the other hand his office is surrounded with connotations of sorcery and physical violence which are absolutely abhorred in the context of Nkoya non-royal village life. This presents an interesting puzzle for historical, symbolic and theoretical analysis, but we cannot present the details of its solution here (van Binsbergen 1992b; 1993b/2003; 2003b). Suffice it to say that there is a notion of legitimate power (*ngovu*), which is cosmologically anchored and of which the *Mwene* by virtue of a very elaborate enthronement ceremony[15] is the central representative, but only in so far as his actions remain within the dignity (*shishemu*) of his office and are underpinned by the advice of the royal council, which tends to be quite vocal. *Mwene mwene na bantu*: 'a *Mwene* is *Mwene* by virtue of the people', is the Nkoya maxim. In addition to his title and regalia, *followers* are the *Mwene*'s most important asset, and he is in practice dependent upon public opinion for his continuation in office. Just like the village headman, the king is dependent upon his followers' continued support (in the form of loyalty, respect and residence within his realm; formerly also in the form of tribute and tribute labour – a *Mwene* cannot engage in productive labour and would starve to death without tribute, as happened to the impeached Mwene Kashina in the mid-nineteenth century). Since people have latent rights of membership and residence, including use of land and other natural resources, in a number of villages besides the village of their actual residence, a failing village headman sees the ranks of his followers dwindle by their moving to different villages until his village may be completely depleted; a failing *Mwene* may even be killed by the senior councillors. Regicide, forced abdication and impeachment of *Myene* are documented in the region's history throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries; for fear of being poisoned, no *Mwene* therefore would drink beer that is not tasted first by a trusted kinswoman or cup-bearer.

The Nkoya political system as it has existed since the eighteenth century (incorporating many elements from a clan-based pre-kingship system that is considerably older)[16] thus reflects interestingly on the three definitions of democracy presented above. There is a notion that high political office, however exalted a status and surrounded by taboos separating the *Mwene* from his subjects, and however underpinned by cosmological references, could not afford to dissociate itself from the people (A). There was a pattern of effective participation within the kingdom, in principle open to all subjects but in practice usually delegated to senior headmen and to mature men in general (C). But

the constitutional procedures stipulating the election to high office and the exercise of power were completely different from those of the global democratic model (B), and defined for mature men a secluded realm of constitutional competence in a way that (through the exclusion of the youth and women) reinforced gender and age cleavages in the local society.

Perhaps one would expect that such a historic political system offered fertile ground for the adoption of the global democratic model, also in terms of constitutional procedures. The opposite turned out to be the case, however, as is clear from developments in this region in the 1950s and early 1960s, when Zambia was involved in the struggle for independence.

For most Nkoya at the time, colonial rule was not much of an issue. Incorporation in the global capitalist economy through labour migration had started early (in the late nineteenth century), but until well after independence it took the form of circulatory labour migration which kept people's social and conceptual dependence on their rural society of origin largely intact; the Nkoya (certainly those of the eastern Mashasha kingdom, that of Mwene Kahare) hardly had an option, since until about 1950 they had very little access to missionary education and therefore no basic skills that might have launched them in a stable urban career. The same lack of education, the lack of literacy in particular, meant that the global democratic model did not filter through to them early on. The imposition of colonial rule had reinforced the hold of the Lozi indigenous administration in the region, and it was the Lozi, far more than the British, who were perceived as oppressors. The seething of protest and contestation throughout the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland in the second half of the colonial period in the Nkoya region at first took the form of symbolic reconstruction of society through witchcraft eradication (which often had anti-Lozi overtones, and was supported by the *Myene*), followed in the 1950s by an outbreak of blatant sorcery practices (Reynolds 1963), as if new forms of power, meaning and redress could be found only in the mystical sphere and not in secular constitutional change. Only when democratic independence pioneers in the centre of Barotseland (the Wina brothers, Princes Nakatindi) challenged the Lozi aristocratic establishment did the Nkoya become interested in modern politics, but the *Litunga* managed to prevent the registration (Mulford 1967) of a Nkoya branch of Mr H. Nkumbula's ANC – the Zambian independence party from which Mr K. Kaunda's ZANC (soon to be called UNIP) broke away in 1958. A few young Nkoya men who meanwhile, against many odds, had managed to get some formal education and had embarked on urban careers, featured in the various political parties on the Northern Rhodesian scene around 1960, some even establishing an ethnically oriented but abortive party called the Mankoya Fighting Fund, and in the first general elections the Nkoya expressed massive support for UNIP, but still the issue as perceived by the Nkoya was anti-Lozi far more than in favour of independence and constitutional democracy. When at independence the Lozi turned out to have occupied powerful positions in regional and national government while not a single Nkoya operated at these levels, and when, moreover, the UNIP government stopped labour migration to Zimbabwe and South Africa, which had been the Nkoya's main source of cash for many decades, the interest in modern politics dissipated entirely, and the Nkoya withdrew to the confines of neo-traditional local politics.

During my first fieldwork in the region in the early 1970s, it was shocking to see how little the local population considered themselves to be part of post-independent Zambia. Zambia was the name for a country 'out there', along the Line of Rail that crosses Zambia from north to south and along which its towns were concentrated. The principles and procedures of Zambia's constitutional organisation seemed largely unknown among most villagers, and commanded even less loyalty. Democratic voting procedures were considered morally and cosmologically obscene for implying that political office could be bought for promises, favours and money rather than being a high responsibility entrusted to the best candidate on the basis of the elders' secret deliberations and the legitimating *ushwana* installation ceremony, which guaranteed ancestral support for the new incumbent. Incorporation into the wider world had in fact created a conceptual boundary between the Nkoya and that world rather than a sense of wider relationships and responsibilities, let alone a new sense of power and competence at the national level. Even the Kaoma district centre, with its administrative and judicial offices and UNIP headquarters, was an alien place, where no Nkoya occupied any position in the political and administrative hierarchy above messenger, driver or cleaner; Nkoya were also conspicuously absent among local entrepreneurs. Paradoxically, the most conspicuous local link with the UNIP government was in the person of Mwene Kahare, whose subtle manoeuvring in the struggle for independence had gained him the honour of being nominated a party trustee. Moreover, he was made a member of the national House of Chiefs, and although this did not give him any tangible power at the national level, it gave his subjects in the rural areas the illusory satisfaction that when their *Mwene* was summoned to Lusaka he went there, using government transport, in order to rule Zambia! Lozi oppression was felt to continue as before independence, and there was widespread nostalgia for the blessings of the colonial period, when blankets and clothing had been cheap and migrants' cash earnings had not been subject to income tax at source.

In the early 1970s a local branch of UNIP existed nominally, but it was virtually invisible at the village level. Rather more visible was a UNIP Youth branch, largely composed of sons and clients of senior headmen who were the *Mwene*'s main rivals for traditional office. With very little feedback from national and regional headquarters, the Youth branch's activities did not consist in political instruction or mobilisation. At a time when UNIP Youth members elsewhere in Zambia were creating havoc with their violent card-selling and card-checking practices, the Nkoya Youth members made themselves useful from time to time as a workforce for communal projects (emulating a historic pattern of tribute labour). They were particularly conspicuous when they organised a mass trial where Mwene Kahare and his staff were accused of the kind of ritual murder that had always been part and parcel of the kingship. In the process the Youth members presented a list of demands that, if implemented, would have made them the de facto authorities in the kingdom. This challenge of the traditional establishment misfired (ultimately the *Mwene*, subsidised and officially gazetted, had much more backing from the outside world than the self-styled UNIP Youth), but what is particularly revealing is that the UNIP Youth's attack was completely inward-looking and failed to adopt the idiom of the national democratic model. The *Mwene*, for his part, could not convert his

basic loyalty to the UNIP government and the post-colonial state into political education for his subjects, since his relationship with his subject was determined by constitutional principles which were totally alien to the global democratic model.

The Nkoya participated in the struggle for independence on the basis of their own ethnic priorities, and did not learn about constitutional democracy in the process. Thus the first opportunity, around the time of independence, to turn the Nkoya into participants in the national democratic process was almost – but not entirely – lost.

I have passed over the urban experience of Nkoya migrants at the time. In the second half of the 1960s, Zambian towns were in the throes of conflict between the ANC and UNIP, which was resolved only by the creation of the Second Republic, under UNIP, in December 1971.[17] Nkoya urban residents had participated in this process as inhabitants of urban residential areas siding with one particular party, as street fighters and so forth, but only a handful of them had actually taken up office in either political organisation and thus been exposed to the inner organisational structure and procedures of the democratic process. One of them, Mr J. Kalaluka, had even stood as an ANC parliamentary candidate in the 1968 elections, but had lost. The forced amalgamation between the ANC and UNIP enabled him to be a UNIP candidate in the 1973 elections, after which he became the MP for Kaoma East. Especially when within a few years he managed to add a ministerial post to his seat in parliament, the Nkoya had finally found the link to the centre that was to teach them how to appreciate and make use of modern constitutional forms.

Three additional factors facilitated this process: the decline of the Lozi at the national level, successful rural development in Kaoma district, and the Nkoya's ethnic self-organisation.

1. In 1969 President Kaunda had terminated the special status of the former Barotseland within the Republic of Zambia, and the 1970s saw the decline of Lozi power at the national level; in the process, the president and his administration missed few opportunities to curry favour with the Nkoya.

2. In 1971, moreover, the powerful parastatal Tobacco Board of Zambia had initiated a major development scheme in the eastern part of Kaoma district. Few local villagers could lastingly benefit, as tenants, from the new opportunities this scheme offered, and the farms were largely occupied by ethnic strangers. Yet within fifteen years the very sparsely populated forest turned into a rural town of nearly 20 000 inhabitants, Nkeyema, with schools, clinics, and a thriving UNIP party branch (Nelson-Richards 1988). For a number of political brokers of Nkoya background, including Mr Kalaluka, the scheme offered both personal economic advancement and a platform for active mobilisation along ethnic and regional lines. Here, for the first time, UNIP songs and the Zambian national anthem were sung in the Nkoya language, whose legitimate existence had so far been denied by the Lozi and the central state. Nkoya gradually awoke to the idea that the modern state and its institutions were not necessarily inimical, either to the ethnic identity they had developed in the context of Lozi incorporation, or to the kingship that had become the central expression of that identity. While Zambia as a whole saw a period of steady economic decline in the second half of the 1970s and throughout

the 1980s, the *relative* economic situation in what had been a stagnant labour reserve, Kaoma district, began to look less bleak. Realising that the state had little to offer, economically, beyond the mixed blessings of the Nkeyema scheme, Nkoya–state contacts increasingly concentrated on an immaterial deal: the Nkoya citizens' loyal support and participation in exchange for state recognition and consolidation of their ethnic identity and traditional leadership.

3. This process was formalised when in the early 1980s, after diffuse preparations as from the mid-1970s, a few middle-class urbanites of Nkoya background founded the Kazanga Cultural Association. This society subsequently linked urban and rural sections of Nkoya life, particularly through the organisation, beginning in 1988, of the annual Kazanga cultural festival, at which the Zambian state has always put in an appearance through a delegation at ministerial level. The festival (one of a growing number of such festivals in Zambia to be announced and reported on on Zambian television) is an enormous source of pride to the Nkoya, and in the course of the quarter century of its existence has generated all sorts of further activities and innovations in the cultural, organisational and economic fields.

As a result of these developments the Nkoya people of Kaoma district have become far more effectively incorporated in the post-colonial state. The misery, bitterness, indignation and estrangement from the state under the Kaunda administration that marked the 1980s for particularly the urban populations of Zambia were here attenuated, somewhat by the rural economic opportunities, but to a much larger extent by the ethnic revival the people went through, which restored a sense of meaning and competence to their rich cultural life, and created contexts in which this heritage was no longer self-consciously cherished and fossilised within a local universe increasingly sealed off from an inimical outside world, but could be communicated to that outside world, in forms (particularly media coverage) which have great prestige in that outside world, and which generate further innovation.

Interesting innovations have meanwhile taken place in the kingship. In the early 1970s the Nkoya neo-traditional court culture was marked by a rigid splendour. The emphatic maintenance of nostalgic historic forms of protocol and symbolic, particularly musical, production (which no longer corresponded with any real power invested in the kingship under conditions of incorporation by the Lozi indigenous state and by the colonial and post-colonial central state) reflected the fact that the need for boundary maintenance vis-à-vis the outside world was at its peak. All this now strikingly contrasts with the laxity of court life today. It is as if the focus of articulation of Nkoya ceremonial court culture has now shifted from the day-to-day protocol at the secluded traditional capitals controlled by traditional councillors to the annual public performance at the Kazanga festival, before central-state dignitaries and a massive audience of spectators, and controlled by the Kazanga Cultural Association executive. Of course, the kingship, based on a local vision of the political and cosmological order, could only lose out when the subjects came to participate more effectively and whole-heartedly in a national democratic order based on very different constitutional principles. However, at the same time a fervent reconstruction process is going on, where the Kazanga Cultural Association effectively negotiates between the state, the kingship and the villagers,

insisting on a new symbolic and ceremonial role for all four[18] Nkoya kings together along lines which are all bricolage and at variance with established historical patterns, but which resulted in restoring the kings to a level of emotional and symbolic significance perhaps unprecedented in twentieth-century Nkoya history. During the 1992 Kazanga festival, Mwene Kahare Kabambi, who used to be a somewhat pathetic, stammering figure dressed in a faded suit with ragged shirt collar, appeared covered in leopard skins and with a headband adorned with regal *zimpande* (*Conus* shells), and formidably brandishing his royal axe and broadsword; after drinking from the sacred pit beer brewed from the year's first harvest, for the first time in living memory he performed the *kutomboke* royal solo dance, which left the audience breathless and moved them to tears. After his death in 1993, his successor, Mwene Kahare Kubama, did likewise at the 1994 festival.

Having greatly invested in the UNIP administration in the previous decade, and feeling that they had been given a fair deal, the Nkoya were certainly not in the forefront of Mr Frederick Chiluba's Movement for Multi-Party Democracy (MMD) when this materialised in 1990 out of the political contestation against the failing Kaunda administration. Even though Mr Kalaluka had lost his parliamentary seat, and hence his ministerial post, in the 1987 elections to a non-Nkoya contender from Kaoma district, the links to the political centre had become sufficiently open, and the sense of political competence sufficiently developed, to take a maturely democratic stance. Recalling the lack of democratic knowledge and attitudes which I found in the area in 1973, I was amazed in the early 1990s by the ease with which ordinary villagers, men and women, spoke about the national political issues of the day, and defined their own position within what was essentially a democratic constitutional framework. I grant that a considerable part of the credit must go to the inspiration of the democratic movement which swept over Zambia following the late 1980s, but this would have fallen onto completely infertile ground had a gradual process of Nkoya–state accommodation over the 1970s and 1980s, under UNIP, not already turned the people into democrats with a realistic national outlook. One recognised the unmistakable need for change, and was prepared to give majority support even to parliamentary candidates (such as Mr Mandande and Mr Tumbila, the MMD MPs for the district at the time) who were new men at both the national and the regional level, and of whom the former neither qualified nor identified himself as Nkoya. Realising that the Nkoya group had come to carry a certain weight at the national and regional level, the political and symbolic brokers making up the executive of the Kazanga Cultural Association lost no time in trading Nkoya support for organisational and logistic facilities under the new government. Needless to say, the promise of innovation and restoration which constituted the MMD's main appeal tied in very well with the local reconstruction the Nkoya were already involved in at their own initiative; again, however, the crucial inspiration appears to have been local and ethnic rather than national and democratic – but now at least within a framework of open and viable local–national relations.

However, the Nkoya learnt not to put all their eggs in one basket. Only a few months before the elections of October 1991 (cf. Sichone (1991–1992); Baylies and Szeftel (1992), which brought Mr Chiluba's victory and Mr Kaunda's political demise, the latter

had personally intervened in an attempt by the *Litunga*[19] to downgrade or even abolish the kingships of Kahare and Mutondo. Perhaps somewhat alarmed by the prominence in the MMD of Lozi politicians such as Mr Arthur Wina and Mr Akashambatwa Mbikusita-Lewanika (both of whom subsequently left the MMD, however), established Nkoya community leaders meanwhile, both in modern and traditional office, tended to continue siding with UNIP, and even after Mr Chiluba's installation as President of Zambia massive UNIP rallies continued to be held in Kaoma district, with Nkoya party officials in prominent positions. Of course, this is as expected under a multi-party democracy, and it is regrettable that, barely one and a half years after the change-over (April 1993), the first UNIP activists had to be made political prisoners in MMD Zambia. The National Party's success in Western Province as a whole, at the expense of the MMD, is also reflected in Kaoma district, and without destructive friction the national and regional executive of the Kazanga Cultural Association continued to encompass the various party-political options as existed at the national level. Local ethnic reconstruction continued to take precedence over national party allegiance.

The nature of my data does not allow me to make pronouncements about the MMD and the democratisation process in general at the national level from the late 1980s onward (cf. Mudenda (1992). My story about one ethnic group in one rural district should not be misread as implying an interpretative pattern for Zambia as a whole, or for rural Zambia as a whole. Not having entered the post-colonial period with a great deal of knowledge and any illusions about the democratic constitutional process and of their own role in it, having fared much better under UNIP than might have been expected, and tapping a source of revitalisation at the local ethnic rather than the national democratic level, the Nkoya could scarcely muster the great sense of frustration and anger that characterised the seasoned trade unionists, politicians and intellectuals at the MMD centre (cf. Mbikusita-Lewanika and Chitala (1990); Kamwambe (1991).

The Nkoya story is only a footnote to the specific history of the MMD in Zambia. But it suggests that the MMD in itself cannot be understood unless against the background of the total, and uneven, picture of the emergence of a global democratic political culture in Zambia, a process in which traditional leadership, religious alternatives, and local–national relations constitute important dimensions.

Glimpses of democracy in Francistown, Botswana

From this point in my argument, and from Zambia, it is only a short step to a neighbouring country which at the original time of writing appeared to have remained untouched by the African democratisation movement of then recent years, Botswana. If the Nkoya case in Zambia brings out regional politics, ethnic reconstruction and the partial survival of a local, ancient political culture as limiting conditions to the reception of the North Atlantic democratic model, the Botswana case would suggest that further boundary conditions lie in the quality of the state's economic performance and in the ideological construction of a sense of historic continuity in the local political culture, so that the state elite can pose as emulating, rather than providing an alternative to, political traditions as perceived by the state's ordinary citizens.

Botswana is a most interesting example among African countries, since to the outside world it has presented the image of one of the very few African democracies to have survived intact since independence; moreover it is one of the few African economies to have avoided the stagnation so common in the continent during the 1970s and 1980s. The most obvious answer to the question as to why in the 1990s there was no conspicuous democratisation movement in Botswana would therefore seem to be: because no further democratisation was needed – the country was a viable democracy and the state delivered what the citizens expected.

My research in Botswana's second largest town, Francistown, between 1988 and 1994, however, convinced me that this answer is only partially correct. The Botswana state has been able to deliver, albeit far from lavishly, and in ways which (as the Batswana[20] workers often complain) compare poorly with the income situation and standard of living in neighbouring South Africa, with which many Batswana are familiar from labour migration, personal contacts and the media. At the same time, Botswana is far from a totally convincing democracy.[21]

At the original time of writing the political scene was dominated by the ruling Botswana Democratic Party (BDP); of the handful of other parties, only the Botswana National Front (BNF) and Botswana People's Party (BPP) were sufficiently organised to win, throughout the first twenty-five years after independence (1966), a few parliamentary seats in the general elections (regularly held at five-year intervals).[22] The weakness of the opposition is due not to the absence of politicians of great capabilities, but to a lack of funds (whereas the ruling party is at least logistically facilitated by the government), fragmentation, a low degree of grassroots organisation, and the circumstance that the ruling party's powers of co-optation and appeal for peace and unity cut across political boundaries. Among the tactics which the ruling party used in the 1970s and '80s in order to perpetuate its position of dominance are the appointment of additional members of elected political bodies whenever the opposition threatens to take a majority, and persuading opposition members to cross the floor to the ruling party (a case in point is the Francistown Town Council in 1987). Another strategy is that of postponing the implementation of unpopular decisions such as the demolition of an informal settlement until after elections, especially if the area in question has a high proportion of BDP supporters.[23] A related and even more general strategy is securing public support in exchange for such facilities as the state (controlled by the ruling party) has to offer: junior secondary schools, clinics, boreholes. Comparable is the government's handling of many millions of pulas[24] of arrears incurred in the country's ambitious and praiseworthy Self-Help Housing Association (SHHA) programme: on the basis of repayable loans and monthly service levies, this programme provided adequate, occupant-owned housing for tens of thousands of town dwellers, but until well after the 1989 general elections the BDP administration chose not to take legal action concerning the arrears for fear of estranging the vast majority of beneficiaries, who had run into often very considerable debt.

Around 1990,[25] the electronic media in Botswana were controlled by the government, as was the only daily newspaper; there were, however, a number of private weekly periodicals which maintained considerable independence from the ruling party. The

Botswana constitution (Republic of Botswana 1983) guarantees the usual human rights, and its extensive limiting clauses in the interest of peace and order are fairly standard by comparison with other constitutions. In practice these clauses meant, for instance, that people were not allowed to use any languages other than English and Setswana in court and parliament (although about 30% have other languages as their mother tongue), and that hardly any periodicals or books in languages other than English and Setswana were being published, partly because citizens were under the strong impression that this would be illegal. The use of a private printing press was subject to a licence which every printer was at pains not to forfeit.

'Freedom squares', open spaces set aside for public meetings of a political nature, existed in every residential area and village and were open to whatever political party applied for a permit to use them, but all political meetings taking place there were attended by uniformed police who tape recorded the proceedings. There were no political prisoners in Botswana, but individuals who during question time at such meetings brought up awkward issues were occasionally known to have been taken to the police precinct for questioning. Similarly, opposition politicians and ethnic activists opted for self-employment in the knowledge that they were likely to be penalised by a *Berufsverbot* if they were to pursue their activities from positions as civil servants, teachers and so on. In places like Francistown, where a garrison was stationed, and especially in border areas, people had learnt to fear the soldiers, whose conduct was not always subject to the kind of sanctioning one would expect under the rule of law.

With the rapid post-independence quantitative expansion of education, and the existence of oppositional politics since the 1960s, educated and middle-class circles had considerable constitutional knowledge. However, among the general public the level of democratic awareness and actual political participation, including voting, were low. Certainly in Francistown the majority of the population gave the impression of taking the government for granted, even in the de facto one-party form it had assumed in Botswana, without taking great interest and, especially, without being keen on change.

Here I refer to the distinction I made earlier between national-level political participation and immediate democracy at the grassroots level of village, urban residential area, workplace, school and so forth. Batswana, both in town and in villages, do take a keen interest in their immediate social environment, and actively seek to structure it through organisation and participation. The social environment need not coincide with the direct physical environment, and often extends far beyond. In newly settled residential areas many people found it difficult to establish flourishing dyadic, informal ties with the strangers who happen to have become their neighbours, but they actively maintained ties with people from their home village, their ethnic group, their church and their workplace (van Binsbergen 1991b; 1993c). And whenever dyadic relations can be embedded in a lasting collective organisational setting involving a number of people on a more or less permanent, formal and predictable basis, Batswana show great eagerness and creativity in the pursuit of public responsibility. Voluntary associations (especially independent churches and sport associations) are a dominant feature of social life, not only in towns but also in rural areas. The model of serious and candid consultation between equals informs the pattern of interaction at the village assembly (*kgotla*), where

the fundamental values of sociability, respect, and inclusiveness are brought out in a way which makes proceedings take on a social significance far exceeding that of the adjudication of petty individual cases. So much is the *kgotla* model the standard for ideal social behaviour that it is immediately emulated whenever the diffusion of information, the need to arrive at a decision, or the settlement of a conflict necessitates the appeal to a common framework of interest and a shared model of action: in family matters, on the work-floor, in formal organisations, and so on. In these contexts the everyday rhythm of activities, including the bureaucratic division of labour and group boundaries, are time and again punctuated by informal, impromptu but extremely effective ceremonies of consultation which are the hallmark of Botswana political culture. For Batswana, the test of appropriate public behaviour, decision-making and 'democracy' lies in principle in this type of practical consultation, far more than in the remote letter of any modern or traditional constitutional legislation.

As such, the *kgotla* model, as pivotal in the national culture, provides a welcome instrument in the hands of the Botswana state elite seeking to legitimate and perpetuate its position of power. Emphatic public reference to and artificial emulation of the *kgotla* model can produce, in the mind of common Batswana, a sense of historic continuity and legitimation where in fact there is discontinuity, transformation and unchecked elite appropriation of societal power. The skilful manipulation of the *kgotla* model in Botswana thus produces what we might designate, somewhat floridly, 'populist authoritarianism through symbolic engineering'. Today, proceedings at village *dikgotla* and especially at Urban Customary Courts are claimed to be in accordance with the time-honoured *kgotla* model which – as the elite never tires of reminding the population – is at the heart of the Botswana tradition; but in fact uniformed police officials and clerks have appropriated the judicial process even at the village level, and even more so in town, where no cross-examination by ordinary members of the public is allowed, the slim volume of the *Penal code* is applied rigidly and mechanically without reference to customary law, even in the latter's codified form, and where sessions are even closed to the public. By the same token, the open-air freedom squares and the political meetings which the ruling party and its weak rivals organise there emulate the *kgotla* pattern, so much so that people may take their own traditional *kgotla* stools there for seats, or make shift with rocks; however, the reader has seen how the actual proceedings during these meeting have greatly deviated from the spirit of the *kgotla* pattern. More examples could be cited from, for instance, the sphere of traditional leadership (where the chiefs – *dikgosi*, of old the central figures at *dikgotla* – have been turned into salaried petty officials), or the state's authoritarian management (through the Registrar of Societies) of people's self-organisation in voluntary associations (van Binsbergen 1993a). In these fields, and many more, the same elite-engineered suggestion of cultural continuity in combination with authoritarian state control along the lines of a non-traditional bureaucratic logic can be pin-pointed.

In the Zambian Nkoya case traditional rulers, the *Myene*, appeared as original foci of a local political culture which, while allowing for certain forms of sociological democracy (C), could not and would not be reduced to the globalising idiom of constitutional democracy along North Atlantic lines (B), – so that the trajectory of democratisation in

that context revolved on the process of interplay between a local and a global political models, each accommodating and reinforcing rather than annihilating the other. In the Botswana case the situation has been very different (Gillett 1973; Roberts 1972; Silitshena 1979). The *kgotla* pattern does imply the role of the traditional ruler, whose co-ordinating presence structures the *kgotla* proceedings, leads them to a conclusion, and legitimates them with the mystical sanctions of his office. Under indirect rule, *dikgosi* did continue to be the principal conspicuous political authorities in Bechuanaland throughout the colonial period, and following independence in 1966 the post-colonial state has derived much of its authority in the eyes of its citizens from the skill with which it has encapsulated the *dikgosi.* In many ways it would be true to say that the central state is felt by its subjects to be the legitimate heir to the *dikgosi.* Besides, the BDP was founded by Sir Seretse Khama, heir apparent to a major royal title (that of the Ngwato), and son of the internationally famous *kgosi* Khama III. In other words, in the Botswana case we do not find a dynamic juxtaposition between local tradition and globalising modern state structure, but the selective subjugation, appropriation and manipulation of local tradition by the state elite.

Some impression of political attitudes and behaviour can be gleaned from the selected results of a questionnaire survey I conducted in Francistown in 1989.[26] The relevant questions as presented here were embedded in a far more extensive questionnaire dealing with household composition, social contacts, economic activities, health behaviour, sexuality, media consumption and church life; this resulted in highly personal in-depth interviews each extending over several hours, where every care was taken to keep response artefacts to a minimum.

What these responses suggest (but of course far more data and analysis are needed in order to substantiate this point) is that – at least at one level of formal and normative consciousness, such as transpires in formal survey interviews – the average urban Motswana at the time viewed even the post-colonial state not as a structure of democratic negotiation ultimately empowered and controlled by himself/herself, but as a sacrosanct outside entity, which nurtured and protected but must not be challenged, and which was essentially in continuity with the colonial and precolonial past.

This conception of the state as being beyond civil control and criticism was even projected onto neighbouring South Africa, and that at a time when, with Mr Mandela still imprisoned, nothing hinted at the splendid democratic developments which have taken place in that country since 1990. The migratory exposure to South Africa had a tremendous impact on Botswana life in the course of the twentieth century. It did certainly produce a political effect: the country's first political parties were founded in Francistown by returning migrants deeply involved in the South African ANC (Murray, Nengwekhulu and Ramsay 1987; Nengwekhulu 1979); the Kalanga-oriented BPP retained that inspiration, but (at least in terms of actual election results) locally it largely lost out to the populist, Tswana-oriented BDP which claimed continuity (through the national language Setswana, for which a considerable price of international cultural isolation is paid) with the 'Botswana traditional culture', and dissimulated social contradictions under an ideology of peace and progress. Church independency, and the political acquiescence and aloofness it has implied at least for ordinary churchgoers[27]

Table 17.1   Selected questionnaire responses, Francistown 1989

1.	Did you register as a voter?	Yes No	73% 27%	*More than one quarter of the respondents claim not to have registered as a voter, although less than one tenth did not qualify for reasons of age and citizenship.*
2.	Which party do you support?	None BDP BPP BNF	10% 43% 27% 20%	*Barely two-fifths of the respondents claim to support the ruling BDP, although in the 1989 elections the BDP carried as many as 7 of the 11 Francistown wards.*[§]
3.	What do you think about the following statements?			
a)	'In a democratic country like Botswana, every citizen is free to form a new political party and to try and get the majority vote.'	Agree Don't know Disagree	76% 11% 13%	*As many as one quarter of the respondents turn out not to know their basic political rights.*
b)	'Botswana would be better off if the chiefs get back the powers they had before independence.'	Agree Don't know Disagree	36% 22% 42%	*Only one third of the respondents claim to be dissatisfied with chiefs' position in post-independent Botswana, whereas many more approve of the current situation in which the state has effectively appropriated chiefs' powers.*
c)	'It is sinful to criticise the government of Botswana.'	Agree Don't know Disagree	35% 21% 44%	*More than one third of the respondents hold the view that it is morally wrong to criticise the government.*
d)	'It is alright to break the laws of the government as long as you are not found out.'	Agree Don't know Disagree	18% 9% 73%	*Three-quarters of the respondents give evidence of having fully internalised the state's authority.*
e)	'The government of Botswana makes sure that nobody needs to go without food, clothing, shelter, education and medical services.'	Agree Don't know Disagree	49% 12% 39%	*Nearly half of the respondents claim that the Botswana state takes excellent care of its citizens, although almost two-fifth are of the opposite opinion.*
f)	'The people who talk about Apartheid and oppose the political system of South Africa are just trouble-makers.'	Agree Don't know Disagree	37% 12% 51%	*More than one third of the Black) respondents reject the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa, most probably – cf. statement c) – because political contestation is abhorred no matter how justified the cause.*[‡]
g)	'Our traditional culture is just a thing of the past – it must disappear and be replaced by the international culture which we see on TV, in the magazines, and from the expatriates.'	Agree Don't know Disagree	21% 13% 66%	*Two-thirds of the respondents claim to insist on cultural continuity between the past and the future.*
h)	Do you know your ward councillor personally?	Yes No	55% 45%	*More than half of the respondents claim to know their ward councillor personally; this official acts as a reference when applying for a self-help housing plot, but is hardly involved in informal conflict regulation between residents at the ward level.*

NOTES

[§] *'Government Notice No. 326 of 1989, L2/7/98 XX', in: Republic of Botswana, Government Gazette, 27, no. 59, 27th October, 1989, p. 1398–1402 – the Francistown returns being listed on p. 1399. These data have been corrected in the light of: 'Government Notice No. 354 of 1989, L2/7/126/II', in: Republic of Botswana, Government Gazette, 27, no. 63, 17th November, 1989, p. 1504, according to which ward 67 was carried not by BPP but by BDP..*

[‡] *This was more than half a year before Mr Mandela's release from prison, when nobody could foresee the imminent dismantling of the apartheid state. However, the response was more positive to a related but differently phrased question: 'The political system of South Africa is wrong and must be changed':*
Agree 79%; Don't know 12%; Disagree 9%

throughout Southern Africa, proved a more significant, if negative, South African export item from a democratic point of view.

In such a setting, who would go out of their way to clamour for more democracy at the national level than a skilfully manipulated traditional (but illusory) model such as that of the *kgotla* can provide?

In the final analysis, meanwhile, it may not be the pretended continuity (through language, the *kgotla* model, the encapsulation of traditional authorities etc.) with the past and with notions pertaining to the handling of power in face-to-face settings that explains the majority's lack of interest in greater democratisation in Botswana at the national level, but the internal contradictions within the package of globalisation that has come to control Botswana increasingly ever since independence more than any other African country of my acquaintance, with the exception of South Africa. As one would expect in a country under South African hegemony such as Botswana, not political participation along democratic lines, but mass consumption along incipient class lines represents the part of the global culture which has the greatest appeal to Batswana today. Probably this selection partly reflects a concern with wealth, and its circulation and accumulation, which was built into the pastoral economy and the patrilineal kinship system long before the advent of colonialism and capitalism; many centuries ago, the great Zimbabwe and Torwa state systems that once encompassed part of Botswana already thrived on the circulation of wealth (Tlou and Campbell 1984). When consumption within a cash economy has become a basic standard of self-esteem and social prestige, as has very clearly been the case in urban Botswana ever since independence, one would hardly expect to encounter democratic initiative and courage of a level higher than that found in the North Atlantic region today – where the dampening effect of affluence on radical political attitudes has been the subject of an extensive literature.

The Batswana's fundamental satisfaction with the *material* performance of the post-independence state must be an important, perhaps even crucial factor explaining their relative lack of contestation and the relative absence of a democratisation movement parallel to those manifest throughout Africa around 1990 – although the landslide victory of the BNF in the 1994 national elections might be interpreted in such terms. The dynamics of the prevailing political culture would then appear to be a very significant additional factor: it engenders political acquiescence and dissipates foci of contention within the civil society, by producing the suggestion of cultural continuity between

actual state performance; and

popular notions of legitimate power hinging on the *kgotla* model, which in fact is only a manipulated neo-traditional façade for an authoritarian, elite state based upon non-participation.

Conclusion

I have stressed that the global model of democracy is a very specific, and far from universal, form of political culture, which needs to be learnt before it can be expected to be applied, and which operates in the context of alternative, more indigenous views

of participation, legitimation and constitutional procedure. In order to appreciate the substantial local variations within this process, national-level analyses can be fruitfully complemented with anthropological insights into the way people structure their local political life-worlds and interpret globalising national politics within a particularist local framework of expectations and concerns. The democratisation movement in Africa since the late 1980s is often portrayed as the return to a model of national democracy that allegedly was already there at national independence but that had merely been eroded or become dormant in subsequent years; my argument, selectively based on ethnographic evidence from the grassroots level in two very different situations in Southern Africa, suggests however that the democratisation movement is only another phase in the ongoing political transformation of Africa, in the course of which, by an interplay between local and national (ultimately global) conceptions of political power, indigenous constitutional, philosophical and sociological alternatives for political legitimacy are tested, accommodated or discarded as obsolete. The capricious and contradictory outcomes of this process at the local level need to be taken into account, particularly by those who hope that the modern democratic model can yet transcend its North Atlantic origins and become the cornerstone of a new and better world.

CHAPTER 18

Enquiring into African statehood, conflict and legitimacy, with particular reference to Somalia and Uganda

Martin Doornbos[1]

Given the traumatic political trajectories that many African states have followed in recent decades, it is only natural that these should have deeply affected the orientations towards the state by its citizenry and by outside observers. The transitions concerned have been nothing less than dramatic. Following a brief developmentalist honeymoon period after independence in the 1960s, many states in Africa have since been leading a precarious existence for much of the time, subject to severe challenges from both within and without, unable to fulfil basic needs and expectations, and in some instances coming literally to the point of collapse (Doornbos 2002b). Inevitably, this has affected internal and external appreciations of the state.

This chapter seeks to raise some preliminary questions about this subjective dimension of the political trajectories African countries have been following. Doing so invites discussion about the ups and downs in the perceived legitimacy of African states and their rulers. Legitimacy, however, is an elusive concept, giving rise to multiple questions as to which agents and agencies would constitute its presumed bearers in different contexts as well as whose assessments should count most when trying to determine its presence or absence. To that end, against a brief general background on the nature of African state trajectories, we must first review the notion of legitimacy and probe its relative merits as an analytical tool. Following that, some of the dynamics concerned will be illustrated on the basis of the experiences of Uganda and Somalia in particular and of the evolution of academic–government relations in Eastern Africa more generally. In conclusion, the chapter will reflect on the contemporary scope and limitations of analyses in terms of political legitimacy.

State and crises, states in crisis

Any discussion about the perceived legitimacy of states and rulers will inevitably be linked to and partially informed by understandings of the nature of power constellations and state formation and performance. In this regard, there has been a good deal of debate concerning possible explanations for the dramatic developments many or most African states have been subject to in recent times. The debate has largely focused on possible internal and external causes of maldevelopment, and observers have often tended to privilege one or the other of these explanations, usually at the expense of the alternative explanation. A focus on internal factors has often highlighted instances of arbitrary rule, excessive personalised powers, lack of democratic accountability and respect for human rights, pervasive clientelism and corruption, and lack of capacity and appropriate managerial and technical skills (Young 2004). Internally, also, it has often been argued that the African situation has been strongly influenced by the historical fragmentation of the continent into arbitrary entities and the imposition of a wholly new and alien order by the colonial powers. The resulting 'gap' in state–society relations in the African context has never really been closed since, and arguably allows or promotes some of the maldevelopment and political misconduct that has been noted. Thus, following a brief period during the immediate post-independence years when 'nation-building' was high up on the academic and international policy agenda, the idea that 'nations' could be forged out of the amalgam of ethno-regional groupings has more recently been quietly dropped across the continent. Economic dynamics have not been able to counter these negative tendencies, but have, on the contrary, for a long time reinforced the presence and continuity of essentially fragile yet exploitative bureaucratic ruling classes. Thus, as contrasted with recurrent formative economic and political processes in several of the larger states of Asia, Africa's state systems appear to have been bequeathed with a stronger vulnerability and propensity for collapse as well as some of the preconditions for arbitrary rule (Doornbos 2006).

On the external side, the combined impact, magnitude and complexity of all external demands put on African states in the context of structural adjustment, Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, good governance prescriptions and subsequent donor strategies has placed an overwhelming weight on the policy-making processes of individual African countries. Given the limited financial and staffing resources vis-à-vis this collective external expertise, the role of the national government often became necessarily limited to accepting – or theoretically refusing to accept – ready-made policy packages prepared elsewhere, or already agreed upon by the main donors. In many instances the state has difficulty in acting as the final nerve centre for policy-making and co-ordination, as many policies are now being developed elsewhere: for aid-dependent countries particularly in Washington in conjunction with the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. Some governments at times managed to give a fresh meaning to the concept of 'the relative autonomy of the state' by skilfully playing off one donor against another (Alavi 1972:59–81), but increasingly insistence on donor co-ordination has made this route more difficult, closing off the limited room for manoeuvre. The scope for developing alternative development strategies in Africa thus became severely reduced.

There has been ongoing debate about the extent to which globalisation has been impacting on the powers and capacities of the state in Africa and elsewhere. Though specifics vary from case to case, it is broadly argued, and largely agreed, that globalisation causes reduced distinctiveness of 'national' contexts, such as for the organisation of production, the setting of norms and regulations, or as a venue for political debate. Closely related, it has been observed that there has been a weakening of state structures in a number of respects. For years the rolling back of the state has been favoured by the key international financial institutions. In not a few cases, the role of the state has thus been changing from one of a supposed centre of policy initiatives to that of an implementing agent of policies designed elsewhere. In the wake of far-reaching state restructuring taking place in terms of decentralisation and other respects, over-arching state agencies often are no longer available or capable to carry out traditional functions such as interest reconciliation or protection of the weaker sections (Meynen and Doornbos 2004). Instead, in an increasingly volatile global economic environment, various state systems have become more vulnerable, at times running the risk of collapse. Many African as well as other states have had to surrender several layers of their 'sovereignty' in the process, and a severance of the links between territory and sovereignty has been noted in several regards.

With the exponential increase of the incidence of African states in crisis, the number of states that in recent decades have gone through, are currently subject to, or may yet fall victim to severe internal conflict is sobering. Unsurprisingly, perhaps, academic as well as more popular accounts have tended to sketch near-apocalyptic pictures of the continent's future political trajectory and condition (eg Bayart et al 1999). Yet, it is important to note that while most African countries have indeed been through, or are still in, periods of pervasive crisis, they may be located at very different points in any spirals of conflict, confrontations and recovery, as the cases of Somalia and Uganda will illustrate.

While these temporal dimensions call for differentiation when surveying the African political landscape, the range of issues and dimensions associated with state crises has also become manifold, indicative of significant variations as to what state crises may entail and comprise. Key words that have come into vogue to describe the African situation, rightly or wrongly, include state failure and state collapse, fragmentation, disintegration, criminalisation, warlordism and ethnocide. Nonetheless, there are also occasional upbeat references to grassroots technologies, 'bottom up' administrative structures, informal economies, cultural resilience and so on to depict the fluctuating conditions. Significantly in this connection, new, at times unprecedented forms of political engagement have been emerging, in which in some cases states may be seen acting as private bodies, while private actors may arrogate state-like powers. In not a few instances novel manifestations of the exercise of power, political violence and political processes have occurred in a kind of semi-public, semi-private, 'twilight state' sphere (Lund 2001). Indeed, the notion of 'state' as such, let alone its legitimation, has become questionable in some cases. Still, although constituting part of an overall pattern of state malaise, each case will have its own distinctive features, with its own fault-lines and potential for specific kinds of strife and solutions.

On conceptualising legitimacy

If in the light of these transitions we would like to come to a better appreciation of assessments made of African states and state performance, this essentially means asking questions about the perceived *legitimacy* of the state and its rulers. Legitimacy has for long represented a key concept in political theory and will naturally remain so in one form or another. Significantly, however, the concept does not seem to be used very often in contemporary studies and discussions on African statehood.[2] This may a priori seem surprising, since with so much emphasis given to problems of economic (mal)performance and failures of governance, one might have expected that more use would be made of the prism of legitimacy in assessing the role and record of African states. A relative *absence* of allusions to the idea of legitimacy in studies of African states, notwithstanding all the major transitions and conflicts they have been subject to, therefore, on the face of it seems intriguing and to call for some explanation.

When searching for possible explanations for the relative *absence* of the use of concepts of legitimacy in discussions of African states, the complexity of the concept itself and the direction which discussion of it has taken in Western theorising could constitute one possible factor. For example, some debate, initiated on the basis of the work by Habermas and Offe, has focused on crises of state legitimation in developed capitalist societies, discussed in terms of 'state overload' and 'legitimation crisis'. 'Overload' occurs when the state system cannot cope with the magnitude of different demands it is expected to devote attention to, while 'legitimation crises' may result from contradictory policy responses to demands from different client groups, leaving the state in crisis. According to David Held (1987:237):

> both overload and legitimation crisis theorists claim that state power is being eroded in the face of growing demands: in one case these demands are regarded as 'excessive', in the other they are regarded as the virtually inevitable result of the contradictions within which the state is enmeshed.

Whatever the relative merits of these theories, however, they both refer to state–society relationships and feedback mechanisms which seem to have only limited applicability to African states, and tend to be characterised by a lack of (implementation) capacity in the hands of not-too-responsive ruling circles which commonly adopt a less receptive role vis-à-vis popular needs in the first place. Hence such a line of scholarship might not be readily taken up under the contrasted circumstances of African and other countries in the South. Still, the orientation given in particular contexts to a concept or set of concepts cannot be a sufficient reason for their non-use in other contexts if they could serve a valid purpose there. Conceivably they might have been given a new and more appropriate content, leaving unattended therefore the question as to *what* other notions of legitimacy, if any, would seem more applicable or called for in other situations. The relative lack of use of notions of legitimacy in the contemporary African context thus still appears to call for some explanation.

If we were to stick to the core of Max Weber's classical concepts of legitimacy and the state, problems of relevance and applicability would nevertheless remain when we

tried to apply them to the African context. To see this, we should first recall that Weber's notions of legitimacy have been largely focused on the state, which in his terms is 'a human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory' (Weber 1958:78). But Weber's concept has two sides, one of them the presumed 'source' of legitimacy, the other stressing the need to 'earn' it. It is not too difficult to see that there may be some tension between these two dimensions, and that that tension itself may illustrate or even cause conflicts over positions of power in some instances. As for its possible sources, legitimacy as a 'claim to power' in Weber's conceptualisation as we know may be derived from tradition, a ruler's charisma, or from broadly accepted legal-rational norms and procedures. However, in each case it would essentially refer to the quality of the relationship between *rulers* and *ruled* within a given state framework. Within this relationship, rulers, or any state organs for that matter, would still need to *earn* their legitimacy in the sense of moral approval by most groups in society through the way they 'cope with whatever tasks they already claim smoothly and efficiently', as Skocpol (1979:31) states. Legitimacy, in other words, is the judgemental by-product of the continuous interactions between state agencies and various client groups, in which states are viewed as seeking to reconcile and satisfy contrasted requirements and the demands and expectations made upon them by those clienteles. And as such, it reaches beyond the question as to whether incumbents' claims to a particular office are *legitimate* or not, that is, in accordance with established rules for succession or election.

However, the problem remains that it can be argued that the notion of and focus on 'ruler–ruled' relations this embodies, even if transposed onto the relationships between 'state organs' and 'client groups', would call for important qualifications within many African contexts. To see this, it will be necessary to bring in the main actors and factors constituting the field of contemporary African politics and statehood, at the level of the 'rulers' as well as that of the 'ruled'. To be sure, the state framework, the government in power, as well as constituent groups of different descriptions, all represent key elements within this context, even though, as noted above, at times it may be questionable whether one can (still; yet) speak of a 'state'. Still, identifying them and their interrelations may not be sufficient to provide a picture and understanding of the key issues at play within the political economy of African states, how these are currently being handled, and by whom. For that understanding it will be necessary to begin by adding external factors, and players, such as the main multilateral organisations, the donor front, and numerous NGOs active in a wide range of fields. In recent decades, the donor community has had a strong and at times decisive influence over policy-making in most African contexts, so much so that it just might not do to assess the degree of legitimacy and moral acceptance of African state leaderships strictly on the basis of the relationships between 'rulers' and 'ruled' in the narrow sense. At least, this would appear to be the case from an external 'academic' perspective, which instead might call for some kind of reconceptualisation allowing us to view key external involvements as now constituting part of the fabric of 'typical' African states. Short of that, the 'ruled' may or may not approve of their immediate 'rulers', depending on the concrete experience, but in either case they may fail to recognise and take account of the intricate connections between their rulers and

external powers, the latter of which may have a decisive sway over their performance, positively or negatively.

Loss of state autonomy is not a strictly African problem, however. It is also encountered in other parts of the world, as for example in the European case, with the European Union taking over state functions in a large number of fields (and trying hard to gain legitimacy in the process). More generally, indeed, the inroads of global forces into state autonomy cannot but affect the scope for analyses of state legitimacy in any conventional sense. But there remains a fundamental difference between a state system voluntarily joining wider collective arrangements and situations in which compliance with external demands comes by way of conditions set by donors. In the African context the notions of state and of state legitimacy in order to remain relevant might well need to be stretched somehow in order to accommodate the external element that has come to be part of many governance arrangements. Understandably, however, various researchers and others might rather avoid this arduous and on the face of it 'unrealistic' task, which may be a further reason why one does not see 'legitimacy' being used too often as a lens and analytical concept in studies of African statehood.

A qualification would also be in order with regard to the *ruled* in the African context, the other part of the classical legitimacy equation. Without asserting that most other states elsewhere in the world are homogeneous entities in social, ethnic, linguistic or religious respects, and without wanting to imply that there are no significant class and other cross-cutting dimensions in the context of African states, it will be evident that the latter are particularly fragmented in terms of ethnicity and other sub-national foci. The implications this has for gaining nation-wide moral acceptance and legitimacy for the state framework are vast indeed, especially since in most cases one has not really seen the emergence of a socio-political stratum which does *not* have its primary sense of affiliation with one of the fragments. A sense of being left out, or being politically and economically marginalised, is indeed common among many groups in African states of a variety of descriptions. Here, therefore, the distinction made at times between *levels* of legitimacy, that is, first with regard to incumbents of institutions whose acceptance and legitimacy is itself unquestioned, then with regard to an institutional regime within a political community otherwise considered legitimate, and finally with regard to the extent to which the political 'community' is or is not itself considered 'legitimate', retains an important validity. In some cases, indeed, it is the legitimacy of incumbents that is being disputed, in others the institutional regime, while in yet others it is the 'political community' that groups are expected to form part of which is at issue. Often the first and second of these challenges may go together, especially if the incumbents concerned attempt to mould the institutional regime to their taste and preferences. Issues arising from the third of these challenges may have two sides: first, that of a group feeling misrepresented in a larger administratively devised 'community' that also includes other, rival groups, and second, the misgivings that some groups may have about the 'alien' overarching framework within which they find themselves placed.

We could take these arguments yet one step further, though at the risk of running into additional complications. The above external dimension does not refer only to the key decision- and policy-making mechanisms which African states must currently

abide by, especially in matters of public finance. In a sense it is also a reflection on the nature of the African post-colonial state and the state framework itself, whose origins were essentially exogeneous and in some respect have often retained an 'alien' character, notwithstanding several generations of 'Africanisation'. These circumstances tend to make it problematic to speak in terms of the more organic kind of state–society or state–citizen relationships which a concept of legitimacy would normally presuppose. In addition, then, there are the fragmented internal legacies which virtually all African states have to contend with. Some observers might therefore say that African states are lacking in basic (moral) legitimacy when it comes to the kind of ruler–ruled relationships they encompass. In contrast, others may instead stress the *legality* of the state frameworks concerned, especially as regards recognition of their formal sovereignty in terms of international law. This particular given, important as it is by way of historical background, at times has not kept (external) commentators from passing judgement on African *rulers* using a legitimacy–illegitimacy scale. Ironically, the African *state* in some such assessments might be considered 'legitimate', but not its rulers. Yet others, for various reasons, might want to reverse that picture, such as some cultural anthropologists who might regard the state in Africa as of doubtful legitimation, but 'traditional' *chiefs* as the legitimate embodiment of culture and history (forgetting perhaps how much 'traditional' chiefs had become embedded in the colonial enterprise and often remained an autocratic undemocratic element; cf. Mamdani 1996; Oomen 2004). In sum, while the conventional *locus* of legitimacy has become problematic with regard to the African situation, attributions of legitimacy and illegitimacy are at times extended to a variety of other actors and different social and institutional levels, turning the achievement of 'classical' forms of legitimacy difficult to attain by African states. Once again, this may also have contributed to the eclipse of a focus on 'legitimacy' in African political studies.

Two final observations on the seemingly limited use of 'legitimacy' as an analytical entry point are related to this. One is of course that a relative absence of *explicit* references to the idea of legitimacy does not necessarily mean that it does not play a role *implicitly* in various analyses. On the contrary, critical analyses of African politics, the dispositions and machinations of its key players, essentially questioning underlying claims advanced to the right to leadership, abound in numerous writings. And second, other concepts such as 'good governance', 'human rights' and 'global justice' have in recent years come in, partly to replace, partly to complement, notions of 'legitimacy' and to give it a more specific content. Some of these, however, like the notion of 'good governance', will be readily recognised as having been externally inspired (Doornbos 2003). Such shifts could be seen as both cause and consequence of the relative decline of a focus on 'legitimacy'.

In sum, these various observations point to a typical mix of (shifting) perceptions about legitimacy and illegitimacy with regard to African statehood and political change. They may help explain, first, why legitimacy seems to be used less as a lens for analysis than one might first have supposed in regard to a range of politically highly volatile situations, and second, whenever it *is* used, why certain actors or factors tend to be focused upon and why others seem to be left out. Besides, as noted, there are significant

a priori variations in terms of which key institutions – the state, state actors, non-state actors such as chiefs – may be regarded as legitimate or illegitimate, whether implicitly or explicitly, and by whom: for example the state for some, 'chiefs' for others. Certainly, there is an important element of differential perceptions and/or perspectives when it comes to attributing legitimacy to players within the broader political field of a state context. And, evidently, there are significant variations as regards the *quarters* from which legitimacy or illegitimacy may be attributed, and to which actors or frameworks it may be attributed. These may include different sections of the population, holding state rulers in high or in low esteem as the case may be, or being inclined to bestow 'legitimacy' on other power-holders than those involved with the central state. They also comprise external actors passing judgements on, for instance, state performance (who at times may well be the same actors carrying final responsibility as to what is demanded of the state agencies concerned). And last, but not least, many internal and external academic observers are making their own assessments as to the policy performance and legitimacy of the state and its rulers. In any concrete situation all of such judgements will somehow coalesce into some overall yet highly volatile assessments of state and regime (il)legitimacy.

Somalia and Uganda

Let us now turn to Somalia and Uganda as our key examples. These are among the countries in Africa that have become most often associated with major political upheavals and traumatic conflicts in the post-colonial period in Africa. Over the years both countries have had major ups and downs in their respective political life histories, concerned either with their searches for national achievement, political unification or the consolidation of power, or with their experiences with internal war, ethnic violence or rampant corruption. Both in Somalia and in Uganda, successes and failures in these regards often came in rapid succession, leaving plenty of historical landmarks to be remembered, or to be eradicated from the collective mind. In both cases, the story is clearly 'ongoing', continuing to draw interest and calling for retrospective and, where possible, prospective analysis. Clearly, the two have many lessons to offer by way of assessments in terms of 'legitimacy' and 'illegitimacy'.

There are ample differences, socially and culturally, between the two countries, with important political ramifications for forms of legitimation. The Somalis have often been noted for their sharing one language, one culture and religion (Islam), and being all ultimately related through a common lineage and clan system, a point often emphasised in government ideology. Closer inspection, however, reveals the historical significance of several Islamic orders, and also of the clan divisions, which have often proved much stronger than sometimes assumed (Lewis 1980; Laitin and Samatar 1987). Uganda, instead, had been historically marked and divided by a number of major linguistic and ethnic cleavages, and even found several political kingdoms incorporated into its colonially established body politic, each of which at different times became a focus of contention. Besides, competitive proselytism in Uganda added Protestantism

versus Roman Catholicism to its fault lines, with political implications, Islam for most of the time remaining relegated to a minor third position (Mudoola 1993; Mutibwa 1992). Initially, therefore, Somalia for many years after independence came under the sway of pan-Somali aspirations and of externally focused political designs that would follow from them. Uganda, on the other hand, found itself having to balance and accommodate kingships with claims to power, a north–south rift with potentially far-reaching ramifications, and religious divisions which further complicated the equation, all of which made it vulnerable to challenges from within.

For all their differences in history and social context, Somalia and Uganda have nonetheless come to share some important features and experiences. They both form part of the Greater Horn as classified by various international agencies, and in that respect they belong to a larger and fairly volatile geo-political region (Adam 1994; Doornbos and Markakis 1994). Specifically, following independence they have both followed dramatic political trajectories, first of nationalist and sub-nationalist political engagement, then of aggravating conflict and crisis and ultimately the collapse or near-collapse of their respective state systems, from which only Uganda has since managed to recover. Surely, if 'legitimacy' and 'illegitimacy' were in some way measurable, the capacity of the political thermometer would definitely have been tested at both the upper and lower ends in both cases. At different times both countries fell victim to repressive military regimes which for years held large parts of their populations hostage. In the end each became subject to various largely externally sponsored post-conflict reconstruction and reconciliation strategies, trying to give new content to statehood and democratisation, among other things (though in the Somali case as yet quite abortive) (Lyons and Samatar 1995; Heinrich 1997; Doornbos 2002a; Hansen and Twaddle 1995). Conceivably, each may face renewed cycles of confrontation and violence in the years ahead.

Somalia's and Uganda's fortunes have both been strongly determined by Cold War and post-Cold War global politics, albeit often in opposite ways. For years their respective political trajectories have formed part of the broader drama of conflict in the Horn, which also involved countries such as Ethiopia, Eritrea and Sudan, and which aggregated the various internal conflicts of these states into a wider and interrelated battlefield with multiple confrontations. Thus, Uganda over time has frequently been played out against Sudan, Sudan against Ethiopia, Ethiopia against Somalia and Eritrea and vice versa, while each has also supported opposition groups in the adjacent state, usually with powerful external backing from larger regional or global players. By coincidence, Uganda in recent years has been acclaimed an 'oasis of peace' by global players, who complimented it for getting its act together and bestowed on it the reputation of 'darling of the donors', clearly a token of externally accorded 'legitimacy'. Somalia instead continues to be depicted as an area of 'civil strife' or as a synonym for 'anarchy', all taken as indicative of 'illegitimacy' for the Somali political context.

Generally, within the overall situation in the Horn, strongly influenced by Cold War politics and beyond as it has been, the crises pervading Uganda and Somalia during and after the times of Idi Amin and Syad Barre in particular have without doubt been among the gravest on the continent. But while Uganda and Somalia came to rank among the

top problematic cases of state repression, conflict and collapse in Africa, they did not go through these cycles in tandem. Uganda was emerging from its prolonged crisis (1986) just as Somalia was about to plunge into its own. Within the general pattern of conflicts in the Horn, moreover, the two systems displayed striking differences in their specific experiences of the handling of conflict. Most notably, and paradoxically, despite Somalia's assumed homogeneity as opposed to Uganda's apparent inbuilt divisiveness, it was Somalia's state system that in 1991 fragmented beyond foreseeable repair, while in contrast in Uganda a unity of sorts endured against expectations of an opposite logic. Pan-Somali nationalism in the end fell victim to internal regional cum clan divisions, whereas in Uganda regional sub-nationalism (notably from Buganda), which had been posing limits to broader 'national' nationalism, had run up and finally lost out against 'national' powers at the political centre. In the two cases, each of the fault lines concerned also reflected different alternative political entities imagined more 'legitimate' than the state by different contending groups within that society, such as Somaliland in Somalia and Buganda within the Uganda context.

In Uganda, from about 1972 till 1979, internal divisions and the inability to organise any concerted action among opposition groups in exile caused Idi Amin's infamous regime to become prolonged for years. In Somalia a similar stalemate has continued, but to block the *re-establishment* of a common state structure as of 1991. Also, whereas Somalia dismally failed in its pan-Somali expansionist pursuits, it happened to be Uganda under Museveni which for some time got away with its external military cum commercial designs in Congo, apparently seeking to carve out a niche within its resource-rich neighbour. There was a widespread assumption that Uganda was trying to create a broader sphere of influence and hegemony for itself in the Great Lakes region, just as its other neighbour, Rwanda, was doing. These contrasts may be partly explained by differences in the respective composition of the body politic in Somalia and Uganda. Basically the potential of Somali regionalism, closely linked to clan politics, for a long time appeared to have been underestimated, while in Uganda the resilience of a level of 'Ugandan-ness' at times has seemed to go unnoticed in the heat of internal conflict. Nonetheless, Uganda, too, has had moments when a 'national' question forcefully asserted itself and when its very cohesion seemed at stake (Doornbos 1988). Besides, with its internal war in the north having lasted some two decades, some of its political rifts have evidently remained unresolved (Dunn 2004; The Refugee Law Project 2004). In both cases, therefore, it is of key importance to appreciate the interplay of the dynamics of regional conflict, movements and sub-nationalism with the trajectories of state politics.

Changing political fortunes

When looking back at the changing political fortunes in Somalia and Uganda and the way these would be translated into terms of 'legitimacy', one thing that remains striking is the succession of almost meteoric ups and downs that have occurred in the course of their respective trajectories of state formation and decline. In the two countries political leaderships at different times emerged amidst great popular enthusiasm, only to leave

the scene years later intensely hated and after power had become highly personalised. But, of course, this has not been a phenomenon unique to Somalia and Uganda. In the Horn alone, the fresh governments of Meles Zenawi in Ethiopia and Isayas Aferworki in Eritrea in the early 1990s were similarly welcomed with great and widespread enthusiasm before they began to sour and display characteristic autocratic tendencies. In Weberian terms we would say they initially seemed to embody a strong element of charisma-based legitimacy, in the eyes of both their followers and outside observers. They aroused high expectations and attracted internal and external attention in view of the novel starts they seemed to have made, until it became evident that there had been a high degree of false promise in their announcements.

It is now difficult to recall that Idi Amin was strikingly popular when he was first installed (with British and Israeli backing) as president of Uganda in 1971, or that Syad Barre during his first years as president of Somalia was able to count on similarly substantial popular support. Those were the years when the latter launched his project for the socialist transformation of Somalia, beginning with mass literacy campaigns to try and bridge perceived widening urban–rural gaps. Somalia then enjoyed a 'progressive' image, and even outbid Tanzania in its bold designs for a new and alternative political future. Uganda under Obote's first presidency (1967–71) also made a short-lived bid in this direction, though Obote's Common Man's Charter and related documents never became the inspiring texts that Nyerere's writings had represented in Tanzania. When contemplating these episodes and the responses each of these moves and initiatives engendered, it is striking to note how strongly person- and personality-oriented the respective judgements in terms of 'legitimacy' and 'illegitimacy' tended to be.

More recently in Uganda, Museveni during his first years and terms of government (beginning in 1986) similarly evoked broad popular support, at least in the southern and western regions, for having restored basic physical security and starting Uganda on a fresh track. These were important years, instilling a fresh sense of confidence among broad sections of the population in their political future, thus bestowing the new government, and Museveni himself, with a substantial degree of 'legitimacy'. Not unlike in Somaliland after it had left the abortive union with Somalia, which had resulted in such traumatic experiences, in Uganda the upsurge of support at this time did not so much result from any collective enthusiasm for 'nationalism', or 'African socialism', but rather signified a deep desire for a 'never again'. However, it is not absolutely inconceivable that Uganda for one, like other countries in the Horn, before long may again find itself in a situation in which changing guards becomes a matter of armed opposition to personalised rule. A number of years ago there was talk that Museveni's challenger in the 2001 presidential elections, former Col. Kiiza Besigye, upon losing the elections, which he felt had been biased against him, might follow Museveni's own example in 1981 under similar circumstances by moving outside the country with the intention of building up an armed opposition force.

In recent years in Uganda, there have been numerous indications of the extent to which the politics of power and legitimacy have become personality-oriented. In the run-up to the 2006 presidential elections, for example, one main question with which the media and other forums were preoccupied from 2003 onwards was whether

Museveni would put himself up as a candidate for yet another term of office (which among other things would require a constitutional amendment allowing incumbents to stand for a third term). Parallel to prolonged media attention about Museveni's longer-term intentions, the regime carefully and successfully manoeuvred to ensure support for constitutional reform allowing such a 'third term', though sceptical observers viewed these steps as moves to clear the path for a life presidency (Okuku 2005). In this case, as in others elsewhere, the ruling group's determination to cling on to power was evidently very strong, stronger indeed than the wish to be seen building a stable constitutional framework allowing periodic democratic change – nurturing legitimacy in the process. What one sees happening in Uganda now actually appears to be a pattern familiar from other contexts, provisionally dubbed by Ivan Briscoe (2008) 'the proliferation of the "parallel state"', namely a step-by-step line of quasi-constitutionalism, quasi-democracy and quasi-legitimisation of the regime so as to present a façade of legitimacy to the outside world, while at the same time seeking to ensure the continuation and strengthening of a firm grip on state power in the interest of a core ruling circle.

Now, interestingly in the context of discussions of violence control in fragile states, Museveni has time and again put forward as one of his arguments for remaining in office the need to 'professionalise the army'. 'Professionalising the army' is presumably another way of pointing to a need to keep the army together, to keep it from contemplating any coup d'état, to keep it 'content', or all of these at once. It is indeed rumoured in Uganda that there are 'divisions of opinion' within the army, which might not be too surprising given the fate and persecutions encountered by Museveni's one-time comrade Besigye after having stepped into oppositional politics. As 'normal' procedures for any substantive change in government have meanwhile been progressively closed off, it is now also widely believed that any change of power can only come about from within the army. Under the circumstances President Museveni may thus be said to be engaged in 'violence control', though this may immediately raise the question as to on whose behalf this is being done. While some historical analyses of state formation processes have been able to trace how power in some instances has come to be transformed over time into legitimate rule, the question for Uganda today is whether the country is moving towards any such perspective or away from it.

In Somalia, meanwhile, one can see a different way of handling the legitimacy 'problem', that is, the problem of presenting some appearance of regime legality which has little correspondence with realities on the ground. Since 1991, when the Somali state system collapsed completely and could not be resuscitated despite numerous international efforts and reconciliation meetings, the international community as represented in the UN system has strenuously held on to the myth of the continued existence of a sovereign and undivided Somali state framework – this despite the fact that the northern-situated, formerly British, Somaliland, which had joined ex-Italian Somalia following its independence in the early 1960s, left the union in 1991 in the wake of the traumatic treatment and oppression it had for years been subject to at the hands of the southern-dominated central government of Syad Barre. Somaliland has since been reasonably successful in running its own independent state system, as it seems to be gaining a fair degree of legitimacy among a majority of its population in the process

and intent to provide for periodic electoral change, yet for reasons to do with regional and geo-politics rather than its governance performance it has failed so far to obtain the legitimacy of international recognition. Far from being viewed as a possible model for the rest of Somalia in searching for ways of establishing a new state system, it instead tends to be internationally frowned upon for being one of the causes of the latter's failing objectives.

Regional and international geo-politics at the present time have added a further twist to images of Somali governance in terms of 'legitimacy'. At the final, extended Nairobi conference attempting to re-establish a (southern) Somali government around 2005, former warlord and president of Puntland (one of the Somali regions), Abdullahi Yusuf, had managed to get majority backing to attempt to install a new interim cabinet. As he was unpopular in his own Puntland region, however, continuing inter-clan fighting left his new government only a nominal and marginal role to play (mostly involving taking part in ongoing struggles) and for a prolonged period the government refrained from establishing itself on Somali territory, fearing for its security. An opportunity arose with the emergence of the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC), which, during the continuing stalemate, had begun to play an active role in providing for minimal justice and social security in several parts of the country and soon gained increasing popular support in its efforts to restore basic order and a sense of tranquillity. However, constituting an ephemeral and volatile movement comprising heterogeneous elements, moderate as well as radical, the UIC also attracted some outspoken individuals who were soon dubbed 'fundamentalist' and 'extremist', among them some who had been blacklisted by the American government for earlier mischief. Following a brief spell of peace, the first that the country had enjoyed in decades, the regional political cards were then soon reshuffled to prepare Somalia for intervention. Without a thought being given to the option of giving international support to the moderate forces within the UIC (which were numerous), US-backed Ethiopian forces, representing Somalia's arch-enemy, invaded Mogadishu to 'assist' Abdulahi Yusuf's 'legitimate' government to clear the country of 'unwanted and extremist elements'. (Ugandan soldiers also followed as 'peace-keepers', demonstrating President Museveni's determination to stand on the right side of the fence.)

At the time the Somali impasse, which only deepened with this intervention, was significant for the play on words with notions of legitimacy it was entailed. Both President Abdullahi Yusuf's claim to power and the backing he received from Ethiopia could at best rest on the thinnest possible claim to procedural 'legality' having been followed or constructed in the respective institutional forums, Somali and international, and had very little if anything to do with any moral legitimacy earned or yet to be earned by the government concerned. The idea of Ethiopian soldiers on a 'peace-keeping' mission in Somalia was mind-boggling, as the image of the Ethiopia government itself, with its doubtful track record in terms of legitimacy, posing as defender of security, legitimacy and presumably 'democracy' in the region.

The twofold question these experiences of Somalia and Uganda leaves us for further reflection is why it is that many new state trajectories apparently must somehow end in the growth of personalised power, and why it is that contenders come to feel that a change

of government can be realised only by force of arms. Clearly, the questions are closely related. Whatever the answer, it is evident that in these conditions of relatively little basic stability and institutionalisation, 'legitimacy' represents a fragile and problematic proposition, and can be gained and lost very quickly. Still, a qualification must be added here, too. While views on the personalities concerned may wax and wane, there is usually a 'hard' core of more immediate followers from a common regional, clan, ethnic, or indeed family basis for whom a particular regime may continue to be popular and by whom it is regarded as 'legitimate', though its decline in terms of legitimacy among wider circles or in other parts of the country may already have become a fact. In principle it is possible for such dichotomies to turn out quite enduring.

The research relationship: Shifting positions

The conferment or withholding of 'legitimacy', as noted, may come from the population at large or particular sections of it, but also from more specific circles, each with its own particular vantage point and possibly strategic interest. Churches or religious orders, donor agencies and the military, among others, all represent such particular interests, each of which would merit closer attention. Another special vantage point has often been that of academic circles, which merit particular attention. After all, 'legitimacy' constitutes part of the stock in trade of social researchers and academics.

Such ups and downs in the political support and legitimacy of successive Eastern African leadership as were signalled above have often been echoed in the academic environment. Nyerere's Tanzania in the late 1960s and early 1970s radiated an appeal to many social researchers for the vision of an alternative development path it presented, giving rise to 'Tanzaphilia', as Mazrui termed it, as a shared set of positive, expectant orientations, until it sought to take a short-cut and implement a core part of this alternative, the *Ujaama* villagisation programme, by military means. Until then, development researchers, foreign and Tanzanian, had felt stimulated to inquire into the pros and cons of policies designed to extract Tanzania from the mire of deepening dependency. They sought to identify obstacles to 'self-reliance', analyse the merits and scope of 'one-party democracy', and scrutinise the co-ordinating mechanisms for the 'district development front', all in support of what appeared to be a bold and imaginative effort at constructing a different route to decolonisation and beyond. There was a sense, then, of research forming part of and potentially contributing to a broader project of national transformation in Tanzania. In so far as academics could be said to have any role in granting 'legitimacy' to the state, they certainly seemed to be doing so during those early years in independent Tanzania (Cliffe and Saul 1972).

Similar interest and support, from an academic research angle, arose in other countries at other times. Somalia never attracted many researchers when it embarked on its own path of 'progressive' transformation in the 1970s, in part owing, perhaps, to a relative lack of sophistication in outlining its policies, and to an impatient nationalist leadership which hardly invited policy 'debate'. Nonetheless, its alternative path was taken note of with interest among academic Africa watchers for as long as it lasted. Again, Uganda much later (after 1986) attracted widespread international attention, not

only because it represented the first instance in which an oppressive military regime in Africa was overthrown not from within its own ranks but through a sustained and popularly supported guerrilla movement. Initially, Museveni's National Resistance Movement (NRM) regime also appealed to the academic imagination on account of the austerity measures it imposed upon itself and the experimentation with grassroots democratisation it undertook, notably the creation of the so-called resistance committees and councils at various levels. Likewise, when Eritrea in 1991 emerged from its thirty-year struggle for independence from Ethiopia as a rare case of a regime determined to defy donor-driven development, it gained much intellectual respect and legitimacy, at least among 'Washington consensus' critics, for its determination to pursue its own strategies for post-conflict development and reconstruction. Ethiopia's new regime based on the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), more or less at the same time also made a much applauded entry on the scene on account of its unprecedented constitution, promising the option of self-determination up to the point of independence to its constituent units. This constitutional novelty stimulated lively discussion even way beyond the Horn in view of its potential relevance to multi-ethnic state systems elsewhere on the continent. Outside observers, along with marginalised community members, waited with interest to see what the next steps would be, in the end only to become disillusioned and embittered by the lack of implementation that followed. These were evidently 'good' years in terms of the credit and legitimacy bestowed upon the new governments, seemingly from internal quarters as well as externally.

In each of these instances a new vision of alternative directions seemed to signify a fresh political departure, potentially opening new realms of power and promising alternative futures. At each of such moments, questions of constitutionalism, democratisation, the handling of human rights, a fresh look at ethnicity as well as class, gender and environmental issues usually figured on the agenda, also to be picked up in academic debate. Researchers would indeed often take an active role in articulating the issues concerned and spelling out options to resolve them. Thus it was not uncommon to see dialogues of sorts following from this between new progressive leaderships and committed academics. Based on a shared vision on the key issues confronting national development and an overlap of ideas on the direction in which the transformation of society should go, such interactions represented one notable type of government–academic relationships emerging from time to time in 'exemplary' Horn countries. Again, legitimacy was rising high during this interval, inspired by different kinds of sources.

If and as state action took on a different form and face, then in country after country the academia–government honeymoon usually soured, or came to an end, albeit at times with a delayed effect if or as long as researchers wanted to grant the government concerned the benefit of the doubt. Deteriorating political climates often caused researchers to feel they could no longer identify with that context, leading to intellectual crises of sorts as in Tanzania, Eritrea, Ethiopia and other situations at different moments in time. Government legitimacy in the eyes of observers as well as (sections of) the population began to ebb. Academic researchers' initial enthusiasm and support came to

be replaced with concern and reservations about arbitrary actions, and critical researchers tended to re-orient their position. Expatriate researchers simply lost interest, or moved on to other pastures and situations. For some, tracking a state system in decline was less rewarding than engagement in imaginative sketches for the building up of a novel order. Others, with a basic loyalty to colleagues, counterparts or to the hapless victims of oppression of various sorts, increasingly saw their role as oppositional, seeking to expose arbitrary decision-making and human rights transgressions in the absence of other platforms or media which could give this voice. Sometimes a 'dialogue' of sorts again emerged between the state and academia, but this was now more usually in the vein of denial versus accusation. To the extent that research outlooks of social scientists are shaped by emancipatory motivations, attention might then have been focused on the plight of victims of arbitrary power, ethnic inequalities, gender discrimination or other forms of injustice. However, it would be wrong to assume that all academics were 'progressive', human rights oriented, and so on. While some focused on the quest for equity, poverty alleviation and opportunities for the empowerment of marginalised groups, others clearly started from a basic preoccupation with the maintenance of order or the promotion of the market economy.

In recent decades, however, the research relationship has become much more complex owing to the increasingly dominant role of a third (now virtually 'first') factor, namely international agencies setting the terms for policy-making as well as for policy and policy-oriented research in most parts of Africa. Notably, the main international financial institutions have effectively eclipsed the role of progressively oriented academic researchers, mainly economists, who were once found prepared to act in advisory capacities to governments which were beginning to map out their own development strategies. That kind of role was meant to strengthen the hands of the governments concerned vis-à-vis uncertain if not hostile global environments. In lieu of that, international consultants now point to the kind of priorities and criteria the institutions they represent expect 'recipient' governments to meet in an age of structural adjustment and beyond. Cast in 'legitimacy' terms, it implies a drastic shift in the quarters from which legitimacy is accorded as well as an equally drastic shift in terms of the criteria to be applied in such assessments.

International agencies have also increasingly taken the initiative to launch intellectual themes and concepts intended to guide mainstream research in directions reflecting the global policy concerns of these agencies. The 'good governance' discourse has been a prime example of this, but similar pushes have been given to 'participation', 'decentralisation', 'sustainable development' and not a few other themes. Direct and indirect funding mechanisms and a host of other incentives are meant to ensure a substantial degree of academic compliance with such directives, which often take the form of comprehensive programmes. In the current era of globalisation, the capacity to establish a certain hegemony over the way social researchers view and define their problems when looking at state–society relationships has thus moved in new directions. From Gramsci we have learnt how close indeed the relations between power, hegemony and legitimacy can be. Certainly, one can now observe an increasingly closer interest and proactive disposition on the part of external agencies of various kinds in orchestrating

the developmental research field. Significantly, however, there are also a growing number of critical think tanks, research consortia and research-minded NGOs to counter these trends and mobilise pertinent data on the nature of social developments. Also, various individual social researchers chose to critically look at the constant stream of global policy designs as much as at the immediate predicaments of the country or region they are working on. Indirectly, these different trends can be seen to be linked to, and feeding into, 'battles over legitimacy' at levels ranging from the local to the global.

Concluding remarks

If there is any single lesson that can be drawn from this discussion it is the importance of the broader context for an understanding of questions of legitimacy when looking at African states in transition. 'Context' must refer here to the external and internal dimensions within which African states have been embedded, both of which tend to render the application of 'classical' legitimacy concepts problematic. A narrow 'ruler–ruled' paradigm is inadequate for a grasp of many of the broader problems African states (and populations) find themselves confronted with. Instead, legitimacy should be conceptualised with greater flexibility, avoiding narrow or rigid definitions. Besides, we need to bring in the historical context to see the space it has left, or created, for the exercise of arbitrary rule in various places. Still, while African states (and their leaders) may often lack 'clear' legitimacy, it does not necessarily follow that they are 'illegitimate'. Significantly, and consistent with the kind of context in which most African state systems find themselves, attributions of legitimacy or its absence can, as noted, fluctuate rapidly, but are more likely to be focused on personalities or regimes than on state institutions. Besides, there is a likelihood of a plurality of claimed 'legitimacies' in various situations, co-existing or competing with one another. 'Battles of legitimacy' are not uncommon in Africa, with some contenders at times resorting to excessively legalistic arguments to defend their claims to power, as against others who may advance essentially populist claims to legitimate their role and position. African languages, and proverbs, provide a rich repository of expressions with which such claims can be advanced or opposed. Again, strong divergences of external and internal notions of legitimacy are part of this overall picture, at times giving rise to situations in which rulers are accorded legitimacy from outside while being denied the same from within, as against opposite situations elsewhere. Much of this picture is likely to remain valid given the broader context sketched, shaped as it is as much by the transitions to which African states have been subject as giving further shape to them.

PART V

CONCLUSION

Conclusion

Wim van Binsbergen & Martin Doornbos

Omissions and intentions[1]

Looking back upon the trajectory of the preceding parts and chapters, what becomes manifest in the first place is the vastness and complexity of the subject of *Researching power and identity in African state formation*, and how little of this we have been able to cover in the present book, voluminous though it is. Our many omissions can be viewed in the context of themes in recent Africanist research on our topic:

- State delivery of goods and services, including poverty alleviation, or rather the absence and failure of such delivery, as a major factor in effective state penetration, ethnicity, democracy and integration;[2]

- The way in which the new media technologies (e-mail, the internet in general, mobile phones), but also time-honoured informal media such as rumour and the print media are sustaining specific forms of citizens' state participation and state defiance;[3]

- Violence in the context of ethnic conflict, xenophobia, and the role of the state in this connection;[4] but also the theoretically interesting case of African post-colonial states' limited and decreasing monopoly on violence;[5]

- Religious and ethnic conflict, not as parallel but separate phenomena in the dynamics of power and identity, but as intimately intertwined in the context of the post-colonial state in Africa;[6]

- The continuing issue of state control over land as an aspect of agricultural and pastoral dynamics and elite formation;[7]

- More in general, the all-pervasive theme of elite formation and perpetuation in the context of the African state;[8]

- The consolidation of vocal 'new' identities within the post-colonial African state, in the first place women, and increasingly also children;[9]

- The way in which Africans today are torn between the virtualised chimera of modernity at the national level, and the equally deceptive lure of apparently time-honoured, 'traditional' socio-political institutions and loyalties at the regional and local level;[10]

- The way in which the dynamics of post-colonial African states revolve not only on power and identity within the national territory, but also and probably in the first place on global economic and military relationships – not only the uncontrolled and criminal traffic in weapons and diamonds, but also on America's access to mineral oil and China's access to African retail markets;[11]

- African trade unions and the world of sports as more or less viable contexts of formal self-organisation, engaging with the state in ways complementary to those of organised religion[12] – and more in general the issue of NGOs in the orbit of the modern state[13] and other non-state players;[14]

- The rephrasing of the predicament of African post-colonial states in the current idiom of neo-patrimonialism;[15]

- Post-colonial African states' engagement with, and retreat from, productive enterprise;[16] and

- the underutilisation of traditional mechanisms of conflict regulation despite the failure to resolve conflict at the national and international level through formal means.[17]

However, while admitting these omissions and many more, we may say in vindication that our aim has not been to provide the ultimate, comprehensive analytical framework for the study of African state formation, but to highlight a few selected themes that, while inspiring our own respective research over the decades, may also continue to be inspiring to a younger generation of researchers coming to a rather different constellation of state, power and identity today, and coming from, inevitably, a different academic training from the one that has constituted our own conceptual and methodological baggage.

Rather than attempting a summary of this voluminous and complex volume, let us end by addressing three themes that may well sum up the kind of perspectives we hoped to open up:

- Power, state vulnerability, and the hegemonic context of 'state failure';

- Further lessons for ethnicity research; and

- The dynamics of religion in post-colonial Africa.

Power, state vulnerability, and the hegemonic context of 'state failure'

Several aspects deserve further attention in the discussion and analysis of the power–identity nexus with regard to contemporary Africa.

1. One is the dimension of power per se, which (as will be apparent from our texts) seems insufficiently factored in when considering alternative analytical approaches to the manifestations of (ethnic) identity – except for correcting representational inadequacies. A sound understanding of issues of identity is often not possible or meaningful without a closer look at the interrelations and reciprocities between aspects of power and identity.

2. A second related area of concern is that of the enhanced vulnerability which many African societies have developed in relation to powerful forces beyond their reach. If there appears to be something of a self-perpetuating quality to much of Africa's fragile and fragmented condition in this regard, then clearly the combined externally driven forces it faces, economically, politically and culturally, have little to offer by way of an escape from this condition.

3. Third, therefore, for a proper appreciation of the power–identity nexus it remains of primary importance to approach it from a broader understanding of the overall context in which various African societies and communities have come to be located.

To start with the latter issue, as inadequacies in 'governance' were identified in various African and other Third World countries after the Cold War, global institutions such as the World Bank, followed shortly by the wider donor circuit, initiated a whole series of conditions and interventions to promote 'good governance' (Doornbos 2003). These were partly aimed at pushing back the predominance and power of post-colonial state structures and were launched in the expectation that 'civil society' would take over and do its part as it did in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Europe. In Africa, this development soon also marked the beginnings of global donor thinking in terms of 'state failure': from this point onwards 'the state' (which earlier had been seen by the same agencies as the Aristotelian Prime Mover of everything that needed doing) began to be blamed for innumerable and rapidly changing lists of failures. After a brief spell in which the 'nation-state' had stood model for independent African countries, these global policies entailed a radically new departure in terms of externally designed models for statehood in the South. By and large African states lost whatever room for policy-making they had enjoyed, found themselves severely curtailed in terms of their capacity for policy intervention, and had to face a whole range of new constraints, such as significant diversions of aid funds via NGOs, the creation of donor co-ordinating consortia with major policy roles in the planning and disbursement of aid, rapidly growing donor involvement in selected sectors and/or regions within African countries, donor preferences for working with autonomous 'non-bureaucratic' corporate statutory bodies, and more (Mkandawire 2004). Similarly, decentralisation policies with strong

privatisation components were favoured by donors, occasionally leaving awkward questions as to which bodies are theoretically still responsible for guarding the 'common interest' (Meynen and Doornbos 2004).

Against this background, many external judgements have been passed on African states in terms of 'state failure', usually followed or accompanied by new rounds of admonitions as to how they should 'restructure' or go about their 'good governance'. To be sure, the realities concerned, in Africa, but not only there, are often sobering – there is no denying that. But what exactly were terms such as 'failing states' supposed to refer to? What and whose criteria were at stake? And how consistent were these criteria themselves? As a matter of fact they often appeared to contain more than a few contradictory prescriptions, which moreover tended to rapidly shift in the course of time (Doornbos 2005).

The inroads into governmental processes played by conditionalities for 'good governance' and the interventions based on them have been drastic, even though they were hardly informed by an understanding as to how political processes worked in the countries concerned. The Structural Adjustment (SA) packages launched as an instrument of economic liberalisation – meant to make state agencies leaner and theoretically more effective; cases in point are the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) of the early years of the twenty-first century – were intended to provide increasingly detailed entries by which state policies are to be monitored. For all the concern with 'good governance', no donor has ever said:

> *let us know whether you would like us to assist you in building up your state institutions your way and we will see what we can do, no conditions attached.*

Such a stance might have begun to enable 'demanding' or 'requesting' countries to regain some sense of overall command over and genuine ownership of their policy formulation and policy integration. *It is this most vital aspect of any governance structure and process which has become seriously eroded due to the massive donor involvement in policy determination in many countries.* Donors by and large have wanted to be in command, not to be available on demand.

The question arising is whether these interventions have made 'failing states' in any way more robust and better equipped to face up to the vagaries of today's global environment, or whether instead the fragility and failure of African post-colonial states have been exacerbated by such interventions. Alternatively, one could also ask what exactly was failing:

- African states at the receiving end, which were trying to meet all the conditions externally imposed on them, yet finding themselves in an increasingly weakened position vis-à-vis their own societies; or

- the models for new-style statehood which were being advanced by global institutions?

As it happens, notions of 'state failure' have been used to justify various successive rounds of intervention by the global financial institutions – the 'good governance' agenda, SA and PRSPs – each time arguing that state failure of one kind or another called for new interventions and reform; yet each time the recipes concerned, instead of leading to amelioration, appeared incapable of resolving the deadlock, always inviting new attributions of 'state failure' and new interventions. Significantly, though, donors never really tried to comprehend how political power was constituted and exercised in the respective countries involved, but took the position that no matter how this might be, getting politics 'right' – in their conception – was to have priority. Belatedly, this picture has begun to change in favour of better donor understandings of 'local' political processes (Hyden 2006), though it remains to be seen how donors will utilise any such enhanced insights. Critical analysis of these successive waves of attribution of state fragility and 'failing' state performance to justify global interventions still appears to be called for.

Venturing a larger than usual shift from these questions to another debate, in some respects sub-Saharan Africa may well appear to offer a paradox of sorts if one tries to grasp its dynamics in terms of power and identity. From colonial times onwards Africa has been subject to many external inroads, in recent times again to serious losses of state autonomy; yet Africa nonetheless offers frequent examples of seemingly arbitrary rule and 'deviant' political processes in many places, underscoring a continuing sense of fluidity and unpredictability in various situations. Why would this be the case? *One possible answer might entail taking this as a manifestation of Africa's continuing exceptional situation, that is, of a societal context that has never become fully politically 'penetrated'*[18] – neither in colonial times nor in terms of the latest waves of 'good governance' prescriptions. Though admittedly hazardous, the argument might gain some credibility if one considers how, in the absence of any completion of external domination or of the emergence of vast empires which entailed the mobilisation and disciplining of massive populations, as in Asia and Latin-America, much of sub-Saharan Africa demonstrates a continuing gap between state and society.

Further along these lines of thought, we might contemplate whether there is somehow a stronger *propensity* for state failure and collapse in Africa than in Asia or elsewhere, and ask why that might be the case. If we attempt to do this, then features such as the relative extent of institutional cohesion, concentration of administrative power and especially the capacity for social mobilisation within and through the state framework might need to be recognised as being of special significance. Beyond the crucial question as to how countries have come to be inserted in the global economy and power structures, in the end it is these kinds of factors which appear to make a difference regarding the extent to which societies and states have either remained relatively insulated from or become vulnerable to the risks of fragmentation, failure and collapse.

A fuller scrutiny of such 'propensity' questions may require us to look back into the respective historical records, including the different ways in which Western imperialism has impacted on Asia, Africa and Latin America (Doornbos 2006). By and large, Asian states, even if undergoing major structural transformations during colonialism, as in India, have known stronger continuities of political organisation than has been the case in Africa. Asia has had a number of long-standing state entities, often largely inwardly

focused and with sizeable internal markets allowing significant degrees of economic differentiation and integration. Culturally, broad civilisational continuities in some of the major countries have helped to sustain basic political and administrative cohesion and facilitate social mobilisation on virtually a mega scale (Kumar 1997). None of this was to preclude major violence and political upheavals at critical historical intervals, but surely there was a strong focus on continuity and preservation of the state systems. Colonial rule, severely impacting though it did in Asia, largely took the form of 'trickle-down' and (selective) absorption of Western elements, while by and large seeking to incorporate distinct precolonial polities into larger and more viable frameworks.

This is in striking contrast to the African situation, characterised by fragmentation of the continent into arbitrary entities and the imposition of a wholly new and alien order. The resulting 'gap' in state–society relations in the African context has never really been closed since, and has been perpetuated through the absence of a political class which does *not* have its roots within one of the characteristic states' ethno-regional groups. Economic dynamics have not been able to counter these tendencies, but have, on the contrary, for prolonged periods reinforced the presence and continuity of essentially vulnerable bureaucratic ruling classes. As contrasted with recurrent formative economic, political and cultural processes in several of the larger states of Asia, therefore, Africa's state systems appear to have been bequeathed with stronger baseline vulnerability, manifested in enhanced fragility, fragmentation and ultimately a propensity for collapse.

It is this same general condition – that of a relative power deficit vis-à-vis pervasive external forces, of the continent's fragmentation, yet also of its diversity of constituent elements and the plurality and variability of authority patterns and social networks – which may go some way in explaining the various kinds of cultural expressions and searches for identity which one may encounter in different parts of sub-Saharan Africa, and which also forms the backdrop for the studies presented in this volume.

Further lessons for ethnicity research

The above argument amounts to a critical deconstruction of the idea of an African socio-cultural propensity towards political fragmentation, instability and failure. This idea goes back, in European thought, to the Early Modern period, and was articulated by Kant and Hegel, but has recently gained a new lease of life in the ideology of 'good governance' as imposed upon Africa from the North Atlantic region.

This brings us to the question as to the existence, and the specific nature, of precolonial identities in Africa. Expressions of ethnicity in Africa in the course of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries have often been interpreted, by observers from the North Atlantic region, in terms of an irrational, blind attachment to 'primordial' traditional identities – so that any modern ethnic conflict could ultimately be represented as the inevitable, automated relapse into ancient 'tribal wars'. As we briefly indicated in the introduction to the part of this book dealing with ethnicity, modern research has exploded this myth, and has shown that African ethnicity of the past century is largely a modern response utilising models that were mainly formulated not in Africa, but in the North Atlantic region in Early Modern times. What, then, was the identity situation prevailing under

precolonial conditions in Africa?

In precolonial Africa a great diversity of languages, cultural customs, modes of production, systems of domination, and somatic traits could be discerned. In local contexts, identities (in the sense of named categories for human sets) may have been defined along each of these criss-crossing dimensions. These categories often had a perspectival nature: one could identify ethnic otherness in terms of 'the northerners', 'the forest dwellers', 'those who seek to dissociate from the state', depending on the opposite position occupied by the speaker herself/himself. Many ethnonyms are rooted in the freezing and fossilisation of such perspectival designations; in Zambia, South Central Africa, for instance, we find, as examples of this phenomenon: Mbwela ('northerners'), Nkoya ('forest dwellers'), Kwanga ('tired, notably of being oppressed by the – precolonial, regional, African – state'), and Tonga ('shunning control by the – again, precolonial – state'; Tonga is thus the designation of five groups in South Central Africa that, apparently, lack all recent historical connections with one another). But in other cases, ethnic designations have derived from localised clans, which (because localised clans – even though often exogamous in themselves – tend to more or less coincide with the spatial core area of a local gene pool) furthered the essentialist suggestion of a fixed, biologically anchored identity acquired by descent from a common ancestor. Precolonial states, such as occurred on and off in parts of Africa during the past few millennia, always displayed a plurality of languages, cultural orientations, modes of production, and somatic features among their subjects, and, besides the statal forms of domination, they tended to loosely incorporate such local forms of authority (eg authority within kin groups, territorial groups, cults, guilds, gender organisations) as constituted organisational alternatives to statehood. Not so much control over demarcated territories, but control over people (by means of courts of law, and by the extraction of tribute in the form of produce and people) was the central theme of these states. Therefore, precolonial boundaries must be understood in terms of areas of overlapping spheres of influence, and not as lines on a map.

The nomenclature of colonial and post-colonial identities in Africa derived to a limited extent from the extensive and complex repertoire of precolonial identities. However, it would be totally erroneous to claim (as African ethnic ideologues, many Western journalists, and a declining number of researchers have done) that twentieth-century ethnicity in the African continent has merely been a continuation of precolonial patterns of group formation and group conflict. It has been amply demonstrated[19] that many colonial and post-colonial ethnic designations in Africa have no roots in the precolonial past, and instead are only very recent. The standard characteristics of twentieth-century ethnicity in Africa outlined in the introduction to part II hardly obtained before the colonial state had established itself with its bureaucratic, named territorial divisions.

In the contemporary ideological construction of Africa by intellectuals, politicians and in the media both in Africa and in the North Atlantic region, as well as in the daily societal practice of many Africans themselves, ethnicity is to a large extent conceived as holistic and as bundled: language, cultural customs, modes of production, somatic features, territory and political leadership are then assumed to form one integrated

package, a whole, in such a way that a person's ethnic identity (that person's 'culture') is claimed to determine the total mode of social being of that person. Such bundling is a direct reproduction of the bureaucratic rationality that forms the framework for the political in postmodern North Atlantic society. The various cultural orientations[20] involved in a local situation are hierarchically ordered in such a way that one cultural orientation is privileged above the others, is essentialised, and is considered to be eminently constitutive for the person or group involved. *Thus 'culture' functions primarily as a performative boundary marker.* By contrast, it was characteristic of precolonial identities that the various dimensions along which they could be defined remained detached from one another, were not mutually integrated, and as a result no single identity was capable of developing into a claim of totality that was publicly mediated. Instead, the various identities within a region criss-crossed in gaudy confusion, now reinforcing now eclipsing one another.

All this allows us to understand what is perhaps the most striking contradiction of African ethnicity today: the fact that in their own personal vision of social life, many Africans have come to consider as an unshakeable reality the very tribal model that professional Africanists are rejecting today. Politicians can appeal to this reified and distorted, mainly ideological, image of social reality in order to lend an ethnic dimension to economic and political contradictions, thus essentialising them.

Given these historical and political backgrounds, it is difficult to offer a useful definition of ethnicity. However, the following is an attempt in that direction: *Ethnicity, then, is the totality of processes through which people, by reference to the ethnic groups which they distinguish, structure the neutral geographical space in which they are involved so as to transform it into an ethnic space.*[21]

And, to address another misunderstanding in the study of ethnicity, we must appreciate that ethnic studies focus on ethnicity as a comprehensive phenomenon that structures the social space at large, and that it is this process of structuring, rather than the resulting classification in ethnic groups, that constitutes our prime research subject. Considering the many uncertainties of *emic* (consciously, by the historical actors themselves) and *etic* (imposed by external analysts regardless of the emic aspect) classification;[22] the manipulation of boundaries, and of membership; the ideological processes by which historical actors politicise and reconstruct the package (of language, culture, somatic traits, name) out of which their ethnicity consists – considering all of this, ethnic groups are too elusive to serve, in themselves, as units of analysis in ethnic studies. Ethnicity is not an effect of the existence of ethnic groups; on the contrary, it is ethnicity which produces ethnic groups, in a historical political process that will be slightly or significantly different for every ethnic group.

A recognised ethnic identity is not 'a culture', and a national or international political system is not in the first place an 'arena of cultures'; it only becomes that if the local actors (and notably their politico-ideological elite, in control of local communication media) have publicly declared that *culture* is to be the major bone of contention within the domestic political space – an exceptional situation prevailing in the North Atlantic postmodern society of the end of the twentieth and the beginning of the twenty-first century, very far from standard in a global perspective encompassing the full range of

human cultural history. An ethnic group is nothing but an explicitly named set of people within a societal system dealing with the classification and ranking of groups. Within the social space (for example a society, a nation-state), the social actors distinguish, collectively, a limited number of such named sets of people – always more than just one, and always intersubjectively, that is, beyond one person's individual idiosyncrasy. Membership of such a set is publicly considered to be acquired by birth and hence is theoretically immutable, but in fact the acquisition of a new ethnic identity later in life is a common occurrence. Invariably more than one identity is invested in one person at the same time. Within each set of people, the members identify with one another, and are identified by others, on the grounds of a number of historically determined and historically mutable, specific ethnic boundary markers. Such ethnic markers include the ethnic name itself, and moreover language, forms of leadership, modes of production, other distinctive cultural features, and occasionally also somatic features. The ethnic groups that exist and are recognised within one country, or more in general within one extended ethnic space, often differ from one another only in respect of a very limited selection of cultural features functioning as boundary markers.

Concretely this may mean the following (but only the case of one very specific type of ethnicity which, although widespread, is by no means the only type). From a Nkoya village in the heartland of Zambia one may trek (partly following in the footsteps of the great explorer, missionary and physician, David Livingstone, in the middle of the nineteenth century) three to five hundred kilometres to the north, east, west and south, without noticing remarkable changes in the cultural, human-made landscape (the villages, the royal courts, the fields, the pastures, the fishing grounds, the hunting groups, the shrines), and also without conspicuous changes in the local people's ideas about kinship, law, witchcraft, kingship, birth, maturation and death, the world, life after death and God. On one's journey one traverses a large number of so-called 'tribal areas' and 'language areas' such as used to be distinguished in the colonial period – one crosses from one ethnicity's area into the next, and into another, and yet another; however, one largely remains with the same, widespread, South Central African overall culture. Most local inhabitants will turn out to be multilingual. The languages of the Bantu linguistic subfamily (a branch of the Niger-Congo language family) display a high level of similarity – comparable to that between Dutch, German and Swedish. It will only be after a few hundred kilometres that one can no longer effectively communicate using the Nkoya language even to non-Nkoya speakers – but this will only be the case long after one has effectively left behind the recognised 'Nkoya tribal area' as defined in colonial times.

In this and similar cases, in Western Zambia as elsewhere in Africa, the great regional continuity of cultural orientations is an empirical fact; in a process of essentialisation, ethnonyms and other aspects of official classification have imposed deceptive boundaries upon this continuity – more or less in the way one cuts out nicely shaped biscuits with a biscuit cutter from a large rolled-out slab of dough that has virtually the same constitution throughout. In other periods and regions, ethnicity may take a very different shape. But always it is a complex and contradictory phenomenon, to be elucidated and explained by painstaking research and reflection rather than causing or

explaining socio-political conditions in its own right.

Let us finally consider the third mainstay of this book, religion, in African state formation.

The dynamics of religion in post-colonial Africa

While the spread of two of the world religions to Africa, and their subsequent development there, has been part of an earlier phase of (proto-) globalisation in the course of the past two millennia, the most recent decades have seen an intensification of globalisation in the narrower sense, governed by technologies of communication and information that have dramatically reduced the social cost of time and space to an unprecedented minimum. However, our present scope does not allow us to pursue the issue of globalisation and religion per se.

The recent globalisation process, with its profound changes in the nature of post-capitalism and the North Atlantic state, has led, throughout the world today, to a situation where (superimposed upon a structure of world-wide inequality along continental, national-constitutional, regional, class, gender and age lines, and largely obscuring the latter from view) there is *a representational structure of identity.* From the local to the global level, politics is conceived less and less as a struggle for scarce material resources, and more as a struggle for recognition of identity[23] – which, if successful, will imply access to the underlying structure of scarce resources anyway. By the same token, denial of identity is increasingly seen as the most brutal act of exclusion. Religious forms, in Africa and elsewhere, have lent themselves to the production of contrastive identities within the socio-political arenas at all levels. They have (often as a result of the local historical contingencies of Christian and Islamic proselytising in Africa) either reinforced existing ethnic, linguistic, regional and class boundaries, or offered alternative (usually more universal) identities in the light of which non-religious identitary boundaries can be crossed or rendered irrelevant. Empirical studies exploring these processes have formed an established genre of Africanist religious research for decades.

Challenges arise here in a number of ways.

The first challenge concerns what has emerged as a major paradigm in the interpretation of organised religion in the postmodern North Atlantic region: *believing without belonging* (cf Davie 1994): the dissociation between adherence to a set of beliefs, on the one hand, and involvement in a voluntary formal organisation propounding such beliefs, on the other. In Africa, it is very much still 'believing and belonging', in the sense that especially in Christianity (but increasingly also in Islam and even in African historic religion) formal self-organisation is the obvious context for belief and ritual.

In the second place we have to consider the proliferation of new boundaries and new identities under the very impact of globalisation – contrary to the naive expectation that globalisation is all about unimpeded flow. Political processes, especially those of an imperial nature, have carved out geographical spaces within which a plurality of identities tend to be mapped out. An unstructured, diffuse social field cannot be

named, nor can it inspire identity. The apparently unlimited and uncontrollable supply of intercontinentally mediated images, symbols, ideas and objects which is swept across contemporary Africa by such factors as the media, commodity distribution, the educational services, cosmopolitan medicine and world religions calls for new identities. People seek to define new boundaries so as to create or salvage their identity in the face of this incessant flow. By imposing boundaries they may either appropriate for themselves a specific part of the global supply, or protect themselves in order to keep part of the global flow at a safe distance. Such boundaries are in the first place constructed by human thought, as conceptual boundaries. However, they are primarily maintained and ever again reconstructed *through interaction*; and for such interaction the relatively new formal organisations of Africa constitute the most obvious context.

Let us, for instance, consider a phenomenon as widespread as the laundering of globally mediated commodities and money in the context of contemporary religious organisations. Many African Christian churches appear as a context for the managing of elements belonging to the inimical domain of commodities, consumption and the market. But much the same process is at work among syncretistic or neo-traditional cults.[24] If such organisations can selectively manage 'the global', and construct a security screen of identity around their members, they are at least as effective in keeping the local (ancestors, spirits of the wild, local deities) out of their charmed circle of identity, or allowing it in only in severely restricted form. There is a remarkable variation in the way in which local religious forms are allowed to be voiced in a context where the globally mediated religious forms (Islam, Christianity) are clearly dominant. Creating identity – 'a place to feel at home', to borrow Welbourn and Ogot's (1966) apt expression first applied to African Independent churches in Western Kenya – means that the Christian or Islamic converts engage in a social process which allows them, by the management of boundaries and the positioning of people, ideas and objects within and outside these boundaries, to create a new community which, in principle, is independent from whatever pre-existing community attachments they may have had on the basis of their kinship affiliations, rural homes, ethnic or political affiliations.

This second point implies the third, which has been elaborated by the cosmopolitan African philosophers Mudimbe (1988; 1997) and Appiah (1992) in their critique of Afrocentricity[25] and ethnic identity politics. These philosophers are claiming that African identities today, including religious identities, are so unmistakably and deceptively of a *constructed* nature that, rather than take them seriously, we should deconstruct them.

In an Africa rife with the reification of, and conflict over, identities, such a theoretical caveat is likely to have fewer practical implications than a fourth type of challenge in the domain of identity. This arises when local and global identities percolate and merge to form a tangle with far-reaching political implications. For instance, the identity constructions of Igbo immigrants in Hausaland, Northern Nigeria (notably: 'will they convert to Islam or not?') are no longer primarily determined by a consideration of the networks of local and regional trade and other economic opportunities, but by the Islamist attacks on the eastern USA on 9 September 2001, and their aftermath. Assuming a Christian identity (although perceived as a path to modernity) was rarely a sufficient condition for an African person's acceptance in North Atlantic circles. Today, however,

possessing, or *assuming*, an Islamic identity now in principle incriminates the same African person by virtue of the deceptive construction, by American-British hegemony, of a collective enemy of the North Atlantic political and economic order and security. Of course, the expansion of Christianity in Africa has been part of a North Atlantic hegemonic project from the nineteenth century onwards, and in this sense the recent projection of extra-African concerns onto African processes of identity is nothing new. We should resist the temptation to turn Africanist religious studies into a hegemonic exercise puppeteered from the Foreign Offices in Washington and London.[26] Instead, we should try to find a social scientific answer to the question – no longer particularly Africanist – as to *why Islam has such a massive and increasing appeal in Africa today.*[27] Islam appears as an alternative route to modernity, ensuring (or at least promising) a meaningfulness, dignity, boundedness, and (as a stepping stone to Islamic diasporas in the North Atlantic region) world-wide belonging, which Northern hegemony denies the vast majority of the inhabitants of Asia, Africa and Southern America. It may be time to break out of our decades-long fascination with identity for identity's sake, and return to the study of underlying inequalities in resources and power.

Our present scope does not allow us to explore[28] what formal religious self-organisation does for the relations between the post-colonial African state and historic (in other words, 'traditional') African religious expressions and how it contributes to the latter's resilience.

Religious forms in Africa either reinforce or cut across existing socio-political, ethnic, regional, class, age and gender identities and their boundaries. Therefore, whenever we encounter religious processes in Africa (be they in the Islamic, Christian or historic African domain), conflict is always within our field of vision, and violence never far away.

The empirical documentation of the varieties of violence[29] and of their religion-related contexts constitutes a meaningful and urgent field of research, not only from an analytical point of view but also from a humanitarian one. Post-colonial African states have often failed to extend economic and physical security to their citizens, and in nearly a dozen African countries the state still exists only on paper, or is just being revived from such chimerical existence. This has had a profound impact on the religious domain: established forms of religious self-organisation come under pressure, or may even collapse; there is a resilience of other forms (especially historic ones), which are being mobilised for survival, protest, and liberation; world religions' intercontinental connections are used to create contexts of negotiation and reconciliation to reduce or terminate conflict, and to further democracy; political, regional and ethnic conflict may be articulated in terms of two rival world religions (Islam versus Christianity), sometimes as an invitation to massive violence.

The challenge here lies particularly in the formulation of more adequate models of social analysis. A powerful tradition in the sociology of religion (that of Durkheim, 1912) puts religion at the centre of the construction of the social order, and hence lets religion appear as a context in which conflict is attenuated and reconciliation may be negotiated so as to avoid violence. This approach has proved reasonably enlightening for socio-political processes at the grassroots level of the village, the localised ethnic

group in a rural setting, and the urban ward. Here the participants' dominant frame of reference tends to be modelled after kinship, and religious groups with their rituals enhance the intra-kin social process or provide the alternative of fictive kinship. Religious institutions in Africa (Islamic, Christian, and historic African) tend to offer highly effective social technologies of reconciliation at the local level (van Binsbergen 1999b/2003; 2003a; 2010). However, at the regional and national level, and in the light of world-wide processes leading to the negative stereotyping of Islam in untutored North Atlantic eyes, religion has proved to be more of a divisive than an integrative force in Africa. All the same, religious organisations, both Africa-based and international, have been active in reconciliation with regard to recent ethnic and racial conflict in, for instance, East Africa and the Republic of South Africa (where the established churches exerted a decisive influence on the format and procedure of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission).

A central challenge, therefore, inspired by the performance of African religious forms in the social and political domain, is: *can African religion contribute to the construction of societal consensus as the backbone of civil society?* Can Christianity and Islam, either separately or in combination, ever succeed in binding the extreme fragmentation of African religious experience into a consensus at the regional, national, even international level?

In principle, the answer is affirmative, despite far-reaching qualifications (cf Mbembe 1997). In addition to the adoption of the formal organisation, and closely related to this process, the transformation of African societies in the course of the twentieth century has consisted of the creation of a new, national societal order, and the religious underpinning of that order by elements derived from a world religion. In the northern half of Africa, where Islam has often been dominant since well before the advent of European colonial rule, this process evolved more gradually than where (very roughly: in Africa south of the 10th parallel north) Christianity emerged as the main world religion in question (although, more recently, under pressure from a rapidly increasing Islam). In Islamic Africa the process subsequently intensified with the global rise of Islam in the final decades of the twentieth century. As far as Christianity is concerned, one can hardly overestimate the rapidity and the force with which this world religion, so closely associated with the colonial state, modern education and health care, in much less than a century managed to establish itself as an implicit 'Great Tradition', not so much eradicating historic African religion but relegating it to the rural and the private sphere, as an unobtrusively surviving, often even resilient, 'Little Tradition'.

Although there are notable exceptions (eg Benin and Swaziland, where historic ecstatic and royal cults, respectively, are frequently mediated towards the public sphere and the centres of national power), by and large, in contemporary Africa, historic African religion tends to be inconspicuous. While surviving as a private expression in the kinship domain and as a local public expression in many rural contexts, it is as a rule not conspicuous in the urban areas and at the political centre. This does not mean that African historic religion is absent from modern life, but that it has largely gone underground (cf van Binsbergen 1993a; 2002), since its numerous private adherents are generally unwilling to withstand or incapable of publicly withstanding the allegations

of primitiveness, heterodoxy and evil which have been projected onto the expression of these local religions ever since the introduction, onto African soil, of Islam and Christianity. It is these two world religions which dominate the public sphere and which may, and often do, offer such (admittedly limited) ideological consensus as national African societies yet display in the post-colonial era. Historic African religion yet plays a role there in a number of ways. It may be explicitly co-opted (albeit in a form which has lost its dynamics and meaning) to the public centre, at selected places and times (eg independence celebrations and other political ceremonial occasions) to help construct a sense of national identity through folklore. It may be nostalgically reinvented (cf Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983), not so much by politicians but by intellectuals, in order to derive, from the realm of ancestors and precolonial kingship, alternative solutions to contradictions which the world religions, given their strong links with the political centre, cannot in themselves reconcile – as in the case of *ubuntu* philosophy in Southern Africa today.[30] However, historic African religion is mainly articulated in the public and central sphere in order to provide a contrast with the norms and values claimed to inform that sphere. When this happens, African historic religion appears in a negative light – as witchcraft, Satanism, human sacrifice, or paganism. This state of affairs may also lead to a point where anti-social violence assumes the trappings of a cult of evil reinvented on the basis of the selective appropriation of elements of African historic religion devoid of their original context (Toulabor 2000). By contrast, when civil war confronts what is seen as an exploitative national or colonial state associated with a world religion, more intact and original forms of African historic religion may be adopted as important props of identity (eg in Southern Senegal, and in the Zimbabwe liberation struggle).[31]

Comparison with the situation in other continents (most nation-states in the Americas, Europe, North Africa and the Middle East) suggests that when one world religion effectively dominates the national political space, this may create the kind of societal consensus conducive to a viable national polity. The presence of competing world religions of comparable strength within a national space often goes together with violent conflict, as in India (Hindus and Muslims) and the Balkans (Christians and Muslims) – and the same may be said about denominations of world religions, such as Protestantism and Roman Catholicism in Northern Ireland, the religious wars in early modern Europe, and the struggles between Sunna and Shi'ite Islam in the Middle East. In Africa, some major violent conflicts have been fought in post-colonial states comprising rival Muslim and Christian populations (Sudan, Chad, Nigeria in the Biafra crisis). However, one need only consider the many post-colonial African cases of regional and ethnic conflict without a major component of world-religion rivalry (eg Rwanda, Burundi, Eritrea) to realise, for Africa and beyond, the one-sidedness of Huntington's (1996) stress on world religions in the clash of civilisations. Such conflicts are explained not by any allegedly irreconcilable contradiction of world religions, but by other features of the post-colonial African states: personalised leadership; a shallow constitutional tradition; the prominence of ethnic and regional conflict; and elite appropriation (of the state and its international relations, of their national economies and of their global political and economic environment).

With the continued decline of African post-colonial states, the world religions tend to provide the organisational backbone of civil society as well as its mouthpiece. This implies that they are in a highly strategic position to mediate between Africa, on the one hand, and the North Atlantic and Middle Eastern political and religious organisations active in the fields of development co-operation, education and human rights, on the other. The role of Christian and Islamic organisations in the democratisation wave and the call for 'good governance' which swept across Africa around 1990 shows the advantages as well as (given our above deconstruction of 'good governance') the limitations of such a situation. However, its implication is a further marginalisation of historic African religion from the public domain and the political centre; also the filtering of North–South contacts via a local African, religiously underpinned development elite contains the risk that the local grassroots level no longer actively participates in the intercontinental production and circulation of knowledge, which then tends to become a circulation of ignorance under what has been described as the Janus effect (van Binsbergen 1999c).

Here we see much of the pattern of middle-class African Christianity around the turn of the twenty-first century: the literate and Christian format appropriated as self-evident yet subjected to personal selective transformation, the rejection of an ancestral past and of African historic religion, the total inability to derive any spiritual resources from the latter, and the effect of being propelled into a mutant cosmopolitan cultural and spiritual solution that is African by the adherents' original geography and biology, but not in substance.

Envoi

Let us conclude with these three vignettes that highlight, and perhaps further develop, the central topics of this book. Our efforts will be greatly rewarded if we have managed to share something of our fascination with the complex subtleties and contradictions which have made *Researching power and identity in African state formation* one of the most inspiring undertakings of our intellectual lives.

Notes to Chapter 2

1 Anthropological and oral-historical fieldwork was carried out in Kaoma district and among urban migrants in Lusaka hailing from that area in February 1972 to April 1974, September to November 1977, and August to September 1978. In the course of the fieldwork, a sizeable collection of local texts was made available to me, mainly in the Nkoya language; here the pièce de résistance is Shimunika's compilation of local ethnohistory, edited in the late 1980s (van Binsbergen 1988b). Archival data were collected in the Zambia National Archives, 1974, and the Kaoma District Secretary's Office, 1978. For a full description and presentation of these data, and extensive acknowledgements, see van Binsbergen (1981b; 1992b) and my other publications cited in the bibliography.

2 The UNIP, which in the late 1950s under the leadership of K. Kaunda and others broke away from H. Nkumbula's original African National Congress (ANC), soon came to dominate the struggle for independence (which was to be successful in 1964, and which after a turbulent post-colonial phase in 1971 culminated in Zambia's Second Republic, characterised by one-party participatory democracy).

3 For a description of a Nkoya lukena from an economic point of view, see van Binsbergen and Geschiere (1985a:261–70).

4 The House of Chiefs is an advisory body that meets only once every few years for a few days – admittedly, in the Parliament building – and whose deliberations (tightly controlled by the government executive), to judge by its published detailed minutes, often deal with such self-referential topics as subsidies and hunting rights for chiefs, and chiefs' disapproval of women's dress considered immodest. However, we must repress the temptation to see this institution as a placebo through which the modern state extends mere token recognition to traditional leadership. Ever since Zambia's independence, the state executive has made considerable efforts to co-opt the senior chiefs' support, in the awareness of the shaky legitimacy of the modern state in the eyes of a considerable part of the traditionalist rural population. (See van Binsbergen 2003b).

5 Imported from North America via South Africa, the Watchtower faith (and syncretistic derivations of it) found significant religious expression in the rural areas of South Central Africa from the 1920s. Its confrontations with the colonial and post-colonial state form, next to the Lumpa rising of 1964, an important example of the conflict between church and state in Zambia (cf. Cross 1973); for information relating to Kaoma district, where since the 1940s the Watchtower movement has been characterised by religious and social retreatism and an absence of political militancy, see Cross (1969); and van Binsbergen 1981b; 1992b.

6 For a general analysis of Zambian rural life in such terms, see Bates (1976), and my critique in van Binsbergen (1977b).

7 This was the precursor to a development that would lead to the greater and more effective participation of chiefs in modern political and representative bodies elsewhere in Zambia in the 1980s.

8 The Humbu or Amahumbu constitute an ethnic group in North-Western Zambia and Eastern Angola. It is remarkable that in that environment, where historical links with the empire of the Lunda ruler Mwaat Yaamv in what is now Southern Zaire are stressed as a source of political

and cultural prestige, the Humbu, more than any other group, have Mbwela connotations; the Mbwela, locally the predecessors of the Ndembu Lunda, are considered the ancestors of today's Nkoya in Kaoma district. Nkoya oral sources put the Humbu in a very different position: that of the most conspicuous exponents of a Lunda expansion that took place at the expense of Mbwela autonomy on the Upper Zambezi. See Verhulpen (1936); McCulloch (1951:6) and appendix map; Schecter (1980:293f); Papstein (1978:78), and references cited there.

9   The special ritual and political roles of female royal kin is a recurrent feature of African early states. See Claessen (1981; 1984) for a Zambian example, and Shimwaayi Muntemba (1970) for a discussion of the Mukuni Leya of Livingstone district, incidentally close neighbours of the southernmost Nkoya, under Mwene Momba.

10   For extensive genealogies of nineteenth-century rulers see van Binsbergen (1992b).

11   It is in one such praise-name, that of the female Mwene Komoka, who succeeded to the Mutondo title c. 1840, that the name 'Nkoya' appears for the first time, as the name for the subjects of the Mutondo *lukena*. Only in the second half of the twentieth century did 'Nkoya' become an ethnic label for all people under Myene claiming descent from Libupe.

12   See van Binsbergen (1981b:ch. 3) for parallels across Zambia. However, among the Nkoya the cult of royal graves, and its ecological connotations, remained rather limited compared with other, larger states in South Central Africa, including that of the Lozi.

13   The dual nature (benevolence/terror) of the later Myene as political rulers is likely to have been built upon a dialectical contradiction already inherent in pre-state Wene, as is suggested by de Heusch (1972; 1984), whose distinction between sacred kingship and statehood is particularly relevant here.

14   With a few notable exceptions, such as Mwene Liwumbo Shakalongo and Mwene Shikanda.

15   Only with regard to the most recent offshoots: Momba and Kabulwebulwe.

16   A Sotho offshoot from what came to be called South Africa, which in the nineteenth century occupied the Zambezi flood plain, and the Lozi state, for several decades.

17   This did not preclude a certain heterogeneity between rulers and subjects, whose linguistic and cultural features often appear to have more closely resembled those of the present-day Ila, Totela and Kaonde than present-day Nkoya; between Nkoya clans and earlier inhabitants of the areas they moved into when leaving the Upper Zambezi; and between local subjects and individual slaves hailing from distant ethnic groups, including the Lenje and Lamba.

18   Not surprisingly, this side of nineteenth-century state formation in the region is little documented in the Nkoya official oral sources. However, documentary and especially archival sources on the region are quite specific on this point; see Gann (1958; 1964), Smith and Dale (1920), Macpherson (1981) and the accounts of the Gielgud-Anderson expedition to the Hook of the Kafue, 1900 to 1901, in the Zambia National Archives.

19   As it appeared to European observers at the time, whose ethnocentrism and need for imperialist self-justification did not in any event allow them to see anything but misery and decay in the area. See Macpherson (1981).

20   See Caplan (1970); Gann (1958; 1964); Mutumba Mainga (1973); Prins (1980) and Stokes (1966).

21   In Zambian English, this is the term for the modern administrative district centre.

22   And through which many local factional, inter-generational and kinship conflicts were to find expression in ways that fall outside the scope of this publication.

23   Incidentally, the rejection of chief(tainship) was also an important element in Lumpa.

Notes to Chapter 4

1   Such as Worsley 1960; and Geertz 1963.

2   The conference was initiated and organised by a committee consisting of Filip Reijntjens (Department of Law, Antwerp University; Centre for Research and Documentation on Africa, Brussels), and Gerti Hesseling and Wim van Binsbergen (Department of Political and Historical Studies, African Studies Centre, Leiden). The committee remains indebted to the African Studies Centre for financial support, to Antwerp University for hosting the conference, and to all participants for their papers and their open and incisive discussion, which greatly contributed to the success of the conference.

3   See Cliffe, Coleman and Doornbos (1977), and specifically Coleman (1977); Doornbos (1983); Coleman and Halisi (1983); Geschiere (1982); and Elwert (1983).

4   See Doornbos (1983); Samoff (1979); and Leys (1976).

5   On the basis of the same research project conducted under the auspices of the African Studies Centre, Leiden, M. Sypkens Smit, in an oral presentation entitled 'What shall we do with the big bad wolf: Land tenure and village secrets in Diatock, a Diola village, Senegal', offered a picture of alleged non-pentration in South Senegal.

6   Among a great many relevant studies, some of which have already been referred to here, we mention Finucane (1974), Bates (1978), (1981); and Dumont and Mottin (1983).

7   The contrast between the pessimistic view as propounded by Pottier's study relating to Northern Zambia and the more optimistic argument relating to Western Zambia put forward by van Binsbergen is only an apparent one. Both are situated in the context of that country's poor and still declining rural economy, but while the latter forms Pottier's primary focus, van Binsbergen attempts to demonstrate how the historical background of the Nkoya ethnic minority has brought them to be fixated on political relations with the central state, within a situation of economic misery they have come to accept as inevitable. For more in general on state penetration in Zambia, see Bratton (1980a; 1980b).

8   Even disregarding, for a moment, emergent rural class formation and increasing exploitation by a state-based middle class, factors which make for the uneven local distribution of the economic fruits of development.

9   Generally, in Africa, this includes, besides a concept of traditional rulers, sorcery beliefs, which in many contemporary local contexts in Africa have been recorded as an expression of and a weapon in the confrontation between local-level concerns and the state-associated power of bureaucrats, chiefs and middle farmers. A Cameroonian case in point is P. Geschiere's contribution in Geschiere and van der Klei (1987), also see Geschiere with Fisiy (1995); for a Tanzanian case, see van Hekken and Thoden van Velzen (1970); for a Zambian case, see van Binsbergen (1975b), which complements the picture of political attitudes at the village level as described in his chapter in this book.

10 For a more general perspective see Jackson and Rosberg (1982), who, echoing discussions on the 'extra-territorial state', reflect on the various merely 'technical' ways of being a state.

11 See van Binsbergen (1981a:298f); for general discussions see Glélé (1981a; 1981b); Heijke (1984); Sinda (1983); and Verhaegen (1977).

12 R. Buijtenhuijs discussed these and related topics including ethnicity in his paper entitled 'Les Toubou et la rébellion tchadienne', Buijtenhuijs (1988).

13 See World Bank (1981); Gruhn (1983); and Helleiner (1983).

14 Thus the Department of Political and Historical Studies, one of the two research departments of the African Studies Centre, Leiden, in 1980 began to concentrate its research and publications on the historical and contemporary dynamics of the African state; see van Binsbergen (1982).

15 See Mamdani (1976); Shivji (1976); Cliffe, Coleman and Doornbos (1977); and Buijtenhuijs and Geschiere (1978).

Notes to Introduction to Part II

1   Derrida 1972:*passim*.

2   Van Binsbergen 2009.

Notes to Chapter 5

1   The essay cited by Shils is Hermann Schmalenbach's 'Die soziologische Kategorie des Bundes', 1922.

2   A different position is taken by Rustow (1967:24–27), who devotes a section of his study to the 'fluidity of allegiance', and by Shibutani and Kwan (1965).

3   Dissenting views pose exceptions to these questions; thoughtful commentary on the nation-building perspective is offered by Obeng (1969).

4   Though suggestive, it seems doubtful whether the concept of identity crisis, originally constructed with reference to individual life experiences, can adequately be transposed to the level of nationalities. For the original concept see Erikson (1958:254).

5   Among African societies, further differences in the level of solidarity can be found; see, for example, Burke (1964:215–216) for a discussion of two contrasting cases.

6   Negative identity is used here in a diametrically different sense from Erikson's (1958:102).

7   See for example Epstein (1958:231). A contrary argument is advanced in Mazrui's essay, 'Pluralism and national integration' (Mazrui 1969:333–350).

8   Lipset's *The first new nation* has failed to recognise the difference in this respect between the American experience and that of the new states (Lipset 1963; Jolles 1964:188–192).

9   Gulliver (1969:12) denies the possibility of this distinction on practical grounds.

10   To borrow from the title of Rothchild and Chazan's collection, The precarious balance: State and society in Africa (1988).

Notes to Chapter 6

1   Quoted on the jacket of the 1970 reprint of Colson (1962), this quotation is intended as an illustration of the uncritical use of the tribal model in anthropology adopted by the *Times Educational Supplement* review, not as a description of van Velsen (1964).

2   Earlier drafts of this chapter were presented at the *Journal of Southern African Studies*/Social Science Research Council Conference on the Interactions of History and Anthropology in Southern Africa, Manchester, September 1980; and at the African Studies Centre's Africa Colloquium, Leiden, February, 1981. An earlier version was published in the *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 8, 1: 51–81; it was subsequently reprinted, in a revised version, as 'From tribe to ethnicity in Western Zambia: The unit of study as an ideological problem', in: Wim M.J. van Binsbergen & P.L. Geschiere (eds.), *Old modes of production and capitalist encroachment*, London/Boston: Kegan Paul International, chapter 6, by the kind permission of the journal's editors and of Oxford University Press. I am indebted to R. Buijtenhuijs, C. Bundy, R. Frankenberg, P. Konings, A. Mafeje, C. Mitchell, C. Murray, T. Ranger, P. Worsley and especially P. Geschiere for comments and criticism; for full acknowledgements concerning my research into 'Nkoya' ethnicity, see van Binsbergen (1981b:5f). The approach as developed in this chapter was greatly influenced by the discussions of the Amsterdam Working Group on Marxist Anthropology.

3   Some progress, however, has been made with regard to the religious aspect of modes of production: see Houtart (1980), Houtart and Lemercinier (1977) and, with special emphasis on articulation, van Binsbergen (1981b).

4   Godelier (1973:93–131): 'le concept de tribu'.

5   See Meillassoux (1964) and Terray (1969); similar criticism is also to be found in Kahn and Llobera (1980:88): 'these writers appear to share the view that "societies" as conceived by traditional anthropology are relevant units of analysis'.

    Rey, however is a different case: without explicitly discussing the problem of ethnicity, in his monograph on the Mossendjo area (Congo-Brazzaville) he takes not a 'tribe', but the region, as his unit of analysis. For an assessment of Rey's approach to ideology, see van Binsbergen (1984).

6   This point is argued at great length in van Binsbergen (1981b:ch. 1, 7, 8).

7   This is already clear from the titles of the works of Colson (1958; 1960; 1962/1970), Watson (1958), Turner (1968a; 1968b), Colson and Gluckman (1959), Gluckman (1957; 1965), Cunnison (1959/1967), Marwick (1965) and Scudder (1962). This selection does not include articles and papers, studies by Rhodes-Livingstone researchers outside rural Zambia, or studies (such as Richards (1939)) not published under the aegis of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute.

8   Mitchell (1956; 1969), Epstein (1958), Gluckman (1960) and Harries-Jones (1969).

9   Van Velsen (1964; 1967), Turner (1968a). Strictly speaking, of course, van Velsen's work was not a direct contribution to Zambian rural anthropology, based as it was on fieldwork in Malawi. Its impact on both rural and urban studies in Zambia was, however, immense.

10 J. van Velsen, personal communication, September, 1980.

11 Gluckman (1968a); see Gluckman (1945), where the concept of tribe is used in the same fashion. One would have expected a lengthy discussion of the problem of tribe in Gluckman's *Closed systems and open minds: The limits of naïvety in social anthropology* (1964), but apart from a cursory remark relating to Bailey's research in India, little of relevance can be found there. The book is about the uses and limitations of anthropologists' naivety vis-à-vis other disciplines, not their own. Hence, I assume, the assertion by Gluckman (1964:199, n. 44) that he considers himself an expert on tribes.

12 The subtitle of his publication (1968).

13 Perhaps the last researchers to discuss contemporary social situations in rural Zambia in terms of a 'tribal community' on the basis of their own fieldwork were Johnson and Bond (1974). However, in his monograph, Bond (1976) did much better than that. Meanwhile the Zambian material remains available for non-fieldworkers to take their pick. Thus Sharp (1981) discusses an Afrikaans South African M.A. thesis on ethnicity in Zambia by J.H. Booysens (1978). Based on library research, Booysens's argument is built on the notion of nineteenth-century tribes (ethnieë) founded in primordial attachments and insurmountable mutual hostilities. Sharp, of course, points out the close links between such a view of ethnicity and the ideology of apartheid.

14 Lancaster (1966; 1971; 1974; 1977). The title of Lancaster's book (1981) follows the Rhodes-Livingstone pattern in its loosely descriptive use of the tribal label. Poewe's work on Luapula is remarkably free from tribal illusions (1978; 1979; 1981), in which she continues the pattern set by Cunnison.

15 Extensive reference, however, is made to Gluckman's work on Barotseland. Gwyn Prins's (1979) dismissive review of *Roots* (as the book is affectionately called among Southern Africanists, who have already accorded it the status of a modern classic) seems to imply that the book could have done with rather more anthropological inspiration.

16 On the crucial significance of the specialist audience in the process of methodological and theoretical innovation, see de Groot (1966:27f).

17 See Kuper (1977b; 1980). Quoted in this context, these references do not do full justice to the type of regional comparative analysis Kuper is engaged in.

18 My fieldwork was conducted in Kaoma district, Western Zambia, and Lusaka respectively from February 1972 to April 1974, September to November 1977, and August 1978.

19 Douglas (1964b), Richards (1950), Turner (1967) and van Binsbergen (1981b); the latter study, however, does reflect on the problem of the unit of study: see van Binsbergen (1981b:13f, 66f, 136f, 216f).

20   See van Binsbergen (1979b:31f) for a discussion of this problem with regard to the definition of kin groups among the 'Nkoya'; the significance of situational aspects in the description and analysis of religious phenomena is stressed in van Binsbergen (1981b:37f, 84), and in the Introduction to van Binsbergen and Schoffeleers (1985).

21   Notably, an exploration of regional patterns of religious change throughout Southern Central Africa: see van Binsbergen (1981b).

22   See Helm (1968), Gutkind (1970) and Godelier (1973). While the concept of 'tribe' is under heavy attack in modern anthropology, we should not ignore the fact that outside this discipline, and particularly in political science, there is a considerable amount of literature that still attaches primary, or at least independent, significance to ethnic factors (consider the work of such authors as Bienen, Rothchild and LeVine).

23   Luyana (cf. Givon (1971) is the old court language among the Lozi. It has managed to preserve itself despite the rapid and universal adoption of the Southern Bantu Kololo language in the first half of the nineteenth century. Luyana and Kololo (= Lozi) are not mutually intelligible, but Luyana and Nkoya (or Mashasha) are.

24   See van Binsbergen (1981b:21), where this point is argued at greater length.

25   It was reported, as such, by: G.H. Nicholls, 'Notes on the natives inhabiting the Baluba subdistrict' 1906, enclosure in KTJ 2/1, Zambia National Archives, Lusaka; Stirke (1922:63); Smith and Dale (1920), vol. i, p. 94; Clay (1946:4); van Binsbergen (1988b) presents Rev. J.M. Shimunika's compilation of local ethnohistory, *Likota lya Bankoya*. For a daring but historically untenable approach to male puberty ceremonies in this part of Zambia, see de Heusch (1978).

26   See Colson (1964; 1968). In her 1964 chapter she critically assesses the tribal model as applied to precolonial Africa. However, the greater sophistication vis-à-vis tribes in Colson's later work does not seem to affect the validity of my observations concerning the implicit, loosely descriptive use of the tribal model in much of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute work, including her own. Further see Lancaster (1974) and Roberts (1976:63f).

27   See Tabler (1963a); Nicholls (see note 76); reports on the Gielgud-Anderson expedition to the Kafue Hook, BS1/93 and KTJ 1/1, Zambia National Archives, Lusaka; van Binsbergen (1988b); Bailey (1913; 1914); Smith and Dale (1920) and Holy (1975).

28   van Binsbergen 1988b; interview, Naliele Royal Establishment, Kaoma district, 28 October 1977.

29   Livingstone (1958). In addition to the sources mentioned in note 78, and the official tribal and linguistic maps published over the years by the Surveyor general, sources on this point include: Merle Davis (1933): 'tribal map'; Fortune (1959; 1963) and Mankoya District Notebook, KSX 4, Zambia National Archives, Lusaka.

30   Adopting Lancaster's (1974) approach.

31   The Lozi prefix *Ma-* instead of the Nkoya form *Ba-* points to the fact that the administrators' perception of the Nkoya as an ethnic group reflected Lozi views, rather than the local people's self-perception.

32   The probably more substantial pressure exerted by Chinyama chiefs coming in from the north is not reflected in collective Nkoya memory as documented in my data – probably as a result of two factors: extensive assimilation of Chinyama and Mbwela/Nkoya elements over the past centuries, and the considerable geographical distance between the main sites where I conducted oral historical research and the area where the Chinyama impact was primarily felt. See, however, Derricourt and Papstein (1977) and Papstein (1978).

33   As I found during my 2011 revisit to eastern Nkoyaland, forty years later (for which I am financially indebted to the African Studies Centre, Leiden, the Netherlands), this situation has improved, but not dramatically so.

34   A very similar case involves the Luvale as studied by Papstein (1978; 1980). My discussions with Robert Papstein since 1974 have greatly contributed to my understanding of Nkoya history and its crucial role in Nkoya ethnicity.

35   For the history of Western Zambia, see Mutumba Mainga (1973). Dr Mainga's work is particularly resented by modern and traditional Nkoya leaders today because of the way she handled the oral materials presented to her at the Nkoya chiefly capitals; however, this is not the place to assess whether such resentment is justified. Further, see Caplan (1970), Stokes (1966), Mulford (1967:ch. vi), Prins (1980) and Ranger (1968b). For approaches from a Marxist point of view, see Clarence-Smith (1979) and Frankenberg (1978). On the Nkoya specifically, see Clay (1946), van Binsbergen (1988b), Anonymous [Shimunika] [n.d.] and van Binsbergen (1981b:ch. 4, 5, 7).

36   During my 2011 revisit, I was greatly surprised to hear members of the Nkoya elite operating at the national level (civil servants, minor diplomats, executive officers) still passionately voice the same narratives of Nkoya humiliation at the hands of the cruel, arrogant, ungrateful Lozi aristocracy that constituted the core Nkoya ethnic discourse in the 1970s. Nonetheless, no such elite existed in the 1970s, and when it emerged in subsequent decades, many of its members had dual Nkoya-Lozi family allegiance. The rise of a privileged Nkoya section at the national level of Zambia went hand in hand with increasing Lozi, Luvale and Luchazi encroachment on Nkoya lands in Kaoma district, and with Nkoya politicians' and would-be politicians' remarkable pattern of continually shifting political allegiance within the multi-party democratic process that had emerged in Zambia since the late 1980s. In the domain of traditional politics, the 1990s saw increasing Nkoya challenges (both through legal means and through physical violence) of Lozi claims of overlordship – which was a reason for extensive state intervention in royal succession of the Kahare title in 2002. What complicated the Nkoya-Lozi issue was that, at the national level, Lozi secessionist tendencies (which had always existed ever since independence in 1964) were coming to a head with the imminent dissolution of the 1964 Barotseland Agreement that had granted Western Province and its Lozi traditional administration (including, ironically, the Nkoya royal chiefs!) extensive privileges in comparison with other Zambian traditional leaders. See van Binsbergen (1992b); (1992a/1995 (this volume, chapter 8); (1999a (this volume, chapter 10); (2000b).

37   In 1972 the ANC was incorporated into UNIP as part of the creation of 'one-party participatory democracy' in Zambia.

38   Testamenta ya Yipya/Nyimbo (1952).

39   The term 'branch of production', for a complex of productive activities that can be meaningfully distinguished within a mode of production, derives from Terray (1969). Beach (1977) applied this term successfully to the precolonial Shona economy, although his argument is essentially non-Marxist. A related concept is that of 'form of production', defined by Le Brun and Gerry (1975:20) as existing for instance, 'at the margins of the capitalist mode of production, but [...] nevertheless integrated into and subordinate to it'. For a preliminary description of branches of production in the social formation at Kaoma district, see van Binsbergen (1978); this is subsequently worked out in van Binsbergen (1992b).

40   Oral evidence on this institution and its historical development is scanty, but we may surmise that what was involved was actually a local version of the institution of pawnship, postulated by Douglas (1964b) to form a general feature of clan structures in the Central African matrilineal belt.

41   In addition to oral traditions I collected myself, there are four collections systematised by their collectors/authors: Clay (1946), Ikacana (1971), van Binsbergen (1988b) and Anonymous [Shimunika] [n.d.]. For extensive treatment of this material and relevant archival data, see van Binsbergen 1992b.

42   Mutumba Mainga (1973); Papstein (1978); Van Horn (1977); Clarence-Smith (1979).

43   Stokes (1966); Caplan (1970); Van Horn (1977:155f).

44   Materials for such an interpretation may be gleaned from Mutumba Mainga (1973), Prins (1980), Roberts (1976:115f) and Flint (1970).

45   This is an important point. Allegiance to a particular chief tends to form a focus for a Zambian's perception of his or her rural home and ethnic affiliation. This is reflected, and reinforced, in Zambia's administrative procedures. Since independence in 1964, ethnic affiliation has never been asked by census enumerators – in 'One Zambia One Nation' (one of UNIP's main

slogans), ethnic affiliation officially does not exist, but a person's chief appears on a citizen's national registration card.

46   This interpretation of ethnicity as an ideological response to the articulation of modes of production comes close to my analysis of religious, as distinct from ethnic, mobilisation in the case of the Lumpa church in Northern Zambia; see van Binsbergen (1981b:4865, 266–316).

47   If one were to define the concept of social formation as the particular interrelationship between various articulated modes of production at a given time and place (Terray), rather than as a specific interrelationship between infrastructure and superstructure at a given time and place (Godelier), such a concept of social formation might in fact begin to provide the sort of unit of study under which to subsume the present analysis of ethnicity in terms of, among others, a response to the articulation of modes of production. However, such a social formation would have to be considered, Wallerstein-fashion, in the context of the total world system, since the dialectics of Nkoya ethnicity refer at the same time to the provincial, the national and the intercontinental level; the analytical gains of adopting such an expanding, and theoretically contentious, unit of study would then be very limited.

Notes to Chapter 7

1   For early literature on Ankole, see Roscoe (1923), Oberg (1940), Katate and Kamugungunu (1955), Stenning (1959) and Morris (1962); for early literature on Toro, see Gorju (1920), Stenning (1959) and Taylor (1962). Also see Beattie (1965) and Dunbar (1965).

2   The major documents of this process included the *African Local Government Ordinance* (Uganda Protectorate 1949); *District Administration (District Council) Ordinance* (Uganda Protectorate 1955); *Local Administration Ordinance* (Uganda Protectorate 1962a); *Administration (Western Kingdoms and Busoga) Act* (Uganda Government 1963a); the renegotiated *Agreements* with the kingdoms of Buganda, Ankole, Toro and Bunyoro (appended as Schedules to the *Constitution of Uganda* (Uganda Government 1962b); *Report of an inquiry into African local government in the Protectorate of Uganda* (Wallis report) (Uganda Protectorate 1953); *Report of the Constitutional Committee* (Wild report) (Uganda Protectorate 1959b); *Report of the Uganda Relationships Commission* (Munster report) (Uganda Protectorate 1961) and *Report of the Uganda Independence Conference* (Uganda Protectorate 1962b).

3   It should be noted that during the first three decades of the twentieth century the chiefs who were found guilty of such breaches to jurisdiction were not only Bahima, but included a substantial number of Baganda who had been brought to Ankole. However, it appears that the Bairu have regarded the role of the Baganda chiefs as being basically supportive of the Bahima superstructure.

4   Although the nature of the concerns of these groups caused them, at that time, to avoid official (that is, Batoro) scrutiny, it is surprising that an anthropologist who spent considerable time during the early 1950s in Bwamba did not notice anything of this activity. In his book *Bwamba, a structural-functional analysis of a patrilineal society,* Edward H. Winter writes: 'Of enormous importance, since it affects almost all contemporary questions, is the fact that the Amba, far from resenting the attitudes which the Toro hold toward them, admit that they are inferior people. Their greatest desire at the present time is to emulate the Toro and to become as fully Toro-ised as possible. One very important implication of this is that the Amba are by no means restive under the rule of the Toro but are more than willing to submit to their authority' (Winter 1950:7). Clearly, the structural-functional approach in the social sciences was not known for its capacity to unravel social conflicts.

5   For some time Mukirane also served as a research assistant to Tom Stacey, a British journalist interested in the history of the Bakonzo. Their close relationship prompted the Uganda government, at the end of 1962, to invite Stacey to try to persuade the separatist leader to change his course of action. An account of Stacey's abortive mission can be found in his *Summons to Ruwenzori* (1965).

6   This arrangement was not dissimilar to that made by the Rwenzururu government, which also appointed nominal chiefs for some of the counties of Toro outside its immediate control. Through this gesture, it apparently sought to reaffirm its claim that Rwenzururians were the original inhabitants of Toro, who were pushed on to the mountainside as a result of Batoro invasions from Bunyoro. The Rwenzururu position was that the Batoro must vacate the area for Rwenzururians.

7   The possibility of the collapse of the movement was anticipated following Mukirane's death. In the conclusion to the Rwenzururu government report on his accomplishments it was stated: 'Let us go forward, let us not deceive ourselves that since Mukirane has died ... also the Rwenzururu movement is dead. Not at all, the Rwenzururu movement lives and will always be kept alive, even by our sons and daughters'.

Notes to Chapter 8

1   An earlier, Dutch version of this chapter was presented at the Free University, Amsterdam, on 20 March 1992 (van Binsbergen 1992a/1995). The present version was expanded in the light of additional insights gained during two short visits to Zambia in May and October 1992, as well as correspondence with members of the Kazanga Cultural Association, a perusal of the association's files as kept by its honorary secretary, and analysis of videotapes and photographs of the Kazanga ceremonies held in 1991 and 1992 as kindly made available by Messrs J. Kapangila and W.M. Shihenya.

2   See Genesis 2:19.

3   Fardon (1987), however, denies the existence of universals in the study of ethnicity.

4   See Lévi-Strauss (1962a; 1962b).

5   See Salamone (1975); and Schultz (1984). The few migrants from Kaoma district who are successful in town sometimes seek to pose as members of a more prestigious ethnic group: Bemba or Lozi. Such posing ('passing') is a much-studied aspect of ethnic and race relations in North America; see Drake and Cayton (1962:159f).

6   As stressed by Horowitz (1975); Fardon (1987); and Prunier (1989).

7   See Chrétien and Prunier (1989); Tonkin, McDonald and Chapman (1989) and Vail (1989a; 1989b).

8   A famous example of such ambiguity is Leach (1954). Also see Barth (1969/1970); Doornbos (1978b); Mitchell (1956; 1974); and Lemarchand (1983).

9   Gutkind (1970); Helm (1968); Godelier (1973), especially pp. 93–131: 'Le concept de tribu: Crise d'un concept ou crise des fondements empiriques de l'anthropologie?'

10   See Ranger (1982); and Vail (1989a; 1989b).

11   Among many studies I cite only the classic Mitchell (1956).

12   For an excellent analysis, see Bayart (1989), especially pp. 65–86: 'Le théâtre d'ombres de l'ethnicité'.

13   See Buijtenhuijs (1991); and Buijtenhuijs and Rijnierse (1993).

14   A trend in Dutch and Belgian research on ethnicity from the 1980s onward has sought to address this one-sidedness by stressing cultural aspects; see Schilder and van Binsbergen (1993).

15   Within the limited scope of this chapter I cannot do justice to the very extensive, multi-disciplinary literature on identity. One of the most influential authors on identity has been the psychiatrist Erikson (eg Erikson, 1968). Valuable anthropological studies on ethnic identity include de Vos and Romanucci-Ross (1975); Horowitz (1975); and Jacobson-Widding (1983). For Zambia specifically, see *Ethos and identity* (Epstein 1978), which dissociates itself from the earlier emphasis on more classification in the ethnicity research of Epstein's close colleague Mitchell (1956; 1974). A masterly approach, with emphasis on expressive culture, is taken by Blacking (1983). For an inspiring French contribution, see Amselle (1990).

16 Such continuity was especially stressed by Vansina (1966) in his pioneering work on the history of the southern savanna in Africa; van Binsbergen (1981b) is an attempt to explore the religious dimension of this continuity.

17 For a similar insight, see Uchendu (1975:265).

18 Early researchers of ethnic phenomena in Africa have been persuaded, precisely by this aspect, to analyse ethnicity in terms of *primordial identity* – a view exploded by Doornbos (1972).

19 Marxist anthropology analyses the mediation between such fundamentally structured social sectors in terms of the articulation, or linking, of modes of production; see Geschiere (1982) and van Binsbergen and Geschiere (1985a), and references cited there. Although the study of ethnicity demonstrates that the symbolic domain cannot be regarded as clearly subordinate to production and reproduction, the articulation of modes of production perspective remains inspiring in this field – see van Binsbergen (1985b).

20 The central role of this type of broker is discussed in an extensive anthropological literature, in which Barth (1966) features as a classic.

21 In ethnic mediation, the outside world does not consist purely of the state and nothing more. Peel (1989) describes Yoruba ethnicity as a nineteenth-century project in which an early church leader played a leading part – as was the case among the Nkoya. Vail (1989a) mentions, besides local politicians and church leaders, academic researchers as mediators in many ethnicisation processes in Southern Africa; see Papstein (1989); and van Binsbergen (1985b). The mediation process is also a theme in Ranger (1982). Studies of Afrikaners or Boers in South Africa have also elucidated the role of creative writers, and in this respect there are numerous parallels with other parts of Africa, such as Okot p'Bitek as a champion of Acholi ethnicity in Uganda (van de Werk 1980).

22 See Edelstein (1974); Saul (1979); Kahn (1981); and van Binsbergen (1985b). Until the 1980s, the Marxist approach dominated the study of ethnicity among South African blacks. The struggle against the apartheid state as a manipulator or even creator of black ethnicity has led analysts – in a way which is laudable from a political point of view, but too reductionist from a scholarly point of view – to deny the status of ethnicity as an independent variable: ethnicity for them could not be anything but perverted class consciousness – eg Simons and Simons (1969); Mafeje (1971); Phimister and van Onselen (1979). This was clearly a militant challenge of the tenets of the apartheid minority state. Since the late 1980s we have witnessed a gradual move away from this position among South African students of ethnicity (eg Beinart (1987), who presents a detailed biography of a labour migrant, and in the process pays ample attention to the ethnic strategies of the black population).

23 Fieldwork in Kaoma district and among migrants from Kaoma district living in Lusaka was undertaken in 1972 to 1974, and during shorter visits between 1977 and 2011 generously financed by the African Studies Centre, Leiden. I owe a debt of gratitude to the Netherlands Foundation for Tropical Research (WOTRO) for financing one year of writing up in 1974 to 1975. On the local society and its history, see van Binsbergen (1981b; 1985b; 1987b; 1991b; 1991c; 1992b); and van Binsbergen and Geschiere (1985a), especially pp. 261–270, 'Production at a Zambian chief's court'; and references cited in these publications.

24 On the Lozi, especially known from the work of Max Gluckman, see Prins (1980) and extensive references there.

25 On the Luvale, see Papstein (1989) and references there.

26 There are indications (whose linguistic plausibility I cannot judge) that the name Nkoya goes back even further: that it is a corruption of the name 'Kola', which designates the Lunda core area – the cradle of many dynasties in South Central Africa.

27 In the northern part of Barotseland in 1940 the Luvale group managed to break away from Lozi administration and to create their own district directly under the central state: see Papstein (1989); for the influence of this process on Nkoya ethnicity, see van Binsbergen (1992b:39).

28 In fact the Andrew Murray Memorial Mission, later named 'Africa Evangelical Fellowship', whose mission church became organisationally independent under the name 'Evangelical Church in Zambia'.

29   *Testamenta* (1952).

30   Anonymous [Shimunika] [n.d.] and Shimunika's magnum opus: *Likota lya Bankoya*, edited by myself in both Nkoya and English: van Binsbergen (1988b; 1992b). The English translation in the 1992 edition was made by Mr M. Malapa (chairman of the Kazanga association, 1988–1991) and myself.

31   Two political organisations under were founded under a 'Mankoya' banner: the Mankoya and Bantu Fighting Fund and the Mankoya Front; however, accused of 'tribalist' agitation, these were very soon prohibited. Further, the creation of an African National Congress (ANC) branch in Mankoya was initially prevented by the colonial authorities in collusion with the Lozi indigenous administration (Mulford 1967).

32   Caplan (1970); Molteno (1974).

33   In 1989 those seated in the state loge included the Cabinet Minister for Labour, Social Development and Culture Mr J. Mulimba, also member of the UNIP Central Committee; the Junior Minister of Culture Mr L. Tembo; Mr J. Kalaluka, a private citizen, until 1988 member of parliament for part of the district and Minister of Economic Affairs; and Mrs S. Mulenga, wife of the Kaoma district governor, who was himself prevented by illness from attending.

34   According to the 1989 programme, the list of solo dancers featured Mwene Mutondo himself, whose royal dance was to constitute the culmination of the festival. However, this part of the programme was cancelled – the reason given being that the aged chief was not feeling well (he died of old age in 1990, two weeks after that year's Kazanga festival), but another important reason was probably that the festival directors were prevented from articulating Mutondo hegemony any more than was already the case even without Mwene Mutondo's solo dance.

35   Remarkable nevertheless is the fact that the *misisi*, a woman's upper garment derived from the Victorian dress of early missionary women in Barotseland and as such the neo-traditional dress of the Lozi elite, is never seen to be worn at Kazanga, although several prominent Nkoya women do possess a *misisi* and do not hesitate to wear one at public gatherings at the provincial level, which roughly coincides with the former Barotseland. Even though the Lozi are not explicitly referred to as ethnic enemies during Kazanga, elements suggestive of a cultural heritage shared between Nkoya and Lozi are avoided at this festival.

The absence of open expressions of Nkoya–Lozi hostility at Kazanga does not mean, however, that this is no longer an issue. From the 1980s onwards such hostility has been exacerbated by the fact that individual Lozi farmers take possession (often with the consent of the Nkoya chiefs!) of fallow land which the Nkoya consider as ancestrally theirs. Kazanga members claim that prominent Lozi are trying to discredit Kazanga by spreading the rumour that human sacrifice is secretly practised on that occasion, as in the original form of Kazanga over a century ago. Moreover, early in 1991 Kazanga leaders helped Mwene Mutondo and Mwene Kahare appeal to President Kaunda to prevent the Lozi Paramount Chief from abolishing their chieftainship or at least making them totally subordinate to the Lozi establishment at Naliele. The President's intervention reinforced his popularity in the district, to such an extent that even after the national victory of the Movement for Multi-party Democracy (MMD) in October 1991 UNIP continued to have a strong backing in Kaoma district. In the Kazanga executive, UNIP and MMD supporters worked hand in hand in the late 1980s and early 1990s. This pattern of trans-party collaboration has continued in recent decades, with a greater variety of political parties on the national scene. Many actual and would-be national-level politicians with a full or partial Nkoya background seem to see Kazanga primarily as a context in which to collect a regional ethnic following – to be delivered by these politicians to any party willing to reward the gesture with national-level political office, notably a seat in Parliament.

36   Politically and culturally the Nkoya are closely related to the Luvale. The distinct ethnic boundary which exists today with regard to male circumcision between the Nkoya (who now ridicule the custom) and the Luvale (who continue to practise it, along with the attending *mukanda* initiation ceremonies) is largely a development of the past hundred years (van Binsbergen 1992b:214 and *passim*; 1991d).

37   Given the official abhorrence of 'tribalism' in the Zambian political culture, the chairman in his speech (originally in English) avoids the charged word 'tribes', instead using 'kinds', which is the

literal translation of *mishobo* (sing. *mushobo*); this word is used by Nkoya speakers to denote not only 'species' and 'kind', but also 'tribe' or 'ethnic group'. Because of the closeness of these meanings, most Nkoya speakers among the audience would have missed the subtle distinction between 'kinds' and 'tribes'.

38   Obviously the suspicion of tribalism was the official reason why the media had stayed away. However, the presence of two ministers suggests that the opinions within the Zambian political centre were divided on this point. From 1991 Kazanga received ample media coverage, both in terms of regular announcements before the event (Kazanga has been one of only five ethnic annual festivals in the country to be so announced) and in over an hour of television broadcasting of the programme itself.

39   Official address by Mr M. Malapa, chairman of the Kazanga Cultural Association, at Shikombwe, 1 July 1989.

40   Less than 1 per cent of the Zambian population speak Nkoya as a first language, but given the high degree of multilingualism in Western Zambia we may assume the number of those who speak Nkoya as a second language to be somewhat higher.

41   The (correctly used) Nkoya word for culture here is *shihemuwa*, literally: 'origin, descent, that which one acquires at birth' (*hemuwa*); the word thus coincides with the analytical term 'ascription'.

42   Official address by Mr L. Tembo M.P., Junior Minister of Culture, at Shikombwe, 1 July 1989.

43   See Brown (1984); Kawanga (1978); and my own publications.

44   See below, concluding paragraphs.

45   See Brown (1984); van Binsbergen (1987a); and references there.

46   The morphology of the Nkoya word Kazanga is: *Ka* [nominal prefix, human person, singular] + v *z* ['to come'] + *anga* [verbal suffix, iterative]: 'the one who comes lastingly or repeatedly'. It thus refers to the chiefs' entrances, to the people's annual coming together on the occasion of the ceremony, and also to the ascent of the Nkoya, who articulate their culture at the national level as a self-asserting ethnic group, and probably even to the ethnic brokers who hope to be 'coming men' in the political sense. Probably the word also contains a reference to the harvest (which comes repeatedly, ie annually), personalised as a concept or as a supernatural being – the principle which renders the new food inedible until it has been dedicated in the right manner. Because of the association with *kwezanga mutena* ('the coming of the day, dawn, east') the word Kazanga ties in with the national political symbolism of UNIP (whose slogan has been *Kwacha!*, 'Sunrise!') but especially with the old cosmological notions in Kaoma district (and not only there) as expressed in the standard prayer used in purification and healing rituals at the village shrine: the good things in life come, as the rising sun, from the east, whereas the bad things, like the day at sunset, must depart to the west ('*kwayanga mutena*'). Incidentally, Lusaka lies east of Kaoma district, and Kahare's *lukena* lies east of that of Mutondo; at Kazanga, Kahare's temporary *lukena* was also situated east of Mutondo's permanent capital.

47   Van Binsbergen (1992b:49f). Human sacrifice was not an unusual aspect of the royal cult in South Central Africa: in the states of Kaoma district and the surrounding region slaves were ritually sacrificed not only at Kazanga but also to the *lilapa* and to the royal drums, on the occasion of royal burials, and for the preparation of royal medicine. Substitution of sacrificial animals for humans was not possible, since in this tsetse-infested region there were hardly any domestic animals, and hunting and fishing yielded the principal sources of animal protein.

48   Around 1870, fleeing from Yeke raiders who were tributaries to the formidable king Msidi (cf Reefe 1981), Mwene Kahare Kabimba passed so close to Mwene Mutondo Shinkisha's *lukena* that his party could hear the sound of her royal orchestra; however, Kabimba preferred to continue his wanderings, at the end of which he was flayed by the Yeke, than to appeal to his colleague, who was also his kinswoman (van Binsbergen 1992b:396 and *passim*).

49   When around 1820 the Lozi king Mulambwa came to visit Mwene Kayambila, one of Shinkisha's predecessors, in order to request royal medicine and a royal orchestra, a temporary royal court was built for Mulambwa and his retinue in an open space between two villages; this location is still known today (van Binsbergen 1992b:417 and *passim*).

50   Capello and Ivens (1886: i, 419); van Binsbergen (1992b:131).

51   During my visits to Shikombwe in the late 1970s there was no such structure at this central and public spot, the shrine being inside the *lilapa*. In an interview I conducted at the Shikombwe Royal Establishment on 5 May 1992, with the *Mwanashihemi* and the *Mwana Mwene* (other courtiers present), it was stated that when the shrine was deliberately moved for the occasion of the Kazanga ceremony, the original ancestral sticks – which appear to be of great antiquity, both as a type and as individual specimens – were dug up from the *lilapa* area and placed in the ground at the new location (a most irreverent and unusual procedure). In that interview it was emphasised that the dynastic shrine bestowed on the *Mwene* who owned it the right to oversee the *mukanda* male initiation ritual – this ties in with other evidence (see note below). Melland (1967/1923:133f, 167) describes a similar type of shrine in the context of the Lunda of North-Western Zambia; the Lunda also practise *mukanda*. For information about the Kahare dynastic shrine, which is totally different, see van Binsbergen (1981b:plates 3a, b); the Kahare dynasty is claimed to have rejected *mukanda* from the very beginning.

52   Situated in that conceptual centre is no longer the earth, as formerly symbolised by the anthill, but representations of royal ancestors. In this respect the shrine, despite the partial Christianisation of the region since the early twentieth century, is really a belated step in a much older process which has taken place over much of South Central Africa in the course of the past five hundred years, during which stranger rulers, in their search for local legitimacy, seized power over the older cult of the land by proposing their own dynastic ancestors as mediators of rain, fertility and crops, and as fighting against the forces (of murder, incest and sorcery) which threaten these blessings, and thus as guardians of the social and cosmic order. See Schoffeleers (1979); Ranger (1985b); and van Binsbergen (1981b).

53   Cunnison (1956).

54   Primarily because, as break-away dissidents from Mwaat Yaamv's Lunda empire, they rejected the idea of an overarching, inter-regional authority, as well as the central ritual basis for such an authority, the *mukanda* complex of male circumcision; the latter was soon to be the occasion for a war with the Humbu branch of the Lunda, and remained a bone of contention between the Kahare title and the Mutondo title, which emerged later – the latter trying repeatedly to restore *mukanda* (van Binsbergen 1992b; 1991d).

55   Van Binsbergen (1992b:234f).

56   Van Binsbergen (1992ba:295f and *passim*).

57   The Nkoya used to have such drums prior to incorporation into the Kololo/Lozi state in the mid-nineteenth century; the Lozi Paramount Chief has had them throughout the twentieth century until the present. According to one rather convincing etymology, the Kaoma river, after which the nearby district capital and the district as a whole was named in 1969, was named thus by Mwene Liyoka in about 1850 since its banks were the scene of the destruction of one of his *Mawoma* (van Binsbergen 1992b:310 and *passim*). Thus President Kaunda's 1969 attempt to 'detribalise' the name of the district by changing it from Mankoya to Kaoma ironically ended up with a name which implicitly refers to a central Nkoya symbol of power and identity; however, for a Bemba speaker such as President Kaunda, the name Kaoma would primarily evoke ethnically neutral associations with the High God, who is called Nyambi in Nkoya. Ever since Lozi incorporation, the capture and subsequent prohibition of the Nkoya *Mawoma* has been felt to be the most tangible symbol of humiliation. Although enlightened Nkoya today, such as those making up the Kazanga executive, are aware that under the post-colonial state the Lozi traditional authorities can no longer stop the Nkoya chiefs from re-adopting *Mawoma*, it has nevertheless taken a very long time for the Nkoya royal chiefs to act on this knowledge. It was only in the mid-1990s that Mwene Mutondo had a *Mawoma* made, which he proudly demonstrated to me. The drum was properly installed with time-honoured, secret ceremonial.

58   As a member of the national House of Chiefs, as a UNIP trustee, as a member of the Kaoma Rural Council, and as a close relative of the only Nkoya minister and member of parliament.

59   These discs, widespread in South Central and Southern Africa, are made from the polished circular bottom of the *Conus* shell, which occurs in the Indian Ocean. They constituted important trade items in precolonial times, and have formed major symbols of royal status. In

Nkoya they are called *zimpande*, sing. *mpande*; a general Southern African term is *ndoro*. See Jeffreys (1953).

60   Only Mwene Momba dons an additional item of regalia: a loose black, red-bordered gown – the official garment which the colonial state issued to chiefs in Southern Province, that is, outside Barotseland, and which has persisted ever since. For an analysis of the symbolism of dress and bodily stance of Zambian chiefs and modern politicians, as a key to their mutual relationships, see van Binsbergen (1987a).

61   I have followed the vicissitudes of the Kazanga Cultural Association and of the Kazanga festival through the 1990s and 2000s, culminating in my revisit of 2011. The Mutondo–Kazanga compromise turned out to be only temporary and unstable, and divisive manifestations of animosity between the two main royal titles, and their followers, have been a recurrent theme in the Kazanga festival in the most recent two decades; see van Binsbergen 2011.

62   Further research is required (eg in the collection of the Livingstone Museum) in order to ascertain whether this absence of visual arts is mainly a result of the iconoclastic influences of Christianity and anti-sorcery movements since the beginning of the twentieth century. If there was a visual art tradition before that time it probably consisted largely of objects from the sphere of the ancestral cult and of sorcery. To my knowledge the ancestral sticks in the Mutondo shrine – an unmistakable form of representational art – are unique in this district, but, as stated above, they do occur elsewhere in North-Western Zambia – in fact they have a wide distribution on the African continent.

63   From the Greek polυ, 'many', and coroσ, 'dance'.

64   For instance, in 1973 to 1974 in the valleys of Njonjolo and Kazo, where barely a thousand inhabitants were distributed among about forty small villages, during the dry winter season from May to August hardly a weekend passed without a major, ritually prescribed musical event taking place in one of the villages. The rate and scale of musical performance at the village level has since declined gradually but considerably, and at present-day Kazanga (cf van Binsbergen 2011) village performing troupes now constitute a minority, among a larger number from regional schools and from urban areas.

65   See van Velsen (1971/1964); Turner (1957).

66   See van Binsbergen (1991b).

67   The commercialisation of musical and dancing performance in the context of Kazanga has been far more prominent in the case of the Lusaka troupe, which performs not only in ceremonial and ethnic contexts but can also be engaged, for a negotiable fee, to perform in bars around Lusaka.

68   Van Binsbergen (1992b:407f).

69   One theoretically important contradiction, which is unmistakable in the village society of Kaoma district but which does not seem to be expressed in Kazanga, is that between (male) elders and youth. Further reflection is needed on this point.

70   However, there are among the spectators a few white missionaries from the Luampa mission station (the main focus of Christianisation in the district since 1923); after the festival they make use of the opportunity to peddle, to the assembled public, religious tracts and song books which the mission has produced in the Nkoya language.

71   See van Binsbergen (1981; 199ba:ch. 6). Likewise, any reference to these cults, despite their conspicuous dominance, is absent from Shimunika's work.

72   On this aspect of cultural transformations in the African post-colonial state T.O. Ranger and R.P. Werbner organised an inspiring conference at Manchester in 1986, 'Culture and consciousness in Southern Africa', many of the contributions to which have appeared in the *Journal of Southern African Studies*; also see Kaarsholm (1989; 1990).

73   I remind the reader of the *gleichschaltende* stage direction of uniform and motor patterns, the suppression of polyphony and polychory, the financial reward, and the reduction of the majority of those present at the festival to incompetent symbolic consumers.

74   See Werbner (1986) in his review of Comaroff (1985).

75   Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983); the concept formalises a notion which earlier was expressed by the term 'neo-traditional'.

76   On Afrikaners, see Moodie (1975); February (1991); Giliomee (1989); and Hofmeyr (1987); on the Zulu and Inkatha, see Coquerel (1989); Maré and Hamilton (1987); Marks (1989); and Schlemmer (1980).

77   In the study of Dutch multi-cultural society special attention has been paid to ethnic brokers who do not belong to the asserting ethnic groups, but to the (Dutch) outside world – the 'caretakers' (Köbben 1983; van Borselen 1985); for brokers who originate within these ethnic groups themselves, see van Wetering (1991); van der Burg and van der Veer (1986); Koot and Venema (1985); and Bruin (1985).

78   See Clifford and Marcus (1986); and Geertz (1988). Personally I have been preoccupied with the idea of anthropology as cultural mediation between local societies and the cosmopolitan outside world, and have tried to explore some of the attending methodological, aesthetic, ethical and political problems; see van Binsbergen (1984; 1985b; 1988c; 1988a; 1991a); and van Binsbergen and Doornbos (1987).

79   For a critical assessment of precisely this type of universalism in a context of African ethnicity, see Mbembe (1988:44f).

80   The fact that only a few months earlier my book on Nkoya history and ethnicity (van Binsbergen 1992b) had been officially presented to this minister may have been not unrelated to his appearance at Kazanga; ethnic festivals do not evidently fall under the ministry of education.

Notes to Chapter 9

1   Chief Minister in the Toro government.

2   Bukonzo refers to the land the Bakonzo aspired to as their own.

3   Busongora is the plainlands area in south-western Toro, where most Bakonzo live.

4   Isebika is the Lukonzo nickname for the *Omukama* of Toro.

5   Those hiding in the mountains.

6   The name Mukirania presumably refers to Samwiri Mukirania, who assumed power in the Rwenzururu kingdom after the death of Isaya Mukirane in 1966; Baba is a Swahili word for 'father'; Kitenga is a proper name, here connoting 'being powerful'.

7   It is interesting to note, though, that colobus monkeys were used as symbols of authority in a much wider area and were, for example, part of the ritual regalia of special Bunyoro chiefs (Beattie 1971:119).

8   This refers to the copper, lime and salt produced in the areas that Bakonzo claimed were part of Rwenzururu territory.

9   *Bakolikoli* (cowards) refers to the Batoro chiefs who, when replaced by Uganda government agents, were concentrated in Bundibugyo in Bwamba county by the Toro government.

10   The Administrator refers to the representative of the Uganda government, who after 1963 was granted full executive powers over the Rwenzori areas when the Toro administration had broken down.

11   'Syllabic unit' is here used as a synonym for the term 'mora' as used by linguists (for example Tucker (1962) and Cooke (1970).

12   A *nyamulere* is frequently used in performances of ekibiibi songs.

13   Personal communication in 1968.

Notes to Chapter 10

1   An earlier version of this chapter was presented as a paper at the conference on Chiefs in Africa today, African Studies Centre, Leiden, 7 March, 1996. I am indebted to Emile van Rouveroy van Nieuwaal, Rijk van Dijk, Wouter van Beek, Albert Trouwborst, and Henk Meilink for useful comments on an earlier version of that paper. This is a revised version of my contribution to *African chieftaincy in a new socio-economic and political landscape*, edited by E.A.B. van Rouveroy van Nieuwaal and R. van Dijk. Anthropological and oral-historical fieldwork was undertaken in Western Zambia and among migrants from this area in Lusaka from 1972 to 1974, and during shorter periods in 1977, 1978, 1981, 1988, 1989, 1992 (twice), 1994 (twice), and 1995. I am indebted to the Zambian research participants, to the members of my family who shared in the fieldwork, to the Board of the African Studies Centre for research funds, and to the Netherlands Foundation for the Advancement of Tropical Research (WOTRO) for funding a writing-up year in 1974–75. For background reading and evidence on specific points, see my publications as listed in the bibliography. On Nkoya court culture, especially music, also see Brown (1984).

2   From the extensive literature I mention: Apter (1961), Apthorpe (1959), d'Hertefelt and Coupez (1964), de Heusch (1958; 1972; 1982), Fallers (1955), Forde and Kaberry (1969), Fortes and Evans-Pritchard (1969/1940), Gutkind (1963), Mair (1936; 1958), Herskovits (1938), Richards (1960), Schapera (1943; 1963) and Vansina (1962); on Zambia (formerly Northern Rhodesia) specifically, see the older studies cited in the bibliographical footnote on Zambian chiefs below.

3   See van Rouveroy van Nieuwaal (1985; 1987), Nana Arhin Brempong, Ray and van Rouveroy van Nieuwaal (1995), and references cited there.

4   See Bentsi-Enchill (1969), Vanderlinden (1989) and Griffiths (1986).

5   Here I have to admit to an inconsistency in my earlier work on chieftainship, which perhaps can be taken as an indication of the analytical pitfalls in this field: my comparative study of Zambian chiefs and the state (van Binsbergen 1987a) was implicitly conceived along such transactionalist lines, with a wealth of detail on boundary crossing, whereas my specific work on the chiefs of Western Central Zambia, based on much richer data gathered in the course of 25 years in a limited geographic area, has been largely dualistic.

6   The work of my friend and colleague Emile van Rouveroy van Nieuwaal, as cited above, is an excellent example of this trend.

7   The literature on chieftainship in Zambia is far more extensive than can be discussed in this chapter. For the reader's benefit, but also because these works have inspired the present argument, let me mention the principal studies: Bantje (1971), Barnes (1964), Bond (1975; 1976), Bradley (1942), Brelsford (1942; 1944; 1965), Brown (1984), Caplan (1970), Chanock (1985), Chiluwe (1967), Chiwale (1962), Clay (1968), Cunnison (1959/1967; 1968), Gamitto (1960), Garvey (1977), Gluckman (1943; 1963; 1965; 1967; 1968a; 1968b), Hailey (1950–53), Kangamba (1978), Kasevula, Luka and Chipango (1976), Kay (1964), Langworthy (1971), Mulford (1967), Mutumba Mainga (1973), Northern Rhodesia (1943; 1960), O'Brien (1983), Papstein (1989), Prins (1980), Ranger (1968b), Republic of Zambia (1966; 1973), Richards (1935; 1969), Roberts (1973), Sangambo (1979), Shimwaayi Muntemba (1971; 1972), Stokes (1966), van Binsbergen (1977a; 1981b; 1985b; 1986; 1987a; 1992b; 1992a/1995; 1993b/2003), van Binsbergen and Geschiere (1985a:261–270), Vansina (1966), Vitebsky (1985), Werbner (1969) and White (1957).

8   Studies of kingship and its colonial and post-colonial form, chieftainship, in Zambia's Western Province (formerly Bartoseland), include: Brown (1984), Caplan (1970), Clay (1968), Gluckman (1943; 1963; 1965; 1967; 1968a; 1968b), Hailey (1950–53) Mutumba Mainga (1973), Prins (1980), Ranger (1968b), Stokes (1966), van Binsbergen (1977a; 1981b; 1985b; 1986; 1987a; 1992b; 1992a/1995; 1993b/2003) and van Binsbergen and Geschiere (1985a:261–270).

9   Significantly, this name derived from that of the nineteenth-century Lozi capital. The new filial court was originally headed by the Lozi prince Mwanawina; when, following a system of position succession, he had become paramount chief of the Lozi, he was succeeded by prince Mwendaweli, who had been Gluckman's research assistant. This is only one indication of the

fact that Gluckman's view of the Lozi indigenous administration, including its judicial role, was biased towards its ruling elite (cf. Brown 1973; Prins 1980). For an understanding of the Nkoya situation this is unfortunate (van Binsbergen 1977c), but in all fairness it has to be admitted that such partiality in fieldwork is inevitable (my own work on the Nkoya shows a complementary partiality); it did not prevent Gluckman from being one of the most impressive anthropologists of his generation.

10   This is only a twentieth-century development, arising from the fact that under the colonial state a royal capital could no longer, as in precolonial times, be moved over distances of scores of kilometres after the death of the king. However, precolonial royal burial sites surrounded by deserted *zinkena* which have reverted to bush have continued to be venerated, even if at great distances from the capitals of later incumbents.

11   Taking the lead from L.H. Morgan (1870), anthropologists term a society's kinship system 'classificatory' if very wide categories of kinsmen are designated by the same simple kinship term ('father', 'sister', etc.) regardless of the actual genealogical ties between the speaker and the people so addressed. However, today the term is applied without the requirement (which was part of Morgan's definition) that the kin classes thus conceived encompass the whole of society. Thus a Nkoya chief may only have several dozens of (classificatory) sisters – women whom he calls 'sister' (*mpanzami*) and towards whom he observes the kinship rules and obligations applicable to sisters – yet Nkoya society comprises tens of thousands of women.

12   See Hoover, Piper and Spalding (1970a; 1970b) and Spalding (1970).

13   Near the turn of the twentieth century, Mwene Kahare Shamamano killed his drummers on suspicion of having committed adultery with the royal wives. As punishment the Lozi king Lewanika deprived Shamamano of the right to a royal orchestra. Being of the wrong lineage, Shamamano – one of Lewanika's military officers – had entirely owed his accession to the Kahare kingship to Lewanika's intervention. Only in the 1930s were the Kahare royal drums reinstated – with the exception of the largest drum, the *Mawoma*.

14   This is not the only example in the context of Nkoya–Lozi relations in which proclaimed ethnic antagonism is contradicted by actual rapprochement. Other examples in the context of the present argument are Mr Kalaluka's Lozi ancestry, although he was for decades the highest-ranking Nkoya politician; and Mr Mayowe's functioning as the district representative of the Lozi-dominated National Party while he was running for the chieftainship of Mwene Kahare. Many more such examples could be quoted. They highlight the manipulative, strategic element in ethnicisation, and will only puzzle those who have not understood that the emphasis on ethnic identity – in the Nkoya case and in general – as ascribed and inevitable is in itself merely ideological and strategic, not factual.

15   Closely related to one another by language, male circumcision, and identification with the Lunda heritage and with Mwatiyamvo, and as such much less different from today's Nkoya than the latter would care to admit; see my study of the vicissitudes of male circumcision among the Nkoya as an ethnic boundary marker (van Binsbergen 1991d/1993).

16   'An olive branch for Kaoma district', 26 minutes, Zambia Broadcasting Corporation, December 1993, videotape in the author's collection.

17   However, this statement is predicated on a conception of the ethnic group as a monolith, which on second thoughts may be dubious. Admittedly, if villagers allow themselves to be mobilised for unremunerated performance at Kazanga (which takes months of rehearsing) it is largely because they have the furthering of their ethnic group at heart. However, over the decades the Kazanga national executive has increasingly been recruited from the budding upper middle class and upper class of Zambian national society – people who have lived in town most of their lives, who are no longer competent in the Nkoya expressive and musical culture, and whose prime motivation appears to have become, in the most recent decade, not so much the furthering of the Nkoya ethnic group as a whole, but the furthering of their own political career through the medium of collecting Nkoya ethnic votes for any party that may reward these politicians with a parliamentary seat.

18   However, ethnicity is not unique in this respect. Elsewhere (van Binsbergen 1993a) I have presented a similar argument with regard to African Independent churches and professional

associations of traditional healers in Botswana; both types of formal organisations present an organisational form in line with the logic of the post-colonial state (via the latter's Societies Act) while internally supporting ideological positions totally at variance with the principles informing the state.

19   Van Binsbergen (1985c; 1993b; 1993c; 1994/1995).

Notes to Chapter 11

1   This chapter is an adaptation of a paper presented at the 2001 Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, Houston, Texas, 15–18 November, 2001, which was based on the concluding chapter of my publication *The Ankole kingship controversy: Regalia galore revisited*, Kampala: Fountain, 2001.

2   Incidentally, the drafters of the (Republican) Constitution made a point of referring to the 'institution of traditional or cultural leaders' rather than to 'kingship'; only a subsequent clarification spells out that '"traditional leader or cultural leader" means a king or similar traditional leader or cultural leader by whatever name called' (Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, Ch. 16, art. 246 (5).

3   In a statement, the Nkore Cultural Trust (NCT), the organisation actively engaged in propagating reinstatement of the Ankole monarchy, proposed shelving the issue till 2003 so as to avoid their campaigning on the issue getting mixed up with that for presidential and parliamentary elections (Mujuni and Tusiime 2000). As the NCT attached several conditions to this proposal, which may have proved difficult to fulfil, including the demand that the Uganda government first acknowledge the heir designate to the throne as 'Prince' and return 'his' property to him, the dispute seemed set to continue for some time.

4   Interview with James Kahigiriza, NCT Chairman (Mujuni and Tusiime 2000). It may be noted, though, that even in respect of Nkore there was a tendency among informants interviewed by Roscoe in the early part of the twentieth century to provide him each time with more extended genealogies of former *Abagabe*, presumably in an endeavour to emulate Buganda. See Roscoe (1923:34).

5   I am indebted for this point to the Rev. Bishop Y. Bamunoba.

6   I am grateful to Justus Mugaju for drawing my attention to this point.

7   Such a position would not have been shared by the British monarch Queen Elizabeth II, who made it known that she would not object to the Australian plebiscite organised in 1999 to decide whether Australia should become a republic or remain under the British monarchy.

8   Actually, there had already been a meeting of all LC-V councillors from the three Ankole districts at the president's home in 1993, where all but one voted against reinstatement.

9   This has been usefully examined in Adriaan, E. and B. van Rouveroy van Nieuwaal, *L'état en Afrique face à la chefferie: Le cas du Togo*, Paris/Leiden: Karthala-ASC, 2000.

10   That objective was not reached: the Buganda government was reconstituted, with ministers being appointed for various portfolios, all in the name of the 'cultural leader' principle. The process is reminiscent of the negotiations that took place in preparation for Uganda's independence in 1962, when especially a strong lobby on behalf of Buganda, commonly identified as the Mengo establishment, submitted claims for autonomous structures and offices based on arguments of 'tradition'. Only a few years later, the 'tradition' discourse made way for one highlighting ethnic confrontation.

11   The positions remain unchanged after the death of Prince John Barigye, on 14 October 2011, followed by the designation of one of his sons, Charles, as his heir, with the NCT vowing to continue its struggle for the restoration of the institution and the BCF reaffirming its determination to oppose the restoration of the Ankole monarchy.

12   It is gratifying to note that a significant step in this direction has been taken with the creation of the Igongo Cultural Centre and Museum at Biharwe, on the outskirts of Mbarara town, in 2011.

Notes to Introduction, Part III

1 See Davidson (1992), Mbembe (2001) and Bayart and Harper (2009).

2 For general reviews of these older themes, see Ranger and Kimambo (1972), Ranger and Weller (1975), Ranger (1986), Hastings (2000), van Binsbergen (1981b) and van Binsbergen and Schoffeleers (1985).

3 Our preferred euphemism for 'traditional'.

4 See Gnamo (2002), Kilani (2000) and Sharkey (2002).

5 See Bediako (2000), Bureau (2002), van Dijk and Pels (1996) and Comaroff and Comaroff (1993).

6 For Islam, see Renders (2002) and Salih (2002). For African historic religion, see below, concluding chapter.

Notes to Chapter 12

1 Quoted in Daniel (1926:281).

2 Arnett (1929); Bovill (1958); Crowder (1962); Daniel (1926); Hiskett (1957); Hopen (1958); Hogben (1930); Hodgkin (1960a; 1960b); Johnston (1967); Last (1968); Niven (1955); Smith, M.G. (1960); Smith, H.F.C. (1960); Spencer Trimingham (1962).

3 See Alberti (1935), Macfayden (1931), McNeil (1902), War Office (1907), Cerulli (1957), Touval (1963), Lewis (1961) and Abdi Sheik-Abdi (1993).

Notes to Chapter 13

1 In addition to publications cited, the following archival sources were consulted:

KDD 1/2/1   Mwepya Witchdoctor (Kasempa District)

KDD 1/4/1   Kasempa Province Correspondence: Watchtower Movement

KDE 8/1/18   Mankoya District Annual Report 1926

KSX 1/1/1   Mankoya District Correspondence 1931–35

SEC/NAT/393 Watchtower 1931–32

SEC/NAT/66A Barotse Annual Report 1935, 1936 (includes Mankoya Annual Report 1935, 1936)

ZA 1/9/62/1/6 Watchtower from 4 September 1934

ZA 1/9/181/(3) Witchcraft

ZA 1/10/file no. 62 Watchtower (includes: 'Quarterly Report for the Period Ending 30th September 1926, Confidential Annexure, Kalabo')

ZA 1/10/vol 3 no. 4 Watchtower Movement

ZA 1/15/M/1   Deportation of Watchtower Natives

ZA 1/15/M/2   Mchape

ZA 7/1/16/3   Barotse Annual Report 1933 (includes Mankoya District Annual Report 1933)

ZA 7/1/17/5   Barotse Annual Report 1934 (includes Mankoya District Annual Report 1934)

All files are in the Zambia National Archives, Lusaka. For a general description of the organisation of these archives, and an explanation of file numbers, see Graham and Halwindi (1970).

2 Given the circumstances described in the opening section of this chapter, I was unable to

carry out local fieldwork on the Lumpa Church specifically. The general argument is backed up by prolonged research in Zambia, both in the Zambian National Archives and in various urban and rural fieldwork settings. Moreover, while in Zambia I informally interviewed a limited number of people with first-hand knowledge of the Lumpa Church, some of them personally involved in its history. However, the specific argument on Lumpa is primarily based on published sources (including the Zambian press) and secondary analyses, most of which are listed in the bibliography. My purpose is not to present new data but to attempt a new interpretation on the basis of available data. For the present chapter, I am indebted to R. Buijtenhuijs, C. Holzappel, A. Kuper and G. Verstraelen-Gilhuis for comments on an earlier draft, and to L. Lagerwerf for bibliographical assistance. My greatest debt is to S. Simonse, who took a keen interest in this study and generously contributed towards its leading ideas.

3   *Times of Zambia*, 20 September 1969, as quoted in Gertzel ([n.d.]:41).

4   Tordoff and Molteno (1974:12); Sklar (1974:359); Pettman (1974:95).

5   Legum (1966:209).

6   Mwanakatwe (1968:253f); Phiri (1975); Hodges (1976); Sklar (1974:359); Pettman (1974:29, 96f); Assimeng (1970:110f).

7   Meebelo (1971:141).

8   Interestingly, the comparison was suggested to Meebelo by the influential Nestor of Zambian Protestant ministers of religion, the late Rev. Mushindo, whose refusal to accommodate Alice any longer within the Lubwa Mission congregation provided the impetus for the founding of Lumpa as an independent church.

9   Hall (1968:229f).

10 Legum (1966:xii).

11 For detailed studies of Zambia's attainment of independence, see Mulford (1967), Hall (1968) and Krishnamurty (1972).

12 Mulford (1967:330).

13 See 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 On the basis of confidential government reports to which he had access at the time, Short (1978), a former district officer, quotes about fifty fatalities.

14 Report 1965b, as quoted in Gertzel ([n.d.]:40), and in *Times of Zambia*, 22 September 1965; Kaunda in Legum (1966:108); Roberts (1972:39f).

15 *Zambia Mail*, 4 and 21 June 1968.

16 See *Daily Mail* (Zambia), 2 June and 17 July 1972; *Times of Zambia*, 21 March; 1, 5, 20 and 25 April; and 14, 16 and 20 May 1972.

17 *Mirror* (Zambia), 45, February 1976:3. Lenshina died on 7 December 1978 (*Zambia Daily Mail*, 8 December 1978).

18 Report (1965b).

19 Hall (1968); Mulford (1967); Macpherson (1974); Rotberg (1967); Krishnamurty (1972).

20 For fuller bibliographical references, particularly to more obscure publications and journalistic pieces, see Roberts (1972), Calmettes (1970), Mitchell and Turner (1966) and Ofori (1977).

21 Rotberg (1961); Lehmann (1961); Macpherson (1958); Stone (1958); Oger (1960); Chéry (1959, 1961). Oosthuizen (1968:65) refers to an article by Audrey I. Richards on the subject, which however does not appear in Gulliver's (1972) bibliography of the principal writings of Audrey Richards, and most probably does not exist.

22 'Postscript to the Lumpa movement' (1964); Emanuel (1964); Fernandez (1964); Martin (1964); Douglas (1964a);Welbourn (1964); Heward (1964); Wilson (1964); Roberts (1964).

23 Lanternari (1965–66); Greschat (1968); Calmettes (1970, 1972); Roberts (1972).

24   At the time this was originally being written, J.-L. Calmettes was working on his MSc Econ thesis on the subject for the University College of Wales; see Calmettes (1978).

25   Wilson (1975:94f); Greschat (1965:101f).

26   Shepperson (1970:48); Lehmann (1963:68).

27   Banton (1970:225).

28   Henderson (1970:591).

29   Barrett (1968:246f); Peel (1973:349).

30   Tordoff (1974); Pettman (1974).

31   Pettman (1974:94).

32   Molteno (1974:85f).

33   Molteno (1974:85).

34   Molteno (1974:86).

35   I have myself studied a similar peasant situation in Western Zambia: van Binsbergen (1975a; 1975b; 1976b; 1977a; 1978; 1979c; 1981b; 1992b).

36   Vansina (1966:19f).

37   Van Binsbergen (1976b; 1981b).

38   Van Binsbergen (1979b; 1981b).

39   Carter (1972).

40   Van Binsbergen (1972; 1976c; 1977c; 1981b).

41   Van Binsbergen (1976c; 1981b).

42   Eliade (1949).

43   Gluckman (1971:163).

44   Rotberg (1965).

45   See van Binsbergen 1981b, chapters 6 ('Ritual, class and urban–rural relations') and 7 ('Cults of affliction in town, and the articulation of modes of production').

46   On Nzila, see Muntemba (1972) and Van Binsbergen (1977c). On Watchtower in the period indicated, see Hooker (1965), Assimeng (1970), Rotberg (1967:136f), Greschat (1965), Cross (1970; 1973) and by that same author a number of unpublished papers which I have no authority to cite. Hooker's reference (1965:99) to Watchtower in Kasempa district, North-Western Zambia, as early as 1913 (instead of the correct date of the 1930s) is based on a misreading of Chibanza (1961:81). In the 1910s, 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 during the First World War (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 and Price 1958; for a reinterpretation cf. Linden and 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 1920s and 1930s, as documented in Zambia National Archives files: KDD 1/4/1; ZA 1/9/181/(3); KDD 1/2/l; KDE 8/1/18; ZA 7/1/16/3; KSX l/l/I; ZA 7/1/17/5; SEC/NAT/66A; ZA 1/15/M/I; SEC/NAT/393; ZA 1/9/62/1/6; ZA 1/10/file no. 62; ZA 1/10/vol. 3, no. 4; ZA 1/15/M/2.

47   Rotberg (1967:142f); Ranger (1975b).

48   Ranger (1972); Willis (1970) provides a lengthy bibliography, including all the classic references; specifically for north-eastern Zambia – the area of the Lumpa Church – see A.D. Roberts (1972:4f, 8f).

49   Willis (1970).

50   Douglas (1963).

51   Aptly summarised in Wilson (1975:56).

52 Henderson (1970). A fascinating study could be written on the use of socialist catchwords, the adoption of Zambian humanism as a conveniently evasive ideology and the yielding to capitalist constraints and temptations among the Zambian nationalist leaders; see the useful remarks in Molteno (1974:80f) and Tordoff (1974:388f).

53 Examples of such successful latter-day Watchtower communities are described by Long (1968) and Cross (1970).

54 Rotberg (1961:63).

55 Government of Northern Rhodesia (1964:941); however, as the number of emigrant Lumpa-adherents in Zaire demonstrates, these are very conservative estimates.

56 Rotberg (1961:75f); Macpherson (1974:238, cf. 180); Mulford (1967:40); Kaunda as quoted in Emanuel (1964):198); *Northern News* (Zambia), 19 June 1965, which contains Nkumbula's statement.

57 Balandier (1965:443).

58 Rotberg (1961); Lehmann (1961).

59 Rotberg (1961:71); Lehmann (1961:253); Gertzel ([n.d.]:36); Warren, as quoted in Government of Northern Rhodesia (1964:940).

60 Roberts (1972:43, 47).

61 Lehmann (1961:266).

62 Calmettes (1970); Roberts (1972).

63 Roberts (1973).

64 Rotberg (1961:76f); Roberts (1972:32).

65 Clairmonte (1964).

66 Chéry (1959); Calmettes (1970; 1972).

67 Rotberg (1961:76); Roberts (1972:22).

68 *Times of Zambia*, 22 Spetember 1965.

69 Roberts (1972:55).

70 Ranger (1968a: 639); Ranger quoted from an earlier version of Roberts's analysis than the 1972 one used for the present study.

71 Roberts (1972:45).

72 Roberts (1972:35).

73 Such an explanation would come close to the views of those writers who have interpreted UNIP–Lumpa feuding as a clash between rival religions: 'Postscript to the Lumpa movement' (1964); Franklin (1964). A similar suggestion in relation to the clashes between Zambian Watchtower and UNIP is made in Assimeng (1970:112).

74 See M. Chona, the later vice-president, as quoted in Government of Northern Rhodesia (1964:940f). Charlton (1969:140) quotes almost identical statements by Rev. Colin Morris, one of Kaunda's main advisers. In 1964, as president of the United Church of Zambia (UCZ), he organised the church's rehabilitation mission to the area where the final conflict was fought. In 1965 he campaigned unsuccessfully to draw Lenshina into the UCZ fold.

75 Roberts (1972:35f); Macpherson (1974:410).

76 Legum (1966:109).

77 Legum (1966:109).

78 Weber (1969:328).

79 Caplan (1970:191f).

80 Lanternari (1965–66) 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' contre la politique de déculturation et de

dépersonalisation de certaines élites dirigeantes.... Les mouvements religieux à 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 indigenes (Lanternari 1966:110).

While thus recognising that incorporation processes lie at the root of such conflicts as between Lumpa and the state, Lanternari only stresses superstructural elements and ignores the fundamental issues of class and the distribution of power.

81   See Kuper (1979).

82   Weber (1969:363f).

83   An example that shows that the established churches do occasionally antagonise, rather than legitimise, the Zambian state was the protest by the Zambia Council of Churches against the banning of the Kimbanguist Church (*Mirror* (Zambia), 50, July 1976: 1).

84   For instance in the Gondwe Watchtower community (Cross 1970), or in some Lusaka unauthorised settlements (Jules-Rosette 1977).

85   Calmettes (1978)

86   In its emphasis on political, economic and class issues Calmettes's work of 1978 also represents a remarkable step for ward as compared with his earlier Lumpa writings (1970, 1972).

87   van Binsbergen (1976a:109).

88   Calmettes (1978:193).

89   Rey (1973; 1976).

90   Calmettes (1978:195).

91   Report (1965b:9); see Roberts (1972:39).

92   Roberts (1972:39).

93   Short (1973:267).

94   Calmettes (1978:193); see Oger (1960:17).

95   Calmettes (1978:172).

96   van Binsbergen (1976a:121).

97   Roberts (1972:3); see van Binsbergen (1977c:161).

98   Werbner (1977).

99   'Lumpa Church is an organisation in which to worship God and his son Jesus Christ. It is not an organisation to make unruly behaviour with the laws of the Country', Laws of the Lumpa Church, Lehmann (1961:253).

100   See Poulantzas (1974).

101   Calmettes (1978:197); it would be interesting to know what specific precolonial wars or primary resistance movements Calmettes is referring to here.

102   Lehmann (1961)

103   Calmettes (1978:196).

104   Calmettes (1978:198).

105   Roberts (1973).

106   Richards (1939; 1969); Brelsford (1942; 1944); Werbner (1969).

107   Cross (1978:307).

108   Calmettes (1978:109f).

109   van Binsbergen (1976a:126).

110   Calmettes (1978:145f).

111 Mamdani (1976); Shivji (1976); Alavi (1972); Saul (1974); Geschiere (1978); Buijtenhuijs and Geschiere (1978).

112 See Miliband (1969) and especially Poulantzas (1974).

113 Short (1973:267).

114 Short (1973:267).

Notes to Chapter 15

1 Fieldwork was conducted from November 1988 to October 1989 and during shorter subsequent visits (August to September 1990, June to July 1991, April to May and October 1992) in Francistown and rural communities in Botswana's North-East district, with short excursions into south-western Zimbabwe, and consultation of government files in Gaborone in 1990. I am greatly indebted to the Applied Research Unit, Ministry of Local Government and Lands, Republic of Botswana, for the hospitality they extended to me as a visiting researcher; to the African Studies Centre, Leiden, the Netherlands, for leave of absence and research funds; to my wife and children for wholeheartedly sharing in the fieldwork; to Chuke Amos, Ennie Maphakwane, Edward Mpoloka, Joshua Ndlovu, Dikeledi Moyo and Rebecca Siska for research assistance; to church leaders, adherents, ritual leaders, adepts, neighbours, friends, and respondents in the Francistown region; and to officials both in Francistown and Gaborone. Under the Botswana Societies Act (Republic of Botswana 1977, section 30), the records of the Registrar of Societies are open for consultation by the public, and I am greatly indebted to the Registrar of Societies and individual officers for facilitating my perusal of the files in every conceivable way. Finally I wish to express gratitude to Matthew Schoffeleers, Isaac Mazonde, Robert Buijtenhuijs, Bonno Thoden van Velsen, Laurens van der Laan, Piet Konings, Willem Klaver and Emile van Rouveroy van Nieuwaal for valuable comments made on earlier drafts, which were presented at the conference on Power and Prayer, Free University, Amsterdam, 10 to 14 December 1990; the Botswana Society, Gaborone, 9 July 1991; and the African Studies Centre seminar, 10 October 1991. For economy's sake, the argument appears here without the elaborate statistical material on which it is partly based; for the statistical underpinning, see van Binsbergen 1990b.

2 See Cliffe (1984), Crowder (1988), Decraene (1985), Holm et al. (1978), Magang (1986), Parson (1984), Parsons (1988) and Picard (1987).

3 For instance, in mid-August 1990 a major conference was organised in Botswana's second largest town, Francistown, at which the opposition parties were to unify in preparation for a final blow to the ruling party, the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP), which won the 1989 national elections virtually unopposed; however, the conference had to be called off because the leaders preferred to attend a private meeting with the president of the republic (*The Guardian* (Gaborone), 20 August 1990, and author's fieldnotes). Such an event is typical of Botswana national politics, and passes without sarcastic comment.

4 Republic of Botswana (1983).

5 'Citizens of the modern state of Botswana'; the same term is also frequently used to denote members of Setswana-speaking ethnic groups in Botswana (constituting some 70% of the national population) and in South Africa.

6 For the impact of popular participation in such non-state foci upon the democratic process, see Shaw (1990) and references cited there; also van Binsbergen (1986).

7 For related arguments, see Holm and Somolokae (1988), Molutsi (1988a; 1988b) and Molutsi and Holm (1990).

8 See Bayart (1988) and Geschiere (1986; 1990); for related discussions, see Doornbos (1989/1990) and Rothchild and Chazan (1988).

9 Republic of Botswana (1977). Date of commencement 9 June 1972, pp. 1–14. In the same edition: S.I. 3, 1973: 'Societies Act, Registration of Societies Regulations (under section 33) (5

January 1973): Arrangement of regulations', pp. A.1–3. Also see schedules (prescribed forms), notably Form A: 'Application for registration or exemption from registration of a society' (pp. A.4–5); Form B: 'Certificate of registration' (p. A.5); Form C: 'Certificate of exemption from registration' (p. A.6); Form D: 'Notification of rescission of exemption' (p. A.6); Form E: 'Notification of cancellation of registration' (p. A.6); Form F: 'Notice of change of a society's name or registered office or postal address, or change of constitution or rules, or variation of objects' (pp. A.7–8); Form G: 'Notice of change of office-bearers' (pp. A.9–10); Form H: 'Annual return' (pp. A.10–11). Finally, on p. A.12: 'Second schedule (reg. 21) Prescribed fees', setting application fee at P5.00, the fee for search and examination of registers of registered societies at P0.25; for a copy of or extract from any document in the custody of the Registrar, per folio of 100 words, P0.25; and for a certified true copy of or extract from any such document, per folio of 100 words, P0.50.

10   From the voluminous literature, see Bhebe (1979), Comaroff (1985), Daneel (1971; 1974; 1988), Fogelqvist (1988), Kiernan (1984; 1987), Oosthuizen (1968), Oosthuizen et al. (1989), Schoffeleers (1988; 1991), and Sundkler (1970; 1976) and references cited there.

11   There is a paucity of monographs studying mainstream, 'cosmopolitan' churches in Botswana, but the reader may fruitfully consult the following publications: Amanze (1994a; 1994b; 2000; 2006), Born (2009), Harona and Jensina (2008), Holm et al. (1996), Matemba (1997), Nkomazana and Lanner (2007), Nsereko (1992) and Parratt (1975). Independent churches in Botswana have received attention from such writers as Grant (1971: a study of conflict between chief and church in the tribal capital of Mochudi in the colonial period), Lagerwerf (1982: an exploratory study of women in selected independent churches), Werbner (1985, 1989: a highly formal and abstract study contrasting three modes of imagery in independent churches in Zimbabwe and Botswana) and Jean Comaroff (1985), who tries to situate the Zion Christian Church (ZCC) on both sides of the Botswana–South African border, among the Tchidi Barolong people, in terms of the processes of socio-economic and political change. The all-pervading therapeutic dimension of the African Independent churches earned them a substantial discussion in Staugård (1985), which, however, is necessarily limited by that author's uniquely medical concerns and frame of reference. Also see Amanze (1998) and van Dijk (2003). Tshambani (1979) made an unpublished study of the Vapostori of Francistown, and Parsons (1971) discussed independency in the early colonial period. More passing references are available in such works as Schapera (1984) and Picard (1987:126–128). In my own work I have contrasted the therapeutic potential of the African Independent churches as active in Francistown with that of the region's more explicitly 'traditional' religious forms (the famous Mwali cult – cf Werbner (1989), Ranger (1979; 1985b), Schoffeleers and Mwanza (1979), Daneel (1970) and Mtutuki (1976) and references cited there) – and the mediumistic *sangoma* cult; van Binsbergen (1990a; 1991a; 1993c).

12   This is stated in section 5b of the Societies Act.

13   The, fairly standard, limitative conditions stipulated further down in the same section provide the constitutional basis for both the Societies Act and for some of the general injunctions which the Registrar of Societies imposes on churches in the context of their registration (II.11.(5).

14   Most of which remains to be written; however, see Chirenje (1977), Grant (1971), Picard (1987), Parsons (1971), Lagerwerf (1982), Amanze (1998) and van Dijk (2003).

15   This very high figure, although offered by the Acting Registrar of Societies, who wrote the cabinet minister's speech, is not supported by my own quantitative data, which, however, are incomplete.

16   Minister's speech 25.7.87, encl 71 in file H28/40/27.

17   Loc. cit.

18   Loc. cit.

19   'Application for registration of a church', circular, Department of Culture, Registration and Social Welfare Matters, Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs, P/Bag 00185, Gaborone. Author's collection; believed to date from the mid-1980s. I shall return to this guidance letter later.

20   Minister's speech 25.7.87, enclosure 71 in file H28/40/27.

21   In fact, registration is a society's *right* under the Societies Act (Societies Act, section 6 (2)
      (a): 'Subject to subsections (3), (4) and (9), upon application being made for registration,
      the Registrar shall register any local society'). The Act is quite specific as to the conditions
      under which registration may be refused: if the society is a branch of a *political* organisation
      established outside Botswana (6 (3); if its purpose is unlawful or prejudices peace, welfare or
      good order in Botswana; if its constitution is inconsistent with any written law; if the society
      does not comply with the Societies Act; if it does not exist; or if its name is identical or similar
      to that of another society, or is unlawful or undesirable (6 (4).

22   Registrar of Societies to Mosojane, 22.11.79; enclosure in H28/30/71 – I, St Anna's Church.

23   Mosojane to Registrar of Societies, 14.12.79; enclosure in H28/30/71 – I, St Anna's Church.

24   Mosojane to Registrar of Societies, 18.1.80; enclosure in H28/30/71 – I, St Anna's Church.

25   Mosojane to Registrar of Societies, 22.8.80; enclosure in H28/30/71 – I, St Anna's Church.

26   Minute 2, 5.12.1980, by G.K. Eustice, Acting Principal Administration Officer and later
      Registrar of Societies, enclosure in H 28/30/22 – I, The Holy Free Corner Stone Apostolic
      Church. This is the church referred to in the statement concerning Matante.

27   Constitution, enclosure in H28/30/71 – I, St Anna's Church.

28   While this clause certainly reflects one of the aims of the Registrar's involvement with the
      African Independent churches, it is quite possible that this particular phrase was included at
      the initiative of Mr Mosojane, the opposition politician.

29   Constitution, enclosure in H28/30/71 – I, St Anna's Church.

30   Guta Ra Jehova constitution, enclosure in H28/30/38. This church is not to be confused with
      Guta Ra Mwari, with which, however, it obviously shares a regional and cultural orientation on
      Zimbabwe.

31   See Registrar of Societies to Molapisi, 29.9.80, in H 28/30/22 – I.

32   The first circular of this type ('Application for registration of a church', circular, Department
      of Culture, Registration and Social Welfare Matters, Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs, P/
      Bag 00185, Gaborone: author's collection, believed to date from the mid-1980s) phrased this
      requirement in the following terms:

      '9 Appointments of Ministers and [sic] Religion including Bishops, Deacons, Evangelists [sic]
      Lay Preachers and others

      Please state that qualifies [sic] member to become a head of the Church, Bishop, Minister,
      Deacon, Evangelist, Preacher or any other positions of clergymen. State academic qualifications
      and their minimum qualifications in theology. State how they are elected and appointed to
      those positions and provide for their terms of office. Please note that it is also important to
      indicate which body or bodies are empowered to ordain such members as Ministers and
      to suspend or withdraw the right to Ministry from a member so ordained and revoke the
      appointments.'

33   Loc cit.

34   Societies Act 6 (4) (e).

35   Gaborone, file no. H28/90/75 – I. The 'traditional' element in this association is so strong that
      Staugård (1987:83) has in fact expressed doubts as to whether it is a church. (Staugård presents
      the constitution of this society on pages 84 and 85.) Through his personal activities and those of
      his wife, the president of this association, the Mwali High Priest for the South-western region,
      Mr Vumbu Ntogwa, probably the principal traditional religious authority in north-eastern
      Botswana, participated in two other churches of a more explicitly Christian designation; see
      Werbner (1989:341, n. 3). However, the principles at work here illustrate the accepted attitude
      of various Registrars of Societies in the 1980s, and are not affected by our judgement as to the
      truly ecclesiastical nature of this association. Other examples will be taken from less peripheral
      or ambiguous church organisations. Incidentally, 'Hosanna' means: 1. biblical praise; 2. Mwali
      adept; 3. Apostolic follower of the Zimbabwean church founder Masowe (cf Daneel 1971:86, 88,
      178, 339–41; Werbner 1989:257f). 'Hosanna' (2) is often pronounced, and written, 'Wosanna'.

The word 'Wosanna' in the sense of Mwali adept has an origin independent from the expansion of Christian missions as from the middle of the nineteenth century (the earliest Jesuit missionary to the Shona, however, was active in the middle of the sixteenth century: Beach 1980:93, 123); but even if not of Judaeo-Christian origin, the phonetic convergence of the words 'Hosanna' and 'Wosanna' in the local context offers endless opportunities for symbolic bricolage.

36   Registrar of Societies to Hosanna Religious and Traditional Association, 20.3.78.

37   Hosanna Religious and Traditional Association to Registrar of Societies, 13.4.78.

38   See Lan (1985) and general writings on the Mwali cult as cited above.

39   File H28/90/258 – I, registered 7.8.84.

40   Registrar of Societies to Society for the Promotion of the Ikalanga Language, 19.9.83

41   Note the difference in tone from that employed in the Hosanna case.

42   See earlier note in this regard.

43   Registrar of Societies to Society for the Promotion of the Ikalanga Language, 19.9.83

44   Such as the conspicuous ZCC badge, by the late 1980s available in two varieties – 'dove' and 'star' – reflecting a church split which had not yet led to a differentiation of the name itself.

45   Registrar of Societies to National Secretary Guta Ra Mwari, 16.12.88.

46   This corresponds with the view expressed by Lagerwerf (1982:46).

47   The addition between parentheses is part of the original name, and is debatable as a translation of the main Shona name; 'Assembly of Mwari/of God' would seem to be more appropriate, but would have created a conflict with other, already existing churches. Note the spelling difference with 'Mwali' as used in the context of the Hosanna Religious and Traditional Association, see above.

48   File H 28/30/38 – I; registered 18.10.1974.

49   Clause 12 from an undated early draft set of rules, enclosure 1 in H 28/30/38 – I, probably early 1970s.

50   Clause 13, loc. cit.

51   This is the literal meaning of the name Mwali.

52   In the early 1970s, the South African rand was still the Botswana currency. Later the pula (P) was introduced, one pula at the time being roughly equivalent to one guilder. The $ refers to the Zimbabwean dollar.

53   Rejected by the Registrar of Societies on 3.5.73, Registrar of Societies to Guta Ra Mwari.

54   Draft constitution rejected in 1973 by Registrar of Societies, clause b.

55   This historic Zimbabwean practice is attested to in Frobenius (1931:119f). So, incidentally, is the ritual killing of humans (cf Frobenius 1931: see his index under *Ritualmord*; Wilson 1931). However, in the context of the Guta Ra Mwari church both institutions appear in conceptual and political isolation, completely devoid of the cosmological, social and political context (including royal responsibility for the well-being and fertility of society as mediated through authoritative divination practices) that, under pre-conquest historical conditions, provided the supreme legitimation for these practices. Meanwhile we should remember that these practices have equivalents in many historic cultures, including those of the ancient Greeks, Germans and Celts of Europe.

56   Audited accounts, File H 28/30/38 – I.

57   An undated letter from Guta Ra Mwari to the Registrar of Societies by P.M. Senau, c. 1986, claimed 'more than ten thousand members in Botswana'.

58   Author's fieldnotes.

59   Ibid.

60   Early draft constitution, Guta Ra Mwari, clause 5.

61 Loc. cit., clause 11. In 1973 this clause was changed to exclude those who had been members for less than two years.

62 Constitution rejected by Registrar of Societies in 1973.

63 Registrar of Societies to Secretary Guta Ra Mwari 8.4.87.

64 Registrar of Societies to National Secretary Guta Ra Mwari, 16.12.88.

65 Registrar of Societies to General Secretary Guta Ra Mwari, 17.3.89:   'It is important that the church in Botswana should not seem to be, or be passive [sic] entity when the church relies on the *ordinary person's* contributions [original emphasis]; when the church raises funds and incurs debts in the name of the people. The general body should have a substantial degree of influence on all matters which affect them. The concept of the CHOSEN TWELVE [the church's governing body according to the then prevailing constitution] would perhaps require explanation or description in the constitution. As it stands it implies hereditary succession or arbitrary appointments which possibly transcends the comprehension of the ordinary members'.

66 General Secretary Guta Ra Mwari to Registrar of Societies, 28.4.89.

67 Registrar of Societies to General Secretary Guta Ra Mwari 10.10.89.

68 Loc cit.

69 Registrar of Societies to Deputy Permanent Secretary, undated memorandum in Guta Ra Mwari file, c. 1987.

70 'Claims that "political" reasons are behind the Separatist Church movement miss the mark. The few instances of radical party affiliations of certain Ethiopian or Zionist groups do not offer sufficient proof of any definite political trend; and even admitting the existence of much outspoken anti-White propaganda in most Independent Churches, one should not forget that the attitude of the leaders and masses of these Ethiopians and Zionists has on the whole been loyal, not least during the trying experiences of war' (Sundkler 1970:296).

71 'The purposive act of reconstruction, on the part of the nonelite, focuses meaningfully on the attempt to heal dislocations at the level of experience, dislocations which derive from the failure of the prevailing sign system to provide a model for their subjectivity, for their meaningful and material being. Their existence is increasingly dominated by generalized media of exchange – money, the written word, linear time, and the universal God – which fail to capture a recognizable self-image. These media circulate through communicative processes which themselves appear to marginalize people at the periphery; hence the major vehicles of value have come to elude their grasp. In these circumstances, efforts are made to restructure activity so as to regain a sense of control. Repositories of value, like the Zionists' money, are resituated within practices that promise to redirect their flow back to the impoverished, thus healing their affliction' (Comaroff 1985:253).

72 See van Binsbergen (1981b:57f).

73 Van Binsbergen (1981b) and references cited there.

74 Notably Kwame (Legwame) Traditional Association (file no. H28/30/34 vol. I, registered 2.5.1977) and United Herbalist Association (file no. H28/80/91 vol. I, registered 2.3.1979). Two other such associations mentioned by Staugård (1985:229) no longer function legally, if at all. As a qualified traditional healer, I have been a member of the Kwame Traditional Association since 1990; see van Binsbergen (1991a).

75 Incidentally, both cultic headquarters have extensive relations with African Independent churches and, as High God shrines, are involved in the empowerment not only of non-Christian therapists but also of church leaders.

Notes to Chapter 16

1 An earlier version of this chapter was presented by Martin Doornbos as a paper at the 1981 Leiden workshop on 'State and Society in Africa'. The present version is a greatly expanded, essentially new argument, to which all three authors made an equally substantial contribution. We are indebted to Ger van der Tang for making available essential materials, and to Mieke Zwart, Ria van Hal and Adrienne van Wijngaarden for typing successive drafts.

2 On constitutions and constitutional law, see Finer (1979); Levy (1969); Marshall (1971); van der Tang (nd) and Zurcher (1955).

3 Reference to francophone states appear throughout this chapter; on anglophone states see Allot (1980a), Nwabueze (1977) and Paul (1981).

4 On Cameroon in general, see Imbert (1972); on the Cameroon Federation, see Alima (1977), Gonidec (1969; 1970) and Rubin (1971); on the constitution of the unitary state, see Mbarga (1973) and Owono (1973; 1983).

5 Debbasch (1962), Durieux (1963) and Muracciole (1962) discuss the *loi fondamentale*; on the preparation of the 1964 constitution see Gérard-Libois (1962); on the 1964 constitution itself see Fourré (1964).

6 Literature on the subject is abundant. A selection: Bernetel (1979); Bowett (1966); 'Les droits de l'homme' (1981); Eide and Schou (1968); Howard (1982); Khadduri (1976); Koopmans (1975); Kuntze (1970); Ramcharan (1979); Robertson (1982); Valticos (1979); Vasak (1967); Khalif and Doornbos (2002).

7 In the Netherlands towards the end of the 1970s much attention was paid to fundamental rights in a context of economic under-development. See *Problemen van internationale communicatie* (1979:3335, 4647) and *De rechten van de mens* (1978–1979:72 ff.).

8 Barillon et al. (1976:259–262).

9 The verdict of the Conseil Constitutionnel of 16 July 1971; see Rivero (1971:537–542; 1972:265) and Robert (1971:171–200).

10 See in particular the Final Act of the International Conference on Human Rights, Teheran, 22 April to 13 May 1968, UN doc. A/CONF. 32/41: 4, where the Universal Declaration of 1948 is referred to as a document that 'states a common understanding of the peoples of the world concerning the inalienable and inviolable rights of all members of the human family and constitutes an obligation for the members of the international community'; see also Koopmans (1975).

11 Veerman (1977:56) subdivides the criteria defining a nation into three categories: the objective, the subjective and the mixed theory. See also literature on the topic as cited there.

12 The problematic boundaries in Africa are the subject of numerous studies: see Bouvier (1972), Boyd (1980), Guèye (1977–1978), Michelon (1978:19) and Widstrand (1969). For a sophisticated discussion on this point, see Van Amersfoort, Heinemeyer and van der Wüsten (1981).

13 On ethnic diversity and ethnicity, see Enloe (1973; 1978), Gallais (1982), Rothchild and Olorunsola (1983) and Stokes (1978).

14 Ayoade (1978:317) states that, paradoxically, the federal solution has been the most popular political form in post-colonial Africa, although federations have shown a strong tendency to fail. More specifically on Cameroon see Kontchou-Kouomegni (1980:442–464).

15 Nationalism, national identity and the struggle for independence did, in mutual interplay, constitute important factors: see Büttner (1980) and Smith (1972).

16 Marxism, socialism and soviet constitutionalism did exercise some general influence on constitutional thought in Africa; see Jouve (1980), Owono (1983) and Reghizzi (1980).

17 Consider the struggles between Senghor and Houphouet-Boigny concerning the organisation and hegemony of West African states at the eve of independence, or the vicissitudes of the Mali Federation. See Hesseling (1982) and references cited there, and Ajayi (1982:19).

18   The sentence ends here, even though it does not seem to be finished; this defect was rectified in the 1963 preamble of Senegal, which in all other respects was identical to that of 1960.

19   See some of the very numerous studies on pan-Africanism and African unity: Agyeman (1978), Esedebe (1977) and Soumonni (1981).

20   A constitutionalist view of the one-party state in Africa is presented by Rogge (1974). A classic on this subject is the study by Coleman and Rosberg (1964). See also: Doornbos (1965), Fall (1980) and Sylla (1977); and in connection with ideology: Silveira (1976).

21   In general, utilisation of symbolic resources seems to be important in African political life: see Fauré (1978).

22   In this respect, the inclusion, in table 16.2, of the famous 1789 motto of France is relevant.

23   Some striking examples are given by Ben Achour (1974), Dilger (1978), Gruner (1981), Rondot (1980) and Paden (1981).

24   Glélé (1981b), in his study on religion, culture and politics in black Africa, cites numerous passages on church–state relations in constitutional and other law texts of African states. See also: Ankrah (1977), Chauleur (1973), Curry (1979), Glélé (1981a), Heyke (1982), Sundermeier (1973) and Verhaegen (1977).

25   On the church–state conflict in Zaire, see Adelman (1975), Asch (1983), Doutreloux (1977), Goovaerts (1975) and Centre de Recherche et d'Information Socio-Politiques (1972).

26   Another interesting example within our sample is Cameroon; see Ngongo (1982).

27   In addition to Mauritania, mention of God in African constitutions outside our sample seems to be limited to the independence constitutions of Cameroon, Gabon, and Malagasy, all of them of 1960.

28   See Amin (1973), Afana (1966) and Schaeffer (1980). On the socialist experience in Mali, see Martin (1976).

29   See *Guide de l'investisseur* (1974).

30   See Hugon (1968), Kom (1971), Ndam Njoya (1976) and Nkuété (1977).

31   See Depelchin (1981), Kamulayi (1981) and Vellut (1982).

32   Cohen (1981). On Cameroon, see Ngayap (1983).

33   See Conac (1980b:385–413).

34   On coups and military rule in Africa, see Bebler (1973) and Collier (1978).

Notes to Chapter 17

1   An earlier version of this chapter was presented as a paper at the seminar on 'Democratisation in Africa', African Studies Centre, Leiden, 24 September, 1993; I am indebted to the organisers, my colleagues Robert Buijtenhuijs and Elly Rijnierse, for creating a stimulating environment for the production of that paper.

2   For an incisive summary of that discussion, see Buijtenhuijs and Rijnierse (1993).

3   See Colás (1992), Hannerz (1987), Featherstone (1990) and van Binsbergen (1994), and references cited there.

4   In this respect, adopting a detached, culturally relative view of the North Atlantic concept of democracy falls under the tantalising category of tabooed ideas in international social science, to which my teacher Köbben (1975, 1991) has devoted illuminating discussions.

5   Khumiri village society, highlands of north-western Tunisia, 1968, 1970; Nkoya rural society, Kaoma district, Zambia, and its urban extensions along the Zambian Line of Rail, 1972 to 2011; Manjak rural society, north-western Guinea-Bissau, 1981, 1982, 1983; Francistown urban society, Botswana, and its urban–rural ties ramifying into surrounding Kalanga, Tswana and Ndebele villages, 1988 to 1998.

6   Glover (1927); Forrest (1966). Remarkably, Plato and Aristotle criticised the dhmokratiα of their time not for being insufficiently democratic but for being *over*-democratic, for having become 'oclokrateiα, or mob rule (Bierens de Haan 1943).

7   De Tocqueville (1954); Mannheim (1940); Doornbos et al. (1984) and references cited there.

8   The following summary of Dutch constitutional history illustrates this point:

Before 1848 the franchise in the Netherlands was very limited indeed. Even after 1848, at first the vast majority of the population were deprived of the franchise. Until the Constitutional Reforms of 1887, the right to vote depended on the size of the amount one had to pay in taxes (the so-called census franchise). The Constitution of 1887 made provision for the extension of the franchise to certain, not clearly defined, categories of persons, by introducing the criterion of 'attributes of appropriate status and wealth', which attributes were further elaborated in the Franchise Bill of 1896. At that stage categories of voters included 'tax voters', 'dwelling voters', 'salary voters', 'savings voters' and 'examination voters'. Under this system in 1916 only 70% of Dutch males had the right to vote. The Constitutional Reforms of 1917 introduced the general franchise for males, and in principle made provision for the franchise for women. In 1922 the franchise for women was enacted in the constitution. (...) Invariably, the passive franchise accrued to all male Dutchmen who possessed the active franchise. Until 1917 women were explicitly excluded from the passive franchise too' ('Kiesrecht' 1974, my translation; cf. Oud (1967); van der Pot and Donner (1968).

9   Anthropological fieldwork among the Zambian Nkoya, carried out in Kaoma district and among migrants in the national capital city of Lusaka, was undertaken in 1972–74, and during shorter visits in 1977, 1978, 1981, 1988, 1989, 1992 (twice) and 1994 (twice). Anthropological fieldwork in Francistown and surrounding rural areas, Botswana, was undertaken in 1988–89 and during shorter visits in 1990, 1991 and 1992 (twice) and 1994. I am indebted to the African Studies Centre, Leiden, for the most generous encouragement and financial support extended to me after I joined the centre in 1977; and to research participants, to assistants and government officials in both Zambia and Botswana and to members of my family, for invaluable contributions to the research.

10 A case in point is African Watchtower throughout South Central Africa from the 1910s; also see the Lumpa church of Alice Lenshina (van Binsbergen 1981b and references cited there). For Botswana the rise of church independency as a major form of contestation preceding by several decades the formation of political parties (Lagerwerf 1982; Grant 1971; Chirenje 1977) is a case in point. For a general perspective on these points, see Gluckman (1971). For a critique claiming that views such as mine or Gluckman's amount to underplaying the contribution of villagers to the independence struggle, see van Donge (1986).

11 A common assumption in the literature on the articulation of modes of production in Africa is that young men went to work so that, via a monetarisation of bride wealth, elders could continue to exercise their kinship-based power in new forms; in fact, however, it was often inter-generational conflict at the village level (where youths tended to regard all elderly men as sorcerers, and often wandered from one kin patron to another in a long chain of disappointment and distress) which propelled youths into a career as labour migrants. The comforts of the old African cosmologies ought not to be exaggerated.

12 Outside Barotseland, two more Nkoya royal chiefs survived: Mwene Kabulwebulwe of Central Province and Mwene Moomba of Southern Province.

13 Even after the state's creation of Local Courts (which were nominally independent from the *Mwene*) in 1965.

14 The *Mwene* is thus one of the 'tears (or, less anthropomorphically, drops) of rain' which feature in the title of my main book on the Nkoya (van Binsbergen 1992b).

15 Which is largely an exalted version of the enthronement ceremony of village headmen, and even of the ordinary name inheritance ceremony by which a surviving junior kinsmen takes a deceased's name.

16 I cannot go into the peculiar gender dynamics of high political office among the Nkoya. Clan heads and early kings tended to be women, but there have been no female *Myene* since the middle of the nineteenth century. See van Binsbergen (1986; 1992b).

17 At the time political parties and the church provided virtually the only organisational structure for the rapidly growing informal settlements, where Nkoya urban migrants used to live.

18 At the original time of writing a fifth Nkoya royal chieftainship had been revived: in October 1994, Mwene Pumpola of Dongwe/Lukulu was ceremonially installed before delegations of all other royal courts and with significant participation by the Kazanga Cultural Association executive and its ceremonial dancing troupe.

19 Who had meanwhile been restored to government esteem, and was even made Member of the Central Committee, UNIP's highest representative in the province, and a member of parliament. Under the Chiluba administration, meanwhile, state–*Litunga* relations declined steadily again, while the Lozi aristocracy tended to retreat into delusions of territorial secession.

20 In line with national usage, Batswana is taken here in the sense of 'Botswana nationals', rather than that of 'people identifying as members of the Tswana cluster of ethnic groups'.

21 See Holm and Molutsi (1989), Picard (1987), Molomio and Mokopakgosi (1991), Charlton (1993), Bernard (1989), Crowder (1988) and Good (1992).

22 The Botswana People's Party went through a process of constant decline until, at the 2009 national elections, it did not win a single seat. The entry 'Botswana National Front' (2011) provides a useful update on the Botswana National Front:

The Botswana National Front (or BNF) has been the main opposition party in Botswana since the 1969 elections. It achieved its greatest electoral success in the 1994 elections, when it won 37.1% of the vote and 13 of 40 parliamentary seats. A factional conflict in 1998 led to the departure of 11 of these MPs, who then founded the Botswana Congress Party (BCP). In the 1999 elections, the BNF's vote share declined to 26% and it won 6 parliamentary seats. In the 2004 general election the party won 26.1% of the popular vote and 12 out of 57 seats. Its representation was sharply reduced in the 2009 elections, with the party reduced to only six seats in the National Assembly of Botswana. The BNF's parliamentary representation fell to 5 seats following the defection of the party's former Vice President, Olebile Gaborone, to the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) in July 2010.

23 As happened with the Francistown PWD informal settlement situated in the Government Camp ward no. 58 (van Binsbergen and Krijnen 1989; Krijnen 1991).

24 At the original time of writing, P1 was worth US$0.45.

25 I regret that, for the following three paragraphs, I am unable to trace these themes through to current conditions in Botswana in the early 2010s.

26 The results are based on a statistically representative sample survey of 175 adults (18 years of age and older) of both sexes, resident in Francistown in 1989; of these, 7% were under the legal voting age of 21 years. Of the 175 respondents, 98% claimed to be Botswana citizens, and 87% claimed to be in the possession of a national registration card (*O Mang*).

27 See Schoffeleers (1991). Church leaders and church committees present a rather more oppositional picture; see van Binsbergen (1993a).

Notes to Chapter 18

1 This chapter is based on a paper prepared for the 'Workshop on Violence Control in the Context of Fragile States – Insights from Africa', Bielefeld University, Zentrum für interdisziplinäre Forschung, 5–7 June 2008. Earlier versions of that paper were presented at a conference on 'Legitimacy and Consensus, State Crisis and Political Transitions' organised by the Dipartimento di Politica, Instituzioni, Storia of the University of Bologna and circulated as FRIDE Working Paper 17, Madrid, 2005.

2 A very cursory check of indexed works on African states and politics published over the past few decades suggests that only very few studies carry any entry for 'legitimacy', and that among those few that do only a handful have included 'legitimacy' as an entry for further serious explorations, while in the others 'legitimacy' appears to have been identified only by means of a word search rather than serving further analytical purposes.

Notes to Chapter 19

1 We gratefully acknowledge the assistance of the library staff of the African Studies Centre, Leiden, in respect of the library research for this chapter, and for this book as a whole.

2 See Crawford and Abdulai (2009), Bauer (2009), Bekele (2009), Hall (2009), Trefon (2009), Branch and Cheeseman (2009), Seekings (2008) and Bates (2008).

3 See Alzouma (2009), Fontein (2009), Willems (2008) and Makungu (2004).

4 See Landau and Misago (2009) and Pul (2005).

5 See Botha (1999), Ikelegbe (2005) and Doornbos (1990).

6 See Ekot (2009), Konings (2007) and Ward (2001).

7 See Beyene (2009), Ubink, Hoekema and Assies (2009), Hagmann and Mulugeta (2008) and Ubink and Amanor (2008).

8 See Bayart and Harper (2009), Konings (2007), Taylor and Williams (2008), Storm (2007) and Fumanti (2004).

9 With regard to women, see Apantaku (2008), Artz and Smythe (2007), Mama (1999), Mann (2000) and Diduk (2004); with regard to children, see Honwana and de Boeck (2005).

10   See Jalata (2008), Bassi and Megerssa(2008) and van Binsbergen (2003b).

11 See Klieman (2008) and van Dijk (2009).

12 See Ally (2008).

13 See Jennings (2008), Kingoro (2009) and de Torrente and Mwesigye (1999).

14 See Bellagamba and Klute (2008) and Mampilly (2003).

15 See Nielsen (2007).

16 See Musambachime (1999) and Werenfels (2002).

17 See Bouh and Mammo (2008), Okotoni and Okotoni (2003), Jackson (2002), Abbink (2000), van Binsbergen (2003a; 2004b; 2010); however, also see Tshehla (2002).

18 And what then could be at the root of this exceptional case of incomplete political penetration, among the continents? Materialists could advance an ecological argument in this regard: in comparison with other continents, the soils of much of Africa are exceptionally old (some more than two billion years old) and depleted – not only and in the first place by human utilisation but also in pre-human geological eras, over an inconceivable period of time. It requires a secure, regular and sizeable surplus production to construct and maintain the formal structures of statehood – and when this condition is not met, states may blossom under external impulses or under a local ideology of construction and expansion, but they will be ephemeral, to relapse into personalised exercise of fragmented power within a few generations. When such conditions have been endemic for centuries, even millennia, people will have learnt to keep their non-statal socio-political institutions at the local and regional level (clans, chiefs, regional cults, ethnic groups) resilient even in times of state ascendancy and expansion, so that these time-honoured non-statal forms will still be viable when inevitable state collapse make it necessary to have recourse to these institutions.

19   See Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983), Vail (1989a; 1989b), Amselle (1990), Amselle and M'Bokolo (1985), Chrétien and Prunier (1989) and van Binsbergen (2008).

20 On the concept of 'cultural orientation' and its analytical advantages over a blanket term 'culture', see van Binsbergen (2003a:22ff, 470ff).

21 For an extensive theoretical elaboration of this position, see van Binsbergen and Woudhuizen (2011).

22 On the emic/etic distinction as an indispensable tool for ethnic analysis, see Headland, Pike and Harris (1990) and van Binsbergen (2003a:22f, 465f).

23 See Taylor (1992).

24 For instance in an urban variety of *sangoma* mediumistic cults widespread in Southern Africa (van Binsbergen 2003a; 2005b).

25 Seminal Afrocentrist writings include Diop (1955) and Asante (1987). For well-documented but largely dismissive critical assessments, see Fauvelle-Aymar, Chrétien and Perrot (2000) and Howe (1998); for a view opposing Howe and defending Afrocentrism in academia, see van Binsbergen (2000a; 2005a).

26 *Pace* Akhahenda (2002); Center for Religious Freedom (2002).

27 See Belmessous (2002), Jhazbhay (2002), Mumisa (2002) and Omar (2002).

28 See van Binsbergen (2004a) and references cited there.

29 See Marlin (2001), Cooper (2002), Devisch (1995) and Konings, van Binsbergen and Hesseling (2000).

30 See van Binsbergen (2002) and references cited there, and the critical response in Bewaji and Ramose (2003).

31 See Geschiere and van der Klei (1988) and Marut (2002) for Senegal; Ranger (1985a), Kriger (1992) and Lan (1985) for Zimbabwe.

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